

The Scriptures:
**THE ONLY GUIDE IN MATTERS OF
FAITH**

Preached At The Baptism Of Several Persons In Barbican, November 2, 1750.

JEREMIAH 6:16.

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein; and ye shall find rest for your souls.

In this chapter the destruction of *Jerusalem* by the Babylonians is threatened and foretold, and the causes of it assigned; in general, the great abounding of sin and wickedness among the people; and in particular, their neglect and contempt of the word of God; the sin of covetousness, which prevailed among all sorts; the unfaithfulness of the prophets to the people, and the people's impenitence and hardness of heart; their want of shame, their disregard to all instructions and warnings from the Lord, by the mouth of his prophets, and their obstinate refusal of them; which last is expressed in the clause following the words read; and which, though an aggravation of it, shew the tender regard of the Lord to his people, and may be considered as an instruction to such who had their doubts and difficulties in religious matters; who were halting between two opinions, and like men *in bivio*, who stand in a place where two or more ways meet, and know not which path to take; and in this light I shall consider them; and in them may be observed,

I. A direction to such persons what to do; to *stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.*

II. The encouragement to take this direction; and ye shall find rest for your souls.

I. The direction given to *stand in or on the ways*, etc. to do as men do when they are come to a place where two or more ways meet, make a stand, and view the roads, and see which they should take; they look about them, and consider well what course they should steer; they look up to the way-marks, or way-posts, and read the inscriptions on them, which tell them whither such a road leads, and so judge for themselves which way they should go. Now in religious matters, the way-marks or way-posts to guide and direct: men in the way, are the scriptures, the oracles of God, and they only.

Not education-principles. It is right in parents to do as *Abraham* did, to teach their children to keep the way of the Lord (Gen. 18:19).

The direction of the wise man is an exceeding good one; Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Prov. 22:6); that is, easily and ordinarily: and it becomes Christians under the gospel dispensation to *bring up* their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4); and a great mercy and blessing it is to have a religious education; but then, as wrong principles may be infused as well as right ones, into persons in their tender years, it becomes them, when come to years of maturity and discretion, to examine them, whether they are according to the word of God, and so judge for themselves, whether they are to be abode by or rejected. I know it is a grievous thing with some persons to forsake the religion they have been brought up in; but upon this foot, a man that is born and brought up a Turk or a Jew, a Pagan or a Papist, must ever continue so. Sad would have been the case of the apostle *Paul*, if he had continued in the principles of his education; and what a shocking figure did he make whilst he abode by them? thinking, according to them, he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus (Acts 22:3, 4; 26:9).

Nor are the customs of men a rule of judgment, or a direction which way men should take in matters of religion; for *the customs of the people are* for the most part *vain* (Jer. 20:3), and such as are not *lawful* for us, being Christians, to *receive* or *observe* (Acts 16:21); and concerning which we should say, We have no such custom, neither the churches of God (1 Cor. 11:16).

Custom is a tyrant, and ought to be rebelled against, and its yoke thrown off.

Nor are the traditions of men to be regarded; the Pharisees were very tenacious of the traditions of the elders, by which they transgressed the commandments of God, and made his word of no effect; and the apostle *Paul*, in his state of unregeneracy, was zealous of the same; but neither of them are to be imitated by us: it is right to observe the exhortation which the apostle gives, when a Christian (Col. 2:8); beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Take care you are not imposed upon, under the notion and pretense of an *apostolical tradition*; unwritten traditions are not the rule, only the word of God is the rule of our faith and practice.

Nor do the decrees of popes and councils demand our attention and regard; it matters not what such a pope has determined, or what canons such a council under his influence has made; what have we to do with the man of sin, that *exalts himself above all that is called God*; who *sits in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he was God*? we know what will be his fate, and that of his followers (2 Thess. 2:4, 5; Rev. 20:30; 13:8; 14:11).

Nor are the examples of men, no not of the best of men, in all things to be copied after by us; we should indeed be followers of all good men as such, *of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises*; and especially of such, who are or have been spiritual guides and governors in the church; who have made the scriptures their study, and have labored in the word and doctrine; their faith we should follow, *considering the end of their conversation*; how that issues, and when it terminates in Christ, his person, truths and ordinances, the same to-day, yesterday and for ever (Heb. 6:12; 13:7): but then we are to follow them no further than they follow Christ; the apostle *Paul* desired no more than this of his *Corinthians* with respect to himself; and no more can be demanded of us; it should be no bias on our minds, that such and such a man of so much grace and

excellent gifts thought and practiced so and so. We are to call no man father or master on earth; we have but one father in heaven, and one master, which is Christ, whose doctrines, rules, and ordinances we should receive and observe. We are not to be influenced by men of learning and wealth; though there should be on the other side of the question, it should be no stumbling to us; had this been a rule to be attended to, Christianity had never got footing in the world: Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed. (John 7:48, 49)

It pleased the Lord, in the first times of the gospel, to *hide* the things of it *from the wise and prudent*, and *reveal* them *unto babes*; and to call by his grace, not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but the foolish, weak, and base things of the world, and things that are not, to confound the wise and mighty, and bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence (Matthew 11:25, 26; 1 Cor. 1:26-29): nor should it concern us that the greatest number is on the opposite side; we are *not to follow a multitude to do evil*; the whole world once wondered after the beast; Christ's flock is but a little flock.

The scriptures are the only external guide in matters of religion; they are the way-posts we should look up unto, and take our direction from, and should steer our course accordingly: To the law and to the testimony: if men speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isa. 8:20); we should not believe every spirit, but try them, whether they are of God (1 John 4:1); and the trial should be made according to the word of God; the scriptures should be searched, as they were by the noble Bereans, to see whether the things delivered to consideration are so or no; the inscriptions on these way-posts should be read, which are written so plain, that he that runs may read them; and they direct to a way, in which men, though fools, shall not err: if therefore the inquiry is,

1st, About the way of Salvation; if that is the affair the doubt is concerning, look up to the way-posts, look into the word of God, and read what that says; search the scriptures, for therein is the way of eternal life; life and immortality, or the way to an immortal life, is brought to light by the gospel. The scriptures, under a divine influence, and with a divine blessing, are able to make a man wise unto salvation, and they do point unto men the way of it: it is not the light of nature, nor the law of *Moses*, but the gospel-part of the scriptures which direct to this; there will shew you, that God saves and calls men with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his purpose and grace; that it is not by works of righteousness done by men, but according to the mercy of God, that men are saved; and that it is not by works, but by grace, lest men should boast (2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:8,9). That it is a vain thing for men to expect salvation this way; that it is a dangerous one: such *who encompass themselves with sparks of their own kindling shall lie down in sorrow*: and that it is a very wicked thing; such *sacrifice to their own net, and burn incense to their own drag*. These will inform you that *Christ is the way, the truth, and the life*; that he is the only true way to eternal life; that there is salvation in him, and in no other: the language of them is, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*: these words, *Salvation alone by Christ, salvation alone by Christ*, are written as with a sunbeam on them; just as the way-posts, set up in places where two or more ways met, to direct the manslayer when he was fleeing to one of the cities of refuge from the avenger of blood, had written on them in very legible characters, *refuge, refuge*.[\[1\]](#)

2dly, If the question is about any point of Doctrine; if there is any hesitation concerning any truth of the gospel, look up to the way-posts, look into the scriptures, search them, see and read what they say; for they are *profitable for doctrine* (2 Tim. 3:16); for finding it out, explaining, confirming, and defending it: there will tell you whether the thing in debate is so or no, and will direct you which side of the question to take; if you *seek for knowledge and understanding* in gospel-truths diligently and constantly, *as you would for silver*, and search after them as for hid treasures, then will you understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God (Prov. 2:4, 5).

Thus, for instance,

If the inquiry is about the doctrine of the Trinity; as the light of nature and reason will tell you, that there is but *one* God, and which is confirmed by revelation; the scriptures will inform you, that there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Spirit, and that these three are one (1 John 5:7); are the one God: look into the first page of the Bible, and you will see how just and right is that observation of the Psalmist (Ps. 33:6); by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath or spirit of his mouth; and that Jehovah, his word and spirit, were concerned in the creation of all things: you will learn from thence that *God made the heavens and the earth*; that *the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*, and brought the chaos into a beautiful order, as well as garnished the heavens; and that *God the word said, Let there be light, and there was light*; and that these three are the U S that made man after their *image and likeness*. (Gen. 1:1-3; 1:26) This doctrine is frequently suggested in the Old Testament, but clearly revealed in the New; and no where more clearly than in the commission for the administration of the ordinance of baptism; Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19); and in the administration of it itself to our Lord Jesus Christ, at which all the three persons appeared; the Father by a voice from heaven, declaring Christ his beloved Son; the Son in human nature, submitting to the ordinance; and the holy Ghost descending as a dove upon him (Matthew 3:16, 17); this was thought to be so clear a testimony for this doctrine, that it was usual with the ancients to say, "Go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the trinity."

If the question is concerning the Deity of Christ, his eternal Sonship and distinct personality, look to your way-marks; inquire into the sacred records, and there you will find, that he is the mighty God, God over all, blessed for ever; the great God, the true God, and eternal life (Isa. 9:6; Rom. 9:5; Titus 2:13; 1 John 5:20); that all divine perfections are in him; that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in him; that he is *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person*; to whom all divine works are ascribed, and all divine worship is given; that he is *the only begotten of the Father, the firstborn of every creature*; or was begotten before any creature was in being (Heb. 1:31; Col. 2:9; 1:15); of whom the Father says, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Ps. 2:7); that he is *the Word which was in the beginning with God*; and must be distinct from him with whom he was; and *in the fullness of time was made flesh*; which neither the Father nor the Spirit were (John 1:1, 14); and the same sacred writings will satisfy you about the deity and personality, as well as the operations of the blessed Spirit.

If the doubt is about the doctrine of Election, read over the sacred volumes, and there you will find, that this is an eternal and sovereign act of God the Father, which was made in Christ before the

foundation of the world; that it is to holiness here, and happiness hereafter; that the means are *sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*; that it is irrespective of faith and good works, being before persons had done either good or evil; that faith and holiness flow from it, and that grace and glory are secured by it; Whom he did predestinate, then; he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 9:21; 8:30).

If you have any hesitation about the doctrine of Original Sin, look into your Bible; there you will see, that the first man sinned, and all sinned in him; that *judgment*, through his offense, *came upon all men to condemnation*; and that by his disobedience many were made sinners; that men are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; that they are transgressors from the womb, go astray from thence, speaking lies, and are by nature children of wrath (Rom. 5:12, 18, 19; Ps. 51:5; 58:3; Isa. 48:8, Eph. 2:3).

If the matter in debate is the Satisfaction of our Lord Jesus Christ, read over the epistles of his holy apostles, and they will inform you, that he was made under the law, and became the fulfilling end of it, in the room of his people; that he yielded perfect obedience to it, and bore the penalty of it, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them; that he *was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him*; and *a curse for them, that he might redeem them from the curse of the law*; that *he offered himself a sacrifice for them*, in their room and stead to God, for *a sweet-smelling savor*; that *he suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them nigh to God*; and died for their sins according to the scriptures, and made reconciliation and atonement for them (Gal. 4:4; Rom. 8:3, 4; 10:4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 5:2; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:3; Heb. 2:17).

If you are at a loss about the Extent of Christ's Death, and know not what part to take in the controversy about general and particular Redemption, look to your way-marks, the scriptures, and take your direction from thence; and there you will observe, that those whom Christ saves from their sins are *his own people*, for whose transgressions he was stricken; that he gave his life a ransom for many, for all sorts of persons, for all his elect, Jews and Gentiles; that they were his sheep he laid down his life for; that *he loved the church, and gave himself for it*; and that *he tasted death for every one of his brethren*, and of *the children* the Father gave him; that those that are redeemed by him, are redeemed *out* of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation (Matthew 1:21; 20:28; John 10:25; Eph. 5:25; Heb. 2:9-12; Rev. 5:9).

If the affair before you is the doctrine of Justification, and the query is, whether it is by works of righteousness done by you, or by the righteousness of Christ imputed to you, or about any thing relating to it, read over the sacred pages, and especially the epistles of the apostle *Paul*; and you will easily see, that a man cannot be justified in the sight of God by the works of the law, or by his own obedience to the law of works; that, *if righteousness comes by the law, Christ is dead in vain*; that *men are justified by faith, without the works of the law*; that is, by the righteousness of Christ, received by faith; that they are *justified by the blood of Christ, and made righteous by his obedience*; that this is the righteousness which God approves of, accepts, and *imputes* to his people, without works; and which being looked to, apprehended and received by faith, is productive of much spiritual peace and comfort in the soul (Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16, 21; Rom. 5:1, 9, 19; 4:6).

If the dispute is about Free-will or Free-grace, the power of the one, and the efficacy of the other, in a sinner's regeneration and conversion; turn to your Bible, and from thence it will appear, that this work is not by the might, or power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts; that *men are born again, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, his Spirit and grace; that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;* that the work of faith is a work of power, of the operation of God, and is carried on by it, and is even *according to the exceeding greatness of his power, who works in man both to will and to do of his own good pleasure* (Zech. 4:6; John 1:13; 3:5; Rom. 9:15, 16; Col. 2:12; 2 Thess. 1:11; Eph. 1:10; Phil. 2:13).

If the demur is about the final Perseverance of the Saints, read over the gracious promises and declarations in the word of God, and they will serve to confirm you in it; as that the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger; that God will put his fear into the hearts of his people, and they shall not depart from him: that they are preferred in Christ Jesus, and in his hands, out of whose hands none can pluck them; who is able to keep them from falling, and will; and that they are, and shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (Job 17:9; Jer. 32:40; John 10:28, 29; Jude 1:24; 1 Pet. 1:5).

To observe no more: if the doctrines of the Resurrection of the dead, and a future Judgment, should be called in question, read the divine oracles, and there you are told, that there will be *a resurrection both of the just and unjust;* that the one shall come forth from their graves to the resurrection of life, and the other to the resurrection of damnation; that there is a judgment to come; that there is a righteous Judge appointed, and a day let when just judgment will be executed; and that all, small and great, good and bad, must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive for the things done in the body, whether they be good, or whether they be evil (Acts 24:16; John 5:28, 29; Acts 17:31; Rev. 20:12; 2 Cor. 5:10).

3dly, If the inquiry is about Worship, the scriptures will direct you both as to the object and manner of it, and circumstances relating to it; they will inform you, that God only is to be worshipped, and not a creature; and that the Deity to be worshipped is *not like to gold, or silver, or stone graven by art and man's device;* that *God is a spirit, and must be worsh4ped in spirit and in truth:* you will there find the rules for the several parts of worship, for prayer to him, singing his praise, preaching his word, and administering his ordinances, and how every thing should be done decently, and in order (Rom. 1:25, Acts 17:29; John 4:24; 1 Cor. 14:40)

4thly, If the inquiry is about the nature of a Church, its government, officers, and discipline; look into the ancient records of the scripture, and there you will meet with a just and true account of these things, the original of them, and rules concerning them; you will find that a church is a society of saints and faithful men in Christ Jesus, that are joined together in holy fellowship; that are incorporated into a visible church-state, and by agreement meet together in one place to carry on the worship of God, to glorify him, and edify one another (Eph. 1:1; 1 Cor. 11:20); that it is not national, provincial, or parochial, but congregational; that its offices or officers are only these two plain ones, Bishops, or Overseers or Elders, and Deacons (Phil. 1:1); where you will find nothing of the rabble of the Romish hierarchy; not a syllable of archbishops, archdeacons, deans, prebends, priests, chantors, rectors, vicars, curates, etc. there you will observe laws and rules of Christ, the sole head of the church, his own appointing, for the better ordering and regulating affairs; rules

about the reception and rejection of members, for the laying on or taking off censures, for admonitions and excommunications; all which are to be done by the joint suffrage of the church.

5thly, If the inquiry is about the Ordinances of the Gospel, *stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths*, in which the saints formerly trod; if it is about the ordinance of the Lord's-supper, the scriptures will inform you of the original institution of this ordinance by Christ, of the nature, use, and intent of it; that it is to shew forth the death of Christ till he come again; to commemorate his sufferings and sacrifice, to represent his body broken, and his blood shed for the sins of his people; and that if any one is desirous of partaking of it, he should first examine himself whether he has true faith in Christ and is capable of discerning the Lord's body (Matthew 26:26-28). If it is concerning the ordinance of baptism, by consulting the sacred oracles you will easily perceive that this is of God, and not of man; that it is to be done in water; that the form of administration is in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; that the subjects of it are believers in Christ, and the mode by immersion; and that the whole is warranted by the commission and example of our Lord (Matthew 21:25; 3:6, 11, 16; 28:19) But,

1. If there is any doubt about the subjects of this ordinance, whether they are infants or adult persons, *stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths* not which fathers and councils have marked out, but which the scriptures point unto, and in which *John* the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, have trod. We do not decline looking into the three first centuries of Christianity, commonly reckoned the purest ages of it; we readily allow, that Infant-baptism was talked of in the third century; it was then moved in the African churches but that it was practiced is not proved. I will not say it is improbable that any were then baptized; but this I affirm, it is not certain that any were; as yet, it has not been proved, and as for the writers of the two first centuries, not a word of it is mentioned by them. And had it, had any thing dropped from their pens that looked like it, and could by artifice be wire-drawn to the countenance of it, we should not think ourselves obliged to embrace it on that account; what if *Hermas*, or *Barnabas*, or *Ignatius*, or *Polycarp*, or the two *Clements of Rome* and *Alexandria*, or *Irenaeus*, or *Justin Martyr*, or *Tatian*, or *Theophilus of Antioch*, or *Athenagoras*, or *Minutius Felix* declared it, any one or more of them, as their opinion, that infants ought to be baptized, (though none of them have) yet we should not think ourselves bound to receive it, any more than the many absurdities, weak reasonings, and silly notions these men gave into; and even could it be proved, (as it cannot) that it is an incontestable fact that Infant-baptism was administered by one or more of them, it would only serve to prove this sad truth, known by other instances, how soon corruptions in faith and practice got into the Christian churches, even presently after the times of the apostles; nay, the mystery of iniquity began to work in their days. Wherefore, in order to get satisfaction in this point,

Look over the accounts of the administration of the ordinance of baptism by *John*, the first administrator of it, and see if you can find that any infants were baptized by him. We are told, that *there went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan*; that is, the inhabitants of these places, great numbers of them; but surely these could not be infants, nor any among them, that *went out to John* to hear him preach, or be baptized by him: it is added, *and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins*: these also could not be infants, but adult persons, who being made truly sensible of sin, and having true repentance for it, frankly and ingenuously confessed it; which infants are not capable of *John* preached the baptism of repentance, and required repentance previous to it, and even fruits meet for it, and evidential of it; and when the

Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism, who also could not be infants, he objects to them, because not good men and penitent; and even though they were capable of pleading that they were the children of *Abraham*, and the seed of that great believer (Matthew 3:5-9). And indeed the notion that is advanced in our day is a very idle one, that infants must be baptized, because the seed of believers. Are not all mankind the seed of believers? Has not *God made of one man 's blood all nations that are upon the face of the earth?* Were not *Adam* and *Eve* believers in Christ, to whom the first promise and declaration of a Messiah were made? And do not all men spring from them? Or come we lower to *Noah*, the father of the new world, who was a perfect man, and found grace in the sight of God; do not all men descend from him? Turks, Jews, Pagans and Papists, are all the seed of believers, and at this rate ought to be baptized: and as for immediate believers and unbelievers, their feed by birth are upon an equal foot, and are in no wise better one than another, or have any preference the one to the other, or have by birth any claim to a gospel privilege or blessing the other has not; the truth of the matter is, that they are equally by nature children of wrath.

Look farther into the account of baptism as administered by Christ, or rather by his orders, and see if you can find an infant there. John's disciple come to him, and say, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him (John 3:26).

These also could not be infants that came to him and were baptized; and besides, who they were that were baptized by him, or by his orders, we are afterwards told, and their characters are given; Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (John 4:1): first he made them disciples, and then baptized them, or ordered them to be baptized, and a disciple of Christ is one that has learnt him, and the way of salvation by him; who is taught to deny sinful, civil and righteous self for Christ; and such were the persons baptized in the times of Christ, who must be adult ones; and with this his practice agrees the commission he gave in Matthew 28:19 where he orders teaching before baptizing; and such teaching as issues in believing, with which compare Mark 16:16. True indeed, he says (Matthew 19:14), suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; but they were admitted to come to him, not to be baptized by him, of which there is not one syllable, nor the least intimation, but to lay his hands on them and pray, or be touched by him, very probably to heal them of diseases that might attend them. However, it seems reasonable to conclude, that the apostles knew nothing of any such practice as Infant baptism, enjoined, practiced, or countenanced by Christ, or they would never have forbid the bringing of infants to him; and our Lord laying nothing of it when such a fair opportunity offered, looks very darkly upon it.

Once more; look over the accounts of the administration of Baptism by the apostles of Christ, and observe who they were that were baptized by them. We read indeed of households baptized by them; but inasmuch as there are many families that have no infants in them, nothing can be concluded from hence in favor of Infant-baptism; it should be first proved that there were infants in these households, before any such consequence can be drawn from them: and besides, it will appear upon a review of them, that not infants but adult persons in the several instances are intended. *Lydia* 's household consisted of *brethren*, whom the apostles *comforted*; who could not be infants, but adult persons; we have no account of any other, no other are named; if any other can, let them be named. The Jailor's household were such, to whom the word of God was spoken, who believed in God, and rejoiced with him. *Stephanas*' household, which is the only other that is mentioned, is

thought by some to be the same with the Jailor's; but, if not, it is certain that it consisted of adult persons, such who addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints (Acts 16:15, 32-34, 40; 1 Cor. 1:26; 6:15). It will be easy to observe, that the first persons that were baptized after our Lord's resurrection and ascension, were such as were pricked to the heart, repented of their sins, and gladly received the gospel; such were the three thousand who were baptized, and added to the church in one day. The Samaritans, hearing *Philip* preach the things concerning the kingdom of God, were baptized, both men and women. The instance of the Eunuch is notorious; this man was a Jewish proselyte, a serious and devout man, was reading in the prophecy of *Isaiah* when *Philip* joined his chariot; Who, after conversation with him, desired baptism of him, to whom *Philip* replied, that if he believed with all his heart he might be baptized; intimating, that if he did not, notwithstanding his profession of religion, and external seriousness and devotion, he had no right to that ordinance; and upon professing his faith in Christ he was baptized. *Cornelius* and his family, and those in his house, to whom *Peter* preached, and on whom the holy Ghost fell, were ordered by him to be baptized, having received the holy Ghost, and for that reason. And the Corinthians, hearing the apostle *Paul*, and believing in Christ he preached, were baptized (Acts 2:37, 41, 42; 8:12, 37, 38; 10:47; 18:8): from all which instances it appears, that not infants but adult persons were the only ones baptized by the apostles of Christ. Now, though we might justly demand a precept or command of Christ to be shewn, expressly enjoining the baptism of infants, before we can go into such a practice, since it is used as a part of religious worship; for which we ought to have a *thus saith the Lord*: yet if but one single precedent could be given us, one instance produced; or if it could be proved that any one infant was ever baptized by *John* the Baptist, by Christ, or by his orders, or by his apostles, we should think ourselves obliged to follow such an example; let this be shewn us, and we have done; we will shut up the controversy, and say no more. Strange! that in the space of sixty or seventy years, for such a course of time ran out from the first administration of baptism to the close of the canon of the scripture, that in all the accounts of baptism in it, not a single instance of infant baptism can be given! upon the whole, we must be allowed to say, and if not, we must and will take the liberty to say, that Infant-baptism is an unscriptural practice; and that there is neither precept nor precedent for it in all the word of God.

2. If the doubt is concerning the Mode of baptism, whether it is to be performed by immersion of the whole body, or by sprinkling or pouring a little water on the face; take the same course as before, ask *for the old paths*; inquire how this ordinance was anciently administered in the times of *John*, Christ, and his apostles. I shall not appeal unto, nor send you to inquire the signification of the Greek word; though all men of learning and sense have acknowledged, that the primary meaning of the word is to *dip* or *plunge*; but this ordinance was appointed not for men of learning only, but for men and women also of the meaner capacities, and of the most plain and simple understandings: wherefore let all inquiring persons consult.

The scriptural instances of baptism; read over the accounts of baptism as administered by *John*, and you will find that he baptized in *Jordan*: ask yourselves why a *river* was chose, when a *bason* of water would have done, had it been performed by sprinkling or pouring; try if you can bring yourselves to believe that *John* was not in the *river Jordan*, only on the banks of it, from whence he took water, and poured or sprinkled it; and if you can seriously and in good earnest conclude (with a grave divine) that if he was in the river, he had in his hand a scoop, or some such instrument, and with it threw the water over the people as they stood on the banks of the river on both sides of him, and so baptized them in shoals. Look over the baptism of Christ by *John*, and see if you can

persuade yourselves that Christ went ankle deep, or a little more, into the river *Jordan*, and *John* stood upon a bank and poured a little water on his head, as messieurs painter and engraver have described them; or whether the most easy and natural sense of the whole is not this, that they both went into the river *Jordan*, and *John* baptized our Lord by immersion; which when done, he straightway came up *out* of the water, which supposes him to have been *in* it; and then the Spirit descended on him as a dove, and a voice was heard from his Father, laying, *This is my beloved Son* (Matthew 3:6, 16, 17). Carefully read over those words of the evangelist (John 3:23), and *John* also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there; and try if you can make *much* water to signify *little*; or *many waters*, as the words may be literally rendered, only a little rill, or some small rivulets of water, not sufficient to cover a man's body; though the phrase is used even of the waters of the great sea;^[2] and persuade yourselves, if you can, that the reason of the choice of this place, because of *much water* in it, was not for baptism, as says the text, but for the convenience of men, their camels and asses on which they came to hear *John*; of which it says not one word. To which add the instance of the eunuch's baptism, in which we are told (Acts 8:38, 39), that *both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water*; and that when baptism was administered, they *came up out of the water*: now try whether you can really believe that this great man, who left his chariot, went down with *Philip* into the water, ankle or knee deep, only to have a little water sprinkled and poured upon him, and then came out of it, when in this way the ordinance might as well have been administered in his chariot; or whether it is not most reasonable to believe, from the bare narrative, from the very letter of the text, that their going down into the water was in order that the ordinance might be administered by immersion; and that when *Philip* had baptized the Eunuch this way, they both came up out of the water: as for that poor weak criticism, that this is to be understood of going to and from the water-side; it may be asked what they should go thither for, what reason was there for it, if done by sprinkling? Besides, it is entirely destroyed by the observation the historian makes before this, that *they came unto a certain water*;^[3] to the water-side; and therefore when they went down, it must be into the water itself; it could not with any propriety be said, that when they were come to the water-side, after that they went to the water-side. But to proceed,

Consider the figurative or metaphorical baptisms mentioned in scripture. Baptism is said (1 Pet. 3:20, 21) to be a like figure to *Noah's* ark, in which eight souls were saved by water; there is a likeness, an agreement between the one and the other; now see if you can make out any likeness between the ark upon the waters and baptism, as performed by sprinkling; whereas it soon appears as performed by immersion, in which persons are covered in water, as *Noah* and his family in the ark were, when the fountains of the great deep were broke up under them, and the windows of heaven were opened above them: think with yourselves, whether sprinkling or immersion best agrees with this, that baptism should be called the antitype to it; to which may be added, that *Noah* and his family, when shut up in the ark, were, as it were, buried there; and baptism by immersion is a representation of a burial. The passage of the Israelites through the Red sea is called a *being baptized in the cloud and in the sea* (1 Cor. 10:1, 2); but why should it be so called? what is there in that account that looks like sprinkling? There is that resembles immersion; for when the waters of the sea stood up on both sides of them, as a wall, and a cloud covered them, they were as people immersed in water; and besides, their going down into the sea, and parting through it, and coming up out of it on the other side; if it may not be literally called an immersion, it was very much like an immersion into water, and an immersion out of it; and both that and baptism represent a burial and resurrection. The sufferings of our Lord, are called a baptism; you would do well to consider

whether only sprinkling a few drops of water on the face, or an immersion into it, best represents the abundance and greatness of our Lord's sorrows and sufferings, for which reason they are called a baptism; and the rather, since they are signified by the waters coming into his soul, and by his coming into deep waters, where the floods overflowed him (Luke 12:50; Ps. 69:1, 2). Once more, the extraordinary donation of the holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost is called a baptism, or a being *baptized with the holy Ghost, and with fire*; which was done when the house in which the apostles were, was filled with a mighty wind, and cloven tongues, as of fire, sat upon them (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5; 2:1-3): it deserves your consideration, whether this wonderful affair, and this large abundance of the Spirit, is not better expressed by baptism, as administered in a large quantity of water, than with a little. To add no more;

Consider the nature, use, and end of baptism; it is a burial; and the use and end of it are, to represent the burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; hence the phrase of *being buried with him in baptism* (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12) see if you can make any thing like a burial when this ordinance is administered by sprinkling; can you persuade yourselves, that a corpse is properly buried, when only a little dust is sprinkled on its face? on the other hand, you will easily perceive a lively representation of a burial, when the ordinance is performed by immersion; a person is then covered with water, and when he comes out of it, it clearly represents our Lord's resurrection, and the believer's rising again to newness of life. Upon the whole, having asked for *the good old paths*, and found them, walk herein, abide by this ancient practice of baptism by immersion; a practice which continued for the space of thirteen hundred years at least, without any exception, unless a few bed-ridden people in the times of *Cyprian*,^[4] who received baptism on their sick and death-beds, fancying there was no atonement for sins after baptism, and therefore deferred it till such time.

But after all, let me advise you in the words of our text to inquire *where is the good way, or the better way*; for though the ordinance of baptism, and every other, is a good way, there is a better way. This is a way of duty, but not of life and salvation; it is a command of Christ, to be obeyed by all believers in him, but not to be trusted in and depended on; it is essential to church-communion, but not to salvation; it is indeed no indifferent thing whether it is performed or no; this ought not to be laid or thought of any ordinance of Christ; or whether in this or the other manner, or administered to this or the other subject. It ought to be done as Christ has directed it should; but when it is best done, it is no saving ordinance: this I the rather mention, to remove from us a wicked and a foolish imputation, that we make an idol of this ordinance, and place our confidence and dependence on it, and put it in the room of the Savior. I call it wicked, because false; and foolish, because contrary to an avowed and well-known principle on which we proceed, namely, that faith in Christ alone for salvation is a prerequisite to baptism: can any man in his senses think that we depend on this ordinance for salvation, when we require that a person should believe in Christ, and profess that he believes in Christ alone for salvation, before he is baptized; or otherwise we judge he is not a fit subject? but on the other hand, those that insinuate such a notion as this, would do well to consider, if their own conduct does not bespeak something of this kind; or otherwise what means the stir and hustle that is made, when a child is ill, and not yet sprinkled? what means such language as this, "run, fetch the minister to baptize the child, the child's a-dying?" Does it not look as if this was thought to be a saving business, or as if a child could not be fared unless it is sprinkled; and which, when done, they are quite easy and satisfied about its state? But to

leave this, and as the apostle says, *yet shew I unto you a mere excellent way* (1 Cor. 12:31), which is *Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life*.

Christ is the way of salvation, which the gospel, and the ministers of it, point out to men; and he is the only way of salvation, there is salvation in him, and in no other; this is what the whole Bible centers in; this is the sum and substance of it; this is the *faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation. that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners*. He is the way of access to the Father, nor can any come to God but by him; he is the mediator between God and man, and through him there is access with confidence by the faith of him. He is the way of acceptance with God: we have nothing to render us acceptable unto God; we are black in ourselves with original and actual sin, and are only comely in Christ; our acceptance is in the beloved. God is well pleased with him, and with all that are considered in him; their persons and their sacrifices are acceptable to God through him. He is the way of conveyance of all grace, and the blessings of it to us. All was given originally to him, and to us in him; and from him, and through him we receive it, even out of his fullness, grace for grace; all spiritual blessings are with him, and come to us from him; all grace passes through his hands; the first we have, and all the after-supplies of it; yea, *the gift of God, eternal life, is through Jesus Christ our Lord* And he is the way to heaven and eternal happiness; he has entered into it with his own blood already, and has opened a way by it for his people, into the holiest of all; he is gone beforehand as their forerunner, and has taken possession of heaven for them; he is now preparing a place for them there, and will come again and take them to himself, and introduce them into his kingdom and glory. And he is a plain, pleasant, and safe way; plain to him that understands, and has a spiritual knowledge of him, even though but of a very mean capacity; for this is *a way in which men, though fools, shall not err*; and it is a very delightful one; what more delightful than to live by faith on Christ, or to walk by faith in him, as he hath been received. And a very save one, it must needs be; none ever perished that believed in Christ; he is the living way, all in this way live, none in this way die; though it is a strait gate and narrow way, yet it surely and rarely leads to eternal life; and though it is sometimes called a *new way*, yet not because newly contrived, for it is as ancient in this respect as the counsel and covenant of peace; nor newly revealed, for it was made known to *Adam* immediately after the fall; nor newly made use of, for all the Old Testament saints were directed in this way, and walked in it, and were rived by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, as well as we; but because it is more clearly manifested now, and more largely and frequently walked in: otherwise it is the good old path to be asked for; there never was any other way of salvation, or ever will be. I go on,

II. To consider the encouragement given to take the direction, and make the inquiry as above; and in this I shall be very brief; it lies in this clause, *and ye shall find rest for your souls*.

There is a rest for souls to be enjoyed in ordinances, when men are arrived to satisfaction about them, and submit unto them in a becoming manner; when a man has carefully and conscientiously searched the scriptures, and is come to a point about an ordinance, his mind is easy, which before was distracted and confused; and he is the more easy in that he has acted the faithful part to himself and truth; and I cannot see how persons can have rest in their minds, who have not stood in the ways and looked about them, searched the scriptures, and inquired for *the good old paths*; and in consequence of an honest inquiry, walk therein; to such, *wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and her paths of peace*; there is great peace enjoyed in them, though not from them; a believer

comes to an ordinance, being upon inquiry satisfied about it, as for instance, the ordinance of baptism; he, I say, comes to it with delight, passes through it with pleasure, and goes away from it as the eunuch did, *rejoicing*.

There is rest for souls to be enjoyed in doctrines, which a man does enjoy, when upon a diligent search after truth, he finds it, and is at a point about it; a man that is tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, is like a wave of the sea, always restless and uneasy; *a double-minded man*, that halts between two opinions, and sometimes inclines to one, and sometimes to the other, *is unstable in all his ways*, and has no true rest in his mind; a man that is carried about with divers and strange doctrines, is like a meteor in the air, sometimes here, and sometimes there; a good thing it is to have the heart established in and with the doctrines of grace; and the way to this is *to search the scriptures, to see whether these things be so or no*; which when seriously and faithfully done, the issue is peace of conscience, rest in the mind.

But above all, true rest for the soul is to be had in Christ, and such who ask for the good and better way find it in him, nor is it to be found in any other; Christ is that to believers, as *Noah's ark* was to the dove, which could find no rest for the sole of its feet, till it returned thither: there is rest in Christ, and no where else, and he invites weary souls to come to him for it; his words are (Matthew 11:28, 29), *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls*; which last clause is the same with this in our text, and the Lord seems to have had respect unto it, and to have took his language from it: and what peace and rest do weary souls find in Christ, when their faith is led to his person, fullness, blood, sacrifice and righteousness? and such who are made partakers of spiritual rest here, shall enjoy an eternal one hereafter, for still there remains a rest to the people of God (Heb. 4:9).

To conclude; let us bless God for the scriptures, that we have such a way-mark to direct us, and point out unto us the way in which we should go; let us make use of them; let us search the scriptures daily and diligently, and the rather, since they testify of Christ, of his person, offices, of his doctrines and ordinances. There are *the more sure word of prophecy, to which we do well to take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place*; these are *a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths*, both with respect to the way of salvation, and to the way of our duty. These guide us to the old paths, and shew us where is the good way in which we should walk; and when we are tempted to turn to the right hand, or the left, it is best to hearken to the voice of the word behind us, saying, *This is the way, walk in it* (John 5:39; 2 Pet. 1:19; Ps. 119:105; Isa. 30:21). The Bible has the best claim to antiquity of any book in the world; and the gospel, and the truths of it, have the greatest marks and evidences of it upon them. Error is old, but truth is more ancient than that; the gospel is the *everlasting gospel*; it was even *ordained before the world unto our glory* (Rev. 14:6; 1 Cor. 2:7); and the ordinances of it, as administered in the times of Christ and his apostles, should be received and submitted to, as there delivered; and we should walk in them as we have Christ and his apostles for an example: but above all things, our concern should be to walk in Him, the way; there is no way better, nor any so good as he; seek rest for your souls in him, and no where else; not in the law, and the works of it, there is none there; not in the world, and the things of it, *this is not your rest, it is polluted* (Micah 2:10); but seek it in Christ, where you will find it here, and more fully enjoy it with him hereafter.

THE AGREEMENT OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

A Sermon,

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture,

in

GREAT EAST-CHEAP, Mar. 24, 1756.

Acts 26: 22, 23.

Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great; saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

This Lecture, which I am now about to take my leave of, was set up in the year 1729, between six and seven and twenty years ago. I opened it with a discourse or two on the words of the Psalmist, in Psalm 71:16, *I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only*: My view in the choice of those words was, partly to observe that I undertook the service of the Lecture, and engaged in this work, not in my own strength, but in the strength of Christ, hoping for and expecting the aid and assistance of his Spirit and grace; and partly to shew that my intentions and resolutions were to preach that great and glorious doctrine of a sinner's free justification before God, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, with all others that are analogous to it, or in connection with it; which *Luther* rightly called *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*, "the article of the church standing or falling, or that by which it stands or falls;" for as that doctrine is received or rejected, the church of Christ in all ages and periods of time flourishes or declines. And through the grace of God I have been enabled to abide by these resolutions throughout my concern in this Lecture; and now I close it with a discourse on the words read, *having therefore obtained help of God, &c.*, which are part of an apology or defence, which the apostle *Paul* made for himself in a very numerous assembly; at the head of which were very great personages, as *Agrippa* king of the Jews, *Bernice* his sister, *Festus* the Roman governor, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city of *Cesarea*, and all in open court; which verified what our Lord had foretold to his disciples, saying, *ye shall be brought before kings and governors for my sake* (Matt. 10:10). The apostle being permitted to speak for himself, addressed the king in a very polite manner, and gave an account of himself from his youth upwards; "how that he was brought up in the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, a Pharisee; trained up in the belief and hope of the promised Messiah, and of the resurrection of the dead; and possessed with prejudices against

Jesus of Nazareth and his followers, against whom he was exceeding mad, and persecuted them to strange cities; and how that in the midst of his career of rage and fury against them, it pleased the Lord to meet with him, and convert him," And then he relates the manner of his conversion; "how an amazing light surrounded him and struck him, and those that were with him, to the ground; that he heard a voice speaking to him by name, and what answer he returned to it; when he was not only effectually called by grace, but the Lord Jesus Christ personally appeared to him, and made him a minister of the everlasting gospel; promised him protection and deliverance from all people, Jews and Gentiles, to whom he should send him; and pointed out the ends and usefulness of his ministration; *to open the eyes of men, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.*" upon which he observes to *Agrippa*, that he was *not disobedient to the heavenly vision*; but immediately preached the doctrines of faith, repentance and good works at *Damascus*; the place where he then was, and at *Jerusalem*, and through all the land of *Judea*, and then among the Gentiles; and these were the only causes and reasons of the rage of the Jews against him, and which moved them to seek to take away his life time after time: but notwithstanding, the Lord preserved him for much and long usefulness in the ministry of the gospel; which he takes notice of in the words before us, *having therefore obtained help of God, &c.* In which may be observed,

First, That the apostle ascribes his continuance in life, and in the ministry of the word, to *the help* that he had *obtained* of God, which help,

Designs the care of divine providence exercised towards him in a special way and manner. The providence of God is common to all his creatures; it is owing to that, the souls of men are upheld in life; and as life itself is a grant and favour from the Lord, so it is his providential visitation that preserves the spirits of men. In him *all live, and move, and have their being* (Ps. 66:9; Job 10:12; Acts 17:28), they not only have it from him, but they are supported in it by him; and there is a special providence which superintends the people of God; though he is *the Saviour of all men*, yet more *especially of those that believe* (1 Tim. 4:10); and particularly ministers of the gospel are in a remarkable manner preserved by the Lord; he *holds these stars in his right hand* (Rev. 2:1); they are his peculiar care and charge, and he continues their useful lives for much service in his church. This was the happy case of our apostle.

It takes in, and has a particular respect unto, the deliverance of him from dangers to which he was exposed, and which Christ promised him, verse 17, and he here acknowledges was made good unto him. As soon as he became a convert, and a preacher of the gospel, the Jews laid in wait for him to take away his life; insomuch that the disciples were obliged to let him down in a basket by the wall of the city of *Damascus*, to make his escape; at another time they found him in the temple, and fell upon him, and beat him unmercifully, and would have destroyed him, had not the chief captain of a Roman band ran to his relief: and after this, forty of them bound themselves under a curse, not to eat or drink until they had killed him; besides many perils of life was he in among the Gentiles, as at *Lystra*, *Iconium*, and other places (Acts 9:24, 25; 14:19; 21:32, 33; 23:12, 13); but he obtained help of the Lord against all his enemies, and deliverance from all dangers; and continued a faithful dispenser of the word, and stood his ground, through all difficulties, and in spite of all opposition.

This includes all that help and assistance which he received from the Lord in preaching the gospel; for notwithstanding his natural and acquired abilities, and the ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the spirit bestowed on him, yet he was conscious of his own weakness and inability in himself to perform such service; and therefore asks (2 Cor. 2:16), *who is sufficient for these things?* He knew he was not of himself, and that the grace of Christ alone was sufficient for him; that it was his strength which was made perfect in his weakness; that it was through Christ strengthening him he did all those wonderful things he did; that though he laboured more abundantly than any of the apostles, yet it was *not* he, *but the grace of God which was with him* (1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 12:9; Phil. 4:13); by which he was what he was, as a minister, and had what he had as such, and did what he did under that character; and by which he was enabled to preach the gospel so frequently, so constantly, so fully, and in so many places, from *Jerusalem* round about to *Illyricum*.

Secondly, The apostle expresses the nature of the work he was engaged and continued in, by *witnessing*; it was a *testifying of the gospel of the grace of God* (Acts 20:24); bearing witness to the truth of it, to the grace of God in it; his free favour in choosing men to salvation, in providing and sending Christ to be the Saviour of them, and in the whole of their salvation by him: it was a giving testimony to Christ, to his person, office and grace; hence the gospel is called, *the testimony of our Lord* (2 Tim. 1:8): the apostles of Christ were made and appointed to be his witnesses, to testify of his incarnation, works, sufferings, death, resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and of all things they had heard, and seen, and knew concerning him; and so was the apostle *Paul*, verse 17, and all ministers of the gospel are witnesses, who prophesy, though in sackcloth, and will do so to the end of the reign of antichrist.

Thirdly, The persons to whom he witnessed, he says, were *small and great*; having, no doubt, a special regard to the audience he was now addressing, consisting of great personages, as before observed, and of a multitude of the common people; he bore witness to the truths of Christ and his gospel, to all sorts of men, of every age, rank and condition of life, high and low, rich and poor; and of every character, wise and unwise; his commission being the same with the rest of the apostles, reached to all; *go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature* (Mark 16:15).

Fourthly, The subject-matter of the apostle's ministry is signified; 1st, More generally, as what agreed with the doctrine of the Old Testament, with *Moses* and the prophets: 2dly, More particularly, as it respected, in agreement with them, the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, and his being *a light* to Jews and Gentiles. And on these two things I shall a little enlarge.

What the apostle chiefly insisted upon in his ministry in general, was the same with what *Moses* and the prophets had spoken of; *saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, or should be*: as he agreed with them in the following things, which are particularly respected, so in every thing they said there is an entire harmony and consent between the prophets of the Old, and the apostles of the New Testament; and especially in every thing concerning Christ: they agreed in laying him as the foundation of the church and people of God, and of their faith, hope and happiness; hence he is called (Eph. 2:20), *the foundation of the apostles and prophets*. The Old and New Testaments are like the cherubim over the mercy seat, which were exactly of the same form and size; their faces were to each other, and both to the mercy seat, a type of Christ; as the cherubim were of the ministers of the word, the prophets of the Old, and the apostles of the New Testament. These two parts of the sacred scripture are the church's *two breasts*,

which *are like two young roes that are twins* (Cant. 4:5); that are in every thing, in nature, color and proportion like to each other. Our Lord and his apostles appealed to the writings of *Moses* and the prophets, for the truth of what they delivered; they fetched quotations from them to support their doctrines by; and these are said by them to be *able to make men wise unto salvation*; and to be *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness*; and to make *the man of God thoroughly furnished unto all good works* (2 Tim. 3:15-17): there is not a doctrine of the gospel, but what may be established and confirmed by these sacred books. And this will soon and easily appear by a short detail of some of the principal and peculiar doctrines of it. As,

The doctrine concerning the divine Being, and the persons in the Godhead. One branch of which is, that there is but one God. This is the voice of reason and revelation, the language of the Bible, of both Testaments, old and new. Our Lord frequently suggests this truth, and so do his apostles; and the apostle *Paul* particularly, in the name of the rest, and indeed of all Christians, says *to us there is but one God* (Matt. 19:17; Mark 12:29, 32; John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; 1 Tim. 2:5); and this is what *Moses* said, *hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord* (Deut. 6:4): the prophets say the same, and the Lord by them; *before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me—is there a God beside me? yea there is no God, I know not any* (Isa. 43:10; 44:8), all which is said in opposition to the polytheism of the heathens, but not to the exclusion of any of the divine persons in the Godhead; for another branch of this doctrine is, that there is a plurality of persons in God, and that these are neither more nor fewer than three; for as the apostle *John* says, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one* (1 John 5:7); and which agrees with the doctrine of Christ, as appears by his appointing the ordinance of baptism to be administered, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* (Matt.28:19); which three divine persons appeared at the baptism of Christ; there was the Son of God in human nature *submitting* to that ordinance; and there was the voice of the Father from heaven, declaring, that *this was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased*; and there was the Holy Spirit, which *descended as a dove upon Christ* (Matt. 3:16-17); hence the ancients used to say, "Go to *Jordan* and learn the doctrine of the Trinity:" and this is no other than what is to be found in the writings of *Moses* and the prophets. *Moses* plainly intimates a plurality of persons in the Deity, which he represents God as saying, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:— Let us go down and there confound their language* (Gen.1:26;11:7); and his account of the creation, plainly suggests there were three, and no more. *God*, the first person, the Father, *made the heavens and the earth*; and *God* the Word, the essential Word, the second person, *said, Let there be light, and there was light*; and *the Spirit of God*, or the Spirit of the Messiah, as the Jews call him, the third person, *moved upon the face of the waters* (Gen.1:1, 2, 3), and brought the dark and unformed chaos in a beautiful order. All which is summarily comprehended in the words of the Psalmist; *by the Word*, the essential Word of the Lord, of Jehovah the Father, *were the heavens made; and all the host of them, by the breath or spirit of his mouth* (Ps. 33:6). And the prophets all agree in, and bear testimony to this truth not to mention any other than those words in *Isaiah*, *and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me* (Isa. 48:16); here are Jehovah and his Spirit spoken of, as concerned in the mission of Christ into this world. Another branch of this doctrine is, that each of the divine persons is God; not to say any thing of the Father, the first person, about whom there is no question; the second person, the Son of God, is expressly called by the apostle *John*, the last of the apostles, with whom the rest agree, *the true God and eternal life* (1 John 5:20); and this doctrine clearly appears in the writings of the Old Testament, *for to the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is*

for ever and ever (Psa. 45:6); and he that is promised as the child that should be born, and the Son given, is named *the mighty God* (Isa.9:6); he who is prophesied of as the Saviour of lost sinners, is called their God, *your God will come and save you* (Isa. 35:4); he that is spoken of that should be incarnate and become man, is said to be not a mere man, but *the man, Jehovah's fellow* (Zech.13:7); his equal, who *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*. And as for the blessed Spirit, who, in the New Testament, is called *the Lord the Spirit*; and lying to him is represented as lying to God (2 Cor. 3:18; Acts 5:3, 4); so in the Old Testament such things are ascribed to him, as clearly shew him to be a divine person such as, his concern in the creation of all things; his bringing the earth into proper form and order, by moving on the face of the waters; garnishing the heavens, and bespangling them with stars; making man, and giving him life and understanding (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; 32:8; 33:4).

The doctrine respecting the person and offices of Christ, is the same in both testaments. Is he called in the New Testament the Son of God? is the doctrine of his divine Sonship written as with a sunbeam, in the books of it? is he owned to be the Son of God, by angels and men, good and bad, as well as declared to be so by his Father himself? is this an article of the apostles creed, in which they all unite, saying (John 6:6, 29), *We believe and are sure that thou art Christ the Son of the living God?* not by office, but by nature; for this is not a term of office, but of relation. The writings of the Old Testament agree herein, in which the second person is often called the Son of God. *Daniel* knew him as such, and had instilled such a sentiment of him into the mind of *Nebuchadnezzar*, an heathen monareh; or otherwise, how could he have said (Dan. 3:25), that *the form of the fourth person, in the fiery furnace, is like the Son of God?* *Solomon*, long before him, under the name of *Agur*, says (Prov. 30:4) of God, and his divine Word, *What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?* And *David* his father, before him, introduces the second person, as declaring what his divine Father had said unto him; *The Lord bath said Unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:* hence *David* exhorts the kings and judges of the earth to kiss this *Son of God*; that is, to serve, worship, and obey him; who appeals to be a divine person, by his being a proper object of trust and confidence; *blessed are all they that put their trust in him* (Ps.2:7, 12).

Do the writings of the New Testament speak of Christ as God and man in one person, this being *the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh* (1 Tim. 3:16)? The writings of the Old Testament speak of him also in both natures as meeting in him: when they represent him as a *child to be born*, they declare him to be *the mighty God and everlasting Father*; and when they intimate he should be a branch of *David's* family, they give him the name of *Jehovah our righteousness*; and when they speak of him as a man, they call him *Jehovah's fellow* Isa.9:6; Jer.23:5, 6; Zech.13:7). Is he in the New Testament said (1 Tim. 2:5) "to be *the mediator between God and men?*" the writers of the Old Testament speak of him as drawing near to God, engaging his heart to approach unto him; as becoming the surety of his people; as being the days-man that lays his hands on both; as signified by *Jacob's* ladder, which reached from earth to heaven, and united both; as the mercy seat, from off of which the Lord communes with his saints; and as the *Angel of God's presence*, who appears for his people in it, and introduces them into it (Jer. 30:21; Job 9:32; Gen. 28:12; Ex. 25:22; Isa. 63:9). Do the apostles of Christ make mention of him as invested with the offices of *prophet, priest, and king?* This is no other than what *Moses* and the prophets said should be. *Moses* foretells that God would *raise up a prophet like unto him* out of the children of *Israel*, whom they should *hearken to* (Deut. 18:15); and *David* says of the Messiah, that he was by the

constitution and oath of God, *a priest after the order of Melchizedek* (Ps. 110:4); and other prophets signify that he should *make his soul an offering for sin*, and *make intercession for transgressors* (Isa. 53:10, 12); which are the two parts of his priestly office: and there is no need to say, that he is often promised and prophesied of as a king that should come, it is so notorious; *Rejoice, O daughter of Zion,—thy king cometh unto thee* (Zech. 9:9).

The several peculiar doctrines of special and distinguishing grace are to be observed in the writings of the Old Testament, as well as of the New. As for instance, the doctrine of eternal, personal election is it a truth of the New Testament, that some men are chosen in Christ their head before the foundation of the world, to be holy and happy? It is suggested in the Old, that Christ is God's, first and chief *elect, in whom his soul delighteth*, and is *chosen* by him *out of the people*; and has a people chosen by the Lord for his peculiar treasure and inheritance (Isa. 42:1; Ps. 89:19; 135:4); for himself, or his glory, to enjoy everlasting communion with him. *Know that the Lord hath set apart, in a most wonderful and gracious manner, him that is godly*; him to whom God is good and gracious, and who is the object of his free grace and favour, as the word signifies; *for himself*, his service and honour. The same writings declare, that God has made with Christ, with *David*, his chosen, an everlasting covenant; that Christ is set up from everlasting as mediator of it; that *his goings forth* in it were *of old, from everlasting*; that he is *the messenger of it*, yea *the covenant itself*; that all the blessings and promises of it belong to him, and are therefore called *the sure mercies of David* (Ps. 89:3; 2 Sam. 23:5; Prov. 8:22; Micah 5:2; Mal. 3:1; Isa. 42:6; 55:3); which are all absolute and unconditional, and are all confirmed and established by the blood of Christ, said to be *the blood of the covenant* (Zech. 9:11; Heb. 13:20), in one Testament, as in the other. The doctrine of particular redemption is held forth in both, and appears alike, the person of the redeemer is the same, that should come to, and out of *Zion*: the redeemed are the spiritual and mystical *Jacob* and *Israel*; the things they are redeemed from, are all their sins, Satan that is stronger than they, and death and hell they deserve (Isa. 59:20; 43:1; Ps. 130:7; Jer. 31:11). The doctrine of justification, our apostle so much insisted upon in his ministry and writings, is clearly expressed by the prophets; from whence it appears that it is God that justifies Christ the head, and all his people in him; that it is *in*, and *by* him, that *all the seed of Israel are justified and glorified*; and it is in him they have their justifying righteousness, which is called an everlasting one; and hence he is called *the Lord their righteousness* (Isa. 50:8; 45:24, 25; Dan. 9:24; Jer. 23:6). The doctrine of pardon of sin, which is an evangelical one, and of pure revelation, is spoken of by *Moses* and the prophets, as by Christ; for *to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins* (Acts 10:43), and by them it appears that *there is forgiveness with God*; and that it is of *all sins*, and is an act of God's free grace and mercy, and peculiarly his; and who, before the face of *Moses*, *proclaimed his name, a God gracious and merciful, pardoning inequity, transgression and sin* (Ps. 130:4; 103:3; Isa. 43:25; Ex. 34:6, 7). And the agreement of other doctrines of the New Testament with the Old, may easily be observed, as being no other than what is there asserted; as that conversion is not by might or power of man, but *by the Spirit of the Lord* (Zech. 4:6); and that they that have the true grace of God shall persevere to the end; shall *go from strength to strength, grow stronger and stronger, and hold on their way*; and that the *fear of God being put into their hearts, they shall never depart from him* (Ps. 84:7; Job 17:9; Jer. 32:40); and that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a future judgment; that those that *sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt* (Dan. 12:2); and that *God will judge the righteous and the wicked, and bring every work into judgment*, good or evil, open or secret (Eccl. 3:17; 12:14).

II. The particular things here observed, in the ministration of which the apostle agreed with *Moses* and the prophets, are such as respect the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, and his being a light to Jews and Gentiles; *that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and shew light to the people and to the Gentiles.*

1st, That Christ should suffer; a suffering Christ is the principal subject of the gospel-ministry. The apostles preached *Christ crucified*, as having suffered the death of the cross in the room and stead of, and for the sake of men; and the apostle *Paul determined to know*, that is, to make known *none but Christ, and him crucified*, as the only Saviour of men. This was the first and principal thing of all which he delivered wherever he came, *that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures* (1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2; 15:3). The person said to suffer, is Christ; not the Father, as some, called *Patri-passians* from thence, are said to hold; they, as the Sabellians, asserting there is but one person in the Godhead; but of the Father our Lord says, *ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape* (John 5:37). He never assumed a nature capable of suffering; nor the Holy Spirit neither; he formed, prepared, and adorned the human nature of Christ, and *Christ through the eternal Spirit offered himself to God* (Heb. 9:14); but the Spirit suffered not; it was the Son of God that became incarnate, and *appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh*; and whom God spared not, but delivered up into the hands of justice and death for us all (Rom. 8:3, 32): it was not indeed in his divine nature, as the Son of God, he suffered, for that is impossible; but in the human nature he assumed, which he took on purpose, that he might have something to offer; as it was necessary he should, that he might be *put to death, in the flesh, and be crucified through weakness* (1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 13:4): and yet his sufferings are ascribed to his whole person, and even as that is denominated from his divine nature; just as what belongs to his divine nature is predicated of his person, as denominated from his human nature; for instance, his omnipresence, which is an attribute of Deity, is ascribed to Christ, denominated the Son of man; *and no man bath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven* (John 3:13): and so, on the other hand, the sufferings of Christ, which are peculiar to his human nature, are spoken of his person, as described from his divine nature; as when it is said, *they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, and God purchased the church with his own blood* (1 Cor. 2:8; Acts 20:28): this is owing to that strict, close, hypostatical, or personal union there is of the two natures in the Son of God; and hence is the efficacy of the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ: *his blood cleanseth from all* (1 John 1:7), because it is the blood of him who is the Son of God; and his righteousness justifies from all sin, because it is the righteousness of God, of him who is God as well as man; and his sacrifice expiates all sin, and is a sufficient atonement for it, because it is the sacrifice of himself. Should it be asked, what it was that Christ suffered? The answer is, That he suffered in his name, credit, and reputation, which he willingly submitted to, and therefore is said to have *made himself of no reputation* (Phil. 2:8); he was content to be reckoned *a worm, and no man* (Ps. 22:6); he was traduced as a sinful man, as a seditious person, as having a devil, and doing his miracles by his help and assistance. He suffered in his body, being beat and bruised, buffeted and scourged, pierced in his hands and feet with nails, in his side with a spear, and in his head with thorns; he suffered the painful, shameful and accursed death of the cross: he suffered in his soul, partly by the temptations of Satan, for he *suffered being tempted* (Heb. 2:18): and partly by enduring the wrath of God in the room and stead of his people; in the garden, when *his soul became exceeding sorrowful even unto death* (Matt. 26:38); and upon the cross, when his God and Father forsook him, and he cried out in the agony of his spirit, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me* (Matt. 27:46)? his soul, as well as his body, was offered, and became a sacrifice for sin. And all this he endured, not on his own

account; he was *cut off* in a judicial way, by the hand of divine justice, but *not for himself* (Dan. 11:26), not for any sin of his; he knew none, nor did any; but, *he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*; it was *for the transgression of his people* that he was *stricken* (Isa. 53:6, 8), smitten and afflicted of God; not for angels, and any sins of theirs, whose nature he did not assume, nor are they spared and saved; but for men, sinful men, the worst of men, the chief of sinners *he suffered, the just for the unjust* (1 Pet. 3:18); not for all the individuals of mankind; for his redeemed ones *are redeemed from among men, and out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation* (Rev. 14:4; 5:9); they are *a people* Christ suffered for, his *sheep* he *laid down his life for*, the *church* he *gave himself an offering and a sacrifice for unto God, of a sweet-smelling savour* (Titus 2:14; John 10:15; Eph. 5:2, 25); and his ends in all his sufferings were to make peace with God for them, which is done by the blood of his cross; to procure the pardon of all their sins, which is obtained the same way; and to redeem them from all iniquity; which redemption is also through his blood; and to deliver them out of the hands of all their enemies, and particularly from him who had the power of death, the devil; and to bring many sons to glory, for which it was necessary the captain of their salvation should be made perfect through suffering. For there was an absolute necessity of them; *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things* (Luke 24:26)? He must; partly on the account of God, his counsels and decrees, his promises and prophecies. God resolved on saving sinners by Christ; he appointed him to be his salvation; he determined he should suffer and die and he was given up to men, by the determinate counsel of God, who did to him "none other things than what his hand and counsel determined before should be done;" and to fulfill the decrees of God, it was necessary Christ should suffer for his *council shall stand* (Isa. 46:10); as well as to make good the many promises and prophecies concerning this matter, delivered out by the mouth of his holy prophets; and had he not suffered, *how then could the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be* (Matt. 26:54)? And partly on account of Christ himself, his covenant-engagements, to do this part of his Father's will, and the several predictions he himself gave out, that he should suffer many things of the scribes and Pharisees, and die and rise again. As also on the account of the Lord's people, who otherwise could not be saved for here was a law broken, which must be fulfilled; not only its precepts obeyed, but its penalty, which was death, must be endured; injured and affronted justice to be satisfied, which could only be done by the sinner, or surety for him, suffering the demerit of sin; there was no other way of saving sinners but by the sufferings of Christ; consistent with the purposes of God, his counsel and covenant; with the engagements of Christ, and the happiness of the Lord's people, these sufferings could not be avoided: it was not possible the cup should pass from him; could any other way have been found out, or these sufferings excused, that prayer of our Lord would have (Matt. 26:39) procured it.

Now all these sufferings of Christ were no other than what were foretold by *Moses* and the prophets. The first promise or hint of a Messiah, suggests, that he would be a suffering one, *Thou shalt bruise his heel* (Gen. 3:15); and all the prophets speak of him as subject to reproach and trouble, to pains and sorrows, to distress of every kind, and death itself. Read over the 22nd *Psalms*, and the 53rd chapter of *Isaiah*, and it will be abundantly evident from thence, and other passages, how the prophets *testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow* (1 Pet. 1:11): these show that he would be a *man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs*; that he would be *wounded, bruised, give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair*; that he would be brought to the dust of death, and his soul be poured out unto death; and that he should be buried, and *make his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death*. Yea, the several circumstances of his sufferings and death are most minutely and exactly foretold in the

writings of the prophets; as that he should be betrayed by one of his disciples, one that ate bread with him should lift up his heel against him (Ps. 41:9); that he should be sold for thirty *pieces* of silver, the price of a servant (Zech 11:12, 13; 13:7); the goodly price he was prized at by them; that he should be deserted by all the disciples, when he should be seized and smitten; that he should be crucified between two thieves, or numbered among the transgressors (Isa. 53:12); that the soldiers should *part his garments, and cast lots on his vesture*; that they should give him *gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink*, and that his side should be pierced with a spear.

2dly, Another particular in which the apostle agreed with *Moses* and the prophets, is, that Christ should be *the first of the resurrection of the dead*, or should rise first from thence: that he is risen is certain, not only from the testimony of the women who first came to his sepulchre, and to whom he first appeared; but from the testimony of his disciples and others: of these, *he was first seen of Cephas or Peter, then of the twelve, after that of above five hundred brethren at once*; next of *James*, then of all the apostles; and even after his ascension he was seen by *Stephen* standing on the right hand of God; and last of all by our apostle, as here declared in the context, *as one born out of due time* (1 Cor. 15:6-8; Acts 7:55). Now the apostles of our Lord *were chosen witnesses of God* for this purpose (Acts 10:41), and were men of unquestionable characters; they were thoroughly acquainted with Christ, and could not be imposed upon nor were they over-credulous; nay they were incredulous to a fault, and in this very case; they believed not the first report of it from the women, and the two disciples that traveled with Jesus to *Emmaus*; and therefore Christ at his first appearance to them upbraided them with their unbelief, *because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen* (Mark 16:11, 13, 14): and they had all the opportunities and advantages of satisfying themselves in this matter they could wish for; he *shewed himself alive to them by infallible proofs* (Acts 1:3); he was seen of them for the space of forty days, during which time they frequently ate, and drank, and conversed with him; and they were men of probity and honesty, and had no sinister ends, nor worldly views to answer by making such a report; but were sure to meet with reproach and disgrace, with rage and persecution, and with death itself in every shape wherever they came with it: nay, the resurrection of Christ is further confirmed by the testimonies of angels, who declared at the grave, that *he was not there, but was risen* (Luke 24:6); and not they, and men only, were witnesses of this, but the Holy Ghost also, by signs and wonders of his attending the declaration of it (Acts 5:31, 32). Moreover, not only Christ was to rise from the dead, but he was to rise *first*, as he did; for though there were others that rose before him, as to time, as the son of the widow of *Sarepta*, who was raised by *Elijah*, and the *Shunamite's* son by *Elisha*, and the daughter of *Jairus*, and the son of the widow of *Nain*, and *Lazarus*, by our Lord; yet these were raised, not by their *own* power, but by the power of another: whereas Christ was raised by his own power, and so declared to be the Son of God: they rose to die again, but he rose to an immortal life, never to die more; he was the first to whom God, in this sense, *shewed the path of life* (Ps. 16:11); for though he was *dead* he is *alive, and lives for evermore, and has the keys of hell and death* (Rev. 1:18): likewise, he was the first in dignity that rose from the dead; he who is the *first-born among many brethren*, is the *first-begotten from the dead*; he rose not as a private person, but as *the head of the body, the church*, as the representative of all his people, and they were *raised up together* with him (Col. 1:18; Eph. 2:6); also he is the first in causality; he is the first cause of the resurrection; as *by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead*. It is by virtue of his power, and in consequence of union with him, the saints will rise; he is *the first-fruits of them that sleep* (1 Cor. 15:20, 21, 23); the earnest and pledge of their resurrection; as sure as his *dead body* is raised, so sure shall theirs; his *glorious body*, raised, is the exemplar and pattern, according

to which the bodies of the saints will be *fashioned* in the resurrection-morn and it will be owing to his *voice*, and to the exertion of his almighty power, that the graves will be opened, and the dead will come forth and appear before him (Isa. 26:9; Phil. 3:21; John 5:28, 29).

Now this is a very principal doctrine of the gospel, and of great moment and importance; on this the proof of Jesus' being the true Messiah, greatly depends; this is the sign he chose to give to the adulterous and unbelieving generation of the Jews, when they required one of him, saying (Matt. 12:39), *there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas*; his lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, a type of Christ's resurrection from the dead on the third day. This doctrine is of so much consequence, that were it not true, the whole of Christianity, the doctrine and preaching of it, the faith and hope of Christians would be affected with it, yea, be all *vain* (1 Cor. 15:14) and worthless. The resurrection of Christ has a very great concern in the justification of men; for *he was raised again for our justification* (Rom. 4:25); and it has an influence on their regeneration, to which it is sometimes ascribed; and Kith may be designed *by the power of his resurrection* (1 Pet. 1:3; Phil. 3:10), as well as the resurrection of his people at the last day, which depends upon it. And the whole of this doctrine is no other than what *Moses* and the prophets said should be; it is perfectly agreeable to the writings of the Old Testament; it was hinted at in the types, of *Isaac* being received from the dead as in a figure by his father, after he had given him up for dead for three days; and of *Jonas* being delivered from the belly of the whale, after he had lain in it three days and three nights; it was foretold by *David*, *Isaiah*, and *Hosea* particularly; who declare he should not see corruption in the grave, that his dead body should arise, and he, and his people with him, should be quickened after two days (Ps. 16:10; Isa. 26:19; Hos. 6:2).

3dly and lastly, Another thing the apostle had asserted, which *Moses* and the prophets had done before him, was, that Christ would be a light to Jews and Gentiles; or *would shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles*; first to the people of the Jews, and then to the nations of the world.

To the Jews. Christ was first sent to them, even *to the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (Matt. 15:24); and to them only; he was *the minister of the circumcision* (Rom. 15:8), or of the circumcised Jews, to fulfill to them what God had promised and foretold: and though they received him not, but rejected him, he sent his apostles to them first, and charged them not to go into the way of the Gentiles, or into any of the cities of the Samaritans; and when their commission was enlarged after his resurrection, they were ordered to begin their ministry at *Jerusalem* (Matt. 10:6, 7; Luke 24:47). Now these people, notwithstanding they had the law and statutes of God, his word and ordinances, and the divine oracles committed to them, yet were in great darkness, and had no true understanding of them; in those times there was a veil over their minds in reading the books of the Old Testament concerning Christ, and the things of the gospel; they were blinded, and so were their leaders the scribes and Pharisees. Christ came a light unto them, and the light of grace and truth came by him; and some through his ministry, and that of his apostles, were spiritually and savingly enlightened.

To the Gentiles. These were in great darkness before the coming of Christ; they were without a divine revelation, without any knowledge of God and Christ; they were suffered to walk in their own ways of darkness, superstition, and idolatry; their times before this were times of ignorance and blindness: but when Christ came, he sent his apostles to them with the gospel to enlighten them; and they carried it throughout the world; and by means of it, many were called and turned

from gross darkness to marvelous light. And now all this was agreeable to the writings of the Old Testament, which represent Christ as the *sun of righteousness*; as that *great light* which should arise and shine on the Galilean Jews, that sat *in darkness, and in the shadow of death*, and should *also be a light of the Gentiles* (Mal. 4:2; Isa. 9:2; 42:6); and so good old *Simeon* understood the prophecies concerning him, that he should be *a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel* (Luke 2:32).

The use of all this is, a wonderful confirmation of divine revelation, of the truth of Christianity, and of Jesus being the true Messiah; for since the various things foretold in the Old Testament by *Moses* and the prophets, at sundry times and in divers manners, appear to be fulfilled in the New, this proves the revelation to be of God; that Christianity stands upon a sure foundation, and that Jesus of *Nazareth* is the Christ promised and prophesied of from the beginning of the world. And this may serve to recommend the writings of the Old Testament to the reading and perusal of men; since they *testify* of Christ so clearly, concerning his person, office, and grace, and are so *profitable for doctrine, and instruction in righteousness* (John 5:39; 2 Tim. 3:16): we have here also the plan of the gospel-ministry; that it is a suffering, risen, and exalted Saviour, held forth as a light to Jews and Gentiles. This was the plan of the ministry of the apostle *Paul*; and no man need be ashamed to copy after such an example, who was the greatest preacher that ever was upon the earth, excepting our Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, my friends, If call you to dear witness that these truths, and what have been briefly suggested in this discourse, have been what I have chiefly insisted upon in the course of this Lecture; namely, the doctrines of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead; of the person and office of Christ; of the person and operations of the Blessed Spirit; of special and distinguishing grace, as it appears in election, redemption, justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, and the final perseverance of the saints; with other doctrines which are in consequence of them, and in connection with them. And now I, am about to take my leave of you, and this Lecture, and do: not through any dislike of the work I have been so long engaged in; not through any disgust at any thing I have met with; not through any discouragement for want of attendance or subscription; I have nothing to complain of; the Lecture was never in better circumstance than it now is. But I find my natural strength will not admit me to preach so frequently, and with so much constancy, as I have done for many years past; being now on the decline of life, in *the fortieth* year of my ministry; so that it is time for me to have done with extra-service, I mean, service out of the church of which I am pastor. But a more principal reason is, that I may have a little more time and leisure to attend to, and finish an arduous work upon my hands,

An Exposition of the Whole Old Testament

Part of which work, I shall immediately propose for publication; and if I meet with encouragement, the publishing of this will be an additional weight upon me; and I have no other way of easing myself, but by dropping the Lecture; and these, and these only, are my reasons for so doing. And now as I would be, and am, thankful to the God of my life, who has given me so much health and strength, to carry on this Lecture for such a course of years, with very little interruption for want of health; so I would, and do return thanks to you, my friends, who have so long encouraged and supported me with your presence and purse; and I heartily wish and pray, that you may be preserved from the prevailing errors of the times, and may be kept stedfast in the faith of the

gospel, and abide by the truths and ordinances of it; and that the means of grace you attend upon, in season, and out of season, here, or elsewhere, may be blessed unto you for your comfort and edification; and *that you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints of light.*

THE
**SURE PERFORMANCE OF
PROPHECY.**

A SERMON,

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture,

in

GREAT EAST-CHEAP, Jan. 1, 1755.

Isaiah 9:7 (latter part)

—The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

In my last annual Sermon save one, on this occasion, I discoursed concerning the glorious things foretold of the church of God in the latter day, both in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ; and now I shall treat of the certain performance of those things. I gave an hint in my last annual Discourse, that whereas *a great portion* of prophecy, particularly in the book of *Revelation*, has been already fulfilled, there is great reason to believe the rest will be; and this hint I shall pursue and enlarge upon at this time; and argue from the actual accomplishment of some things relating to the kingdom of Christ, to the certain completion of others; and into this train and course of reasoning I shall be naturally and easily led in considering the words of my text; which refer partly to the performance of some things foretold, since fulfilled, and partly to others which yet remain to be accomplished; and as sure as the one is fulfilled, so sure shall the other. The things that are already performed are,

The appearance of Christ in the land of *Galilee*, which is predicted (ver. 1) and which land, as it had been afflicted by the Assyrians, and was to be moved so by the Romans, as it has been in the times of *Vespasian* and *Titus*, as the history of *Josephus* shows; and as it was vile and mean, and lightly esteemed of by men, it should be made *glorious* and honorable, as the word signifies, particularly by the presence, ministry and miracles of Christ in it; and to this purpose it is quoted and applied by the evangelist Matthew (4:13-23), from whence it appears, that Christ first began to preach in that country: that he called his first disciples near the sea of *Galilee*; and that he went through that whole land, and taught and preached in the synagogues in it, and healed all diseases; here he wrought his first miracle of turning water into wine; here he lived the greatest part of his private life; and here he resided chiefly during his public ministry; here he promised to meet his disciples after his resurrection, and here he did: in short, being educated and brought up in this country in the former part of his life, and conversing here so much in the latter part of it; the Jews

concluded he was born here, and confronted his Messiahship with it, *shall Christ come out of Galilee* (John 7:41)? And hence he was called by them Jesus of *Galilee*, and his followers *Galileans*: all which confirm the truth of this prophecy, and the performance of it; and it is with respect to this, no doubt, that the ancient Jews expected that the Messiah would first appear in *Galilee*.

Another event in consequence of the former is foretold, and that is, the illumination of the *Galileans* by the ministry of Christ among them (ver. 2). These people were an ignorant and illiterate people; their common language was rustic, rude and barbarous; their speech betrayed them, as *Peter's* did, who therefore was supposed to be a *Galilean*; they were reckoned a people *that knew not the law, and were accursed*: it was observed, that no prophet arose among them, and no good thing was expected of them; and so are here said to *walk in darkness*, and to *dwell in the land of the shadow of death*; and yet these people, according to this prophecy, were first favored with seeing Christ, *the light* of the world, both with their bodily eyes and with the eyes of their understanding, enlightened by his ministry; the great light of the gospel shining in them, removed their darkness, and filled them with spiritual light and knowledge. Hence, as here predicted,

There was a multiplication of them; *thou hast multiplied the nation*, that is, *Galilee* of the nations; which was multiplied with glory and honor, with light and knowledge, with joy and comfort, and with a number of truly gracious souls that believed in Christ; the five hundred brethren to whom our Lord appeared at once after his resurrection, seem to be *Galileans*, when he showed himself on a mountain in their country to the eleven disciples; for it will not be easy to say where there was such a number of brethren, or believers, but in *Galilee*; it is certain their number at *Jerusalem* was not so large; being about an hundred and twenty.

It is foretold that there should be great joy upon all this; indeed our version renders it *not increased the joy*; but the *Keri*, or marginal reading of the Hebrew text is, and *increased joy unto it*, unto the nation: or it may be rendered with an interrogation, as it is by some, and may take in both the textual and marginal reading, *hast thou not increased joy unto it?* and in one way or other it must be rendered, or otherwise there is a glaring contradiction in the text ; for it follows, *they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil*; phrases expressive of the greatest joy among men; as there doubtless was among the *Galileans* when Christ was present with them, and his gospel preached to them; which is a joyful sound, and brings good tidings of good things, peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by the incarnate Redeemer; and so joy along with it, wherever it comes with power, and is received and embraced; as it did in *Samaria*, and among the *Gentiles*.

The ground and reason of this joy would be a deliverance from a burdensome yoke, and from a staff and rod of affliction; which was effected by Christ, who has delivered all his people, and so those believing *Galileans*, from the yoke of the ceremonial law, a yoke of bondage intolerable; from the tyranny of Satan, and from the servitude of silk; and which should be wrought as easily, and as suddenly, as the deliverance of *Israel* from the *Midianites* by *Gideon*; Christ's own arm bringing salvation to him, and his people, without the help of man: *for every battle of the warrior is with confused noise*; with the shoutings of soldiers, blowing of trumpets, beating of drums, rattling of armor, *and garments rolled in blood*; the garments of the slain rolled in their own blood; *but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire*; through the flaming love and burning zeal and affection of Christ for his people, who,

Is prophesied of as the author of all this, and is the *child* that should be *born*, and the *Son* that should be *given*; for not *Hezekiah* is here meant, as the Jews would have it, who at the time of this prophecy was at least ten or eleven years of age, and to whom the august titles after given can by no means agree. The child here is the same that is prophesied of, chapter 7:14, that should be born of a virgin, and called *Immanuel*; even Jesus the son of *Mary*, born in the city of *David*, a Saviour, Christ the Lord, whose birth the *angel* declared to the shepherds; the Word that has been made flesh, and has dwelt among men; he is the Son of God, his only-begotten Son, his Son in such sense as no other is, and is the unspeakable gift of his love to men. He is here represented as a king, on whose *shoulders the government should be*; not meaning the government of the whole world, which belongs to him as God and creator; *the kingdom is his, and he is the governor among the nations* (Ps. 22:28); but the government of the church, his mediatorial kingdom, which is delegated to him, and devolved upon him as king of *Zion*, king of saints; a kingdom appointed to him, and for which he is and will be accountable to his Father, and will give it up to him complete and perfect and God shall be all in all; his names and titles follow, *and his name shall be called*; not that he should be called in common by all the following names, but that he should be or answer to what is signified by them: so he is *wonderful* in his person as God and man, having two natures united in him; in his offices, in his life and death, in his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, session at the right hand of God, and second coming to judgment: *counsellor* or, as the *Septuagint* rendered it, the angel of the great council: who assisted in the everlasting council held concerning the salvation of men; and who by his Spirit in his word, and by his ministers, gives the most wholesome counsel and advice to saints and sinners respecting their spiritual and eternal welfare: *the mighty God*, as appears from the perfections of deity in him, from the works done by him, from the worship given to him, and from his names and titles: *the everlasting Father*, who has a spiritual seed and offspring given him, whom he loves with an everlasting love, takes an everlasting care of, and makes everlasting provision for: *the prince of Peace*, the author of peace between God and men, between Jew and Gentile, and the giver of spiritual and eternal peace. Now all the above things the *zeal of the Lord of hosts* has performed already.

The things which remain to be performed, are the increase of Christ's Government, and the peace, order and establishment, of it; which are predicted in the beginning of this verse, the latter part of which I have read unto you. The kingdom of Christ is set up in the world, and there was an increase of it in the first times of the Gospel, both in Judea and in the Gentile world, but it was but small in comparison of what it will be; the stone was cut out without hands, but it is not yet, as it will be, a great mountain, which will fill the whole earth; as yet the kingdoms of this world are not Christ's, as they will be, when he shall be king over all the earth; when the Jews will be converted, and the fullness of the Gentiles will be brought in. Little peace has attended the kingdom and church of Christ as yet, but there will be abundance of it, when there will be an increase of his government; when his "kingdom shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," then there will be peace without and peace within; war shall cease from among the nations of the earth, and they shall learn it no more; the church will, be free from persecution, and no more annoyed with it; there will be none to hurt and destroy in all the Lord's holy mountain; and there will be no more animosities and divisions among the saints; "*Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim*" (Isa. 2:4; 11:9, 13): and though Christ is upon the throne of his Father *David*, and has appointed and ordered the form of government, and enacted laws, and settled ordinances for the execution of it; yet it does not appear with that order and regularity as it will, when the church shall be established upon the top of the mountains, and so continue, being an everlasting kingdom. Now

from the exact performance of all the above things in the context, and of all others, we may reasonably and strongly conclude the certain accomplishment of all things relating to the increase, peace, prosperity, order and settlement of the kingdom of Christ; and this is what I shall at present insist upon, in the following method.

I shall consider the things that remain to be performed, and the certain performance of them.

Show to what the performance of them is to be ascribed; to the zeal of the Lord of hosts.

The things that are not yet fulfilled, but will be, as may be argued from the performance of many things already relating to the same subject: and these are the destruction of antichrist, the more extensive call of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, the setting up by these means the kingdom of Christ in greater glory in the world, and his second coming, which will introduce his personal reign.

First, The destruction of antichrist which as I have observed in the Sermon first referred to, is the leading event to the glory of Christ's spiritual kingdom; which cannot greatly increase, nor the peace of it, so long as this enemy stands in the way; and therefore he must be removed, as it is foretold he shall be. All that believe a divine revelation allow that there is, or will be, what is commonly called antichrist; not only Protestants, but even Jews and Papists: though both these latter have very foolish and fabulous notions concerning him; yet a general notion they have, which is founded on prophecy.

I shall therefore lay before you the more considerable prophecies concerning him, and observe what are fulfilled, and from thence argue the certain performance of those which relate to his utter and final ruin. I shall not take notice of what is only incidentally and occasionally dropped concerning him: such incidental and occasional hints we have as early as the times of *David*. In his *Psalms* there are frequent hints of him, and of his destruction; as that *the man of the earth* shall no more oppress, when the Lord shall reign for ever, and the heathen or Gentiles, a name sometimes given to Papists, shall *perish out of his land*; and when the Messiah is said to *wound the head over many countries*; that is, antichrist; who has reigned over the kings and kingdoms of the earth: and respect seems to be had to his followers, when it is wished, that *the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and the wicked be no more* (Ps. 10:16, 18; 110:6; 104:35); at the end of which verse the word *Hallelujah* is first used, and which is used at the destruction of mystical *Babylon*. But I shall only observe such as purposely and largely predict him and his ruin, and shall begin,

1st, With the famous prophecy of him in the seventh of *Daniel*, in which the prophet is said to have a vision of four beasts rising out of the sea; that is, of the four monarchies rising up in the world, the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman: the fourth and last beast is the Roman empire, said to have ten horns; now among these rises up a little horn, different from them, and which plucks up three of them; and it is said to have "eyes like the eyes of a man, and a look more stout than its fellows; to have a mouth speaking great things against the most high, and to make war with the saints, and prevail over them, and wear them out; and to think to change times and laws;" and thus it is to continue until a time, and times, and the dividing of time, and then to have his dominion

taken away, destroyed and consumed. Now this horn cannot be *Antiochus Epiphanes*, as *Grotius*, *Junius*, and others have thought; for not a single person or king is meant by a horn, but a kingdom or state, and a succession of rulers and governors in it; as by the other ten horns are meant ten kingdoms (ver. 24). And besides, this little horn is a part of the fourth, and not of the third beast, to whom *Antiochus* belonged; and was to rise, not in the third, but in the fourth monarchy, not in the Grecian, but in the Roman empire; and moreover was to continue until the coming of Christ, even until the spiritual coming of Christ in the latter day, and when his spiritual kingdom will take *place* in the world and as there is no other that has appeared in the Roman empire but antichrist, or the Pope of *Rome*, to whom the characters agree as to him; it may *be* safely concluded he is intended, and as will more fully appear by the account of him; who described,

By his name and title, *a little horn*. An *horn* is an emblem of strength, power and authority, and denotes a strong and powerful principality or kingdom, as the ten horns do, as before observed; the allusion is to the horns of beasts, in which their strength lies, and with which they push their enemies and defend themselves: this horn indeed was but a *little* one, rose from small beginnings, and at its height was but such, in comparison of others; so the Pope of *Rome*, as to his ecclesiastic power, was but at first a common minister, pastor, or bishop of a single church; then became metropolitan of all *Italy*, and at last commenced universal bishop: though this seems rather to regard him as a temporal prince; who was but very little indeed at his first appearance; and, when considered only in his own domains, at highest, was but little in comparison of the other horns or kingdoms; though being allowed to exercise power in the rest of the kingdoms, and their power and strength being given to him, he was so formidable that none could withstand him, or make war with him, (Rev. 17:13; 13:4).

By his rise and original from among the other horns or kingdoms, and his connexion with them; he is said to *come up among them*. When the northern barbarous nations broke, into the empire, and set up ten kingdoms in it, this little horn sprung up among them; and while they were forming kingdoms for themselves, he was contriving one for himself; they arose at the same time, and reigned together: so the ten horns in the *Revelation*, which are the same with these, and are there, as here, interpreted ten kings, are said to *receive power, as kings, one hour with the beast* (Rev. 17:12), the same as this little horn. Indeed in verse 24 this little horn is said to *rise after them*, the other ten; not after the ten kingdoms were at end, but after they were set up, and constituted, and established; as it was proper they should, since they were to give their *strength, power and kingdom to the beast* (Rev. 17:13), by which he became a horn, a temporal prince. The *Septuagint* renders it *behind them*; which Mr. *Mede* understands of his growing up unawares, imperceptibly, unnoticed, and unobserved by them, till he overtopped them. He is said to be *divers* or different *from the first horns*; they only had and exercised a secular power, but he, besides his temporal authority, had and exercised an ecclesiastic and spiritual one; he not only had power over the bodies and estates, but over the souls and consciences of men; and even over the other ten horns or kingdoms, which they had not over one another. hence he is represented by two beasts in the *Revelation*, the one describing him in his secular, the other in his spiritual authority, as we shall see anon; and this made him different from other kings and princes: Moreover, *before him three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots*, or, as in verse 20, *before whom three fell*, and which is interpreted (v. 24) of his *subduing three kings* or kingdoms; which according to Sir *Isaac Newton*, were the exarchate of *Ravenna*, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the senate and dukedom of *Rome*. The bishop of *Cloger*, more lately, has expressed them thus, *Campagna* of *Rome*, the exarchate of

Ravenna, and the region of *Pentapolis*; these were plucked up by *Pipin* and *Charlemagne*, kings of *France*, and given to the Pope, and were confirmed to him by their successor *Lewis* the pious; and make up what is called the *patrimony* of *St. Peter*; and in memory of this a piece of Mosaic work was made, and put up in the Pope's palace; in which were represented *St. Peter* with three keys in his lap, signifying the three keys of the three parts of his patrimony; and to show his sovereignty over them, the pope to this day wears a triple crown. How surprisingly does the prophecy open unto us! An event is here predicted above a thousand years, twelve or thirteen hundred years, before it was accomplished.

This little horn is further described by its eyes and look; its eyes were *like the eyes of man*; strange for a horn to have eyes, stranger still for the horn of a beast to have eyes as the eyes of man. These are thought by some to denote the pretended sanctity and religion of the pope of *Rome*, or antichrist, who, though a beast, would be thought to be a man, a religious creature; others think they design his pretended modesty, humanity and courtesy, when he is all the reverse; but rather his insight into the sacred scriptures, and controversies about them; he pretends to setting himself up to be an infallible interpreter of them, and judge of all controversies; though these eyes seem better to signify what he really had, and not what he pretended to; and so may denote his sagacity and penetration, his craft and cunning, his looking out sharp to get what power and dominion he could, both temporal and spiritual; and his watchfulness and carefulness to keep what he had got, that none encroached upon it, or took part of it away from him and they may also design all instruments and means by which he inspects his own affairs, and those of others; particularly the order of the Jesuits, which are, as his eyes, every where; spies in all kingdoms and courts, that pry into the mysteries of state, and by one means or another get knowledge of what is done in the councils and cabinets of princes: and how many eyes this horn had, is not said; nor is it easy to say how many the Pope has; he has as many as *Argus*, and more too, and these sharp and piercing: his *look* is said to be *more stout than his fellows*; either than his fellow-bishops, claiming an authority over them, giving out that he is universal bishop or rather, than his fellow-horns, the kings and princes of the earth: having a look more bold and daring, more arrogant and impudent; assuming that power and authority to himself they do not; *all power in heaven, and in earth*; a power to depose kings, and absolve their subjects from allegiance to them; a power over the minds and consciences of men or, as it may be rendered, *whose appearance is greater than his fellows*; makes a greater show and figure, appears in greater pomp, splendor and glory than the kings; unless this can be understood of the society and college of his cardinals.

This horn is also described by its mouth, and what that spoke; it is said to speak *great things*, yea *very great things*; as the Pope of *Rome* has, in favor of himself; as that he his head of the church, and Christ's vicar on earth: declares himself infallible, and to have a power over the kings and princes of the earth; nay, he is said to *speak great words against the Most High*; setting himself up as a rival, and upon an equality with him; taking upon him to forgive sin, and to make laws binding on the consciences of men, contrary to the scriptures; and preferring his own decrees, and the traditions of the church, to the word of God; and thus the beast of *Rome* is described in Revelation 13:5, 6.

This horn is described by what he did, or thought to do; he is said to make war with the saints, and prevail *against them* and *wear them out*; which respects the wars of the popes of *Rome* with the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, whom they slew in great numbers, and got the victory over; and what

by their oppressions and persecutions, murders and massacres, have tired and near wore out the patience of the saints and whereas the beast, the same with this little horn, shall make war with the two witnesses, and overcome and slay them; the saints will then seem to be quite wore out and consumed, when their dead carcasses will lie in the streets of the, great city unburied; so that they will seem to be all destroyed, and be thought by the Papists to be so; and hence that rejoicing and sending gifts to each other, because these witnesses are no more (Rev. 11:8-10), also he shall *think to change times and laws*, which in chapter 2:21 is ascribed to God as peculiar to him, and joined with removing and setting up kings; which is what the Pope of *Rome* has taken to himself; to alter the forms and constitutions of kingdoms, and to set up and pull down kings at his pleasure, and free their subjects from obligation and obedience to them; as also to change the use of times and seasons, by setting apart holy days for the commemoration of his canonized saints; and by appointing such days in the week, and such a season in the year, for abstinence from meats; as well as also to change laws, the laws of God and man, and dispense with both, and make new laws and canons to be observed. And this power of his was to continue *until a time, and times, and the dividing of time*, or half a time, as in Revelation 12:14, where the same way of speaking is used, borrowed from hence; *time* signifies a year, the longest measure of time we have, *times* two years, and a *dividing of time* half a year; in all, three years and a half; the same with the forty two mouths, the time of the beast's continuance, (Rev. 13:5) and of the treading down of the holy city (Rev. 11:2), and which answer to 1260 days, the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, verse 3, by which are meant so many years; and so long the little horn or beast is to continue; but when this time is up, then his *dominion* shall be *taken away*, and be *consumed and destroyed*; yea, because of *the words this horn spake, the beast will be slain, his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame* (Dan. 7:11, 26), the whole empire shall be destroyed, the capital of it shall be burnt with fire, the ten kings shall hate the whore, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire; this will be the catastrophe of the little horn. And now, who that attentively considers how every part of this vision and prophecy has been exactly fulfilled, except the last, can hesitate in his mind, or doubt one moment of the certain performance of that, even the utter destruction of this little horn, or antichrist? *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this*, as well as all the rest.

2^{dly}, Another famous prophecy of antichrist, and his destruction, we have in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 where he is described,

By his names and characters; he is called *the man of sin*; one addicted and given to sin in a grievous manner, not notoriously sinful, a spiritual wickedness in high places; one guilty of all manner of sin, as the Popes of *Rome* have been; lying, perjury, adultery, incest, sodomy, simony, sorcery, and every thing that is bad: hence their seat is called *Sodom and Egypt*, and the antichristian whore, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth, all centering here; and therefore with great propriety is he said to be *the son of perdition*, a name given to *Judas* that betrayed our Lord (John 17:12) and rightly belongs to antichrist, who is the Apollyon and destroyer of the souls of men, by his false doctrine and worship, and will himself go into perdition: he is also represented as he that *opposeth*; that opposeth Christ, and is an adversary of his, and therefore called antichrist: he opposes him in his offices; in his kingly office, by asserting himself to be the head of the church; in his priestly office, by pretending to offer up Christ again in the sacrifice of the mass, when he by one offering has perfected the whole work of atonement; and in his prophetic office by coining new doctrines and articles of faith moreover, *he exalteth himself above all that is called God*; above the gods of the heathens, who ascribe the government of the *heavens* to one, of the *earth* to another, of

the *sea* to another, and of the *winds* to another; but this haughty creature assumes *all* power to himself, in heaven, earth and hell: he exalts himself above angels, who are called *gods* (Ps. 8:4). In his bulls he has commanded angels to take such a soul out of purgatory, and to carry such a one to heaven: and above all civil magistrates, who are called *gods* (Ps. 82:5), assuming a power over them to depose them at pleasure making an emperor to hold his stirrup whilst he alighted from his horse and got upon it, and trampling on his neck, using those words in Psalm 91:13, and throwing a king under his table to lick bones, whilst he was eating: yea, he *sitteth in the temple of God as god, shewing himself that he is god*; he rose up and appeared in the church of God, at least so by profession, where he took his place, and, becoming apostate, here he continues, and shows himself as if he was God; admitting his creatures and flatterers to call him God on earth, and our Lord God the Pope; receiving worship from them, and assuming that which is the peculiar prerogative of God, to *forgive* sin. Moreover, he is called the *mystery of iniquity*; Mystery is one of the names of the whore of *Babylon*, and was formerly put upon the mitres of the Popes: it may respect both doctrines and practices, which were set afoot in the apostles time, and began to appear and work in *Simon Magus*, and his followers, and which centered in the papacy. Once more, he is called *the wicked one* (anom), a lawless person; that dispenses with the laws of God and man, setting up himself above all law; giving out that he is not subject to any human judicature; that he is the spiritual man that judges all, but is judged of none, being not accountable to any; yea, though he should lead millions of souls to hell, yet none ought to say, "O Lord the Pope, what dost thou?"

He is described in this prophecy by his appearance, and manner of entrance, and his influence over men. There was something that let or hindered him from making his appearance sooner than he did, which being removed, he was to be and has been revealed; this was the Roman empire and emperors, which so long as they were, and *Rome* the seat of their empire, he could not take his place and seat, and appear in his pomp and grandeur; but this let was removed, partly by *Constantine* conquering the heathen emperors, abolishing paganism, and establishing Christianity in the empire, and bestowing great riches on the church; but more so by removing the seat of the empire from *Rome* to *Byzantium*, called after his name *Constantinople*, which opened the way for the bishop of *Rome* to take his place; and chiefly and last of all, the empire being divided into *eastern* and *western*, the latter became extinct in *Augustulus*, the last of the Roman emperors, who resigned to *Odoacer*, who took upon him the title, not of emperor of *Rome* but king of *Italy*, and retired, from *Rome* to *Ravenna*; and the seat being empty, was soon filled by the Pope of *Rome*, and he quickly appeared in his grandeur and glory; whose *coming* was *after the working of Satan*; he came in like him, a deceiver, a liar, and a murderer, and under his influence, and by his assistance: *with all power*; with pretensions to all power in heaven and in even to power next to omnipotence: *and signs and lying wonders*; pretending to work miracles, though all were shams and lies, of which the popish legends are full; and under a show of righteousness deceived many; and meeting with carnal professors that loved not the truth, they were given up in a judicial manner to believe his lies, as, that he was head of the church, Christ's vicar, had a power to forgive sin, and grant pardons and indulgences; particularly that great lie of transubstantiation, that he and his priests have power to transmute the bread and wine in the Lord's supper into the very body and blood of Christ; receiving which lies spoken in hypocrisy, they bring damnation upon themselves. And here give me leave,

To observe another passage, though not in this prophecy, yet delivered out by the same inspired writer, which predicts some of the notorious doctrines and practices of antichrist; it is in 1 Timothy

4:1-3 where the apostle foretells a departure from the faith in after-times, and the appearance of seducing spirits, who should teach *doctrines of devils*. The doctrines of demon-worship; like that of the heathens, their demons being a middle sort of beings between God and men, and mediated between them; and such are the angels and saints departed, the Papists direct men to pray unto; and which is called worshipping devils and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood (Rev. 9:20), *forbidding to marry*; matrimony, though God's ordinance, and honorable, is forbidden popish priests, and celibacy is enjoined, under a notion of sanctity and purity; and which is the source of great debauchery and uncleanness among them: *commanding to abstain from meats*: as on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* in every week, and during the *quadragesima* or *Lent*, the *fast* of forty days. And now whereas it is most clearly manifest, that all these characters of antichrist, and all these things predicted of him hundreds of years before his appearance, exactly answers to the Pope of *Rome*, and have been punctually performed; there can be no reason to doubt of the certain performance of what the same prophetic spirit has declared concerning his destruction; as that *the Lord shall consume him with his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming*; that is, by the spiritual and powerful preaching of the gospel, attended with the presence of Christ in the beginning of his spiritual reign; when the whole earth will be enlightened with his glory, and antichrist, and all antichristian darkness, doctrine and worship shall disappear; and the rather this is to be credited, since it receives confirmation from a prophecy of *Isaiah*, delivered many hundreds of years before this, in much the same language, and from whom the apostle seems to borrow his words; for speaking of Christ, he says, *he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked*: that wicked lawless one, antichrist: The Lord in his *great zeal will perform this*.

3^{dly}, I will just observe, in brief, the account we have of antichrist in the book of the *Revelation*: in chapter thirteen he is described, both in his civil and ecclesiastic capacity, by two beasts; the one rising *out of the sea*, that is, out of the commotions made in the empire by the northern nations; when he appeared as a temporal prince, having his seat on the seven-hill-city, signified by seven heads, and power over the ten kingdoms or ten horns; and is compared to a leopard for his swiftness and insidiousness in obtaining power; to a bear for his cruelty, and to a lion for his strength and terror; and became so powerful, notwithstanding the deadly wound, as to be admired and feared by all the world; and is described much in the same manner as the little horn in *Daniel*, having a mouth speaking blasphemies against God, his tabernacle and people: and power to make war with the saints, and overcome them, and permission to continue exactly the same time. The other beast, an emblem of him in his ecclesiastic capacity, is said to rise *out of the earth*; from the dregs of Christians, earthly, carnal and corrupt, from an apostate church; and pretending to great humility, calling himself *servus servorum*; having *two horns like a lamb*, as if very meek, humble and harmless; but *spake like a dragon*, when he uttered his bulls and anathemas: he is represented as exercising all the power he had as a temporal prince, to oblige the world to worship him, and as doing lying miracles to deceive men; enjoining them to worship his image on pain of death, and causing all to have his mark in their right hand or forehead, or else be deprived of the common privilege of mankind in buying and selling; all which has been done by the Romish antichrist; and the account is concluded with the number of his name 666, about which there have been many conjectures; but none bid fairer than the ancient one of *Ireneus*, which is *Lateinos*, the letters of which amount to this number; this was the name of a man, a king of *Italy*. Now the church of *Rome* is the Latin church: its service is in the Latin tongue; the Pope is head of it; and his seat is in the Latin empire. In chapter seventeen antichrist is represented by a woman sitting on a beast with

seven heads and ten horns, which designs him in his twofold capacity as before; and as sitting on many waters, interpreted of people and nations; and is described as a *whore* by her dress and attire, by her fornication, filthiness and murder; all which exactly points at, and has been fulfilled in the church of *Rome*. And now, who that considers these things, and observes the exact accomplishment of them, but will see abundant reason to believe, that what is said of the ruin of this antichrist shall be performed; that the seven vials of God's wrath shall be poured out on the antichristian states; that the whore shall be burnt with fire, and that her seat *Rome*, mystical *Babylon*, shall meet with the same fate, and the beast go into perdition? *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this* (Rev. 16:1; 17:8, 16; 18:10).

Secondly, The increase of the kingdom of Christ in the latter day, foretold in this verse, will be owing to the vast numbers of Gentiles that shall be called, and to the conversion of the Jews. Many and ancient are the prophecies concerning the calling of the Gentiles; as, that when Shiloh, or the Messiah should come, the *gathering of the people* should be to him; that he should be set up as an ensign to them, and they should *seek to him*, and he be a *light* unto them, and the *covenant* of them; and the abundance of them should be converted to him (Gen. 49:10; Isa. 11:10; 43:6; 60:4, 5); which had their completion in part in the first times of the gospel, by the ministry of the apostles every where; and especially when the Roman empire, or the whole world became Christian; and also at the time of the Reformation; but as yet they have not had their full accomplishment, as they will when the kingdoms of this world shall become Christ's, and all kings and nations shall serve and worship him: and since they have been in part fulfilled, we may be assured of the full performance of them; since we have seen the kingdom of the stone cut out without hands, as Mr. *Mede* distinguishes, we need not doubt of the kingdom of the mountain, which will fill the whole earth, taking place: the conversion of the Jews, as a body, as a nation of men, is what is predicted, and will make much for the increase and glory of Christ's kingdom. That people have been of old the subject of prophecies, which in a variety of instances have been fulfilled. It was foretold to their great ancestor, *Abraham*, that they his posterity should be *strangers*, and serve in a land not theirs in much affliction four *hundred years*, and then come out with great substance (Gen. 15:13, 14), as it is well known they did at that exact time; their going to captivity in *Babylon*, and their return from thence at the end of 70 years, were predicted many years before these events (Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10), which were punctually accomplished: the various straits, difficulties, and distresses these people should come into their sins, at different times; the besieging of their cities, and the dreadful famine they should be reduced to, so as to eat their own flesh, and delicate women their own children, as at the siege of *Samaria*, and at the siege of *Jerusalem*, both by the Chaldeans and Romans; and their dispersion all over the world, and even the very characters of their enemies, are given us, being of a far country, of a fierce look, and of a language they understood not: all these, with many other things, are foretold by *Moses* in Deuteronomy 28:20-68, some of them, at the distance of two thousand years, and which have had their exact accomplishment: but what is most surprising of all, is the continuance of this people as a distinct people, notwithstanding all this, as it was said they should, and as the Lord promised he would not cast them away, destroy them utterly, or make a full end of them, as he has of other nations their enemies (Lev. 26:44; Jer. 30:11); who are no more, nor their names to be heard of any where, as the *Edomites*, *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, and others; but these are still in being; yea, what is more wonderful, that several of those nations among whom they are now dispersed, have been even since their scattering among them, so mixed and confounded with other people, that they are not able to distinguish one from another, or trace their original, as particularly in *Spain*, *France* and *England*; yet, these people remain a distinct people, as

they do every where, without any king over them, not having their own magistrates, and without the observance of many of their own laws: now what can be the reason of this? no other, than as the tribe of *Judah* was kept a distinct tribe till the Messiah came, that it might appear that he sprung from it, according to prophecy; so the Jews are kept a distinct people unto the time of their conversion, that they may be manifest to all the world. Moreover, even the ignorance and blindness of this people, their unbelief and rejection of the Messiah, and their obstinate persistence in it, are the fulfilling of prophecy; both our Lord, and the apostle *Paul*, when they speak (John 12:37-41; Rom. 11:8-10) of these things, refer to ancient prophecy, as being no other than what were foretold. Seeing then all these things concerning them have been accomplished, we ought most firmly to believe, that what concerns them in futurity also will; as that they shall seek and find the Lord, and *David* their king; that a spirit of grace and supplication shall be poured on them, and *they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn*; and shall turn to the Lord, and receive him as the Messiah, and embrace his gospel and ordinances; and so all *Israel* shall be saved in a spiritual sense, and shall return to their own land, and resettle there, as is foretold they shall (Hos. 3:5; Zech. 12:10; 2 Cor. 3:16; Rom. 11:25, 26; Ezek. 37:21, 22): *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

Thirdly, By the above means the kingdom of Christ will be set up in the world in greater glory than now it is, of which we have no reason to doubt; especially when we observe the several steps which were to be taken, and have been taken towards the advancement of it; as the opening of the seven seals, and blowing of six of the trumpets. The seven seals are so many several steps, and gradual advances to introduce the gospel, kingdom and church of Christ into the world. The opening of the first seal brought the gospel into the Gentile world, in which Christ is represented riding on a white horse with a bow, and conquering, and to conquer; the second, third and fourth seals opened, brought the sword, famine and pestilence into the Roman empire, as God's judgments for the ill usage and persecution of the preachers and professors of the gospel; and the fifth seal represents the souls under the altar crying for vengeance on their enemies for shedding their blood; and the sixth opened brings utter destruction on the whole Pagan empire, as such, signified by the darkening of the sun, moon and stars, and by other things. And here one might have expected that the kingdom of Christ would have been now set up in all its glory: but though here were peace and prosperity introduced into the church of God, and it was greatly enlarged; yet the worldly wealth and riches brought into it, issued in corruption and apostasy of it; and brought in the papacy, which arose, and continued, and still does, and stands in the way of Christ's kingdom. The seventh seal opened, brings in seven angels with seven trumpets to blow, six of which are blown already. The first four blown, brought in the northern nations, the Goths, Huns, Vandals, &c., into the western empire, which overrun several countries, entered *Italy*, sacked and burnt *Rome* itself, signified by the burning mountain, and spread darkness and ignorance over all the empire, designed by the smiting of the sun, moon, and stars; and which broke it to pieces, and divided it into ten kingdoms, signified by the ten toes in *Nebuchadnezzar's* dream, and the ten horns in *Daniel's* vision. The fifth trumpet brought in *Mahomet* and his Saracens, the locusts; and the sixth trumpet the Turks, the four angels loosed at the river *Euphrates* into the eastern empire, which set up a kingdom there that still continues. And now since six of these trumpets have been blown, and the effects have followed predicted by them; why should we not most firmly believe, that the seventh trumpet will be blown, when the mystery of God will be finished: when the kingdoms of this world will become our Lord's; when he will take to himself his great power and reign; when he will destroy them that

destroy the earth, and give a reward to his servants, and to all that fear his name! *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this* (Rev. 10:7; 11:15-18).

Fourthly, As by the above events, the spiritual reign of Christ will take place in the world, so by his second coming the personal reign will be introduced, which will last a thousand years; and from the fulfilment of prophecy concerning the first coming of Christ, which is predicted in the context, as we have seen, we may most strongly argue the certain performance of all that respects his second coming. He came at first: exactly at the time pointed out in prophecy; before the scepter departed from *Judah*, while the second temple was standing, into which he came, as he was to do, and just at the expiration of *Daniel's* weeks. All characters and circumstances in prophecy meet in him; all things concerning him in the law, psalms and prophets, had their fulfilling end in him; concerning his birth, and the place of it: his mean appearance in the world; his doctrines and miracles; his sufferings and death, and many particular circumstances respecting them; as the betraying of him by one of his disciples; selling him for thirty pieces of silver; crucifying him between two thieves; piercing his hands, feet and side; giving him gall and vinegar to drink; casting lots on his vesture, with other things; also his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God. And since these things have been completely fulfilled, what room or reason is there to doubt that he will appear a second time without sin to salvation? The angels at his ascension affirmed he would descend from heaven, as he ascended: the apostle *Paul* assures us he shall descend from heaven with the voice of an archangel and be revealed from thence with his mighty angels; and he himself has said no less than three times, in the close of the canon of the scripture, *Lo, I come quickly*. Let us believe therefore that he will come, and make all things new; produce new heavens, and a new earth, and set up his tabernacle among his people, and dwell with them, and they reign with him; *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this*. Which leads me,

To consider to what the performance of all this will be owing; to the *zeal of the Lord of hosts*: he is the Lord of hosts or armies, the maker of the host of heaven, and the disposer of them, and rules among them, and does whatever he pleases; nothing is impossible with him, or too hard for him; and as *Abraham* believed that God, who promised, was *also able to perform*; so should we believe, that whatever the Lord of hosts has prophesied of, he is able to fulfill, and will fulfill; his truth and faithfulness are engaged, as for the performance of his promise, so of his prophecies; he is the unchangeable Jehovah, God that cannot lie, and who never repents of what he has spoken, but makes all good: his *zeal* moves and puts him upon it; which may be understood either of his wrath and indignation against his enemies, that jealousy of his that smokes against them; that zeal and vengeance with which he is sometimes clad: this will put him upon performing all that he has said concerning antichrist, against whom his indignation must be raised; who has spoke great things against him, and blasphemed his name, opposed his Son, his kingdom and interest, and persecuted his people: or else it may design his great love and affection. As zeal with men, when right, is no other than fervent charity, burning love, and flaming affection, so it may be considered here; and mean his love for himself, his zeal for his own glory, which is his ultimate end in creation, in providence, in his works of grace, and which will be answered in the destruction of antichrist, and setting up the kingdom of his Son in the world: also his strong love and affection to Christ, both as his own Son, and the mediator between him and his people; and therefore it may be depended on, he will make him his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth: to which may be added, his great love to his church and people; which has been so great as to give his Son for them, to become incarnate, and to suffer and die in their room, and to make him king over them to protect and

defend them; and therefore it need not be doubted that the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to them, according to promise and prophecy (Dan.7:27); *The zeal of the Lord of hosts, the zeal of his house, and for it, will perform this.* I shall close with a word or two.

What has been said will serve greatly to support the credit of divine revelation; the sacred Word will appear from hence to be indeed the Word of God, and not the word of men; we may be assured the scripture is divinely inspired, and is a sure word of prophecy; for what else could have foretold such numbers of events, which have been exactly fulfilled: particularly what relate to Jews and Papists, who are two such living and standing proofs of the truth of the divine revelation, that all the Deists in the world are not able to set aside? Likewise, this may serve to encourage our faith, as to the performance of whatsoever has been spoken by the Lord; for if he performs all things for us in providence, as he does for particular persons, as *Job, David,* and others, as he did; then much more may we believe that he will perform all that he has said he will do for himself, for his Son, and for his church and people in the world. But then, though he has so particularly prophesied of, and so peremptorily promised these things, yet he will be enquired of by his people to do them. We should therefore pray continually to him, and give him no rest day nor night until they are accomplished; and for the accomplishment of which we should quietly wait; for there is an appointed time, and when that comes there will be no tarrying: *Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days* (Dan. 7:12). I add no more but this wish, *the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting of Christ* (2 Thess. 3:5).

**THE WORDS OF DAVID,
THE WORDS OF JEHOVAH,**

FATHER, SON, AND SPIRIT.

2 SAMUEL 23:2, 3.

The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue: the God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me.

Having considered in a former discourse the preceding verse, which contains a line description of David, that tends to recommend to our notice those last words of his recorded in the following verses. I shall now proceed to show how they are further recommended to us, from the author of them: for they are to be considered not so much the words of David himself, as the words of a divine person spoken by him, This we may gather from the text. *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me.* They were his words, and not merely David's. *It was the God of Israel that said, it was the Rock of Israel that spake to him and by him.* From which we may notice,

I. The author of these words as represented in these several different expressions, which all tend to recommend them to our most serious consideration. And then,

II. The words themselves, which the divine person or persons spake in, by, and to David.

I. The author or authors of them, for these words do not appear to be David's words, properly, but another's, even the Lord's.

1. It is observed, *the Spirit of the Lord spake by him.* He did not speak what he did, from his own spirit, nor out of his own heart, according to the dictates of his own mind; but the Spirit of the Lord spake by him. We read of some in the times of Jeremiah, "who ran and were not sent, who prophesied, and the Lord had not spoken unto them (Jer. 23:21). The same sort of persons are described by the prophet Ezekiel, "as speaking out of their own hearts, and following their own spirit" (Ezek. 13:2, 3). They said those things which their own carnal minds suggested unto them, and which they judged would be pleasing to natural and carnal men, whereby they might get introduced among them, and so serve their own purposes, either with respect to applause or worldly wealth. And this being the case, some persons pretending to divine and spiritual things, speaking not by the Spirit of God, but from their own spirit, makes the caution the apostle John gives necessary. *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone forth into the world* (1 John 4:1).

All who pretend to speak by the Spirit of God are not to be believed: they speak only out of their own hearts, and follow their own spirits, therefore are to be tried by the word of God, to see whether what they say is agreeable to that or no. What David said was not from his own spirit, but the *Spirit of the Lord spake by him*. He, and other holy and good men, spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God; for prophecy came not of old time by the will of man. Even those who were the true prophets of the Lord, and by whom the Spirit of the Lord spake: they could not prophesy, they could not deliver out any thing as from God when they pleased. It was not at their option, it was not according to their will; no, but just as they had an impulse upon their spirits by the Spirit of God. Even Balaam, though a false prophet, yet in the hands of God and under his direction at that particular time, of which he was sensible, was obliged to say, he could *not go beyond the commandment of the Lord* (Num. 24:13), or say more or less than what was suggested to him.—Nay, if Balak would give him his house full of silver and gold, it could not have been otherwise: he could not go beyond the commandment of God, to do either good or bad.

Now if this was the case with Balaam, we may reasonably conclude, that what the prophets of the Lord spake, was not according to their own will; but according to the will of God, and by the Spirit of God. This was so well known, that Zedekiah, King of Israel, puts this question to Jeremiah, who was a true prophet of the Lord, *Is there any word, from the Lord?* (Jer. 37:17). He knew very well Jeremiah could say nothing to any purpose, that he could depend upon, unless he had a word from the Lord: and that he gives according to his sovereign will and pleasure.

Well, these last words of David were spoken by him, not out of his own heart, not out of his own spirit, not out of his own head, as pleased himself: but by the Spirit of God. And much less were what he said, from an evil spirit: the spirit that works in the children of disobedience, or what is called the spirit of the world, which rules and governs in the world, and in worldly men. *We have received*, says the apostle, *not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given us by God* (1 Cor. 2:12). Now it was this Spirit of the Lord that spoke by David. Who is of God, comes from God, is of the same nature with the divine Father, and proceeds from him: so our Lord describes the Holy Spirit as *proceeding from the Father* (John 15:26). What is meant by that proceeding, we know not; we are unable to explain it: we must take it as it is. This we are sure of; that the Holy Spirit is of God, comes from God, and is of the same nature with him, So also he is from the Son, and therefore is called the *Spirit of the Son* (Gal.4:6).

A dispute there was in ancient times, and that in the churches—whether the Spirit proceeded from the Son as from the Father? It is most certain he proceeded from the one as from the other: but as to the modus of it, it is not in the power of a finite mind to conceive of. This we know, it is the Spirit which is of God: possessed of the same nature, and of the same divine perfections with God the Father, and with the Son, from whom he proceeds. He is eternal, He is called the *eternal Spirit* (Heb. 9:14): so from everlasting to everlasting, God. He is omnipresent: a perfection which only belongs to God. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence?* (Ps. 139:7). There is no such thing. He is every where; and therefore must be God. He is a God omniscient: he searches the deep things of God, and reveals them to his people. He can, and has foretold things to come. He, the *Spirit* of Christ in the prophets, foretold the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Omnipotence is ascribed to him: miracles such as are above the power of nature, and contrary to the laws of nature, are done by him, in confirmation of the truths of the everlasting gospel. You read of wonders, and miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, by which

the gospel was at first continued. Now these abundantly prove him to be the true God, as he is represented. He is Jehovah, whom the Israelites rebelled against; they are said to *vex the Holy Spirit* (Isa. 63:10). It was Jehovah who said, in a vision of Isaiah, *who will go for us?* (Isa. 6:8). In the Acts of the Apostles He is said to be the Lord, the Holy Ghost. He is expressly said to be God: lying against him is said to be lying against God (Acts 5:3, 4). The saints are called the temples of God; and this reason is given for it, *because the Spirit dwells in them*. He is likewise denominated, *the Lord, the Spirit* (2 Cor. 3:17): that is, Jehovah the Spirit.

The same works which are said to be done by the Father, may also be ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The work of creation, this may be ascribed to him. He not only moved upon the face of the waters, and brought the indigested chaos into order after its creation; not only did he garnish the heavens; but he it was that made them: for *by the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them, by the Breath or Spirit of his mouth* (Ps.33:6). He is expressly said to be concerned in making man. Elihu says, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life* (Job 33:4). These are works that prove him to be the true God. Worship is also to be paid unto him. He is not only to be prayed unto as the Father and the Son are (*the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ* (2 Thess. 3:5); where he is manifestly distinguished from the Father and the Son); but he is prayed unto along with them (2 Cor. 13;14). The ordinance of baptism is directed to be performed in His name equally as in the name of the other two divine Persons (Matthew 28:19).

Now it was the Spirit of God, or God the Spirit, that spake by David; *the Spirit of the Lord spake by me*: the same that spake by the rest of the inspired writers. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God: holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21): and so did David. It is expressly said, in a quotation from a Psalm of his, that the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David (Acts 1:16). *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me*. It may be properly enough rendered, *the Spirit of the Lord spake in me*: so respects an internal revelation of the mind and will of God unto him, which he was to declare unto others, which was made by the Spirit of God unto his prophets and inspired writers. He illuminated them, or gave them a clear and distinct view of things internally. So the prophecy of Hosea is said to be *the beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea*; so it is rendered, though it may as well be rendered, *in Hosea*. The Apostle Peter does with great emphasis express it of the inspired writers, that *the Spirit of Christ which was in them, testified of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow* (1 Pet. 1:11).

Now inasmuch as the Spirit of the Lord spake by David, then what he said and delivered under his impulse, influence, and inspiration, must be reckoned the *word of God*; and should be received, not as the word of man, but as it is, in deed, and in truth, the word of God. So we are to account David's Psalms to be a part of the word of God, (and a most excellent part indeed!) and of Christ who speaks in them. Hence the Apostle says, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly*: and what does he mean by the word of Christ? He particularly seems to have regard to the words of David; since it follows, *teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs* (Col. 3:16). These are the words of Christ, at least a great part of them: the reason is, that the Spirit of the Lord spake in and by David, in penning and delivering these Psalms. Moreover, we should regard what the Lord say by David; because what he delivered was *spiritual*. *That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit* (John 3:6): so, what any man says under the influence of the Spirit is spiritual. What David said by divine inspiration was spiritual; and therefore with propriety are his Psalms, in

the passage before referred to, called spiritual songs: not only because the matter in them is spiritual, but because the Author of them was the Spirit of God.

It also follows from hence, that what David spake under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, must be *holy*, for the Spirit of God is holy: an epithet peculiar to the Third Person, called the Holy Spirit, *how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* (Luke 11:13). All that comes from him must be holy. The Law of God is holy; the Gospel is holy; the Scriptures are holy. They are called the Holy Scriptures: the reason is plain and clear; because they come from the Holy Spirit of God; therefore the whole matter of the Scriptures must be holy. *The Law is holy, just, and good* (Rom. 7:12). The Gospel is so; all the doctrines and truths of it are holy (*the doctrine which is according to godliness* (1 Tim. 6:3)). They open not a door to licentiousness, as many who are ignorant of them foolishly object, knowing nothing of the power of them; for *the grace of God teaches men, that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*. Therefore, I say, if David spake what he did by the holy Ghost, then what he said must be holy.

It must be *true* also; because the Spirit that spake by him is the Spirit of Truth. How often does Christ give him that epithet: *Even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me* (John 15:26): and again, *when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth* (John 16:13). Now, inasmuch as what was said by David, and by any other inspired writer, was by the Spirit of God, the Scriptures must be the Scriptures of truth: for *no lie is of the Truth* (1 John 2:21).

This also being the case, David speaking by the Spirit of God, as well as all other holy and good men, it follows, that the *blessed Spirit is the best interpreter of the Scriptures*. It is He that can most truly lead into all truth, and make application of it; lead men into the truths contained in the Psalms of David; open their understandings, that they may understand them. It is He also that can best assist us in singing the psalms which he himself is the inditer of: most wisely therefore did the Apostle resolve, in the strength of divine grace, to sing with the Spirit as well as with the understanding (1 Cor. 14:15).

The Spirit of the Lord spake by me. And it is added, *His word was in my tongue*. His word: the word of the Spirit of God was in my tongue. Not only did he indite the matter, but he gave him the *express words* wherewith to deliver that matter.—Some have been of opinion, that the inspired writers of the word of God had only the matter thereof dictated to them, or their minds furnished within views of things, but that they were left to clothe those ideas with words of their own. If this had been the case, if there had not been infallibility with respect to words as well as to matter, they might have made use of improper ones, which would not have conveyed to our minds the proper ideas of things; so that we should have been at an uncertainty with respect to faith and practice. But this was not the case: words were also suggested unto them, by which they were to express those ideas, those impulses upon their minds. *His word was in my tongue*. What they said, they said, not in words which man's own wisdom taught, but in *words which the Holy Ghost taught* (1 Cor. 2:13). The *very words* they were directed to make use of, as well as the matter. We are said to be nourished up in the *words* of faith and sound doctrine (1 Tim. 4:6): not with doctrine, but the words of doctrine: not doctrines as to the matter of them—but the very words of those doctrines are laid down in the Scriptures; and therefore we are commanded *to hold fast the form of sound words* (2

Tim. 1:13)—*sound speech that cannot be condemned* (Titus 2:8)—which must be that which is under the direction and inspiration of the Spirit of God. *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue—or on my tongue*; impressed there; even his very words were so: and thus his tongue became as the pen of a ready writer (Ps. 45:1). Words flowed from him most readily, and he most faithfully delivered and penned them as the Lord says, *He that hath my word let him speak my word faithfully* (Jer. 23:28). Now this being his word, the word of the Spirit of God, when it comes not in word only but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, it must answer some valuable ends and purposes—for the conviction of sinners, for their conversion, for their illumination and instruction, for the working of faith in them, for the encouragement of hope: it must be effectual to lead them into all truth, effectual for their consolation, and answer all the divine purposes.

2. There is another person that is said to speak by David—The God of Israel. God: He that at the first creation of all things *said, and it was done—commanded, and it stood fast* (Ps. 33:9). He the great God who said, *Let there be light, and there was light*: He that said, *Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters*: He that said, *Let the waters be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear*: He that said, *Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit*: He that said, *Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven*: He that said, *Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life*: He that said these things, and they were immediately *done* (Gen. 1). He spake by David. The God of Israel said. The God of Israel: He that spake to Israel upon Mount Sinai, and said in an audible voice, *I am the Lord the God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt out of the house of bondage* (Ex. 20:2). And which was a most wonderful event; for who of any nation (as Moses said to the Israelites) ever heard the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, and lived? Most amazing it was, that God should speak in the manner he did upon Mount Sinai. The same God of Israel said to David what follows.

The God of Israel: that is, *the covenant God of Israel*. He was so to Israel in a literal sense. He was the covenant; God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. The God of the Hebrews, the God of Israel: so he calls himself. When he sent Moses to demand the free dismissal of the people of Israel out of *Egypt*, Moses says unto Pharaoh, *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go*. Moses also speaks of a very solemn avouchment of this relation between God and Israel. *Thou hast* (says he) *avouched the Lord this day to be thy God—and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people* (Deut. 26:17, 18). Now this is to be understood in a *national* way; but God is the God of his spiritual Israel; the God of all Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles. He is the God of all whom he has chosen for his peculiar people, whom Christ has redeemed by his precious blood, and who are effectually called by divine grace. He is their covenant God in a special sense. This covenant was made with Christ from everlasting. *I have made a covenant with David my servant*; that is, with the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom that covenant stands for ever. *My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips* (Ps. 89:34).

This is a *covenant of grace*, we commonly call it so, because it consists of the blessings of grace; and because it is founded on the free sovereign mercy of God. *I have said mercy shalt be built up for ever, "and therefore I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant"* (Ps. 89:2, 3). It is called the *covenant of peace* which shall never be removed (Isa. 54:10), because the grand article in it is peace and reconciliation by Christ Jesus the Lord: contrived,

agreed upon, and settled in that covenant. It is also called the *covenant of life*, as well as of peace, because the blessings of life spiritual and eternal were secured in it; all those spiritual blessings wherewith the Lord's people are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3); but the most grand and principal article in this covenant is, the Lord being the God of his people. *They shall be my people, and I will be their God* (Jer. 24:7). Men may be temporally happy with the things of this world; but happy, beyond all expression happy, is he whose God is the Lord. This is the grand article of the covenant of grace, that God is the covenant God and father of his people in Christ Jesus. "I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:18). This relation always continues: he is their God, and their guide even unto death. Now here we have the God of Israel speaking to David: and what line said, must needs be *true*, because it is God who said it. He is a God of truth, and cannot lie; and therefore whatever he has delivered out, as his mind and will, must be true: let God be true, but every man a liar (Rom. 3:3, 4). Since it is God that said it, I say it must be true; and as he is the God of Israel, it must be for the good of spiritual Israel. He can say nothing but what is so. All that is contained in the sacred writings, is for the good of spiritual Israel. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works* (2 Tim. 3:16). The whole of the sacred Scriptures as well as the book of Psalms, *were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope* (Rom. 15:4). And he who is the God of Israel that spake by David, could give the best account of the covenant of grace. This is one part of the last words of David "although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant:" and who but Israel's covenant God could give the account he does, of the covenant he has made with them? It is a wonderful instance of his condescending grace, that he should say any thing to the sons of men! Marvelous that he should speak to Israel face to face, as he did; that he should commune with Moses from off the mercy-seat; and that he should speak to his dear children as he does, and disclose the secrets of his heart's love unto them!—*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant* (Ps.25:14).

Now what the God of Israel says, ought most certainly to be attended to. "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." The Lord God hath spoken, (says Amos) who can but prophesy? (Amos 3:8) and when he speaks in compassion to the sons of men, who can but hearken?

3. *The Rock of Israel spake to me.* The Rock of Israel: which may be understood of the same person still; hence the word Rock in Scripture is often used as expressive of Deity,—as in that passage, *Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges* (Deut. 32:32): that is, their God is not as our God, as the Psalmist says. *Who is a Rock save our God?* (Ps. 17:31). Or, it may be understood of Christ, the second person in the glorious Trinity; and it will not be any difficulty, I think, to observe a Trinity of persons in this account.—Here is the Rock of Israel, the second person: and then here is the Spirit of the Lord, that spake by him: all the three divine persons. A glorious testimony of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead.

The Rock of Israel, who appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: who delivered Israel out of the hands of Pharaoh: called by Moses, *his God, and his Fathers' God* (Ex. 15:2). The Rock of Israel; he that was typified by that Rock Israel drank water out of in the wilderness; of which the Apostle testifies *that Rock was Christ* (1 Cor. 10:4); a type of him.—*The Rock of Israel*, or, he who is the

safety and security of Israel; the Rock in whom is everlasting strength; that Rock of Refuge which is for saints to apply to in every trouble: *The name of the Lord is a Strong Tower, and thither the righteous run and are safe.*—*The Rock of Israel*; on which the spiritual Israel of God is built; the church of God, against which the gates of hell can never prevail: that one and only foundation laid in Sion: that sure foundation, on which, whosoever builds shall be safe:—that Rock of Israel on which every single believer is built; for he is the foundation of the apostles and prophets. All the saints under the old and new testament dispensation are laid on this foundation. Every wise and good man lays his soul, and the salvation of it, upon this Rock, which will bear it against all storms, and tempests whatsoever. He is the rock, and the foundation of all our faith, hope, spiritual peace, and comfort. The foundation of our faith, the anchor of our hope, and the spring of our peace and comfort. A glorious Rock indeed! *If there be any consolation it is in Christ Jesus* (Phil. 2:1). This is the Rock of Israel, that spake in, by, or concerning David as his type: *The Rock of Israel spake by me.*

I should now have proceeded to consider what the Spirit of the Lord spake by David; what words were in his tongue; what the God of Israel said, and what the Rock of Israel spake by him: spake by him as the Psalmist of Israel; for the words may be connected with those, *and the sweet Psalmist of Israel said*—*The Rock of Israel spake by him*, directed him what to speak: which serves to prove the divinity of the Book of Psalms; it is a part of the sacred Scriptures given by inspiration of God. It is also a testimony of the truth of that Book, and of what is contained therein: a greater testimony sure we can never have, since all the Three divine persons appear in it: there is the God of Israel, the Rock of Israel, and the Spirit of God. There are Three that bear testimony; and if we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. The Rock of Israel spake to me, or concerning me: concerning me as a type of Christ. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega of the Psalms: they all testify of him, concerning his offices, concerning his grace, concerning the work of salvation and redemption; and particularly concerning what he is in himself, what he endured and suffered for his people, what office he bears, what a low estate he should be brought into, to what glory he should be advanced, and of what use and service he should be to the sons of men.

This also serves to establish the character of David as a prophet, which the Apostle gives him in Acts 2:30, where he quotes some passages of Scripture out of the Psalms, and argues that David, being a prophet, said so and so. *Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ.* He then cites from the 16th Psalm. *His soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption.* There are other passages in the same Psalm, quoted in this chapter, which speak of David as a prophet. All which prove, that the *God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake by him.* We may then conclude, that we ought to receive what is delivered there, as the Word of God.

But what these Three divine persons said to David, or spake by him, chiefly respects what follows; as, *he that ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God:* or, that there should be such a Ruler (meaning the Messiah), who should be as the light of the morning, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. But the consideration of these things I must defer to another discourse.

(Editors Note: Roman Numeral II. was not recorded as a part of this sermon or any sermon following in this series.)

**FAITH IN GOD AND HIS WORD,
THE ESTABLISHMENT AND PROSPERITY OF HIS
PEOPLE:**

A Sermon,

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture,

in

GREAT EAST-CHEAP, Dec. 27, 1753.

2 Chronicles 20:20

Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established blessed; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

In the beginning of this chapter, we have an account of an invasion of the land of *Judea* in the time of *Jehoshaphat*, by the neighboring nations, who joined in confederacy against the Jews. These people were always a typical people, and in this their case and circumstances were an emblem of the church and people of God; who in their present state are militant. They are surrounded with enemies, as the Jews were, which are many, lively and strong; they have numerous fleshly lusts which war against their souls; and some enemies that are not flesh and blood, but spiritual wickednesses, with whom they wrestle; and even the whole world is against them, and hate, oppose, and persecute them, in one shape or another, to the uttermost; so that upon one account or another, for the most part, *without are fightings*, and *within are fears* (2 Cor. 7:5).

The method of *Jehoshaphat* and his people took in this their distress, was to seek the Lord by prayer, and ask help of him. Prayer is a special piece of the Christian armor; it is the last that is mentioned in the account of it; it is the dernier resort of believers, and which they often use to good purpose and great advantage. There were some sort of devils in Christ's time, who could not be dispossessed by any other means; Satan has often felt the dint of this weapon of our warfare, and dreads it; and dreaded it has been by some of his instruments. *Mary* queen of Scots used to say, that she dreaded more the prayers of *John Knox*, a famous Reformer, than ten thousand armed men; so effectual is the fervent prayer of the righteous, as for the bringing down the blessings of the covenant of grace upon them, so for the intimidating of their enemies, and for their protection from them.

The excellent prayer of *Jehoshaphat* on this occasion is recorded; which begins with taking notice of the place of the divine residence, heaven; in like manner as our Lord taught his disciples to pray, saying first of all, *Our Father which art in heaven* (Matt. 11:9); and of the sovereignty of God over all the kingdoms of the world: and of his uncontrollable and irresistible power; and of his being the covenant God and Father of his people; all which are necessary to be observed by us in our addresses to him, to raise in our minds just ideas of him, and to encourage our faith and hope in him. The royal saint goes on to make mention of the works of God of old; his works of power and might, of grace and goodness, in driving the heathens out of the land of Canaan, and giving it to the seed of Abraham for ever; from whence he hoped and concluded, it would not be given up again into the hands of their enemies. He takes notice of the sanctuary or temple that was built in it, where Jehovah dwelt, granted his presence to his people, and heard and helped them in the times of their distress; which was a type of Christ's human nature, the temple of his body, the true tabernacle which God pitched, and not man, in which dwells all the fulness of the Godhead; and for the sake of him the Lord hears and answers the prayers of his people, when they look, as Jonah did, towards his holy temple (Jonah 2:4); and which, with great pertinency, is here observed. Next the ingratitude of their enemies is taken notice of; when *Israel* came out of *Egypt*, and passed through the wilderness, they were bid not to meddle with or distress the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, but turn away from them, as they did; who now reward them evil for good, by attempting to dispossess them of the land given them to inherit: and therefore it was hoped the Lord would judge their cause, and right their wrongs; since the king and his people had no power to oppose such a numerous army that was come up against them; but their eyes were to the Lord, and on him was their dependence, and with him they left the issue of things.

The Lord presently showed himself to be a God hearing and answering prayer; for immediately, as the king and all the people stood before the Lord to hear what he would say unto them, the Spirit of the Lord came upon *Jahaziel* a Levite, who stood up and prophesied, and bid the people not to be dismayed at the number of their enemies; told them where they were to be met with; assured them of victory, nay, that they had no need to fight, the Lord would fight for them; and that they had nothing to do, but to stand still and see the salvation of God; which message *Jehoshaphat* and the people received with faith, with holy fear, bowing their heads and worshipping; and so fully assured were they of the truth of what was promised them, that they sung praises of God, before the deliverance was wrought; upon which they marched out to meet the enemy, when *Jehoshaphat* at the head of his army addressed it in the words first read; *believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established blessed; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper*: "do not trust in your numbers, nor in your strength, courage, and skill; but trust in your covenant-God, so shall ye be strengthened, confirmed, and animated to engage your enemies with true fortitude of mind; believe what he has said by his prophets, particularly *Jahaziel*, who has just now delivered a message from him to you; so shall ye succeed against your enemies, and obtain a complete victory over them." This is the sense of the words respecting the present case; but they may be applied to believers in any age or period of time, in whatsoever case or circumstances they may be; the main and principle thing in them is faith or believing; concerning which,

I shall consider the kind and nature of it.

The objects of it, as here expressed, the *Lord God* and his *prophets*.

The advantages arising from it, *establishment* and *prosperity*.

I shall consider the kind and nature of faith: There are various sorts of faith, as the apostle suggests, when he says (1 Cor. 13:2), *though I have all faith*; that is, all sorts of faith, which he supposes a man may have, and not have *charity*, love of true grace; he means all sorts but one, namely, special faith; for whoever has that, has charity or love: for *faith worketh by love* (Gal. 5:6): however there are several sorts or kinds of faith.

There is a faith of miracles, or of doing miracles; and which the apostle in the above words has in view, since it follows, *so that I could remove mountains*; referring to what our Lord said to his disciples; *if ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; nothing shall be impossible unto you* (Matt.17:20). Christ, when he gave his disciples a commission to preach the Gospel, gave them power of working miracles to confirm it; he gave them power over unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of diseases; and *Judas* no doubt had this power as well as the rest; for a man in these times might have such a faith, and such a power, and yet not have that special faith which issues in salvation. We read (Matt. 7:22, 23) of some that cast out devils in the name of Christ, and yet are not, and will not be known and acknowledged by him as his.

There is a faith which is commonly called an *historical* faith; which is a mere assent to a set of propositions as true, and which are true in themselves as,

That there is but one God: that there is a God may be known and believed by the light of nature, may be concluded from the things that are made by him; and that this God is but one, is the voice of reason and revelation; the language both of the Old and of the New Testament; the faith of Jews and Christians; and it is right to believe it; and which may be done where there is not true special faith: *thou believest that there is one God, thou dost well; the devils also believe and tremble* (Jam. 2:19); that is, they believe there is one God, and know there is but one, and tremble through fear of his awful majesty.

With this sort of faith, a man may believe all that is said and is true of Jesus Christ; as that he is God over all blessed for ever, the true God of eternal life: that he is the Son of God, and Savior of the world; that he is God and man in one person; that he became incarnate; that he suffered and died for the sins of men; that he was buried, and rose again from the dead; that he ascended up to heaven, is set down at the right hand of God, and will come a second time to judge the world; all which a man may believe, and yet be destitute of the true grace of God. There are indeed some strong expressions in the epistle of the apostle *John*, where he says, that *every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God* (1 John 4:2); and *whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God* (1 John 5:1): whereas now there are whole nations that believe these things, of multitudes of whom it cannot be thought that they are regenerate persons. It will help us over this difficulty a little, by considering times, and times: in the apostles times, these truths were generally denied; the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, opposed them; and then for a man to believe and profess them in the face of all opposition, and under the scandal of the cross, was a great matter; it was reckoned a proof of true grace, and a criterion of a man's regeneration: but now, since Christianity is established, and become the religion of nations, to believe all this is no mark or sign of being born again; for such a national faith is no better than the faith of Indians and

Mohammedans, only it happens to have a better object; for the ground and reason of it is the same; namely, being born and brought up among those who generally believe in the same way. Though it may be, the true sense of the above expression is this; that Christ is come in the flesh, or is become incarnate, is on the side of God and truth; and that whoever believes that Jesus of *Nazareth* is the true Messiah, is a regenerate person; that is, not barely assents to this truth; but whereas his work, as the Messiah was to make atonement for sin, and procure the pardon of it, and bring in everlasting righteousness, and obtain salvation for men; he deals by faith with him for these things; with his atoning sacrifice for the expiation of sin; with his blood for pardon and cleansing; and with his righteousness for justification; receives him as a Savior, and depends upon him for life and salvation; otherwise, barely believing him to be the Messiah, is no other than what the devils themselves do; who in the days of his flesh knew and owned him to be the Christ, the Son of God (Luke 4:34, 41).

With this sort of faith a man may believe all the doctrines of the gospel, and yet not have the root of the matter in him, or true grace. Men may have the whole form of gospel-doctrine in their heads, and deny the power of it, or not feel it in their hearts; they may believe the things concerning the kingdom of God and Jesus Christ, as *Simon Magnus* did, or however professed to do, and yet be, with him, in *the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity*. Yea, many have had such a degree of knowledge in evangelical things, as to be able to preach the gospel clearly and distinctly, to prophesy or preach in Christ's name, and yet knew him not spiritually and experimentally, nor were known by him; they may speak with the tongues of men and angels, have all knowledge and all faith of this kind, and yet be without charity or true love to God, to Christ, and to divine and spiritual things. Indeed, without believing the gospel of Christ, and the things concerning him, there can be no true faith in him; men cannot be children of light without believing the light of the gospel, or giving credit to the gospel-revelation; and therefore our Lord exhorts men to *believe in the light, that they might be children of the light* (John 12:36): the way and means of being so, is to attend unto and believe the gospel-scheme; but then this may be believed, and yet men fall short of the true light of special grace.

This faith is but temporary faith, a believing for a while; and it need not be thought strange if persons that have only this should make shipwreck of it, and put away a good conscience; and which is no instance of a true believer's falling away from grace; whereas those who have true faith, and live by it on Christ, are not of them that draw back into perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul; which brings me to observe,

That there is a special and spiritual faith, to which salvation is annexed; with which he that believes shall be saved, according to the gospel-declaration; and which directs and encourages sensible sinners to look to Christ, and believe in him, assuring them they shall be saved. The scheme of salvation the gospel publishes and proclaims, is, that it is *by grace through faith in Christ*: hence, I suppose, it is, that this sort of faith is commonly called *saving faith*, to distinguish it from others; though I think not with strict justness and propriety, and could wish the phrase was disused; since it seems to derogate and detract from the glory of Christ, who is the only Savior, and to carry off the mind from the object of faith, to the act of it. But be this as it will:

This sort of faith is not of a man's self; it does not owe its original to the creature; it is expressly denied to be of man; *that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God* (Eph. 2:8); it is not the effect of

pure nature; it is not the produce of man's free-will and power; *all men have not faith* (2 Thess. 3:2): there are few that have it, and those that have it, have it not from nature, but by the grace of God. *No man*, says Christ, *can come unto me*; that is, believe in him, for coming to Christ, and believing in him, are the same thing, *except it were given him of my Father* (John 6:65). And again, *no man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him* (John 6:44); that is by the influence of his Spirit and grace.

Nor is this sort of faith of the law of works; for as *the law is not of faith* (Gal. 3:12), so neither is faith of the law; the law is not so much as the means of it, nor does it reveal the object, nor require the act, or direct and encourage to it; it is not the means of true faith in Christ; *faith comes by hearing the word of God* (Rom. 10:17); but by what part of it? not the law, but the gospel; *received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith* (Gal. 3:2)? That is, by the preaching of the law, and works of it, or by the preaching of the doctrine of faith? By the latter, and not the former: and as the Spirit is not received in that way, or by such means, so not the graces of the Spirit, and particularly faith. How should it come this way, since the law does not reveal the object of it, Christ, or give the least hint concerning him? *By the law is the knowledge of sin* (Rom. 3:20); but not the knowledge of a Savior from sin: did it reveal Christ to a poor awakened sinner, it would not work that wrath in his conscience, or leave him without hope of mercy, as it does; and if it knows nothing, and makes known nothing of the object of faith, how can it be thought it should require the act of it? does it require an act upon an unknown object? does it require men to believe in an object it does not reveal, or give the least discovery of? How should they believe in consequence of such a requirement, of whom they have not heard the least title from the law? Nor does the law give any direction or encouragement to souls to believe in Christ; its language is, *do this and live* (Gal. 3:12), but not *believe in Christ and be saved* (Acts 16:31); this is the voice of the gospel, and not of the law. Should it be said that *faith* is reckoned among *the weightier matters of the law* (Matt. 23:23); this is to be understood either of fidelity, of faithfulness among men, or of trust in God, as the God of nature and providence, &c., giving credit to the revelation of his will, and the worship of him according to it.

True faith in Christ, comes from another quarter than from the covenant of works, and flows in another channel; it is a blessing of the covenant of grace, of that covenant which *is ordered in all things and sure* (2Sam. 23:5); for the glory of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and for the good of the covenant-ones; it provides all blessings of grace for them for time and eternity, and among the rest faith in Christ Jesus. This lays open and exposes a mistaken and false notion of some, who assert, that faith and repentance are *conditions* of the covenant of grace, when they are the *blessings* of it, included in that promise; *a new heart also will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh* (Ezek. 36:26); and these are gifts without repentance, which God never revokes or takes back, or suffers to be of no effect. Faith in Christ is the fruit of electing grace, and is as sure as salvation itself; the one is in the decree of the means, the other in the decree of the end; that decree of election which secures the end, salvation, secures also the means, *sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth* (2 Thess. 2:13); or faith in Christ, who is the truth; so it has been in all ages, now is, and ever shall be, *that as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed* (Acts 3:48). Hence true faith is called the *faith of God's elect* (Titus 1:1); it being certain, proper and peculiar to them; and this is the true reason why one believes, and another does not; as our Lord says of some, *ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep* (John 10:26): the sheep which the Father gave unto me in

election, and in the covenant of grace: let any man rise and give a better reason if he can, that this that Christ has given, why one believes in him, and another does not. Believing in him is the pure gift of God, of his rich, sovereign and distinguishing grace; he gives it to one, and denies it to another, as he pleases: he *hides* the things of Christ, and of the gospel, *from the wise and prudent*, and does not vouchsafe unto them faith in them; and *reveals* them *unto babes*; and gives them faith in his Son; and no other reason can be given than his sovereign pleasure: even so, Father, says Christ, *for so it seemed good in thy sight* (Matt. 11:26).

Special faith in Christ is of the operation of the Spirit of God: he produces it by his mighty power in the soul; he enlightens the mind, reveals the object, brings near Christ, his righteousness and salvation, and enables the sensible sinner to look unto him, lay hold on him, and receive him as his Savior and Redeemer; hence he is called the *Spirit of faith* (2 Cor. 4:13); because he is the author of it, who begins and carries on, and will perform the work of faith with power: the principal use of which grace is to receive all from Christ, and give him the glory. God has put this honor upon it, to constitute and appoint it to be the *receiver-general* of all the blessings of grace. It receives Christ himself as the Father's free-gift; it receives out of the fulness of Christ, even grace for grace, or an abundance of it; it receives the blessing of righteousness from the Lord of justification; it receives the remission of sins through his blood, according to the gospel-declaration; it receives the adoption of children, in consequence of the way being opened for it through the redemption which is in Christ; it receives the inheritance among them that are sanctified, the right unto it, and the claim upon it; and to this post it is advanced, that all the glory might redound to the grace of God; *it is of faith, that it might be by grace* (Rom. 4:16): there are other uses of faith, and actings of it, which will be observed under the following head. I now proceed to consider,

The objects of faith, as in the words directed to, the Lord God and his prophets. 1st, The Lord our God, who is the one Lord to be believed in; *hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord* (Deut. 6:4); from which passage the ancient Jews^[1] have established the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the godhead, as well as the doctrine of the Unity of the divine Being; and certain it is, that Father, Son, and Spirit, are the one God; and each, and every one of them, are to be believed in, and are the proper objects of faith.

God the Father is the object of faith, who is to be believed in; and to believe in him is not merely to believe his existence and perfections, for he is a fool indeed that believes there is no God; nor merely to believe in him as the God of nature and providence, and to trust in him for the preservation of life and the continuance of the blessings and mercies of it, and to glorify him for them; though there are some who believe there is a God, yet do not glorify him as such, nor trust in his goodness, nor are thankful for providential favors: but to believe in him with a special faith, is to believe in him as he has proclaimed his name in Christ, *a God gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin* (Ex. 34:6); it is to believe in him as our covenant-God and Father, for so he is to his people in Christ; he is to them what he is to him, as he says, *I ascend to my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God* (John 20:17): it was a noble act of faith expressed by *David, I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, thou art my God* (Ps. 31:14); and such should believe that this God, who is their God, will be their God and guide even unto death; since covenant-relation always subsists, and can never be made void. And whereas the Father of Christ stands in the relation of a Father to his people; it becomes them, having had the testimony of the Spirit of adoption, witnessing to their spirits that they are the children of God, to call him in faith,

and with a filial fear and reverence, their father, and not turn away from him: to believe in him, is to believe in his everlasting and unchangeable love; and to believe that it is so, and their interest in it, it being shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit given unto them; this love being declared unto them by the Lord himself, and affirmed in the strongest terms, saying, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love* (Jer. 31:3); of which he has given full proof, not only by his choice of them in Christ, and by the redemption of them through him, but by drawing them with loving-kindness to himself in effectual vocation; it should be believed: it is a glorious act of faith of the apostle's when he says, *I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Rom. 8:38-39); this is to be rooted and grounded in it. To believe in God the Father, is to believe in him as the God of all grace, the author of it; that his grace is sufficient for us in all times of need; that he is able to cause all grace to abound toward us; and that he will supply all our wants, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus: it is to believe in his promises, which are exceeding great and precious; that he is faithful who has promised, and will perform; that he will never suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor any good word which he has spoken; that all his promises are yea and amen in Christ: it is to believe in his power, that he is able also to perform and make good what he has said; and likewise that there is in him everlasting strength, and that, according to his promise, as our day is, our strength shall be; and that we are, and shall be kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is also the object of faith: *ye believe in God, believe also in me* (John 14:1), says Christ himself; who is God as well as the Father, and to be believed in equally with him: the gospel directs to faith in Christ, and it is the principal thing it encourages; the ministers of it point him out to sensible and distressed sinners, saying, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved* (Acts 16:31): the sum of the gospel of the word of faith is, *that if thou shalt confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (Rom. 10:9, 10). The *Targum*, or *Chaldee* paraphrase of our text, is, believe in the word of the Lord your God; where the *Paraphrast*, by the *memra Jehovah*, or *word of the Lord*, does not mean the written word of the Lord, the scriptures; nor the oral word of the Lord, what was spoken by the prophets, as it is said he sometimes does; since it follows in the same paraphrase, *believe in his law, and in his prophets*; wherefore it is to be understood of the essential Word, the Son of God, who is to be believed in; and various are the acts of faith which are exercised on him, or believing on him is expressed by various things.

Faith in Christ is signified by seeing him, and looking unto him; an unknown Christ cannot, but an unseen Christ is, and may be, the object of faith: faith is the evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1), the principal of which is an unseen Christ: the believer by faith beholds the glory of his person, the fulness of his grace, the excellency of his righteousness, the preciousness and efficacy of his blood, and the suitableness of his salvation; and it looks to him, for peace and pardon, for righteousness, eternal life and happiness; and keeps looking to him as the author and finisher of faith. It is a *motion* of the soul towards Christ; it looks at him, gazes with admiration and pleasure on the glories of his person, and the riches of his grace, but goes out unto him; faith is the soul's coming to Christ, which it is encouraged to do, by his kind invitation; *come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Matt. 11:28); and by his gracious declarations and resolutions, that he *will in no wise cast out him that cometh to him* (John 6:47): yea, it is

expressed by a swift motion to him; by a fleeing to him for refuge under a sense of sin and danger; by *running* to the name of the Lord for safety, which is as a strong tower; and by turning into the strong-hold Christ, as prisoners of hope: to believe in him, is not only to behold him with an eye of faith, to flee and come unto him in a way of believing, but to *lay hold* upon him, and embrace him; for Christ is *a tree of life to them that lay hold upon him, and happy is every one that retaineth him* (Prov. 3:18): it is to lay hold upon the skirt of him that is a Jew; to lay hold upon his righteousness; to lay hold upon his strength; to lay hold on him as the mediator of the of the covenant; to hold him fast, and not let him go; saying with *Job, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him—he also shall be my salvation* (Job 13:15, 16). Faith in Christ is a leaning on him, while passing through this wilderness; it is a recumbency, a relying upon him for salvation; a staying a man's self upon the mighty God of Jacob; laying the whole stress of his salvation on him; casting all his care, and all his burdens on him, who has promised to sustain him and them; believing he is able to keep him from falling, and to keep what he has committed to him: for to believe in Christ, is to give up all into his hands, our souls, and the eternal concerns of them; to expect all grace, and all the supplies of it from him, even all grace here, and glory hereafter: it is in one word, to deal with his person for acceptance with God; with his blood for pardon and cleansing; with his sacrifice for atonement: with his righteousness for justification; with his fulness for every supply of grace, looking for his mercy unto eternal life.

The Holy Spirit of God is likewise the object of faith; we read and hear of faith in God, and of faith in Jesus Christ, but very little of faith in the Holy Ghost; and yet as he is the one God with the Father and the Son, he is equally to be believed in as they are: and we are not only to believe his being and perfections, his deity and personality, his offices as a sanctifier and comforter, and the operations of his grace on the souls of men; but there are particular acts of faith, trust, and confidence, to be exercised on him: as he is God, he is to be worshipped, and this cannot be done aright without faith; he is particularly to be played unto, and there is no praying to him, nor praying in him, without faith; we are to trust in him for his help and assistance in prayer, and indeed in the exercise of every religious duty, and even of every grace. I fear ministers of the word do not trust in him as they should do in the discharge of their work, nor private Christians in the performance of theirs: and besides all this, there is an act of special faith to be put forth upon him, as upon the other two persons; for as we are to trust in God, the Father to Keep us through his power to salvation, and to trust in Christ for the salvation of our souls, and to trust the salvation of them with him; so we are to trust in the Holy Spirit for carrying on and finishing the work of grace on our souls, who is equal to it; we are to trust the whole of it with him, and be *confident of this very thing*; as we may be, as of any one thing in the world, *that he, the Spirit of God, which hath begun a good work in us, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ* (Phil. 1:6).

2dly, The prophets of the Lord are to be believed; first the Lord, and then his prophets, being set by him, and coming from him, bringing a message from him, and declaring his will; so the children of *Israel* at the *Red* sea believed the Lord and his servant *Moses* (Ex. 14:31).

By the *prophets* are meant the prophets of the Old Testament, who are to be believed, since they spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; *the Spirit of the Lord spoke by them, and his Word was in their tongue* (2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Sam. 23:2): he dictated to them what they should say; he led them into all the truths they delivered; he indited the scriptures of truth, and therefore they ought to be credited as such: nay, not only all scripture is given by inspiration of God, even all the writings of the prophets; but whatsoever things were written aforetime, *were written for our learning, that*

we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope; the whole of scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (Rom; 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:16); which several advantageous uses should the more recommend the writings of the prophets to our faith and love; and especially since they contain many things in them concerning Christ, the more immediate object of special faith; there are many things in the Psalms, and in the law, and in the prophets, concerning him; Moses wrote of him, and all the prophets bear witness of him, of his person, offices, and grace, of what he should be, and what he should do and suffer; they testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; and especially we, at this time of day, have great reason to believe the prophets, since the far greater part of what they prophesied of, is exactly come to pass. The prophecies of *Isaiah*, concerning the captivity of the Jews, and their deliverance from it by *Cyrus*, who is mentioned by name a hundred and fifty years or more before he was born, have been punctually fulfilled. Also Daniel's prophecies concerning *Darius* king of *Persia*, and *Alexander* the Great, under the names of the ram and he-goat, and of the kings of *Egypt* and *Syria*, and what should be done in their times; and not only these, but others of greater importance, concerning the Messiah, his birth of a virgin, the place of his birth, his miracles, sufferings, and death; his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, the effusion of the Spirit, and the spread and success of the gospel in the Gentile world, as well as the destruction of the Jewish nation, for their rejection of him; on account of all these things, and more, the prophets of the Old Testament claim our faith and credit.

The prophets of the New Testament are to be believed. The apostles of our Lord are by him called *prophets* and *wise men*; some of which, he says, the Jews would *kill*, and *crucify*, and others *scourge* (Matt. 23:34): they are so called, both because they were extraordinary preachers of the word, and foretellers of things to come, and on both accounts were to be believed. *John* the divine, was eminently a prophet in both respects, as he was a faithful dispenser of the word, and bore record of it, and of the testimony of Jesus, and as he foretold things to come under a divine inspiration: his *Revelation* is a prophecy of what should be in the world and church, from his time, to the second coming of Christ: great part of which has already been fulfilled; and there is all the reason in the world to believe the rest will be accomplished. The sayings in it are the sayings of God, and they are faithful and true; believe what he has said by this his prophet. The ordinary and common preachers of the word are called *prophets* and their preaching *prophesying* (1 Cor. 14: 3, 4, 5, 29, 32, 37); and though we are not to believe every spirit, and every man that pretends to be a spiritual man and a prophet, *but try the spirits whether they are of God*, by his word, the standard of faith and practice; *because many false prophets are gone out into the world* (1 John 4:1): yet such who bring the doctrines of Christ with them, such as are agreeable to the word of God, which are taken out of it, and established by it, ought to be believed and received, not as the word of man, but as in truth the word of God.

The whole of divine revelation is to be believed, which God has made by his prophets, whether of the Old or of the New Testament; and which is all comprehended in these words our Lord began his ministry with, *believe the gospel* (Mark 1:15); not to believe this, is the damning sin of unbelief, so much spoken of in the New Testament; this was the sin of the Jews, and in which the greater part died, that they believed not the Jesus was the Messiah, and other important truths concerning him, though they came with such full evidence; this is the sin of all, to whom the external revelation of the Gospel comes, and they believe it not; this is the sin of the Deists of the present age, of all deniers, rejecters, and despisers of the Gospel; who either neglect to examine the evidence of it, or

notwithstanding the evidence of it, reject and condemn it: what will the end of such persons be, that obey not the gospel of Christ, that do not embrace, but neglect or despise it? They will be punished with everlasting destruction; he that believeth not this revelation shall be damned. *This is the condemnation*, the cause and aggravation of it, *that light is come into the world and men love darkness rather than light* (John 3:19); the darkness of nature, rather than a divine revelation. This sort of unbelief, and not want of special faith in Christ, is the cause of men's damnation. No man will be lost or damned, because he has not this faith; to say that God will damn any man because he has not this special faith in Christ, is to represent him as *the most cruel of all beings*, as the Arminians say we make him to be; to damn a man for that which is solely in his power to give; for no man can believe in Christ with this sort of faith, unless it be given him of his Father; and which yet he determines not to give unto him, as unto all the non-elect: and which man never had in his power to have or to exercise, no, not in the state of innocence. Can any man believe, that God will ever damn a man on such an account as this? This is just such good sense, as if it should be said, that a malefactor dies at Tyburn, for want of receiving the king's pardon, he did not think fit to give him; it is true, if the king had given his pardon, and he had received it, it would have saved him from dying; but then it is not the want of the king's pardon, or of his receiving it, that is the cause of his condemnation and death, but the crimes he was charged with, and convicted of in open court. So, though if it pleases God to give men special faith in Christ, for the remission of their sins, they will certainly be saved; but then it is not the want of this faith in the blood of Christ, for the pardon of sins, that is the cause of any man's condemnation and death, but the transgressions of the law of God, and the contempt of his gospel they have been guilty of. As is the revelation which is made to men, such is the faith that is required of them. If there is no revelation made unto them, no faith is required of them; and unbelief, or want of faith in Christ, will not be their damning sin, as is the case of the heathens; for *how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher* (Rom. 10:14)? No, they will be condemned, not for their want of faith in Christ, or his gospel, which they never heard of, but for their sins committed against the law and light of nature; *as many as have sinned without the law, shall perish without law* (Rom. 2:12): if a revelation is made, this is either external or internal; if only an external revelation is made, the faith required is an assent unto it, and a reception of it; and such who do not attend to the evidence it brings with it, or reject and despise it, shall be damned: but if besides the external revelation and internal revelation is made by the spirit of wisdom, in the knowledge of Christ; or God by his word calls men effectually by his grace, and reveals his Son in them, as well as to them; this sort of revelation comes with such power and influence upon the mind, as certainly to produce a true and living faith in the soul, which infallibly issues in eternal life and happiness; and of such persons, and such only, acts of special faith in Christ, are required: and though the sin of unbelief is often found in them, it is such as is consistent with true faith in Christ, and which in the issue is overcome by it: this is the sin of unbelief, that is opposite to special faith, and obstructs it in its acts; but partly because it is pardoned with the other sins of believers, and partly because it is finally subdued and vanquished, it is never the damning sin of any. So I think the truth of things stands. I proceed,

To consider the advantages arising from faith in God, and in his word, *establishment* and *prosperity*. Now, though establishment is annexed to faith in the Lord our God, and prosperity to faith in his prophets; yet this is not so to be understood, as if establishment only followed upon faith in God, and not upon faith in his word; and as if prosperity was the consequence of faith in the word only, and not of faith in God; whereas, as on the one hand, the prophets and ministers of the

word, are the means of establishing believers; hence the apostle *Paul* was desirous of imparting the spiritual gifts he had received, *to the end* the saints might be *established* (Rom. 1;11), and speaks of God as *of power to establish* men, *according* to his *gospel* (Rom. 16:25); so, on the other hand, spiritual peace and prosperity flow from faith in God, who *keeps* such *in perfect peace*, *whose mind is stayed* on him, *because he trusteth* in him (Isa. 26:3); wherefore these things are to be considered, not in a strict separate sense, but promiscuously, as they are the joint effects of both faith in God, and in his word.

1st, *Establishment*; which is to be understood, not of the state of believers, but to their hearts, frames, graces and duties.

Not of the state of the people of God, which is in itself firm and stable, and cannot be made more so: they are safe in the arms of everlasting love; they are not only engraven by the Lord upon the palms of his hands, and set as a seal upon his arm, but also as a seal upon his heart. Nothing in heaven, earth, or hell, can separate them from his love; it is invariably the same, in whatsoever condition or circumstance they are; when he hides or chides, he still loves; he rests in his love; it is more immovable than rocks or mountains. They are fixed in the hands of Christ, out of whose hands neither sin, nor Satan, nor the world can pluck them, and out of which they shall never fall. What was said by the queen of *Sheba*, concerning *Solomon*, with respect to *Israel*; *because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them* (2 Chron. 9:8), may be said of Christ, with respect to his people; that because he loved the saints, and in order to establish them for ever and ever, he put them into the hands of Christ, where they are safe from all danger, and from every enemy. They are secured in the covenant of grace, which is sure and immovable; its blessings are the sure mercies of *David*; its promises are yea and amen in Christ; it is established on better promises than any other covenant; and the persons in it can never be removed out of it. They are settled on the rock of ages, on which the church is built, against which the gates of hell can never prevail; they are built on a sure foundation God has laid in *Zion*; so that, though storms and tempests of corruption, temptations, and afflictions should beat upon them, they stand unmoved against them all, being built on a rock. They are in a state of grace, in which they will ever remain; they are in a state of justification, and shall never enter into condemnation; they are in the family of God, by adopting grace, out of which they will never be turned; for, *if a son, no more a servant, but an heir of God through Christ* (Gal. 4:7); they are in a state of regeneration, and can never be unborn again; they have the principle of grace, which springs up unto eternal life: these things are so chained together, that not one link can ever be broken; *whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified* (Rom. 8:30). Now this establishment does not arise from faith, nor is it by it; if all the faith that ever was in the world, from *Adam* to this moment, was engrossed and possessed by one man, it would not make his state, God-ward, a whit the surer and firmer that it is. But,

The hearts of God's people are very unsettled, and need establishing; they melt like wax, and flow like water, through fear, and want of stronger faith. They are unstable as water, as is said of *Reuben*, and do *not excel* (Gen. 49:4); their frames are changeable and various; one while their *mountain stands strong*, and they say they shall *never be moved*; presently God hides his face, and their souls are *troubled* (Ps. 30:6, 7): one that could say, *the Lord is my portion, therefore will I hope in him*, soon comes into such distress as to *put his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be*

hope (Lam. 3:24, 29); he whose love is as *strong as death*, exceeding fervent and ardent, *the coals thereof give a most vehement flame*, which *many waters cannot quench* (Cant. 8:6, 7); through the prevalence of corruption, the force of temptation, and the snares of the world, waxes chill and cold. And he that seemed to be steadfast in the faith, falls from some degree of his steadfastness in it; and instead of quitting himself like a man, is like a child *tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine*, wavers in his profession, slackens in his duty, and is negligent of it. Now faith in God, and in his word, has a tendency to establish the heart, and make it fearless; *he shall not be afraid of evil tidings*, even he whose *heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord; his heart is established, he shall not be afraid* (Ps. 112:7, 8): as is a man's faith, so are his other graces; if faith is in lively exercise, hope will be lively too, and be as an anchor sure and steadfast; his love will abound, for faith works by it; he will become established in the truths of the gospel he believes, and has an experience of; he will be more stable and constant in the discharge of duty; he will be *steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord* (1 Cor. 15:58).

2dly, *Prosperity* arises from faith in God and his word; not temporal, but spiritual prosperity; not prosperity of body, but prosperity of soul, such as *Gaius* had, whom the apostle John thus salutes, *Beloved, I wish above all things, that they mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth* (3 John 2); on which soul-prosperity faith has a very great influence. The soul is in good health and in a prosperous condition, when there is an appetite for the word; when it hungers and thirsts after righteousness; when it desires the sincere milk of the word; when it finds it, and eats it by faith; when the word is mixed with faith upon hearing, and it is taken in and digested by it; as also when a soul has a comfortable view by faith of the forgiveness of its sins through the blood of Christ: sins are diseases, pardon is the healing of them; and then is a believer in a prosperous condition, when *the sun of righteousness* rises on him with this *healing in his wings* (Mal. 4:2); and when he, *the inhabitant of Zion, shall not say I am sick*; the reason of which is, because *the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity* (Isa. 33:24): so likewise when a man has much spiritual peace and joy through believing in the righteousness of Christ for his justification; in his blood for the remission of his sins; and in his sacrifice for the atonement of them; and spiritual joy is such a certain concomitant or consequence of faith, that it is called the joy of faith (Phil. 1:25); and whoever is possessed of it must, in a spiritual sense, be in prosperous circumstances. Such a one is fat and flourishing, and all he does prospers: and as *prosperity* in the text carries in it an idea of victory over enemies, this may be ascribed to faith; it is by faith the believer resists Satan and his temptations: by holding up the shield of faith, he quenches his fiery darts, and obtains a conquest over him; as he does also over the world, the men, things and lusts of it: *This is the victory the overcometh the world, even our faith; who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God* (1 John 5:4, 5)? What heroic actions, what wonderful things have been done by faith! Men *through faith have subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, &c* (Heb. 11:36), and such must be in prosperous and flourishing circumstances.

From the whole we learn, what an excellent and precious grace the grace of faith is; what use it is of, what purposes it serves, and what influence it has upon the stability and prosperity of the believer; it is a pity it should be put out of its place; for when it keeps its place, it is very useful and serviceable; but if it is put in the room of Christ, it is good for nothing. Careful we should be, not to ascribe that to the act, which belongs to the object. It may be known, whether a person has this grace or no; for where it is, Christ is precious, to them that believe he is precious (1 Pet. 1:7); it

works and shows itself by love to him, his word and ordinances, his people, and his ways; and it is attended with good works, the fruits of righteousness; for *faith without works is dead* (Jam. 2:26): and if persons are satisfied that they have this grace, they should be thankful for it, and attribute it, not to the power of their own free-will, but to the free Grace of God, whose gift it is; for it comes along with the abundant and superabundant grace of God in conversion. And such who have it should pray for an increase of it; since their stability and prosperity have such a connection with it; and should guard against unbelief; and upon every appearance of it, pray as the poor man did, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief* (Mark 9:24). To conclude, since such are the advantages of believing in God and his word, *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God* (Heb. 3:12).

JEHOVAH'S PREROGATIVE

AND HIS LOVE

TO PUT AWAY

THE SINS OF HIS PEOPLE

2 SAMUEL 12:13

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

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

Now, such examples as these are recorded, not for our imitation, but for our caution and from hence we learn this useful lesson, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall* (1 Cor. 10:12). And, moreover, these things stand upon record for the comfort and relief of such who have backslidden, fallen into great sins, and are brought to true repentance for them, such need not despair of the grace and mercy of God; for the sin of David, notorious as it was, and though attended with such dreadful aggravations, yet, according to the message brought him in our text, God put it away, that he should not die.

David for a considerable time, as it appears, was under great stupidity of mind; quite insensible of the evil he had committed; did not appear to have any remorse of conscience, or at least, not to be humbled before God for his sin, and make an acknowledgment of it, or discover any true repentance for it, not for a year, or thereabouts, as is plain from the history; but God will not suffer sin to lay upon any of his people, and especially not upon such an eminent servant as David was, unrebuked, without taking notice of it. The Lord will rebuke man for his iniquity some way or other; either by impressing a sense of guilt upon his conscience, by some awakening providence, or by the ministry of the word, or by sending his servants to reprove for it, and convince of it; which was the case here. He sent Nathan the prophet: one whom David was familiar with, and who had been brought up in his court; a very proper person to be a messenger to him; a man that knew how to speak to a king, and address him in a decent and becoming manner; as appears from the context. He does not take upon him to speak in an abrupt, or use him in a rough way; but by a fable, an apologue or parable, leads him into the nature of his sin, and fulfils the message that God had sent him with. He delivers out a parable unto him, concerning two men in one city; a rich man and a

poor man. The rich man had many flocks and herds; the poor man had but one ewe lamb. A traveler came to the rich man's house, and he thought fit to entertain him; but instead of taking a lamb or kid out of his own flock, he takes the poor man's lamb, and dresses that for his guest. So Nathan represents the case to David; who was so enraged, that this man should behave in such a manner, that he at once pronounces him worthy of death; *As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing, shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold:* upon which Nathan says to him boldly, *Thou art the man.* Thou art the man that hast done this, or what is equivalent unto it: and then sets forth his sin in its proper colors; threatens, in the name of God, what should be done to him; that the sword should not depart from his house, because he had shed innocent blood; that one of his own family, a son, should rise up and ravish his wives and his concubines. David was then smote to the heart, and cried out, as in the former part of the verse, *I have sinned against the Lord.* "I own my sin, acknowledge it, and repent of it. I am sorry for it." It is but a short confession that he here makes, but it was a full one; attended with brokenness of heart, contrition of soul, real contrition and sincere repentance; as it is plain from the fifty-first Psalm, that penitential Psalm, which was penned on this occasion. Nathan, who was thoroughly satisfied with the genuineness of David's repentance, being under the impulse of the Divine Spirit, and directed by the Lord, then said unto David, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die. He hath put away thy sin;* he will not impute it to thee, or place it to thy account: he will not charge thee with it, or punish thee with death, though thou deservest to die. *Thou shalt not die,* either a bodily, spiritual, or eternal death. It is as much as if he had said to him, *Thy sin is forgiven thee.* He had authority from God to say this to him for his comfort, under the conviction and distress of mind which he now was fallen into. So sometimes God makes use of a gospel minister for the declaring of pardoning grace and mercy to his people. We have an instance of this in the sixth chapter of Isaiah; when the prophet, sensible of his iniquity, confessed it. with a great deal of concern and trouble; and, perhaps, in some sort of despondency, said, *Woe is me, for I am undone! I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts* (Isa. 6:5). Now to relieve the prophet, under a sense of his impurity and the consequences of it, one of the Seraphim (who may be considered as an emblem of a gospel minister), flew to the altar, and took a live coal from thence (an emblem of the sacrifice which our Lord Jesus Christ has made for sin), and applied it unto the lips of the prophet, saying, *Thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged.* Thus gospel ministers are made use of, in the hand of the blessed Spirit, for the relief of his people under a sense of sin, to direct them to the pardoning grace and mercy of God to sinners.

It is the will and pleasure of Jehovah, that when his dear children are distressed on account of sin, that they should be comforted; and the ministers of Christ are charged to do this. *Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, to her very heart, and cry unto her that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins* (Isa. 40:2). In this light, I apprehend, we are to understand the words of the text: from which I observe the following things.

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

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

I. It is the Lord's work, and his only, it is his act, and deed, to put away sin from his people. Of this, they themselves are sensible; and therefore, under a sense of sin, apply to him for the removal and putting of it away: hence Job says, *I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou Preserver of men?—Why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?* (Job 7:21); plainly intimating, that no other could pardon and forgive, or take away his sin, but the Lord himself, against whom he had sinned: and hence David, when he was under a strong and full conviction of the sin he had been guilty of, here referred unto, in the fifty-first Psalm, that penitential Psalm penned on this occasion, entreats, that God would *blot out his transgressions, and cleanse him from his sin* (Ps.51:1, 2); which is the same thing as in the text, *putting away his sin from him*. This is the Lord's act, and his only.

And sometimes we may observe, Jehovah puts this plea into the mouths of his people, and encourages them to ask it of him: thus he speaks to backsliding Israel, *Take with you words and turn to the Lord; say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously* (Hosea 14:2). And the Lord does do so: as he did to Joshua the High Priest, represented as clothed with filthy garments, to whom he said, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee; and I will clothe thee with change of raiment (Zech. 3:4).

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

1. What that is which is put away. Sin.

2. What is meant by *putting it away*. And then,

3. Shall show that this is *God's act and deed*, and *his only* to put away sin. Nathan the prophet does not take it upon himself: he speaks of it clearly as the act of God, the Lord *hath put away thy sin*.

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

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

Men, even all men, through sin, are in a state of estrangement, alienation and distance from God: even God's elect themselves, as in a state of nature, are so; but they are reconciled, made nigh by

the blood of Christ, and brought into open and near communion with God, through the power of divine grace upon them. And yet, even those who are brought into such nearness, and have communion with him, may, through sin, be set at a sort of distance from him; though not separated from him with respect to union and interest; yet with regard to sensible communion and fellowship they may. *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God; and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear* (Isa.54:2). Now to have that put away, that whisperer, which separates chief friends, must be a desirable thing by the saints themselves.

The Lord hath put away thy sin. Sin, which is a burden, an heavy burden, too heavy for the saint to bear; he groans under the weight of it: *we groan, being burdened*, says the apostle (2 Cor. 5:4). Not he only, and other ministers of the word but all the people of God in common. They groan under the weight of indwelling sin: especially when it breaks forth into practice in any open way and manner. Then do the iniquities of God's people pass over their heads as an heavy burden, too heavy for them to bear. This produces distress of soul, and inward confusion; such as is intolerable, without discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy; for *a wounded spirit who can bear?* Now to have sin put away, which is the cause of all this, must be a very desirable thing.

Sin is the cause of all soul sorrow and distress to God's people, as it was to David. It was the occasion of the breaking of his bones, and by reason of this he had no rest; no soundness in his flesh, because of his sin (Ps. 38:3). His loins were filled with a loathsome disease, and he was in great distress of soul on that account; which makes even the most holy man upon earth to say, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* (Rom.8:24). Now to have sin, the cause of all soul sorrow and distress, put away, is a desirable thing.

"The Lord hath put away *thy* Sin." The sin which he had been guilty of and which was only chargeable upon himself, was not to be attributed to God, who had suffered it, or to Satan, who had tempted him to it: for it was his *own sin*; for "every man is drawn aside of his own lust and enticed." He had no one to charge with it but himself. *Thy* sin, which thou hast owned and acknowledged to be thine, confessed it with sorrow, humiliation, repentance, and contrition: *thy* sin, who hath said, *my sin is ever before me* (Ps. 2:3); *thy* sin the Lord has put away. And all this may, in the first sense, respect the sin he had been guilty of with respect to Uriah; yet it is not to be restrained hereunto, but takes in all other sins. David had an application of pardoning grace and mercy, with respect to all his sins, and therefore he calls upon his soul, and all that is within him, to bless the Lord, who had forgiven him *all* his iniquities (Ps.102:1,2,3): and indeed, where one sin is forgiven, all are forgiven. God forgives all manner of iniquity for Christ's sake; and *the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses from all sin* (1 John 1:7). But,

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

This is not to be understood of removing sin as to the *being* of it. God does not put away the sin of his people in this sense, in the present state of things. He could do it if he would: that is not to be doubted. He could have dispossessed the Canaanites from the land of Canaan at once; but he chose not to do it: he drove them out by little and little. And he could, at first conversion, clear his people of all those corruptions of nature which are in them; for this he does at death, when this earthly house of their tabernacles is dissolved; this house that is infected with leprosy when the timber and

stones are removed, and carried into the grave; all sin is removed, and there is nothing left but the spirits of just men made perfect. I say, he that can do it at death, could do it at first: but that is not his pleasure. No. As he left the Canaanites in the land for wise reasons, so he does the corruptions in the hearts of his people for if there were no corruptions in them, there would be no trial of their faith. Well then, God does not put away sin, the *being* of sin from his people: it dwells in them, it did in an apostle; *sin dwelleth in me* (Rom. 7:17).

A most awful soul-deception some are under, who imagine they are free from sin. What will they say to that text which must stare them in the face: *if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us* (1 John 1:8). God puts away the sin of his people; but not as to the being of it; no, that continues. There is such a thing as the weakening of the power of sin in them; or there is a putting off the old man, though there is not a putting him away. A putting him off, according to the former conversation, and a putting on the new man, which *after God is created in righteousness and true holiness* (Eph. 4:24); but then this is their own act, under the influence of the Spirit of grace. They are exhorted to put off the old man, and to mortify the deeds of the body; and, to encourage them, it is said, *If ye through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live* (Rom. 8:13). But what I am speaking of, and what our text speaks of, is what is God's work entirely. The Lord hath put away thy sin. The promise is, *sin shall not have dominion over you* (Rom. 6:14); and it is made good: but sometimes sin overcomes them; and it had been so with poor David. It could not then be said, that the Lord had put away his sin, as to the being of it; for perhaps his lust never was stronger than at that time. He found what the apostle said, to be his own experience (though the apostle never sinned as this good man did). I see *another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members* (Rom. 7:23). Poor David, with a witness, was brought into captivity to the law of sin and death, through the prevalence of indwelling corruption. It could not be said of him then, "the Lord hath," as a past act, "put away thy sin;" i.e. as to the being of it, as it never was stronger in him than it had now been.

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

But this must be understood as a discovery of pardoning grace and mercy to him. The Lord sometimes comes and says to a poor sinner, laboring under a sense of sin, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy, sins* (Isa. 43:25). Or, as our Lord Jesus Christ himself said to the man sick of the palsy, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee* (Matthew 9:2), to backsliders Jehovah is pleased to say, *I will heal your backslidings* (Hosea 4:4). And sometimes he sends such a message as this by a servant of his, as he did to David by Nathan; *the Lord hath put away thy sin;* that is, he will never charge it upon thee, nor punish thee for it.

Various are the ways the Lord takes to put away the sins of his people: I will just run them over. The first of these is, his determination, and resolution not to impute sin unto them. This was a resolution and determination taken up in his divine mind from everlasting. *God was in Christ reconciling the world (of his chosen people) unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them* (2 Cor. 5:19). It was his determined will, not to impute their trespasses unto them; that is, not to charge them upon them, or place them to their account. And if God will not, who dare say any thing to the charge of God's elect? O happy man, whom the Lord will not charge with sin! "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity" (Ps. 32:2). This is Jehovah's first step the resolution of his mind from eternity was, not to reckon sin to his people, or charge them with it.

Then he has promised, in the everlasting covenant of grace, that *he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities, he will remember no more* (Heb. 8:12). And this promise of grace is made known in all ages for the comfort of his people; for, to *him* (that is, to Christ) *give all the prophets* (all from the beginning of the world) *witness, that through his name, whosoever believes in him, shall receive remission of sins* (Acts 10:43). And he has proclaimed his name, *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin* (Ex. 33:6,7). Moreover, he set forth his own Son to be a propitiation for sin, or foreordained him (as the word signifies) to be a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of his people: and in consequence of this purpose, he sent him, in time, to be this propitiation, that is, to make reconciliation for their sins, and bring in an everlasting righteousness.

In order to this, he took off all the sins of his people from them, and put them upon Christ: transferred them all upon him; so, saith the Scripture, *the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all* (Isa. 53:6). And so made him sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

This mystery and wonder of divine grace is emblematically held forth to us by the High Priest putting all the iniquities and all the transgressions of the children of Israel upon the head of the scape goat. It is said, *And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send them away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness; and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited* (Lev. 16:21, &c.). Now just so, Jehovah put all the sins of his people upon his Son, who agreed to it, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself: as it is said, *Once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself* (Heb. 9:26). To put away sin, to abolish it, to make it null and void, as the word signifies, so that it shall have no power to condemn those for whom Christ suffered: hence there is said to be *no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus* (Rom.8:1). Yea, Christ, by the sacrifice of himself, has so put away sin, that it shall be no more. It is finished; the body of sin is crucified and destroyed (Rom. 6:6): and it is put at a distance, removed from them; the Lord *removed the iniquity of that land in one day* (Zech. 3:9). The iniquities of all his people in that one time, when Christ bore their sins in his own body on the tree, and made full satisfaction to divine justice for them, were removed as far as the East is from the West, to the utmost distance; signified by the scape goat bearing the sins of Israel into the wilderness, and a land uninhabited: removed so as not to be seen by the avenging eye of God's

justice. Having regard to this work of Christ, God sees no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel (Num. 23:21): when their sins are sought for, they shall not be found, because he has pardoned those whom he hath reserved (Jer. 1:20); which is the same thing as *putting away sin*. He has cast them behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, so as never to be remembered any more; that is to say, never to be charged upon them. They are justified by Christ's righteousness and satisfaction, from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. All their iniquities are pardoned, they are justified, and so shall most certainly be glorified. These are the steps Jehovah has taken for the putting away the sins of his people: Now,

3. This is *God's own act and deed*. None can put away sin but himself. There is a sense indeed, in which it may and is, put away by others; thus, sin may be put away by the civil magistrate's punishing a malefactor for his sin; so the judges of Israel were directed, by various laws, to put away the iniquity of Israel; as may be seen in the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, where mention is made of a false prophet, who, upon conviction, was to be put to death; and it follows, *so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee* (Deut.17:5). Put the evil man away, and so put away the guilt of his sin from the nation, on which it would have laid, had they not punished the man with death, as the law required.

So, with regard to idolatry, and other sins. When a person was convicted of idolatry, he was to be put to death (Deut.17:5); and it follows, "so shalt thou put the evil away from among you" (Deut. 17:7). So the man that dealt presumptuously, and would not hearken nor submit to the sentence of the court of judicature; he was to be put to death, that so they might put away evil from Israel. Hence, you see, there is a sense in which sin may be put away by man; the civil magistrate.

So also sin may be put away by heads of families: by not conniving at it, by severely rebuking for it, and checking it. It was more than once suggested by Job's friends, when they thought him a bad man, that he had connived at sin in his family; hence says Zophar, *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away; and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle* (Job 11:14). What is meant by putting away sin is, not suffering wicked men to dwell in his house. So likewise Eliphaz, says, *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles* (Job 22:23): thou shouldest not connive at sin, but put it away. In this sense, sin may be put away by man.

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

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

It is the Lord's act, and his only, to put away sin in that sense which has been considered. It is his prerogative, against whom it is committed, whose righteous law is broken; and who is that Law-giver, who is able both to save and to destroy. The word used in the Hebrew language for forgiveness of sin signifies, *a lifting of it up*. Now this is what God only can do. Sin is such a heavy thing, God only could lift it up, and put it upon his Son; and he only can lift it up from the conscience of a sinner laboring under a sense of it. A man himself cannot do it; and all the friends he has in the world cannot lift it up from the conscience, when it lies heavy there. It is God's work; all that man can do will not move it. Neither the blood of bulls nor of goats, under the legal dispensation, could take away sin. All humiliation, repentance, tears, duties, and the like, cannot take away sin; no, it is the Lord alone that must do it: souls, therefore, are directed to him for the putting it away. He does (as before observed) put words in their mouths, and bids them say, *Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously* (Hosea 14:2).

This is God's act, and it is a *past* act too; so Nathan speaks of it as such, "the Lord *hath* put away thy sin." He does not say the Lord *will*, but the Lord *hath* put away thy sin. Forgiveness of sin is a past act.; it was made in eternity, as it respects a non-imputation of it; and, as it regards the removing and putting it upon Christ, this is God's act; and this is a past act of sovereign mercy, an act of special grace and abundant goodness. Yea, I may add, it is an act of justice, as it is founded on the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; *if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* (1 John 1:9). Now I am to observe,

II. That those whose iniquities the Lord puts away, *shall not die*. This may, in a sense, respect a *corporal death*, which David might be in some fear of; for the sin he had committed required such a death. He had shed blood; and it is said, *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed* (Gen. 9:6). The sin of adultery, which he had been guilty of, demanded death; *The man that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death* (Lev. 20:10). Now though David, being in so high a station as he was, and so greatly esteemed of the people, might have nothing to fear from a court of judicature, or of being called to account, or dealt with according to the rigor of the law of God, yet he might be in fear that God would, by his own hands, strike him dead, as he did Nadab and Abihur, Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, or Annanias in the New Testament; for though the magistrate might not do it, he knew God could do it, and he might think he would do it; therefore, says Nathan, "The Lord hath put away thy sin, *thou shalt not die*," a corporal death.—I do not see there is any reason to omit this sense.

And we may observe, the Lord's people, though they do indeed die a corporal death, good men, as well as bad men, "Our fathers, where are they?" yet those from whom God hath put away their sins, do not die this death as a *penal evil*. Though they die, they do not die under the curse; the sting of death is taken away, and death is a blessing to them. *Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord* (Rev. 14:13).

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

whosoever believeth in me (says Christ) shall never die; believest thou this? (John 11:26). Those, whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are put away, in the sense we have been speaking of, they shall never die an eternal death—But, to draw to a conclusion,

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

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

THE DOCTRINE OF
PREDESTINATION

STATED, AND SET IN THE
SCRIPTURE LIGHT;

In Opposition to Mr. Wesley's *Predestination calmly Considered*, with a Reply to the Exceptions of the said Writer to *The Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints*.

Mr. *Wesley* having declared himself the author of the *Serious Thoughts upon the Perseverance of the Saints*, to which I lately returned an answer; has been pleased to shift the controversy from *perseverance* to *predestination*: contenting himself with some low, mean and impertinent exceptions to a *part* of what I have written on the subject of *perseverance*; not attempting to answer any one argument advanced by me in vindication of it; and yet he has the assurance in the public papers, to call this miserable piece of his, chiefly written on another subject, *A full answer to Dr. Gill's pamphlet on perseverance*; any other man but Mr. *Wesley* would, upon reflection, be covered with shame and confusion; though to give him his due, in his great modesty, he has left out the word *full* in some after-papers; as being conscious to himself, or it may be, some of his friends pointed it to him, that it was an imposition on the public, and tended greatly to expose himself and his cause since he has left me in full possession of all my arguments; which I will not say are unanswerable, though I think they are; and it looks as if Mr. *Wesley* thought so too, seeing he has not attempted to answer one of them; yet this I may say, that as yet they are not answered at all, and much less is a *full* answer given unto them.

And now, though I might be very well excused following him in this wild pursuit on the subject of *predestination*; since he has not meddled with my argument from it for the saints *perseverance*; since he has not pursued that subject, as his title promises; and since throughout the whole he does not *argue*, only *harangue* upon it; and that only a part of it, *reprobation*, which he thought would best serve his purpose; yet for the sake of weak and honest minds, lest *through his subtlety*, they *should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*; I shall endeavour to state the doctrine of *predestination*, and set it in a true light according to the Scriptures, with the proofs of it from thence; and take notice of the principal objections raised by Mr. *Wesley* in his *harangue* on that part of it which respects *reprobation*; and then close this treatise with a reply to his trifling exceptions to what I have written on the subject of the saints *perseverance*.

As to the doctrine of *predestination*, it may be considered either,

I. In *general* as respecting all things that have been, are, or shall be, or done in the world; every thing comes under the determination and appointment of God "he did, as the *assembly* of divines say in their confession, from all eternity, unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass;" or, as they express it in their catechism, "God's decrees are the wise, free and holy acts of the counsel of

his will whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass in time:" and this predestination and fore-appointment of all things, may be concluded from the fore-knowledge of God; *known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world, ἀπ' αἰῶνος, from eternity* (Acts 15:18); they were known by him as future, as what would be, which became so by his determination of them; for, the reason why he knew they would be, is, because he determined they should be: also from the providence of God, and his government of the world, which is all *according to the counsel of his own will* (Eph. 1:11): for he does every thing according to that, or as he has determined in his own mind. Eternal predestination in this sense, is no other than eternal providence, of which actual providence in time is the execution. To deny this, is to deny the providence of God, and, his government of the world, which none but *Deists* and *Atheists* will do; at least it is to think and speak unworthy of God, as not being the all-knowing and all-wise and sovereign ruler of the world, he is once more the very wonderful thing, prophecy, or foretelling things to come, could not be without a predestination of them; of which there are so many instances in Scripture such as the stay of the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, and their departure from thence; the seventy years captivity of the *Jews* in *Babylon*, and their return at the end of that time; the exact coming of the Messiah at such a certain time; with many others, and some seemingly the most casual and contingent; as the birth of persons by name a hundred or hundreds of years before they were born, as *Josiah* and *Cyrus*; and a man's carrying a pitcher of water, at such a time, to such a place (1 Kings 13:2; Isa. 44:28; 45:1; Luke 22:10, 13): how could these things be foretold with certainty, unless it was determined and appointed they should be? There is nothing comes by chance to God, nothing done without his knowledge, nor without his will or permission, and nothing without his determination; every thing, even the most minute thing, respecting his creatures, and what is done in this world in all periods and ages of time, is by his appointment; for the proof of which see the following passages.

- Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2-*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; a time to be born and a time to die, &c.* a time fixed by the purpose of God for each of these.
- Job 14:5-Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass. Chapter 23:14, He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him.
- Daniel 4:35-And he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou?
- Ephesians 1:11-Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.
- Acts 15:18-Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Chapter 17:26—and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.
- Matthew 10:29, 30-Are not two sparrows sold for a *farthing?* and one of them shall not fail to the ground without your Father; but the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

II. Predestination may be considered as *special*, and as relating to particular persons, and to things spiritual and eternal; whereas predestination in general respects all creatures and things, even things temporal and civil.

First, Christ himself is the object of predestination; he was fore-ordained to be the mediator between God and man; to be the propitiation for sin; to be the redeemer and saviour of his people;

to be the head of the church; king of saints, and judge of the world: hence he is called, God's *elect*, and his *chosen* one; and whatsoever befell him, or was done unto him, was by the determinate council and fore-knowledge of God; even all things relating to his sufferings and death in proof of which read the following Scriptures.

Romans 3:5-Whom God hath set forth, προεθετο, fore-ordained to be a propitiation.

- 1 Peter 1:20-Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, that is, to be the Lamb slain. See chapter 2:4.
- Luke 22:29-And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.
- Acts 18:31-Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained. See also chapter 10:42.
- Isaiah 43:1-Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. See Matthew 12:18.
- Luke 22:22-And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined, but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed.
- Acts 2:23-Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, &c. Chapter 4:28—For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Secondly, Angels also are the objects of predestination, good and bad; the blessed angels are chosen unto life, and to continue in their happy state to all eternity: and their perseverance therein, and eternal felicity, are owing to the eternal choice of them in Christ their head; *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things* (1 Tim. 5:21). The evil angels are rejected of God, and left in that miserable estate their apostasy brought them into, without any provision of grace and mercy for them: they are *delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved to the judgment of the great day; and everlasting fire is prepared for them*, according to the determinate counsel and will of God, (2 Pet. 2:4; Matthew 25:41).

Thirdly, Predestination which the Scriptures chiefly treat of, is what respects men, and consists of two parts, *election* and *reprobation*; the one is a predestination unto life, the other unto death.

I. Election, which is a predestination unto life, is an act of the free grace of God, of his sovereign and immutable will, by which from all eternity he has chosen in Christ, out of the common mass of mankind, some men, or a certain number of them, to partake of spiritual blessings here, and happiness hereafter, for the glory of his grace.

1. The objects of election are *some* men, not all, which a choice supposes; to take all would be no choice; called therefore, a *remnant according to the election of grace* (Rom. 11:3). These are a *certain number*, which though unknown to us, how many, and who they are, are known to God; *the Lord knows them that are his* (2 Tim. 2:19). And though they are in themselves a *great multitude, which no man can number* (Rev. 7:9), yet when compared with those from whom they are chosen, they are but few; *many are called, but few chosen* (Matthew 20:16). These are chosen out of the same common mass of mankind, be it considered as corrupt or pure; all were on an equal level when the choice was made; *hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour* (Rom. 9:21)? these are not whole nations,

churches, and communities, but particular persons, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life; *Jacob have I loved, &c. salute Rufus chosen in the Lord: according as he hath chosen us in him &c.* (Rom 9:13; 16:13; Eph. 1:4), not a set of prepositions, but persons; not characters, but men; or not men under such and such characters, as believers, holy, &c., but men as having done neither good nor evil; before they had done either (Rom. 9:11).

2. This act of election, is an act of God's free grace, to which he is not moved by any motive or condition in the object chosen: wherefore it is called *the election grace*; concerning which the Apostle's reasoning is strong and invincible; and *if by grace, then it is no more of works, other wise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work* (Rom. 11:5, 6), it is according to the sovereign and unchangeable will of God, and not according to the will or works of men; *having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will* (Eph. 1:5), and again, verse 11, *being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*; hence it stands immutably firm and sure, even *the purpose of God according to election, not of works but of him that calleth* (Rom. 9:11).

3. This act of election is irrespective of faith, holiness, and good works, as causes or conditions of it; faith flows from it; is a fruit and effect of it, is secured by it, and is had in consequence of it: *as many as were ordained unto eternal life, believed* (Acts 13:48), hence it is called *the faith of God's elect* (Titus 1:1), and though holiness is a means provided in the act of election, it is not the cause of it; men are chosen, not because they are, but *that they should be holy* (Eph. 1:4), good works do not go before, but follow after election; it is denied to be of them, as before observed, and it passed before any were done (Rom. 9:11; 11:5, 6), they are the effects of God's decree, and not the cause of it; *God hath fore-ordained them that we should walk in them* (Eph. 2:10),

4. The act of election was made in Christ, as the head, in whom all the elect were chosen, and into whose hands, by this act of grace, were put their persons, grace, and glory; and this is an eternal act of God in him; *according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world* (Eph. 1:4), and so the apostle tells the *Thessalonians* (2 Thess. 2:13), *God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation*; not from the first preaching of the gospel to them, or from the time of their conversion by it, but from the beginning of time, even from all eternity, as the phrase is used in Proverbs 7:23, hence nothing done in time could be the cause or condition of it.

5. What men are chosen unto by this act are, grace here, and glory hereafter; all spiritual blessings, adoption, justification, sanctification, belief of the truth, and salvation by Jesus Christ. Salvation is the end proposed with respect to men; sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth are the means appointed and prepared for that end. Ephesians 1:4, 5, *Hath chosen us in him,—that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, &c.* 2 Thessalonians 2:13, *We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord; because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.* 1 Peter 1:2, *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* 1 Thessalonians 5:9, *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.*

6. Both means and end are sure to the chosen ones, since this is an act of God's immutable will; these are redeemed by the blood of Christ: he died for their sins, and made satisfaction for them; they are justified by his righteousness and no charge can be laid against them; they are effectually called by the grace of God; they are sanctified by his Spirit; they persevere to the end, and cannot totally and finally be deceived and fall away, but shall be everlastingly glorified: Romans 8:33, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth!* That is, the elect. *It is Christ that died,* that died for them. Romans 8:30, *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Matthew 24:24, *For there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect;* but that is not possible.

7. The ultimate end of all this, with respect to God, is his own glory; the glory of all his divine perfections; the glory of his wisdom in forming such a scheme, in fixing on such an end, and preparing means suitable unto it; the glory of his justice and holiness, in the redemption and salvation of these chosen ones, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of his Son; and the glory of his rich grace and mercy exhibited in his kindness to them through him; and the whole of it is, *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved* (Eph. 1:6).

This now is the Scripture doctrine of predestination, or that part of it which is called election; from whence it appears to be absolute and unconditional, irrespective of any thing in man as the cause and condition of it. Mr. *Wesley* believes, that, "election is a divine appointment of *some men* to eternal happiness;" so that he owns a particular and personal election, and calls it an eternal decree; but believes that it is conditional: but if it is conditional, the condition is to be named; let him name the condition of it: let him point it out to us, and in what passage of Scripture it is; this lies upon him to do, and I insist upon it, or else he ought to give up his unscriptural notion of conditional election. Mark 16:16. is no expression of this decree, but a declaration of the revealed will of God: and points out to us what will be the everlasting state of believers and unbelievers: But believers, as such, are not the objects of God's decree; it is true, indeed, that they who are real believers, are the elect of God; but then the reason why they are the elect of God is not because they are believers, but they become believers, because they are the elect of God; their faith is not the cause or condition of their election, but their election the cause of their faith; they were chosen when they had done neither good nor evil, and so before they believed: and they believe in time, in consequence of their being ordained unto eternal life, from eternity: faith is in time, election before the world was; nothing temporal can be the cause or condition of what is eternal. This is the doctrine of the Scriptures; if Mr. *Wesley* will not attend to these, let him hear the articles of his own church; the seventh of which runs thus:

Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season: they through grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by

adoption: they be made like the image of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and at length by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.

This is an article agreeable to the Scripture; an article of his own church; an article which he as a true son of the church, has treacherously departed from; an article which Mr. *Wesley* must have *subscribed* and *sworn* to; an article which will stare him in the face as long as *subscriptions* and *oaths* stand for any thing with him.

The doctrine of election, as above stated, standing in so glaring a light in the sacred Scriptures, and appearing with such evidence, as is impossible for all the art and sophistry of men to set aside; the other branch of predestination necessarily follows, which we deny not, but maintain. Mr. *Wesley* would have an election found out which does not imply reprobation; but what election that can be, the wit of man cannot devise; for if some are chosen, others must be rejected; and Mr. *Wesley's* notion of election itself implies it; for if, as he says, "election means a divine appointment of *some* men to eternal happiness;" then others must be left out of that choice, and rejected. I proceed therefore,

II. To the other branch of predestination commonly called *Reprobation*; which is an immutable decree of God, according to his sovereign will, by which he has determined to leave some men in the common mass of mankind, out of which he has chosen others, and to punish them for sin with everlasting destruction, for the glory of his power and justice. This decree consists of two parts, a negative and a positive; the former is by some called *preterition*, or passing by, a leaving some when others are chosen; which is no other than non-election; the latter is called *pre-damnation*, being God's decree to condemn or damn men for sin.

First, Preterition is God's act of passing by, or leaving some men when he chose others, according to his sovereign will and pleasure; of which act of God there is clear evidence in the sacred Scripture; as well as it is necessarily implied in God's act of election which has such clear and uncontestable proof. These are οἱ λοιποὶ, *the rest*, those that remain unelected whilst others are chosen; *the election hath obtained* it; or elect persons obtain righteousness, life and salvation, in consequence of their being chosen; *and the rest are blinded* (Rom. 9:7), being left, they remain in their native darkness and ignorance, and for their sins are given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart. These are they that are left out of the book of life, whilst others have their names written in it; of whom it is said, *whose names are not written in the book of life (of the Lamb) from the foundation of the world* (Rev. 13:8; 17:8).

Secondly, Pre-damnation, is God's decree to condemn men for sin, or to punish them with everlasting damnation for it: And this is the sense of the Scriptures; and this is the view which they give us of this doctrine (Prov. 16:4), *The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil*. Not that God made man to damn him; the Scripture says no such thing, nor do we; nor is it the sense of the doctrine we plead for; nor is it to be inferred from it. God made man neither to damn him, nor save him, but for his own glory, that is his ultimate end in making him, which is answered whether he is saved or lost: but the meaning is, that God has appointed all things for his glory, and particularly he has appointed the wicked man to the day of ruin and destruction for his wickedness. *Jude* verse 4, *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who*

were before of old ordained to this condemnation: But who are they? They are after described *ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.* Hence the objects of this decree are called *vessels of wrath fitted to destruction*, that is, by sin (Rom. 9:22). And now what is there shocking in this doctrine, or disagreeable to the perfections of God? God damns no man but for sin, and he decreed to damn none but for sin.

Thirdly, This decree, we say, is according to the sovereign will of God, for nothing can be the cause of his decree but his own will let the object of that part of the decree, which is called *Preterition*, be considered either in the corrupt or pure mass of mankind, as fallen or unfallen creatures, they are to be considered in the same view, and as on an equal foot and level with those that are chosen and therefore no other reason can be given, but the will of God, that he should take one, and leave another. And though in that branch of it, which is an appointment of men to condemnation, sin is the cause of the thing decreed, damnation; yet; it is the will of God that is the cause of the decree itself, for this invincible reason; or otherwise he must have appointed all men to damnation, since all are sinners: let any other reason be assigned if it can be, why he has appointed to condemn some men for their sin, and not others.

Fourthly, God's end in all this is the glorifying of himself, his power and his justice; all his appointments are *for himself*, for his own glory, and this among the rest; *What if God willing, to shew his wrath, his vindictive justice, and to make his power known*, in the punishment of sinners for their sin, *endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction!* (Rom 9:22).

The doctrine of reprobation, considered in this light, has nothing in it contrary to the nature and perfections of God. Harsh expressions, and unguarded phrases, which some may have used in speaking or writing about this doctrine, I will not take upon me to defend: but as it is thus stated, I think it is a defensible one, equally as the doctrine of election, and is demonstrable by it. The Scriptures are indeed more sparing of the one than of the other, and have left us to conclude the one from the other, in a great measure, though not without giving us clear and full evidence; for though reprobation is not so plentifully spoken of, yet it is clearly spoken of in the sacred writings; wherefore, upon this consideration we judge it most proper and prudent, not so much to insist on this subject in our discourses and writing; not from any consciousness of want of *evidence*, but because of the *awfulness* of the subject. This our opponents are aware of; and therefore press us upon this head, in order to bring the doctrine of election into contempt with weak or carnal men; and make their first attacks upon this branch of predestination, which is beginning wrong since reprobation is no other than non-election, or what is opposed to election; let the doctrine of election be demolished, and the other will fall of course; but that will cost too much pains; and they find a better account with weak minds in taking the other method; a method which the *Remonstrants* formerly were desirous of, at the synod of *Dort*, could it have been allowed, a method which Dr. *Whitby* has taken in his discourse of the five points; and this is the method which Mr. *Wesley* has thought fit to take, and indeed he confines himself wholly to this subject: for though he calls his pamphlet, *Predestination Calmly Considered*; yet it only considers one part of it, reprobation, and that not in a way of argument, but harangue; not taking notice of our arguments from Scripture or reason, only making some caviling exceptions to it; such as have the face of an objection, shall

gather up, as well as I can, from this wild and unmethodical performance, and make answer to. And,

1st, He desires it may be impartially considered, how it is possible to reconcile reprobation with the following Scriptures: Genesis 3:17 and 4:7; Deuteronomy 7:9, 12; 12:26-28. and 30:15; 2 Chronicles 15:1; Ezra. 9:13, 14; Job 36:5; Psalm 145:9; Proverbs 1:23; Isaiah 65:2; Ezekiel 18:26; Matthew 7:26; 11:20; 12:41; 13:11, 12; 22:8; and chapter 25; John 3:18 and 5:44; Acts 8:20; Romans 1:20; and 2 Thessalonians 2:10 (Predestination Calmly Considered, p. 13). In all which there is not a word that militates against the doctrine of reprobation; nor is any thing pointed at worthy of consideration: we know very well, nor is it contrary to this doctrine, that the curse came upon men for sin; and that it is that which renders them unacceptable to God, and is the reason why at last they shall find none with him, nor him favorable to them: there is a repentance which may be found in non-elect persons; instances of that kind do not at all weaken the doctrine. Matthew 13:11 and 12, proves it. The word *any*, is not in the original text in Job 36:5. It is certain there are some whom God despises, Psalm 53:5 and 73:20. It is pity but he had transcribed two or three hundred more passages when his hand was in; even the whole books of *Chronicles*, and the book of *Esther*, which would have been as much to his purpose as those he has produced.

2dly, He proposes the following Scriptures which declare God's willingness that all should be saved, to be reconciled to the doctrine of reprobation, Matthew 21:9; Mark 16:15; John 5:34; Acts 17:24; Romans 5:18 and 10:12; 1 Timothy 2:3, 4; James 1:5; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 4:14 (Predestination Calmly Considered, pp. 16, 17). Some of which do not respect eternal salvation at all, but the temporal salvation of the *Jews*; and others have nothing to do with salvation in either sense; some speak only of God's will to save his elect, to whom he is long-suffering; and others of his will, that *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, should be saved; and that it is his pleasure that some of all sorts should he saved by Christ; neither of which militate against the doctrine of reprobation.

3dly, He thinks this doctrine is irreconcilable with the following Scriptures, which declare that Christ came to save all men; that he died for all; that he atoned for all, even for those that finally perish; Matthew 17:11; John 1:29; 3:17 and 7:14; Romans 14:15; 1 Corinthians 7:11; 2 Corinthians 5:14; 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 2:9; 2 Peter 2:1 and 1 John 2:1, 2 (Predestination Calmly Considered, pp. 16, 17). But these Scriptures say not that Christ came to save all that are lost; or that he came to save all men, or died for all men, for all the individuals of human nature; there is not one text of Scripture in the whole Bible that says this: that which seems most like it is Hebrews 2:9, *That he might taste death for every man*; but the word *man* is not in the original text; it is only *υπερ παντος*, *for every one*; for every one of the sons of God, of the children, of the brethren of Christ, and seed of *Abraham* a spiritual sense, as the context determines it. As for the above-cited passages, they regard either the world of God's elect; or the *Gentiles*, as distinguished from the *Jews*; or all sorts of men; but not all the individuals of mankind: and those who are represented as such that should perish, or in danger of it, are either such who only professed to be bought by Christ or real Christians whose peace and comfort were in danger of being destroyed, but not their persons; and none of the passages militate against the doctrine under consideration.

4thly, This doctrine is represented as contrary to, and irreconcilable with the justice of God, and with those Scriptures that declare it, particularly Ezekiel 18 (Predestination Calmly Considered, p. 19). To which may be replied, that, that chapter in Ezekiel concerns the people of the *Jews* only,

and not all mankind; and regards only the providential dealings of God with them, with respect to civil and temporal things, and a vindication of them from inequality and injustice; and not spiritual and eternal things: or the salvation and damnation of men; and therefore is impertinently produced. And if any one does but seriously and impartially consider the doctrine as above stated, they will see no reason to charge God with injustice, or find any difficulty in reconciling it to his justice. In the first branch of this decree, called *Preterition*, let the objects be creatures fallen or unfallen, it puts nothing into them; it leaves them as it finds them; and therefore does them no injustice: in the other branch of it, appointment to condemnation, this is only but for sin; *is there unrighteousness with God* on that account? No surely; if it is not injustice in him to condemn men for sin, it can be no injustice in him to decree to condemn them for sin: and if it would have been no unrighteousness in him to have condemned all men for sin, and to have determined to have done it, as he doubtless might; it can be no ways contrary to his justice to condemn some men for sin, and to determine so to do; wherefore all that is said under this head is all harangue, mere noise and stands for nothing. Let the above argument be disproved if it can.

5thly, This doctrine is represented as contrary to the general judgment; and that upon this scheme there can be no judgment to come, nor any future state of reward and punishment (Predestination Calmly Considered, pp. 26, 30): but why so? How does this appear? Why, according to our scheme, "God of old ordained them to this condemnation:" but then it was for sin; and if for sin, how does this preclude a future judgment? It rather makes one necessary; and certain it is, that a future judgment is agreeable to it, and quite inevitable by it; God decrees to condemn men for sin; men sin, and are brought to the judgment-seat of God, and are justly condemned for it. The judgment of God takes place, and the just reward of punishment pursuant to the righteous purpose of God, and according to the rules of justice. But this writer has the assurance to affirm, that we say, that "God sold men to work wickedness, even from their mother's womb; and gave them up to a reprobate mind, or ever they hung upon their mother's breasts." This is entirely false; we say no such thing; we say, with the Scripture, that men sell themselves to work wickedness as they grow up; and that God gives men up to a reprobate mind after a long train and course of sinning; and it must be a righteous thing with God to bring such persons to judgment, and condemn them for their wickedness. But then it is said they are condemned "for not having that grace which God hath decreed they never should have." This is false again; we say no such thing; nor does the doctrine we hold oblige us to it; we say, indeed, that the grace of God is his own; and whether it is the sense of the text in Matthew or no, it matters not, it is a certain truth he *may do what he will with his own grace*: we own that he has determined to give it to some and not to others, as we find in fact he does: but then we say, he will condemn no man for want of this grace he does not think fit to give them; nor for their not believing that Christ died for them; but for their sins and transgressions of his righteous law. And is not here enough to open the righteous judgment and proceed upon? Besides the sovereign decrees of God respecting the final state of men, are so far from rendering the future judgment unnecessary, *that will proceed according to them, along with other things*: for with other books that will be opened then, *the book of life* will be one, in which some men's names are written, and others not; *and the dead will be judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works.—And whosoever is not found written in the book of life, shall be cast into the lake of fire* (Rev. 20:12, 15); *I never knew you, depart from me* (Matt. 7:23).

6thly, This doctrine is said to agree very ill with the truth and sincerity of God, in a thousand declarations, such as these, Ezekiel 18:23, 32:32; Deuteronomy 5:29; Psalm 81:12; Acts 17:30;

Mark 16:15 (Predestination Calmly Considered, pp. 31, 33). To which I reply, that some of those declarations, concern the Jews only, and not all mankind; and are only compassionate inquiries and vehement desires after their civil and temporal welfare: and at most only shew what is grateful to God, and approved of by him, and what was wanting in them; with which they are upbraided, notwithstanding their vain boasts to the contrary. Others only shew what is God's will of command, or what he has made the duty of man; not what are his purposes man shall do, or what he will bestow upon him; and neither of them suggests any insincerity in God, supposing the doctrine of reprobation. The gospel is indeed ordered to be preached to *every creature* to whom it is sent and comes; but as yet, it has never been brought to all the individuals of human nature; there have been multitudes in all ages that have not heard it. And that there are universal offers of grace and salvation made to all men I utterly deny; nay, I deny they are made to any; no, not to God's elect; grace and salvation are provided for them in the everlasting covenant, procured for them by Christ, published and revealed in the gospel, and applied by the Spirit; much less are they made to others wherefore this doctrine is not chargeable with insincerity on that account. Let the patrons of universal offers defend themselves from this objection; I have nothing to do with it; till it is proved there are such universal offers, then Dr. *Watts's* reasoning on that head, will require some attention; but not till then.

7thly, It is said that the doctrines of election and reprobation least of all agree with the scriptural account of the love and goodness of God (Predestination Calmly Considered, p. 135). The doctrine of election surely can never disagree with the love and goodness of God; since his choosing men to salvation is the fruit and effect of his everlasting love and free grace; the reason why any are chosen is, because they are beloved of God; election presupposes love: this the apostle points out clearly to us, when he says, *we are bound to give thanks always to God, for you brethren, beloved of the Lord; because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation* (2 Thess. 2:13). And the goodness of God greatly appears in consequence of this decree in the redemption of the chosen ones by Christ, in the regeneration and sanctification of them by the Spirit, and in bringing them at last to eternal glory and happiness according to his original design. But it may be, it is the doctrine of reprobation only, though both are put together by our author, that so ill agrees with the love and goodness of God. It is not inconsistent with his providential goodness; in which sense *the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*; and notwithstanding this decree, all men have a large share of this goodness of God; and though they may abuse this goodness, which will be an aggravation of their condemnation; this is their own sin and fault, and not to be charged on the decree of God, as this writer falsely does; who says, that God, according to us, gives men this world's goods on purpose to enhance their damnation; and every one of their comforts is, by an eternal decree of God, to cost them a thousand pangs in hell; whereas the abuse of mercies given, which will enhance their damnation, flows not from the decree, but from their own wickedness. The special mercy and goodness of God is denied to such indeed, which is at his sovereign will to give to whom he pleases; who *will have mercy on whom he will have mercy*: the act of election is an act of God's love, and flows from it; reprobation indeed flows from his hatred, which is an appointment to wrath; but then it is from his hatred of sin, which is no ways contrary to his being a God of love and goodness: besides there is a much greater display of the love, grace, mercy, and goodness of God in choosing some men to salvation and infallibly securing it unto them, and bringing them safely to the enjoyment of it, than in the contrary scheme: according to which not one man is absolutely chosen to salvation; salvation is not insured to any one single person; it is left to the precarious and fickle will of man: and it is possible, according to that scheme, that not one

man may be saved; nay, it is impossible that any one man should be saved by the power of his own free-will. Let it be judged then, which scheme is most merciful and kind to men, and most worthy of the God of love and goodness. Upon the whole, the doctrine of reprobation, though set in so ill a light, and represented in such an odious manner, is a defensible doctrine when stated and cleared; nor are we afraid to own and maintain it.

This *cloven foot* does not affright us; so Mr. *Wesley* calls (Predestination Calmly Considered, p. 11), as he thinks, beautifully, but most blasphemously, an act of the divine will; nor is this a *millstone that hangs about the neck of our hypothesis*, as he no doubt very elegantly expresses it (Predestination Calmly Considered, p. 77); but let me tell him, it will be his distinguishing mercy, if it is not a millstone about his own neck. From hence he wanders to free-will and irresistible grace: sometimes he is for free-will, sometimes for free-grace; sometimes for resistible, and sometimes for irresistible grace. When he can agree with himself, he will appear in a better light, and may be more worthy of notice. What he says of free-will on the one side and reprobation on the other, as agreeing or disagreeing with the perfections of God, may be reduced to one or other of the above objections, where they have had their answer.

It is scarcely worth my while to observe what he says of the covenant of grace (Predestination Calmly Considered, p. 52); which he owns he has no understanding of; and I believe him, as that "God the Father made a covenant with his Son before the world began, wherein the Son agreed to suffer such and such things and the Father to give him such and such souls for a recompense, in consequence of which these must be saved." And then he asks where it is written? And in what part of Scripture this covenant is to be found? Now not to inform or instruct Mr. *Wesley*, but for the sake of such who are willing to be informed and instructed, read Psalm 40:6-8; Isaiah 49:1-6 and 53:10-12; Psalm 89:3, 4, 28-36, in which will appear plain traces and footsteps of a covenant, or agreement, of a stipulation and re-stipulation, between the Father and the Son; in which the Father proposes a work to his Son, and calls him to it, even the redemption of his people; to which the Son agrees, and says, *Lo I come to do thy will, O my God!* and for a recompense of his being an offering for sin, and pouring out his soul unto death; it is promised he should see his seed and prolong his days, and have a portion divided him with the great, and a spoil with the strong. And that theme was such a covenant subsisting before the world began is clear; for could there be a Mediator set up from everlasting, as there was, and a promise of life before the world began made to Christ and put into his hand, and all spiritual blessings provided, and all grace given to his people in him, before the foundation of the world; and yet no covenant in being? See Proverbs 8:23; Titus 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:1, 9 and Ephesians 1:3. The covenant of circumcision made with Abraham, and that made with the *Israelites* on mount Sinai, are no instances of the covenant of grace; but are covenants that are waxen old, and vanished away; and do not so concern us who are not under the law, but under grace: but however these covenants were conditional to them that were under them; the covenant of grace is absolute and unconditional to us, being made with Christ our head, who has fulfilled all the conditions of it.

But I proceed now to vindicate what I have written on the subject of the saints *Final Perseverance*, from the exceptions made unto it. Mr. *Wesley* says (Predestination Calmly Considered, p. 57), "this is so pleasing an opinion, so agreeable to flesh and blood, so suitable to whatever of nature remains in those who have tasted the grace of God, that I see nothing but the mighty power of God, which can restrain any who hear it from closing with it." Strange! that the doctrine of perseverance in

grace and holiness, for no other perseverance do we plead for, should be so pleasing and agreeable to corrupt nature, besides much who have tasted the grace of God, as they have a principle of grace in them, cannot easily give into a doctrine which manifestly gratifies corrupt nature, but would oppose and reject it; surely it must come with very great evidence, that nothing but the power of God can restrain from closing with it; and which they close with, not to indulge their corruptions, but to encourage their faith and hope, and to promote holiness of heart and life; to which they are induced both by arguments, from experience, and from Scripture; the former it seems, weigh but little with those who believe the possibility of falling; and the latter are not plain and cogent. There are some Scriptures, it is said, against perseverance, and determine the other way; the arguments from them have been considered in a former treatise; to which Mr. *Wesley* has made some exceptions, and to which I shall now make a reply.

The *first* text produced against the perseverance of the saints, is Ezekiel 18:24. *When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, &c.* This passage, and the whole context, I have observed wholly and solely regard the house of *Israel*, and is impertinently produced. Mr. *Wesley* calls upon me to prove this. What proof would he have? Let him read the chapter, and he will see it with his own eyes; the house of *Israel* is mentioned by name, and that only; the addresses are only made to them; the expostulations and reasonings are only with them; and the exhortations are unto them; the dispute is between God and them, the charge against God is brought by them; and the answer to it is returned to them. Let Mr. *Wesley* disprove this if he can; it lies upon him to point out any other person or persons than the house of *Israel*, to whom any passage in the chapter is directed. The righteousness of the righteous man, spoken of in it, I have affirmed to be his own righteousness, and not the righteousness of faith nor is there the least hint of the sanctifying grace of the Spirit in the account of it. To disprove this, Mr. *Wesley* refers to verse 31. *Cast away from you all your transgressions—make you a new heart, &c.* Monstrous! This is a most evident proof that the *Jews* had no true righteousness; that notwithstanding their pretensions to it, they had not cast away their transgressions, and were without any inward principle of grace or holiness. I further observe, that what is said of the righteous man, admitting him truly righteous, is only a supposition. This Mr. *Wesley* flatly denies. But if he reads over the chapter to which he directs, he will find the facts supposed and not asserted, *verse 5, If a man be just, &c. verse 10, if he beget a son—that doth not any of these duties, &c. verse 24, If he beget a son that seeth all his father's sins, &c.* and in the passage under consideration, *verse 24, When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness; that is, if he should; and so it is rendered in the Vulgate Latin version, and by Pagnine, and is the sense of our own translation; for a supposition is as well expressed by when, an adverb of time, as by the conjunction if: For instance; when Mr. Wesley writes more to the purpose, he will deserve more attention; that is, if he should. Whereas I explained the death in verse 26, of one and the same death, a temporal death for sin; it is no unusual thing for one and the same thing to be expressed by different words; and which may be the case here, without any force upon the text, or making it speak nonsense; for which I have given a reason that is not taken notice of: and that this death is a temporal, and not an eternal one, is clear, because it was now upon them, and of which they complained, and from whence they might be delivered by repentance and reformation; and which, I say again, cannot be said of eternal death, when a person is once under it. Upon the whole, as this chapter relates not to eternal salvation or damnation, the passage from it is an insufficient proof of the apostasy of real saints.*

The *second* text of Scripture brought in favor of the said, doctrine, is 1 Timothy 1:19, *holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck*: in which I have observed, that it does not appear, that these men referred to, whose names are mentioned in the next verse, ever had their hearts purified by faith; but were ungodly men, and so no instances of the apostasy of true believers. To this no reply is made. I further observe, that putting away a good conscience, does not necessarily suppose they had it, but rather that they had it not; which I support; by the use of the same word in Acts 13:46, where the Jews are said to *put* the word of God *from* them. This instance Mr. *Wesley* says makes full against me, it being undeniable they had the word of God till they put it away. But this I must deny; they never had it; they never received it, never gave their assent to it, or embraced it, but contradicted and blasphemed it; and so is an instance of the use of the word to my purpose. It is owned by him that men may have a good conscience in some sense, without true faith; but such is not that the apostle speaks of, because he exhorts *Timothy* to *hold* it. Be it so; yet it does not appear that these men had such a conscience that arises from a heart purified by faith; putting it away, we see, does not prove it; and, besides, it deserves consideration, that it is not said they made shipwreck of a good conscience, which it does not appear they even had, but of faith which they once professed, even the doctrine of faith: but that faith means only the doctrine of faith, wants better proof, he says. What proof would he have? I have shewn that the phrase is never used but of the doctrine of faith, and have pointed to the places where it is so used; nay have pointed out the particular doctrine of faith they made shipwreck of. It lies upon him to disprove this. From the whole it appears, that this also is an insufficient proof of the apostasy of real saints.

The *third* text of Scripture insisted on as a proof of the doctrine, is Romans 11:17-24, concerning the breaking off of the branches, and cutting off those that are grafted into the olive-tree; which olive-tree I understand not of the invisible church, but of the outward gospel-church-state, or the visible gospel-church. This Mr. *Wesley* says, I *affirm*, and he *proves* the contrary. But though I affirm, yet not without a reason for it; a reason which he takes no notice of, nor makes any reply to: and how does he prove the contrary, that it is the invisible church? Why, because it consists of holy believers which none but the invisible church does. But does not the visible church consist of such? Are there no holy believers in it? Read over the epistles to the visible churches, and you will find the members of them are called holy and believer's, saints and faithful in Christ Jesus. I observe that those signified by the broken branches, were never the believers in Christ, and so no instances of the apostasy of such. To this he replies, That he was not speaking of the *Jews*. Very well, but I was; but of the *Gentiles*, exhorted to *continue in his goodness*, and so true believers; and yet liable to be *cut off*. So they might be, though it does not necessarily follow from the apostle's exhortation; which is to be understood not of the goodness of love, and favor of God; but of the goodness of a gospel-church state, the ordinances of it, and an abiding in them, and walking worthy of them; or otherwise they were liable to be cut off from the church-state in which they were. This is said to be a forced and unnatural construction, and requires some argument to support it. But what else could they be cut off from? If the olive-tree in which they are said to be engrafted, is not the invisible, but the visible church, as is proved by an argument not answered; then the cutting off from the olive-tree, must be a cutting off from that. And whereas there is a strong intimation that the *Jews*, the broken branches, may be grafted in again; why may not those be grafted in again which are cut off, when restored by repentance, which is often the case. It remains then, that this passage of Scripture does not in the least militate against the final perseverance of the saints.

The *fourth* text of Scripture quoted as against the doctrine of perseverance, is John 15:1-5, concerning the branches in Christ the vine, which abide not, are taken away, are cast forth and withered, and are cast into the fire and burned. I observe that there are two sorts of branches in Christ, the one fruitful, the other unfruitful; the one in him by regenerating grace, the other only by profession; of the latter are all the above things said, not of the former. This Mr. *Wesley* says is begging the question, and taking for granted the point to be proved: far from it, I answer to the instance alleged, by distinguishing the different branches in the vine; I prove the distinction from the text and context; as well as illustrate it by time instances of the churches in *Judea* and *Thessalonica*, being said to be *in* Christ; all the members of which cannot be thought to be really in him, but by profession. There are some that never bore fruit, and so never gave any evidence of their being true believers, and consequently can be no instances of the apostasy of such. There are others that bring forth fruit and are purged, that they may bring forth more fruit, and whose fruit remain, and are instances of perseverance. Let it be proved, if it can, that any of those who never brought forth any fruit, that we read of, were true believers in Christ; or ever received true grace or life from him, that are said to be cast out and burnt; and that any of those who brought forth fruit and were purged and pruned by the Father of Christ, that they might bring forth more fruit, ever withered away and were lost. Till this is done, this passage will be of no service for the apostasy, or against the perseverance of the saints.

The *fifth* text of Scripture pressed into this argument is, 2 Peter 2:20, 21, concerning those that have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Christ, being entangled therein and overcome. Of whom I observe, that it does not appear that those persons had an inward experimental knowledge of Christ; which is what ought to be proved, or else it furnishes out no argument against the perseverance of real saints. Had it been such, I add, they could not have lost it. This Mr. *Wesley* calls begging the question. It might seem so, if my argument had rested here; but I gave reasons why such a knowledge cannot be lost: which he conceals and takes no notice of; as the promise of God, that such shall follow on to know him, and the declaration of Christ, that eternal life is inseparably connected with such knowledge (Hosea 6:3; John 15:3). *Escaping the pollutions of the world* does not prove the persons to have such knowledge, or to be real saints, since it signifies no more, I say, than an outward reformation. Here, he says, I aim at no proof at all. Let him make more of it, if he can. He owns that these persons might be called dogs and swine before their profession of religion, and after their departure from it, but not whilst under it: but unless it can be proved that they passed under a real change, and were truly converted, which their having knowledge and escaping the pollutions of the world are no proofs of; they might as well deserve the appellation during the time of their profession, as before and after. If any thing is done to any profession from this instance, it should be proved that these men had an inward spiritual and experimental knowledge; that from dogs and swine they became the sheep of Christ, and had the nature of such, and from the sheep of Christ became dogs and swine again; or it can never be thought to be any proof of the final and total falling away of true believers.

The *Sixth* text produced in favor of the saint's apostasy, is Hebrews 6:4-6, which speaks of enlightened persons, and such that have tasted the heavenly gift, &c. falling away. Upon which I observe, that the words contain only a supposition, *if they fall away*. Mr. *Wesley* says, there is no *if* in the original. I reply, though it is not expressed, it is implied, and the sense is the same, as if it was; and that the words in the original lie literally thus; *It is impossible that those who were once enlightened—και παραπεσοντας, and they falling away, to renew them again to repentance;* that

is, should they fall away, or if they fall away. Here Mr. *Wesley* rises up in great wrath, and asks, "Shall a man lie for God? Either you or I do;" and avers, that the words do not literally lie thus; and that they are translated by him, and *have fallen away*, as literally as the *English* tongue will bear; and calls upon all that understand *Greek* to judge between us. I am well content, and extremely desirous they should, and even willing to be determined by them, which is the most literal version, mine, which renders it as a participle as it is; or his, which renders it as a *verb*, which it is not. I am supported in mine by the authority of the great and learned Dr. *Owen* (On Perseverance, c. 17), whose knowledge of the *Greek* tongue no one will scruple, that is acquainted with his writings: he says, that *verbum de verbo*, or literally the words lie in the text, *and they falling away*, just as I have rendered them. Take some instances of the participle of the same tense, both in the simple theme of the word, and in other compounds, as so rendered by our translators; *πεσων* (1 Cor. 14:25), *falling down* on his face; *προσπεσουσα* (Luke 8:47), *falling down* before him; *περιπεσοντες* (Acts 27:41), *falling into* a place where two seas met. Did these learned men lie for God? Mr. *Wesley's* quibble is, because the participle is not of the *present* but of the *aorist*: the instances now given are of the same tense. Every one that has learned his *Greek Grammar* knows that the *aorist* or *indefinite*, as he names it, is so called, because it is *undetermined* as to time, being used both of time present, and of time past (Of which see instances in Dugard's *Greek Grammar*, p. 126); and when of the latter, it is left undetermined, whether just now past, or sometime ago, is meant, but as the circumstances of the place shew: but let it be rendered either way, either in the present or past, the sense is the same, and the condition is implied; be it *and they falling away*, or *and they having fallen away*; for one or other it must be to render it literally; that is, should they fall away, or should they have fallen away; or, in other words, if they should. And now why all this wrath, rudeness, and indecency? Is this the *calm* Considerer, as the title of his book promises? The man is pinched and rages. This puts me in mind of a story of a country fellow listening with great attention to a *Latin* disputation; which a gentleman observing, stepped to him, and said, Friend you had better go about your business, than stand here idling away your time to hear what you do not understand. To which he replied, *I am not so great a fool neither*, but I know *who is angry*; suggesting by the temper of the disputants, one of them being very angry, he knew who had the better, and who the worst of the argument. And since Mr. *Wesley* has brought it to this dilemma, that either he or I must lie for God; I am very unwilling to take it to myself, seeing no reason for it: and therefore without a compliment, must leave it to him to get out, and off, of it as he can. But to return to the argument; let it be a supposition or a fact contained in the words; the question is, who these persons supposed, or said to fall away are, and from what they fell? There is nothing in the characters of them, as has been observed, which shew them to be regenerated persons, real saints, and true believers in Christ. This ought to be proved, ere they can be allowed to be instances of the apostasy of such; whereas they are distinguished from them, and are opposed to them, verses 7-9. There is nothing in the account of them, but what may be said of a *Balaam*, who had his eyes open and saw the vision of the Almighty, and of such who are only doctrinally enlightened; or of a *Herod* that heard *John* gladly, and of the stony-ground hearers, who received the word with joy; or of a *Judas* who had no doubt both the ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and a power of performing miraculous works, called the powers of the world to come, or the gospel dispensation. So that from hence nothing can be concluded against the perseverance of the saints.

The *seventh* passage of Scripture brought into this controversy, is Hebrews 10:38. *The just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*: But very impertinently; since he that is said to live by faith, and he that is supposed to draw back, is not one

and the same person. Mr. *Wesley* asks, "Who is it then? Can any one draw back from faith, who never came to it?" To which I answer, though he cannot draw back from faith he never had, yet he may draw back from a profession of faith he has made. In order to make it appear, that one and the same person is meant, Mr. *Wesley*, finding fault with our translation, renders the words thus: *If the just man that lives by faith draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* This translation I call inaccurate. He desires to know wherein; I will tell him. *Εαν, if,* is by force removed from its proper place, even from one sentence back to another; inserting the word *that* before *live* is doing violence to the text; rendering *ζυσεται, that lives,* as if it was of the present tense, when it is future, and should be *shall live.* Leaving out *και, and* or *but,* which distinguishes two propositions; so confounding them and making them one. And after all, were one and the same person meant, it is only a supposition, which, I say again, proves no matter of fact; let Mr. *Wesley* shew that it does if he can: it is a clear case, that the just man in the text, and he that draws back, are two sorts of persons; it is most manifest, and beyond all contradiction, that in the original text in Habakkuk 2;4 the man whose *soul is lifted up* with pride and conceit of himself, *and is not upright in him,* has not the truth of grace in him, is the person who both according to the Apostle and the *Seventy* is supposed to draw back; from whom *the just man that lives by faith* is distinguished, and to whom he is opposed: and by the Apostle two sorts of persons are all along spoken of in the context, both before and after; besides, that these two must be different and not the same, is evident, since it is most surely promised the just man, that he *shall live;* which would not be true of him, if he drew back to perdition. So that this also is an insufficient testimony against the perseverance of the saints.

The *eight* text of Scripture made use of to prove the Apostasy of true believers, is Hebrews 10:29, *Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing.* The stress of this proof lies upon the person being *sanctified with the blood of the covenant,* who is supposed to be the same that *trod under foot the Son of God.* But I have observed that the antecedent to the relative *he* is the Son of God, and so consequently he, and not the apostate, is said to be sanctified with the blood of the covenant; wherefore the words are no proof of the apostasy of truly sanctified persons. Mr. *Wesley* says I forgot to look at the original, or my memory fails. Neither, is the case. However, I have looked again to refresh my memory, had it failed; and find indeed other words going before, but no other substantive but *υιος,* the Son of God, to whom the relative *he* can refer; and that this does refer to the Son of God in the clause immediately preceding, is not a singular opinion of mine that learned *Dutchman Gomar* (Comment in Heb. 10:29), and our very learned countrymen Dr. *Lightfoot* (Harmony, &c. p. 341), and Dr. *Owen* (On Perseverance, p. 432), of the last age, and Dr. *Ridgley* (Body of Divinity, Vol. II, p. 125), of the present, are of the same sentiment. But admitting that it refers to the apostate, since this may be understood of his being sanctified or separated from others by a profession of religion, by church-membership and partaking of the Lord's Supper, in which *the blood of the covenant* is represented; and of his being sanctified by it in his own esteem and in the esteem of others, when he was not inwardly sanctified by the Spirit; this can be no proof of the apostasy of a real saint. It should be proved, that this sanctification is to be understood of inward sanctification, or else it proves not the point in debate. Mr. *Wesley* thinks it may be so understood, and that for this reason; because the words immediately following are, *and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace.* Surprising; that a man's having done despite to the Spirit of grace, should be a proof of his having been inwardly sanctified by him; which might more reasonably be thought to be a proof of the very reverse. So

then it remains, that this passage also does not militate against the doctrine of the saints final perseverance.

Mr. *Wesley* has thought fit to add several other texts, which he proposes to consideration, as proving that a true believer may finally fall; but as he has not advanced any argument upon them, I shall not enter into any examination of them, and of the weight they bear in this controversy; and besides, they being such as either do not respect true believers, about whom the question is, or only them falling from some degree of grace and steadfastness of it, and do not design a total and final falling away; or else they only intend persons receiving the doctrine of grace and a falling from that, and so are nothing to the purpose. And unless something more to the purpose is offered, than yet has been, I shall not think myself under any obligation to attend unto it.

TRUTH DEFENDED:

BEING AN

ANSWER TO AN ANONYMOUS PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED,

Some Doctrines in the Supralapsarian Scheme impartially examined by the Word of God.

Lately to my hands an anonymous pamphlet, entitled, *Some Doctrines in the Supralapsarian Scheme impartially examined by the Word of God*. The author of it is right, in making the word of God the rule and standard by which doctrines and schemes are to be tried and examined. *To the law and to the testimony; if men speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* (Isa. 8:20) He sets out with large declarations of his regard to the sacred writings, which to swell the performance are too often repeated, even *ad nauseam*; and yet, in his very first paragraph, drops a sentence not very agreeable to them, if any sense can be made of it: "All opinions and maxims, he says; that correspond not with this divine rule, we should either entirely reject, or at least refuse to admit as articles of our faith." But why not entirely reject them, without any hesitation? why this disjunctive proposition? why this softening clause added? If it can be thought to be so, or to convey a different idea from the former, as it is designed it should; though I should think, to refuse to admit doctrines and maxims as articles of faith, that do not correspond with the divine rule, is the same thing as to reject them as articles of faith. The man seems to write in the midst of hurry and surprise. Since he has met with schemes and opinions so exceedingly shocking and stunning, it would have been advisable for him to have sat down and waited until he was better come to, and more composed, before he put pen to paper, and committed his frightful apprehensions to writing. And indeed one would have thought he has had time enough to have recovered himself from the surprise he has met with, seeing it is near *four* years ago, since the more modern pieces he has taken notice of were published to the world.

I. The examination begins with the foundation principle of the Supralapsarians, as he calls it, that "God chose his people without considering them as fallen creatures." He does well to begin with their foundation-doctrine; for if he can demolish the foundation, the superstructure must fall; if he can pluck up what he supposes to be the root of many false opinions, the branches which grow from it will die in course. But though this received opinion of theirs, as our author styles it, is a denomination one, or that from which they are called Supralapsarians, yet it is far from being a foundation principle, or a fundamental article of faith with them; nor do they consider this point, in which they differ from others, as the principal one in the doctrine of election: They and the Supralapsarians are agreed in the main points respecting that doctrine; as, that it is an eternal act of God; that it is of certain particular persons; that it is unconditional, irrespective of faith, holiness, and good works, as causes and conditions of it; and that it entirely springs from the good-will and pleasure of God. The Contra-Remonstrants were not all of a mind concerning the object of predestination, but did not think it worth their while to divide upon that account. Nay, some of them were of opinion that it was not necessary to be determined, whether God, in choosing men,

considered them as fallen, or as not yet fallen provided it was but allowed that God in choosing considered men in an equal state, so as that he that is chosen was not considered by God either of himself, or by his own merit, or by any gracious estimation, more worthy than he who is not chosen. That famous Supralapsarian, Dr. *Twiss*, declares that "as for the ordering of God's decrees, upon which only arise the different opinions touching the object of predestination, it is merely *apex logicus*, a point of logic." The decrees of God may be distinguished into the decree of the end, and the decree of the means, that they may the better be conceived of by our finite understandings; which are not able to consider all things at once, and together, as they lie in the divine mind, but of one thing after another; and that without dividing and separating of God's decrees, or supposing any priority or posteriority in him. Now the decree of the end must be considered before the decree of the means; and that what is first in intention, is last in execution, and so *vice versa*. Let then eternal life and glory, or a state of everlasting communion with God, be the end of election, as it is with respect to man, then the creation, permission of *Adam's* fall, and the recovery out of it, are the means in order to that end. It follows, that in the decree of the end, man could not be considered as a fallen creature, but as yet not created; because the creation and the permission of the fall belong to the decree of the means, which is an order of nature after the decree of the end. For if God first decreed to create man, and to permit him to fall, and then decreed to bring him to a state of eternal life and happiness; according to this known rule, that what is first in intention is last in execution, this strange absurdity will follow, that man will be first brought into a state of eternal life and happiness, and then created and permitted to fall. Let the end be the manifestation of God's glory, which certainly is the supreme end of election, then the means are creation, permission of sin, redemption, sanctification, and in a word, complete salvation; which though they are materially many, yet make up but one formal decree, called the decree of the means. Now according to the former rule, the intention of the end must be first, and then the intention of the means; and, consequently, man cannot be considered in the decree of the end, the manifestation of God's glory, as yet created and fallen; because the creation and permission of sin belong to the decree of the means, which in order of nature is after the decree of the end. But if, on the contrary, God first decreed to create man and permit him to fall, and then decreed to manifest the glory of his grace and mercy, in his eternal salvation; according to the above rule, that what is first in intention is last in execution, and so *vice versa*, it will follow, that the glory of God's grace and mercy are first manifested in the eternal salvation of man, and then he is created and suffered to fall. Likewise it is to be observed, that the several things mentioned in the decree of the means, creation, permission of sin, and salvation, are not to be considered as subordinate, but as co-ordinate means, or as making up an entire, complete medium. We are not to suppose that God decreed to create man that he might permit him to fall, or that he decreed to permit him to fall, that he might save him: but that he decreed to create him, permit him to fall, and to save him notwithstanding his fall, that he might glorify his grace and mercy. Nor are we to conceive of them after this manner, that God first decreed to create man, and then decreed to permit him to fall; for it would follow that man, in the execution of these decrees, is first permitted to fall, and then he is created: Nor thus, that God first decreed to create man, and permit him to fall, and then decreed to save him; for, according to the former rule, man would first be saved, and then created and permitted to fall. These are some of the reasonings of the Supralapsarians; particularly of Dr. *Twiss*, as may be seen in his *Vindiciæ*, and in his *Riches of God's love, against Hord*. This poor man, that takes upon him to write against the Supralapsarians, would do well to try his skill in unraveling and destroying this kind of reasoning: But alas his capacity will never reach it. I am afraid the very mention of these things will increase

his surprise and fright. However, since he has taken upon him to object to this opinion of the Supralapsarians, it will be proper to hear what he has to say. And,

1. He proposes to shew, that this doctrine is destitute of support from the scripture, and tells us, he has *often wondered* what part of sacred writ can be produced to support it; and that he has been searching and trying to know the language of the divine word concerning election; and shall therefore mention, and in a few words, comment upon those scriptures which, says he, *I judge, are only necessary* to be considered in this dispute; and these are, 1 Peter 1:2, Ephesians 1:3, 4 and Romans 8:29. If the man is really ignorant, as I am inclined to think he is, and does not know what parts of sacred writ the Supralapsarians have produced to support their doctrine, he has acted a weak part in meddling with the controversy; if he does know, he has acted a worse in concealing of them. He promises to mention and comment on those scriptures, which *he judges* are *only necessary* to be considered in this dispute; but he ought to have mentioned the scriptures, which the men he opposes judge necessary to be considered in this dispute; and to have shewn the misapplication of them, and that they are not pertinent to their purpose; is this impartially to try and examine, by the word of God, the Supralapsarian scheme, as his title promises? every one knows, that knows any thing of this controversy, that the scriptural part of it is about the sense of the *ninth* chapter of the epistle to the *Romans*; and the question is, whether the Sublapsarian, or the Supralapsarian scheme, concerning the objects of election and reprobation, is most agreeable to the sense of the apostle in that chapter; particularly, whether the Supralapsarian scheme, of God's choosing some, and leaving others, considered as unfallen, as having done neither good nor evil, does not best agree with the account the apostle gives in verses 11-13 of the election of *Jacob*, and rejection of *Esau*; and more especially whether it does not best agree with the same apostle's account in verse 21, of the potter's making *of the same lump one vessel* unto honour, *and another unto dishonour*? This author should have mentioned these scriptures, and commented upon them, and answered the arguments of the Supralapsarians from them; in particular, those of that eminent Supralapsarian, *Theodore Beza*, in his notes upon the last of these *texts*, which I shall transcribe for this man's sake; and he may try whether he is capable of answering of them. "Those who, by the mass, or lump, says this great man, understand mankind corrupted, do not satisfy me in the explanation of this place: for first, it seems to me, that the phrase of informed matter, neither sufficiently agrees with mankind, either made or corrupted. Moreover, if the apostle had considered mankind as corrupted, he would not have said, that some vessels were made to honour, and some to dishonour but rather, that seeing all the vessels would be fit for dishonour, some were left in that dishonour, and others translated from that dishonour to honour. Lastly, if *Paul* had not rose to the highest degree, he had not satisfied the question objected; for it would always have been queried, whether that corruption came by chance, or whether, indeed, according to the purpose of God, and therefore the same difficulty would recur. I say, therefore, *Paul* using this most elegant simile, alludes to the creation of *Adam*, and rises up to the eternal purpose of God, who, before he created mankind, decreed of his own mere will and pleasure, to manifest his glory, both in saving of some whom he knew, in a way of mercy, and in destroying others, whom he also knew, in righteous judgment. And verily, unless we judge this to be the case, God will be greatly injured; because he will not be sufficiently wise, who first creates men, and looks upon them corrupt, and then appoints to what purpose he has created them: nor sufficiently powerful, if when he has taken up a purpose concerning them, he is hindered by another, so that he obtains not what he willed; nor sufficiently constant, if, willingly and freely he takes up a new purpose, after his workmanship is corrupted."

As for the scriptures mentioned by our author, as opposing the Supralapsarian scheme, I shall not trouble the reader, by observing the mangled work he makes with them, and the low and mean comments he makes upon them; I shall only say, that it will be readily owned, that sanctification, obedience, and conformity to the image of God and Christ, are things included in the decree of election: but do these things necessarily suppose, that the persons whom they concern, were in that decree considered as impure, unholy, disobedient, and in a want of conformity to the image of God and Christ? were not the elect angels chosen to sanctification, obedience, and conformity to the image of God? will any one say, that these things supposed them to be, or that in the decree of election, they were considered as impure, unholy, disobedient, and in a want of conformity to the image of God? But, admitting that these things, with respect to men, suppose them in such a case; it should be observed that they belong to the decree of the means, and therefore fall short of proving that God, in the decree of the end, or in decreeing men to eternal life and happiness, for the glorifying of himself, considered them in such a state; since the decree of the end, in order of nature, is before the decree of the means; unless we can suppose the all-wise being to act in such manner as no wise man would, namely, first fix upon the means, and then appoint the end. Now if God first decreed to create man, permit his fall, and then sanctify and conform him to the image of his Son, before he decreed to glorify himself in his salvation, the consequence will be, that God is first glorified in the salvation of man; and after that, man is created, suffered to fall, is sanctified, and conformed to the image of Christ; because what is first in intention, is last in execution. There is one thing more I would observe, and that is, that this author delivers it as the settled opinion of the Supralapsarians, "that we were not elected as holy and obedient beings, but to the end we might be such:" And I am much mistaken if this is not the settled opinion of all Sublapsarians, except such as are in the Arminian scheme. But what is this mentioned for? why, to shew that the Supralapsarians are inconsistent with themselves, and guilty of so flagrant a contradiction, as is not to be reconciled by any. But where does it lie? "why, whereas they affirm, that we were not the Almighty's choice, because we were holy; but that he did choose us to be made holy, and yet in that choice, beheld us free from all defilements and deformity." But this author must be told, if he does not know it, that the Supralapsarians, in considering men not yet created, and so not fallen, as the objects of election, suppose them neither good nor had, righteous or wicked, holy or unholy, but in the pure, that is in the mere mass of creature-ship, not yet made, much less corrupted, and as having done neither good nor evil; now is this such a flagrant contradiction, never to be reconciled, that men considered neither as holy or unholy, as obedient or disobedient, should be chosen to holiness and obedience?

2. This author proceeds to shew, that "the doctrine of the Supralapsarians is repugnant to their own opinion of God's eternal foreknowledge, according to which he was pleased to make his choice." To which I reply; that the Supralapsarians will readily own, that the omniscient Jehovah did, at one view, see, and perfectly behold, whatsoever would come to pass, throughout all ages of time; and that he has an universal prescience of all creatures and things, in their different states and circumstances; but then they will deny that election proceeds upon, or that God has been pleased to make his choice according to this his general and eternal prescience. It is true, that those who are elected, are elected according to the *foreknowledge of God the Father*; (1 Peter 1:2; Rom. 8:29) *and whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son*. But these passages are not to be understood of the universal prescience and foreknowledge of God; for then all men would be elected and predestinated, for *whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate*; but all men are neither conformed to the image of Christ, nor predestinated to be so; it remains, that

the foreknowledge, according to which election and predestination proceed, is God's special foreknowledge of his own people, and which is no other than his everlasting love to them, which is the source and spring of his choice of them; and the meaning is, that *whom he foreknew*, that is, in his eternal mind knew, owned, approved of, loved with an everlasting love; *he chose* them to salvation, *and predestinated* them to be conformed to the image of his Son.

3. This writer goes on to observe, that "this doctrine of God's choosing his people without considering them as fallen creatures, tends to lessen the infinite grace and mercy of God in their election." I reply; that though it has been a matter of controversy between the Supralapsarians, and others, whether election is an act of mercy, yet not whether it is an act of grace; they, with the scriptures, (Rom. 11:5, 6) affirm, that election is *of grace*, springs from the sovereign grace and good pleasure of God, and is not influenced by, or to be ascribed to the works of men; but then they cannot observe, that it is ever said to be of mercy. Regeneration is ascribed to the mercy of God, 1 Peter 1:3, so is forgiveness of sins, Luke 1:77, yea, our whole salvation, Titus 3:5, but never election, nor that, but *salvation is* said to be *of God, that sheweth, mercy*, Rom. 9:15. Their reasons, among many others, too many to mention, why it cannot be an act of mercy, are, because the angels are elected, but not of mercy; the human nature of Christ is elected, but not of mercy. They argue, that supposing it should be admitted, that election is an act of mercy, it must either be *actus elicitus*, an actual will of being merciful, or *actus imperatus*, the act of shewing mercy itself; not the latter, because that supposes persons not merely foreknown as miserable, but in actual being, and in real misery, and is a transient act upon them; whereas election puts nothing in the persons chosen: if it is an act of mercy, it must be the former, God's actual will of being merciful; but this does not necessarily presuppose misery, or miserable objects, it being internal, and immanent in God, and the same with his mercy itself; and would have been the same, nor would God have been the less merciful, if the world had not been, and there had never been a miserable object on whom to display it. The act of election does not presuppose men sinners and in miserable, nor indeed can it; for should it presuppose sin, it would presuppose the decree of the permission of sin; and the permission of sin would be first in God's intention, than man's salvation of God's mercy, and consequently would be last in execution; than which nothing can be thought of more absurd. Besides though election is not an act of mercy, yet it is far from having any tendency to lessen the mercy of God, and does, even according to the Supralapsarian scheme, abundantly provide for the glorifying of it; since, according to that, the decree of the end is, the glorifying of the grace and mercy of God, tempered with justice; The decree of the means provides for the bringing about of this end, which includes creation, the permission of sin, the mission of Christ, sanctification, and complete salvation; so that the elect of God may well be called *vessels of mercy*; since through such means, they are brought to eternal life and glory; though, in the decree of the end, they are considered as not yet created and fallen, than which nothing can more tend to advance the free grace and mercy of God.

4. This author urges, that "this way of stating election strikes severely against the justice of God, in passing by the rest of mankind, not included in this decree; for hereby they are rejected as creatures only, and not as sinful creatures." It is very strange, that election should severely strike against the justice of God, when, according to this way of stating it, it is a choice of persons to eternal life and happiness for the glorifying of the grace and mercy of God, mixed with his justice; and so as much provides in end and means, for the honour of divine justice, as for the glory of grace and mercy: and it is stranger still, that election should be a passing by the rest of mankind, not included in this

decree: I suppose he means reprobation; for he has an extraordinary hand at putting one thing for another. Now let it be observed, that though the Supralapsarians do not consider reprobation as an act of justice, but of sovereignty, yet not of injustice; nor does their way of stating it at all strike at the justice of God. They suppose, that God, in the act of preterition, considered the objects of it as not yet created and fallen; and determined, when created, to leave them to their own will, and deny them that grace which he is not obliged to give: and where is the justice of all this? But then, though they do not premise sin to the consideration of the act or preterition, yet they always premise it to the decree of damnation; which this author, as is generally done, confounds together. They say, that as God damns no man, but for sin, so he decreed to damn no man but for sin: and surely this cannot be thought to strike severely against the justice of God. It is true, they do not look upon sin to be the cause of the decree of reprobation, *quoad actum volentis*, which can only be the will of God; but *quoad res volitas*, the cause of the thing willed, damnation. Besides, this way of stating the decrees of election and reprobation, respecting men, can no more strike at the justice of God, than the way of stating these decrees, respecting angels, does: which can not be done in another way: for the elect angels could never be considered as fallen; and therefore the other angels, who were passed by, and rejected at the same time, must be rejected as creatures only, and not as sinful creatures; unless it can be thought that the angels were not chosen and passed by at the same time, nor then considered in a like state; and that God chose some of them upon their foreseen holiness and obedience, and rejected the rest upon their foreseen rebellion and disobedience: and if so, why may not the election and rejection of men be thought to proceed upon the same foot? which none, that I know of, will come in to, but such that are in the Arminian scheme. This theme our author says he has been at ways cautious of meddling with, lest he should *darken counsel for want of knowledge*; and it is pity he meddled with it now, since he discovers so much ignorance of it: who can forbear thinking of the common proverb? Thus having considered what he calls the foundation doctrine of the Supralapsarians, he proceeds,

II. To examine some of the doctrines which grow from this root, as the natural offspring of it, and appear with the same complection; and begins,

1. With their doctrine of eternal justification. What this author says, I am persuaded, will never meet with general credit, "that eternal justification is the natural offspring of the Supralapsarian doctrine, respecting the objects of election, not considered as fallen creatures." He goes all along, I observe, upon a false notion, that whatever is thought, or said to be done in eternity is a Supralapsarian doctrine: whereas the Sublapsarians themselves allow election to be from eternity, before the foundation of the world, and so believe the fall of *Adam*, though not without the consideration of it; and in this they differ from the Supralapsarians. I know a reverend Divine, now living in this city of *London*, who, if I mistake not, reckons himself among the Supralapsarians, and says, that they dig deepest into the gospel; and yet is a strenuous opposer of justification from eternity; and even before faith: on the other hand, there have been some who have thought, that the object of election is man fallen, and yet have been for justification before faith. For my own part, I must confess, I never, considered justification from eternity, any other than a Sublapsarian doctrine, proceeding upon the surety-ship engagements of Christ, and his future satisfaction and righteousness; upon which foot the Old-Testament saints were openly justified, and went to heaven long before the satisfaction was really made, or the justifying righteousness brought in; and, indeed, if the objects of justification are *the ungodly*, as the scripture represents them to be, they must be considered as fallen creatures; However, if the doctrine of eternal justification is the natural

offspring of the former, and appears with the same complection, and is to be maintained with equal force of argument, we have no reason to be ashamed of it: and I am sure we have no reason to be in any pain on the account of the opposition this doughty writer makes unto it: he says, we have exceeded all the bounds of revelation in our inquiries after it, and then barely mentions three or four places of scriptures, which speak of justification by faith; and concludes, that therefore there is no justification *before* it; an extraordinary way of arguing indeed! When justification by faith no ways contradicts justification before it; nay, justification perceived, known, enjoyed by faith, supposes justification before it; for how should any have that sense, perception, and comfort of their justification by it, if there was no justification before it? He proceeds to observe the order or chain of salvation, in Romans 8:30, where calling is represented as prior to justification; an objection I have formerly answered in my *Doctrine of Justification*, to which I refer the reader, and take the opportunity of observing, that neither this author, nor any other, have attempted to answer the arguments there made use of in favour of justification before faith: I will not say they are *unanswerable*; but I may say, that as yet they are *unanswered*: this author, if he pleases, may try what he can do with them, and it might have been expected in this his performance; but instead of this, he sets himself, with all his might, against some other doctrines, which he represents as Supralapsarian, as calculated to favour the scheme of eternal justification, and as branches of it; as,

1. "That God was eternally reconciled to the elect; and that no scripture can be produced to prove that the Lord Jesus did come to procure reconciliation for them; and that wherever Christ is said to make peace by his blood, It is to be understood only of his reconciling the sinner to God." Whether he refers to anything that has been published, or dropped in private conversation, or who the persons are, that affirm this, I know not: I greatly fear he has both misrepresented their words and meaning. I must own, I never heard of any such thing as an eternal reconciliation of God to the elect. Reconciliation supposes former friendship, a breach of it, and a conciliation of it again; which is inconsistent with the everlasting, invariable, and unchangeable love of God to them. *God was indeed from everlasting reconciling, not himself to the world, but the world of his elect to himself;* (2 Cor. 5:19) that is drawing the scheme and model of their reconciliation by Christ, or settling the way and manner in which reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction for their sins, should be made; and accordingly made a *covenant of peace* with his Son, appointed him to be their *peace*, and in the fulness of time sent him to make *peace by the blood of his cross*, and laid upon him *the chastisement of their peace*; and who has actually *made reconciliation for their sins*; and so they, even when enemies, were actually *reconciled*; that is, their sins were actually expiated and atoned for *to God, by the death of his Son*. This is the doctrine of reconciliation the scriptures speak of, and which I never knew before was ever reckoned a Supralapsarian doctrine: for surely reconciliation, atonement, or satisfaction for sin, which are synonymous terms, expressive of the same thing, must suppose persons sinners herein concerned. Let it be farther observed, that God from all eternity loved his elect with an invariable love; that he never entertained any hatred of them, or was at enmity with them; that there is no such thing as a change in God from hatred to love, any more than from love to hatred; that our Lord Jesus Christ did not by his atoning sacrifice procure his Father's love to the elect, seeing his being a propitiation for sin was a fruit, effect, and evidence of that love Agreeably, the scriptures never speak of God's being reconciled to his elect either in eternity or in time, but of their being reconciled to him and not so much of the reconciliation of their persons, as of a reconciliation for their sins; whereby their persons are reconciled, not to the *love* and affections of God, which they always shared in, but to the *justice* of God, which insisted upon a satisfaction to a broken law; which being given, both love and justice are reconciled together, *righteousness and*

peace kiss each other, in the affair of their salvation. Now, there is nothing in this doctrine of reconciliation that is opposite,

(1.) To the sin-offerings and peace-offerings under the law, since these were made to the God of *Israel* for the people of *Israel*, whom God loved above all people that were upon the face of the earth, and were typical of that atoning sacrifice, in which indeed were discovered the severest resentment of justice against sin, and yet the clearest evidence of strong love and affections to persons then enemies, and destitute of love to God: *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* (1 John 4:10) In this both type and antitype agree, that the reconciliation is not of God to men, but for men to God; though this author says, "it is past all dispute, that the party to be reconciled is God;" when it is the very thing in dispute between us. It is no where said of the sacrifices of the law, that God was reconciled by them to the people of *Israel*; and it is no where said of the sacrifice of Christ, the antitype of them, that God is by it reconciled to his elect; though I am content that God should be said to be reconciled to his elect by the death of Christ, provided no more is meant by it than satisfying of his justice, not a conciliating or procuring his love and favour. The author's reasoning on the denial of this, that the reconciliation must be made to the house of *Israel*, or for the God of *Israel*, or with the sinner or the sin, is so stupid and senseless, that it deserves no consideration

(2.) Nor does this doctrine, which denies that Christ came to reconcile God to sinners, oppose, as is suggested, what is prophesied of him in the Old Testament, or what is affirmed of his performance in the New; since, though it was prophesied of him, that God should *make his soul an offering for sin*; (Isa. 53:10) and it is affirmed of him, that *he gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God*; (Eph. 5:2) yet it is neither said that he should, or that he did do this for the elect, to remove any enmity in the heart of God against them, or to turn any hatred of his into love towards them, or to purchase and procure the love and affections of God for them: so far from this, that because they had a peculiar share in the love and affections both of the Father and the Son, the Father made the soul of his Son an offering for them, and the Son gave himself an offering unto God on their account. The Old Testament says, that *the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable*; (Isa. 42:21) and the New Testament says, that Christ has so loved his, that he *has given himself for them, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour*; (Eph. 5:2) a but neither the one nor the other say, that either God was to be, or that he is, hereby reconciled to his elect, or they hereby ingratiated into his affections. What is written in *Colossians* 1:20, *Corinthians* 15:3, *Hebrews* 2:17, *Colossians* 2:14, *Ephesians* 1:7, perfectly agree with the doctrine of reconciliation I am now contending for; nor does this oppose that plain scripture, *Romans* 5:1, *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus*. We have no need to remove the stop in the text; though how this author dare venture to alter the reading of it, and render the words *peace in God*, or what is his reason for it, I know not. The peace the text speaks of, does not design the peace, reconciliation, and atonement made by the blood of Christ, but the effect of it; even an inward conscience peace, which believers have with God, or God-ward, through Christ the donor of it, springing and arising from faith's apprehending an interest in the justifying righteousness of the Son of God.

(3.) Nor does this doctrine lessen, or tend to frustrate the great and important ends of our Saviour's sufferings and death, as this author attempts to prove. The ends of his sufferings and death were to *bring the elect to God to make reconciliation for their sins, to reconcile them to God*; and

accordingly they *were even when enemies, reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* (1 Peter 3:18; Dan. 9:24; Heb. 2:17; Rom. 5:10) Where does the scripture ever represent the end of Christ's sufferings and death to be, to reconcile God to his elect; that is, to remove any enmity in his heart against them, or to procure for them his love and favour? but on the contrary, it represents the sufferings and death of Christ as fruits and evidences of his matchless and surprising love to them. *God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* (Rom. 5:8) The doctrines of reconciliation and justification, thus viewed in the light of scripture can never clash with the satisfaction of Christ, nor tend to lessen and frustrate it; since reconciliation is no other than satisfaction and atonement to the justice of God, and justification proceeds upon the foot of satisfaction, and everlasting righteousness. Nor is there room or reason for that stupid inference and conclusion, that because Christ came to reconcile sinners to God, therefore he became an offering to the sinner, and not to God. There is a twofold reconciliation the scriptures speak of; the one is obtained by the price of Christ's blood, the other by the power of his grace: you have them both in one text, *Romans 5:10, For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* The meaning of which is; that if, when the elect of God were in a state of nature, and so of enmity to God, atonement was made for their sins by the sacrifice and death of Christ, which is strongly expressive of the amazing love of God to them; then much more being by the Spirit and grace of God reconciled to this way of peace, pardon, atonement, life and salvation, they shall be saved, through the interceding life of their Redeemer.

(4). This doctrine, as it has been stated, does not render the offices of Christ, as mediator, intercessor and high priest, needless, yea, of none effect; unless this author can imagine, according to his own scheme, that it is the *sole* work of the mediator, intercessor and high priest, to reconcile God to the elect. This we indeed say is *no* part of his work, in such sense, as to conciliate the love and favour of God to them; but does it follow, from hence, that his office is needless, and of none effect? Is it not needful, to reconcile the elect to God, to make reconciliation for their sins? Is he not useful, as mediator, to be their advocate and intercessor, their way of access to God, and acceptance with him, and of conveyance of all the blessings of the covenant of grace to them, whence he is called the mediator of it? I would also ask this author, if he thinks when God is reconciled to the elect by the death of his Son, or rather when they believe; for it seems there is no reconciliation before faith in Christ, the blood, sacrifice and death of Christ will not effect it, according to these men, till faith has given the finishing stroke: I say, I ask this author, whether he thinks that the office of Christ, as mediator, ceases? for, according to his way of reasoning, it should cease, when reconciliation is really made. Whereas Christ, after believing as well as before, is *the mediator between God and man, and ever lives to make intercession for us.* (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25) We are able to prove that Christ was set up as mediator from everlasting that his mediation was always necessary, and ever will be; that, as he is the medium of all grace now to us, he will be the medium of all glory to all eternity. To conclude this head; our author seems to be convinced that *John 3:16*, expresses the love of God to his elect, antecedent to his giving and sending of his Son to be the propitiatory sacrifice; since he does not attempt to offer any thing against the exposition, or to give another sense of it.

2. "Another branch of their (Supralapsarians) eternal justification, is said to be their refusing to pray for the pardon of sin, any otherwise than the manifestation of it to their consciences." Strange! that pardon of sin should be a *branch* of eternal justification, when it is a distant blessing from it;

as, I think, I have sufficiently made to appear in my treatise concerning it: stranger still! that *refusing to pray* for it should be deemed a branch of it: and what is of all most wonderful, is, flint this should be reckoned a Supralapsarian point, when pardon of sin supposes sin, and sin supposes the fall; anti whether it is to be conceived of as in the divine mind, from eternity, or as passing into successive acts in time, as men sin, or as manifested to their consciences, the objects of it cannot be considered otherwise than as sinners, fallen creatures; and therefore is a Sublapsarian, and not a Supralapsarian doctrine. Is this man qualified to examine the Supralapsarian scheme? He proceeds to try this practice of refusing to pray for the pardon of sin any otherwise than the manifestation of it to the conscience, by the example of the holy men of God, and by the advice and direction of our blessed Lord and Saviour. He might have spared the pains he has taken in collecting the instances of praying for the pardon of sin, since the question is not, whether the saints, in any sense, should pray for it; for we allow, that they have done it, that they are directed to it, and should do it; but the question is, in what sense they have done it, and should do it? Now we apprehend, that when believers pray for the pardon of sin, that their sense and meaning is not, nor should it be, as if the blood of Christ should be shed again for the remission of sin, or as if complete pardon was not procured by it, or as though this was to be obtained by their praying, tears, humiliation, and repentance, or that any new act of pardon I should arise in the mind of God, and be afresh passed; but when they pray in this manner, their meaning is, either that God would, in a providential way, deliver them out of present distress, or avert those troubles and sorrows they might justly fear; or, that they might have the sense and manifestation of pardon to their souls, fresh sprinklings of the blood of Jesus, and renewed applications of it to their consciences; and this, we believe, is both their duty and interest to do daily, since they are daily sinning against God, grieving his Spirit, and wounding their own consciences. The instance of the apostle's advising *Simon Magus* to pray, is not to pray particularly for the pardon of sin, or that the evil thought of his heart might be forgiven him, as this author suggests; but to repent and pray in general; and this is added by way of encouragement, *If perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*. However, I will not contend with him about it, since nothing in this controversy depends upon it. He goes on to observe, that,

3. "The third branch of their eternal justification is, that God loved and delighted in the elect as much while in their sinful state, and in the height of their rebellion against his laws, as when they are converted, and made obedient to his ways." That God loves his elect, and delights in them, as considered in Christ, and so as justified in him before the foundation of the world, I firmly believe; and which is far from being a licentious way of talking, or from being any contradiction to the holiness of God: but that his love to them, and delight in them as such, should be a *branch of their eternal justification*, is what I confess I never was acquainted with before; and what is more news still, is, that this *spurious tenet*, as this author in his great wisdom and modesty calls it, is built upon eternal union with Christ, which he represents as a false and sandy foundation: whereas the persons he opposes, consider the everlasting love of God to his elect as the foundation, yea, the bond of their eternal union. Of this one would think he could not be ignorant; but really every page, and almost every line, discover such stupidity and ignorance, that it is not at all to be marvelled at. He goes on, in his former way, to consider this tenet of God's loving and delighting in his elect, while in their unconverted state with the rest, as a Supralapsarian point; and which he calls a common maxim of the Supralapsarians. I entreat this author, that he would never more attempt to write about Supralapsarian principles, or to try and examine the Supralapsarian scheme, until some of his friends, patrons, or editors, have better informed him concerning them. What, is this a

Supralapsarian tenet, that God loves and delights in his elect while in their sinful state, and in the height of their rebellion? Surely these persons must be considered as sinners, as fallen creatures; and therefore as this author has stated the point, it must be a Sublapsarian, and not a Supralapsarian one. Had he indeed represented it as our sense, that God loved and delighted in his elect, as in Christ from all eternity, above the fall, and without any consideration of it, he had done us more justice; and this would have bid fair to have been deemed a Supralapsarian point: but this would not have answered his *wicked* design; I can call it no other, which is to suggest to weak minds "that God loves and delights in the sins and rebellions of his elect, or loves and delights in them considered as sinners, and rebellious persons;" this we abhor, as much as he: for what else can reflect dishonour on the Christian religion, or strike at the doctrine of God's holiness, or stand diametrically opposite to all practical godliness, or oppose those scriptures which speak of God as hating sin, and abhorring the workers of iniquity? Not the doctrine of God's loving and delighting in his elect, as considered in Christ, in whom they cannot be considered otherwise than as holy and righteous. We know that men in an unconverted state cannot please God, that is, do those things which are well-pleasing to him; and yet their persons may be acceptable in his sight, not as considered in themselves; for so they cannot be, even after conversion, notwithstanding all their humiliations, repentance, tears, prayers, and services; but as considered in Christ, in whom, and in whom alone, they are the objects of God's love and delight. But it seems we are to hear of this again; and therefore at present I shall take my leave of it, till we know what he has farther to object.

4. He proceeds to prove "that these authors (the Supralapsarians) in order to support their doctrine of eternal justification, have very unjustly affirmed that our blessed Saviour was by imputation a sinner; yea, that he became *very* sin." I shall content myself in making some general observations upon his long harangue on this head, which will serve to discover his weakness and ignorance.

(1.) I observe, that as his title page promises an examination of some doctrines in the Supralapsarian scheme, and his assurance leads him on; so, according to his usual way, he affirms that the doctrine of Christ's being made sin, or a sinner by imputation, or of the imputation of sin to Christ, is a doctrine in the Supralapsarian scheme, or a Supralapsarian notion; whereas imputation of sin supposes sin, and that supposes the fall; wherefore the persons whose sins were imputed to Christ, and in whose room and stead he bore them, must be considered as sinners and fallen creatures. And hence it appears to be a Sublapsarian, and not a Supralapsarian doctrine.

(2.) I take notice of the unfair and disingenuous dealing of this writer. He first proposes to prove, that it is unjustly affirmed that Christ was *by imputation* a sinner, and immediately alters the state of the question, and represents it as the notion of the Supralapsarians, that Christ was *really* the sinner, and made *truly* and *properly* sin, and made sin, or a sinner, in a *proper* sense; whereas though with Dr. *Crisp*, we affirm, that there was a *real* transaction, a *real* imputation of sin to Christ, and that the *really* bore the sins of his people in the Protestant sense, as opposed to that of the Papists, who sneeringly call every thing imputed, putative, fantastic and imaginary, with whom our author seems to join: but then we say that Christ is only the sinner by imputation, or was only made sin this way; not that sin was inherently in him, or that it was committed by him; in which sense only he can be truly, properly, and really the sinner. And this is what Dr *Crisp* himself says, and that in the very passage this man takes upon him to confute: "Christ, says he, stands a sinner in God's eyes; though not as the actor of transgressions, yet as he was the surety." This observation alone is sufficient to set aside all the trifling and impertinent reasonings of this writer on this head.

We are not afraid, nor ashamed to say, that Christ was made original and actual sin in this sense; that is to say, that original sin, and the actual sins of God's people, were imputed to Christ, and he bore them and made satisfaction to justice for them: Nor can we observe any absurdity in descending to particulars, and saying that the swearing the lying, blasphemy, &c. of God's elect, were laid upon him, imputed to him, and he took them upon him, and bore them away: Nor does this reflect upon the holiness of God, as this man suggests, in making his Son by imputation the worst thing that ever was in the world; since there never was any one thing in the world which so much discovers the holiness of God, and strictness of his justice, than his giving his Son to be the propitiation for our sins; which could not be done without the imputation of them to him: Nor does this act of imputation make God the author of sin, any more than the imputation of the righteousness of Christ makes the Father the author of that righteousness; nor does this reflect dishonour, either on the divine or human nature of Christ, since neither of them can be defiled with sin but, on the other hand, serves much to express the wondrous love, grace, and condescension of Christ, that *he who knew no sin*, should be *made sin for us*.

(3.) I observe the rudeness of the man, in representing the doctrine of the imputation of sin to Christ, or his being made sin by imputation, "as vile and ridiculous, and equally as pernicious as Transubstantiation; a scheme not to be freed from inexplicable perplexities, and vile nonsense; calling it ridiculous doctrine, spurious stuff, yea, blasphemy;" when it is the doctrine of our reformers, of all sound Protestant divines, never denied by any but Socinians and Arminians, or such as he inclined to them: Wherefore had he thought fit to have rejected it, yet for the sake of so many valuable men who have espoused it, he ought to have treated it with decency. Nor can I pass by his rude treatment of Dr. *Crisp* and Mr. *Hussey*; the one he represents as guilty of blasphemy, or something like it, and an addle-headed man, that *knew not what he wrote*; and the other, as a *ridiculous writer*; when they were both, in their day and generation, men of great piety and learning, of long standing and much usefulness in the Church of Christ; whose name and memory will be dear and precious to the saints, when this writer and his pamphlet will be remembered no more.

(4.) I observe, this author treats the doctrine of Christ's being a sinner by imputation, as a novel doctrine, and embraced by men of a vehement thirst after novelty. I have already hinted, that this was the doctrine of the first reformers, and all sound Protestant divines, that our sins were imputed to Christ, and Christ's righteousness imputed to us. This was the faith of the ancient church, in the first ages of christianity, as appears from a passage of *Justin Martyr*, one of the most early christian writers extant; "What else," says he, speaking of Christ, "could cover our sins, but his righteousness? In whom could we, transgressors and ungodly, be justified, than in the only Son of God? Ω O sweet. change! O unsearchable performance! O unexpected benefits! that the transgression of many should be hid in one righteous person: and the righteousness of one justify many transgressors." Yea, some of the ancient writers have expressed themselves in terms full as exceptionable as what Dr. *Crisp* has made use of: so *Chrysostom*; "For he hath made that righteous one a sinner, that he might make sinners righteous: indeed he does not only say so, but what was much more; for he does not express the habit, but the quality; he does not say, he made him a sinner, but sin itself; that we might be made, he does not say righteous, but righteousness, even the righteousness of God." So *Oecumenius*; "Christ," says he, "was the great sinner, seeing he took upon him the sins of the whole world, and made them *his own*:" So *Austin*; "He, that is, Christ, is sin, as we are righteousness; not our own, but God's; not in ourselves but in him; even as he

himself is sin; not his own, but ours: not in himself, but in us." Some of them have been very express, as to Christ's bearing the filth of sin; particularly *Gregory of Nyssa*; "For," says he; speaking of Christ, "having translated to himself the filth of my sins, he imparted to me his own purity, and made me a partaker of his beauty." And in another place, says he, "the pure and harmless one took upon him or received the filth of human nature; and passing through all our poverty, came to the trial of death itself." And elsewhere he says, "purity was in our filth; but the filth did not touch that purity;" meaning, that the holy nature of Christ was not defiled by it. I shall not now take notice of some later writers; perhaps I may hereafter: I hope this will be sufficient to clear the doctrine from the charge of novelty.

(5.) I cannot overlook the wretched vanity and ignorance of the man about tropes and figures. Though I cannot but think his learned friend, or friends, who had the supervisal of his performance, have been far from acting the kind, faithful, and friendly part, in suffering him to expose himself as he has done; he tells us that "it is very evident, that all the scriptures that they (*Dr. Crisp*, and others) depend upon as plain proofs that Christ was made very sin for us, are *metonomies*, which is a figure frequently to be met with in the Bible;" and then by an asterisk, we are directed to the margin, where, for the sake of the poor, illiterate Supralapsarians, a definition is given of a metonymy, which is this; "a metonymy is a changing, or putting one thing, or more, for another:" "and," says he, in the body of his work, "sometimes you have the cause for the effect, and sometimes the effect put for the cause;" and among the instances he produces, this is one, that *unbelief is put for faith*. Now, not to take notice that a metonymy is a trope, and not a figure, nor of his miscalling it *metonomy*, instead of *metonymy*, which might have been thought to have been an error of the press, but that it is so often repeated; I say, not to take notice of these things; he says, "a metonymy is a changing, or putting one thing, or more, for another;" but surely it is not a changing, or putting *any* one thing for another; it looks as if he thought so, seeing, among his examples, he makes *unbelief to be put for faith*. There is a metonymy of the cause and effect, subject and adjunct, but never of contraries; as grace and sin, vice and virtue, faith and unbelief are: this looks more like the figure *antiphrasis*, than the trope *metonymy*. Our author, by his new figure in *rhetoric*, will be able, in a very beautiful manner, to bring off the vilest of creatures, *that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter*. (*Isa. 5:20*) Let me ask this author, since he has put this instance among his examples of a metonymy of the cause for the effect, and of the effect for the cause; let me, I say, ask him, whether he thinks unbelief is the cause faith, or faith the cause of unbelief; and seeing he has got such a good hand at metonymies, we will try what use he can make of them in explaining the scriptures in this controversy.

(6.) The scriptures made use of to prove the imputation of sin to Christ, or that Christ was made sin by imputation, are, *2 Corinthians 5:21*, *Isaiah 53:6*. Now our author "hopes to make it plain, that these scriptures are as truly figurative texts as those are that represent Christ to be a lion, a star, a door, a rock, a vine," &c. and observes that "all the scriptures depended on as plain proofs, that Christ was made very sin for us, are *metonomies*." But he should have observed, that the scriptures which speak of Christ as a lion, a star, a door, a rock, a vine, &c. are metaphors, and not metonymies; and could he produce any, where Christ is said to be *made* a lion, a star, a door a rock, a vine, &c. there would appear a greater likeness between them, and such a text which says, he was *made sin for us*: he fancies the doctrine of transubstantiation is as well supported by scripture as this doctrine; that the constructions we put upon the texts in dispute about it, are as gross as those

the Papists put on such as they produce in favour of theirs; which is not very surprising, since he seems to have an opinion of popish doctrines, and to be verging that way; for in one part of this performance of his, he frankly acknowledges, that he has no *high* opinion of popish doctrines, which supposes that he has *an* opinion of them, and begins, at least, to think a little favourably of them, though not highly. But let us attend to the texts in dispute; the first is, *2 Corinthians 5:21. For he hath made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him who knew no sin*; which, he says, has been notoriously wrested, and observes, that "this text in both parts of it, is *metonymically* spoken, and is the cause put for the effect; and the native language of it is, that God made his dear Son a sin-offering for us, that we might partake of the promised blessings, or the righteousness of God in him." Admitting the words are to be taken in a metonymical sense, yea, that the meaning is, that Christ was made an offering for sin; they are not a metonymy of the cause for the effect; for sin is not the cause, though the occasion of a sin-offering; there might have been sin and no offering for it: offering for sin is not an effect necessarily arising from it, but what purely depended on the will and pleasure of God; but taking the words in the sense of a sin-offering, it is, as *Piscator* observes *Per metonymiam subjecti occupantis in veteri Testamento usitatam*. Besides, this sense of the words is so far from destroying the doctrine of the imputation of sin to Christ, that it serves to confirm it: For as the typical sin-offerings under the law, had first the sins of the people put upon them by the priest, and typically imputed to them, and were bore by them, *Leviticus 10:17*, before they could be offered for them; so our Lord Jesus was first made sin, or had the sins of his people imputed to him, or he could never have been made an offering for them. I deny, that *salva justitia Dei*, consistent with the justice of God, Christ, an innocent person could ever bear even the punishment of our sins, or be made a sacrifice for them, or die for them, as he did, according to the scriptures, if they had not been imputed to him; punishment could never have been inflicted on him, if sin had not been reckoned to him. Though I see no reason why *sin*, in one and the same sentence here, should have two different meanings, as it must have, according to this sense of them, *he hath made him, to be sin for us, who knew no sin*: the word *sin*, last mentioned, cannot be meant of an offering for sin: for it is not true, that Christ knew no sin-offering, when multitudes had been offered up under the law; but the meaning is, that he never was guilty of sin; and yet he who never was guilty of sin, was made so by imputation, that is, had the guilt of our sins imputed to him; which well agrees with, and may be confirmed by the latter part of the text, *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*. Now in the same way that we are made the righteousness of God, was Christ made sin: we are made the righteousness of God by imputation, that is, the righteousness of Christ, who is both God and man, is imputed to us; so Christ was made sin by imputation, that is, our sins were imputed to him. What this author says concerning our being made the effects of God's righteousness or faithfulness, I own, I cannot, for my life form any idea of; and though he has attempted to explain it, he has left it inexplicable; I choose not to use his own phrase, *inexplicable nonsense*. Before I dismiss this text, I would take notice of one very extraordinary observation of this author's; which is, that this way of reasoning to prove Christ a sinner, will prove that all men, that have the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, are their own saviours; his argument is this: "if by the imputation of our condemning sins to Christ he was made a sinner, then, by the imputation of his saving righteousness, we are made saviours." But, with his leave, this does not follow; but the truth and force of the reasoning stands thus: If by the imputation of our condemning sins to Christ he was made a sinner, and condemned as such, then, by the imputation of his righteousness, we are made righteous, and saved as such; for not sinner and saviour, but sinner and righteous, salvation and condemnation, are the antitheses. Give me leave to subjoin the sense of two or three of our principal reformers, and sound Protestant

divines, of this passage of scripture, who wrote long before Dr. *Crisp's* time. *Calvin* upon the text says; "How are we righteous before God? namely, as Christ was a *sinner*; for, in some respects, he sustained our person, that he might become *guilty* in our name; and as a sinner, be condemned, not for his own, but the offences of others seeing he was pure, and free from all fault, and underwent punishment due, not to himself, but to us:" which agrees with what he says on *Galatians* 3:13. "Because he sustained our person, therefore he was a *sinner*, and deserving of the curse; not as in himself, but as in us." *Beza* on the place, has these words; that "the *antithesis* requires, that rather Christ should be said to be made sin for us, that is, a *sinner*, not in himself, but on the account of the *guilt* of all our sins, *imputed* to him; of which the two goats were a figure, mentioned *Leviticus* 16." *Piscator*, as well as *Beza*, having mentioned the other sense of Christ's being made a sin-offering, adds, "rather sin here, by a metonymy of the adjunct, signifies *summum peccatorem*," the chief sinner; "inasmuch as all the sins of all the elect were imputed to Christ; which exposition the following antithesis favours, that *we might be made the righteousness of God in him*; that is, righteous before God; namely, by a righteousness obtained by the sacrifice of Christ; imputed to us by God." So that though the words may be taken in a metonymical sense; yet they are not a metonymy of the cause for the effect, but a metonymy of the adjunct: so *scelus* is put for *scelestus*, by Latin authors, as here sin for the sinner.

I now proceed to what our author has to say to *Isaiah* 54:6. *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*. This text he says, Dr *Crisp* makes the foundation of his several sermons, to prove that our blessed Lord was made a sinner and says, that he very injudiciously affirms, that it is the very fault, or transgression itself, that the Lord laid upon Christ; but he purposes to make it plain, that he is mistaken in his opinion about this text, and that it was not the crime or fault, but the punishment due to us for our sins, that was laid upon Christ, which, he thinks, is evident from *verses* 3, 7. To which I reply; that the punishment due to us for sin, could not have been laid upon Christ, nor could he have been wounded for our transgressions, or bruised for our sins, or have been oppressed and afflicted, had he not had our sins laid upon him, that is, imputed to him: nor is it inconsistent with the holiness of God, to take either original sin, or our actual sins and transgressions, even particular sins, and lay them upon Christ; since this was done in order to shew his infinite holiness, his indignation against sin, and the strictness and severity of his justice in the punishment of it; nor is this inconsistent with the nature of sin, nor any rude and extravagant way of thinking of it, which surely may as truly and properly be put, or laid upon Christ, as the iniquities and transgressions of the children of *Israel* in all their sins, which mean their very crimes, were typically put and laid upon the scapegoat. This writer goes on to observe, that the prophecy in *Isaiah* 53:4, *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows*, was fulfilled by our Lord's healing the diseases of the people, *Matthew* 8:16, 17, and argues, that if the text in *Isaiah* 53:4 is to be construed in the same method as the sixth and eleventh verses are, the consequence will be, that our Lord bore the palsy of the Centurion's servant, and the fever of *Peter's* wife's mother: this, he thinks, will greatly hamper our scheme, so that we shall not be able to produce any thing consistent with it, free from inexplicable perplexities and vile nonsense. But what reason can be given, why the expressions in the several places, should be interpreted in the same way? What though our Lord, in his state of incarnation, being a *man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs*, is said to *bear the griefs, and carry the sorrows* of men, because he had compassion on them, and sympathized with them in their sickness, which put him upon healing of them; and in such sense, bore them as a parent bears the sicknesses of a child, or a husband bears the infirmities of a wife; *for we have not an high priest which cannot he touched with the feeling of our infirmities*; does it therefore follow, that this must

be the sense of Christ's bearing our sins when he suffered for them as our surety? Can it be thought that he sympathized with our sins, or with us on the account of them, which put him upon suffering for them, as he is said to bear or sympathize with men's sicknesses and diseases, or with them upon the account of them which put him upon healing of them?

(7.) The imputation of the filth of sin to Christ, and his bearing of it, would come next to be considered; but our author has not thought fit to make use of any arguments against it, and therefore I do not think myself obliged to enlarge upon it; only would observe, that filth and guilt are inseparable from sin; and therefore if sin is laid upon Christ, and imputed to him, guilt and filth must be likewise: nor can I see how we can expect to be cleared of the one and cleansed from the other, unless Christ bore them both, when his soul was made an offering for sin, and his blood was shed to cleanse from it. This writer would, indeed, be nibbling at it, but knows not how to go about it; and only cavils at, some expressions of Mr. *Hussey's* concerning it. Whether, in *Psalms* 100:7, there is any allusion to the brook Cedron, or *Kidron*, over which our Lord went in to the garden, I will not say; but I see not why that black and unclean brook, or common-sewer, may not be an emblem of the pollutions and defilements of sin; which being laid on Christ when he passed over that brook, made him so heavy and sore amazed in his human nature, as to desire the cup might pass from him. As to what Mr *Hussey* says of our iniquities being put into this bitter cup, and of his drinking of it, and of the torrent of our sins and blacknesses running into his soul with that wrath; this is not to be understood of sin being inherent in him, or of his being defiled with it, the contrary to which he solidly proves; but only of the imputation of them to him, and of his susception of them; for he says, "It was not pain or torture abstractly in the bitter draught, but pollution, the dregs of our sins, sin being the only impure thing in God's account, and so the spot of sin, the filth and pollutions of sin, were *imputed* to him by his Father and put upon Christ's account, and mingled with his wormwood cup, that it made his holy soul to tremble." Nor is the simile he makes use of a foolish one, of a drop of ink, or poison, falling upon a fiery globe of brass, without leaving any sullyng mark upon it, or receiving any stain or pollution by it; nor does it tend to extenuate the flood of the filthiness of sin, that has been running ever since *Adam*; nor is it unsuitable to the imputation and susception of it; which is all he means by his drinking of it; but is designed to set forth the infiniteness of Christ, and of his power to resist the infection and stain of sin; as may be seen at large in this valuable writer; who himself frankly owns, "that the similitude is imperfect, to set out the matter in the deep mysteries of this *gold tried in the fire*, or the person of Christ in his sufferings; the greatest of which was, the Father's imputation of our sins to him." What our author further observes concerning some texts of scripture, engaged by the Supralapsarians, to speak for their opinions of eternal justification and adoption, being what is introduced by him, with reference to a living author, I leave it to him to answer for himself; who, I doubt not, will make a proper and suitable reply. I proceed,

Secondly, To defend the doctrine of *eternal union*, which this author calls a "branch which grows from the fruitful root of the Supralapsarian tree; which," says he, "they style eternal, actual, union." As this author particularly refers to myself, throughout his performance on the head of union, I take leave to ask him, Where has he found eternal union in any writings of mine, styled eternal, actual union? I have carefully avoided calling justification, or union from eternity, actual; though for no other reason than this, lest in any should imagine, that I considered them as transient acts of God upon the elect, which require their personal and actual existence; for otherwise, as I believe, that eternal election is actual, and eternal reprobation is actual, as they are immanent acts in God; so, I

believe, eternal justification is actual, as it is an immanent act in God that justifies; and eternal union is actual, as it is an act of God's everlasting love to his elect, whereby he has knit and united them to himself. I go on to ask, where have I said, or who has told this man, that a non-entity was united to an existence? The language with which this expression is clothed, manifestly shews, it to be of his own shaping. The elect of God, though they have not an *esse actu*, an actual being from eternity; yet they have an *esse representativum*, a representative being in Christ from everlasting, which is more than other creatures have, whose future existence is certain; and therefore at least capable of a representative union from eternity, and which has been readily owned by some divines, who are not altogether in the same way of thinking with myself. However, it seems eternal union is a branch which grows from the fruitful root (not from the body) of the Supralapsarian tree. Poor creature! it is plain he knows nothing of the Supralapsarian tree, as he calls it, either root, body, or branch; for as he is pleased to explain the meaning of eternal, actual union, it is this, "that they," I suppose he means the elect, "had actual union with Christ, whilst they were in their sins;" and if so, they must be considered in their union with Christ, as fallen creatures; and then it will follow, that this is a branch which grows from the Sublapsarian, and not the Supralapsarian tree. But passing these things, I shall now attend to what he has to object to what I have written on the subject of union. And,

(1.) Whereas I have undertaken to prove that it is not the Spirit on Christ's part that is the bond of union to him, I endeavoured to do it by observing that the Spirit is sent down, and given to God's elect, in consequence of an antecedent union of them to Christ; and that he, in his personal inhabitation, operations and influences of grace in them, is the evidence, and not the efficient cause of their union. That an elect person is first united to Christ, and then receives the spirit in measure from him, and becomes one spirit with him, I thought was pretty evident from *1 Corinthians 6:17. He that is joined unto the Lord, is one spirit.* From whence I concluded, and still conclude, that a person becoming one spirit with Christ, or receiving the same spirit Christ has, though in measure, is in consequence of his being joined or united to him: and not that he first becomes one spirit, or receives the same spirit from Christ, and then is joined or united to him. The sense of the text is evident, and admits of no difficulty: But, says this writer, "it evidently proves that the Spirit of Christ dwells in all that are united to him." I grant it, that the Spirit of Christ dwells in all that are united to him, sooner or later, but the question is, whether the indwelling of the Spirit is antecedent to their union, or in consequence of it? If it is in consequence of it, then that is not the bond of union; If it is antecedent to it, it must be before faith; for, according to this man's scheme, union is by faith, and there is none before it: and so the absurdity he would fain leave with me, follows himself; "that the holy Spirit dwells with unbelievers." To illustrate this matter, of a person's receiving the Spirit from Christ, in consequence of union to him, I made use of a simile taken from the head and members of an human body, and the communication of the animal spirits from the one to the other, in consequence of the union between them. This author, though in his great modesty he owns that he is poorly skilled in philosophy, a concession he needed not have given himself the trouble to make: yet thinks himself capable to make it appear, that I am not a little wanting in the application of my argument; I suppose he means *simile*; for I am often obliged to guess at his meaning. But what is it he fancies is wanting? In what is it inapplicable? Does it not exactly tally with what I am speaking of? But instead of shewing the want of application, or any disparity in the case, which he does not attempt, he puts me upon proving, "that there is any life in the head of a body natural, when the members are all dead; on that the life of a natural body is all extinct before the head dies, or that the head can subsist without any living members, or that the body natural is

destitute of natural life, when united to a living head;" things I have no concern with, and which are no part of the simile I make use of; and which is made use of by me only to shew, that as the animal spirits from the head are communicated to the members of the body, not antecedent to union between them, or in order to effect it, but in consequence of it: so the Spirit of Christ is communicated from him, the head, to the members of his body, not antecedent to their union, or in order to effect it, but in consequence of it: whence it follows, that he cannot be the bond of this union; and by this I abide. For the proof of the Spirit's being the evidence of communion, and so of union, and therefore not the bond of it, I produced *I John* 3:24, and chapter 4:13. Only the first of these scriptures is taken notice of by this writer; who fancies that the former part of this text was disagreeable to me, and therefore left out by me. I declare I was far from thinking it to be so; and am well content it should be transcribed at large, it being a witness for, and not against my new notion, as he is pleased to call it: *And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him; and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.* The meaning of which is, that those persons, who under the influences of the Spirit of God are enabled to keep the commandments of God, dwell in him, and he in them; that is, they have communion with him, as the effect of union to him; for these acts of indwelling are not uniting acts, but acts of communion, in consequence of union; of which the Spirit being given them, is an evidence. Now could it be proved that Christ dwells in his people by his Spirit, though the scripture no where says so, but that he *dwells* in their *hearts by faith*; yet it does not follow that he is united to them by his Spirit, because this act of indwelling is an act of communion: not this, but his everlasting love, which is the foundation of his dwelling in them, is the bond of union. That the Spirit is the seal of covenant-love and of union with Christ, will not be denied: But then his being a seal, is no other than his being a certifying evidence and witness of these things. Now from the spirit's being a witness and seal of union, this man suggests that he must be the bond of it; because the party that seals, is *the principle of the bond*: where his poor wandering head is running upon a *pecuniary bond*: a bond in writing, by which a man is bound to another; and in which he most miserably blunders; seeing it is not the principal, or he to whom the bond is made, but the debtor, on he who obliges himself to the other, that signs and seals: Whereas the thing in dispute is, a bond of union between persons, by which they are united to each other. Nor will it be denied that the Spirit quickens and regenerates us, begets and maintains spiritual life in us; but then all this is in consequence of union to Christ: nor is it by this spiritual life which he begets and maintains, that we have union with our living head, but we have this spiritual life as the effect of that union, and thereby have communion with him: and though the elect of God, whilst dead in trespasses and sins, have no communion with Christ, yet there is a sense in which they are united to him then; which union is the ground and foundation of their being quickened.

(2.) I have also affirmed that faith is not the bond of union to Christ, and desired those who plead for union by faith, to tell us whether we are united to Christ by the habit or act of faith; and since there are different acts of it, whether our union is by the first, second, third, &c. acts of believing? To which our author has not thought fit to return any answer. I go on to argue, that if union is by faith as an habit, it is not by faith on our part, because faith, as such, is the gift of God; and if it be by faith as an act of ours, it is by a work; for faith, as such, is a work; and then not by grace, since works and grace cannot be blended. To which this author replies: "what if we have union with Christ in that part which lies on our side the question, by acts of ours, unto which we are enabled by the spirit of God, who works faith in us; does this tend to lessen the exceeding grace of God?" I answer, that what he says of the Spirit's working faith in us, is right, but that regards faith as an

habit; though that there is a part lying on our side the question, to bring about our union to Christ by an act of ours, I utterly deny: Strange! that an uniting act or a bond of union, must be *parted*, that there should be a *part* belong to us, and another to the Spirit of God? But to his question I answer, that to ascribe our union to Christ in part to acts of ours, though enabled to them by the Spirit of God, does lessen the grace of God: and I argue thus, that if to ascribe election in part to works, to any acts of ours as to faith, though enabled to it by the spirit of God, would tend to lessen the glory of grace in it; so to ascribe our union to Christ to any acts of ours, to faith as such, though enabled to it by the Spirit of God, would tend to lessen the glory of that grace and love of Christ, which is the alone bond of it. This writer farther suggests, that I incline to admit the grace of love to be the union-bond; and argues, that that being an act of ours, it must consequently be esteemed a work, and so be liable to the same difficulty: whereas, though I observe, that had our divines fixed upon the grace of love as the bond of union, it would have been more plausible and feasible than their fixing upon faith; yet I am far from an inclination to admit of it, when I affirm, in so many words, that "it is not our love to Christ, but his love to us, which is alone the real bond of our union to him." I proceed to observe, that "faith is no uniting grace, nor are any of its acts of a cementing nature." This man fancies I am guilty of such a flagrant contradiction, as is not to be produced in any book besides; because I add, "faith indeed looks to Christ, lays hold on him, embraces him, and cleaves unto him; it expects and receives all from Christ, and gives him all the glory." These sentences, it seems, are closely united; and yet an agreement between them cannot be proved. I own I am not so quick-sighted as to see any contradiction, much less a flagrant one, in them. Was I sensible of it, I should be thankful for the discovery. I perceive that the acts of laying hold on, embracing and cleaving to, are thought to be uniting acts. I confess I never thought that whatever my hand lays hold on, is united to it, or one with it. I now lay hold on my pen, and hold it in my hand, make use of it, take it up, and lay it down at pleasure; I do not find they are one, but two distinct things; my pen is not one with my hand, nor my hand with my pen, nor do they both make one third thing. I never knew that one person's embracing another was an uniting their person's together, or that any union or relation between them commenced upon such an act. When the apostles exhorted such who were partakers of the grace of God, *to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart*, it can never be thought that their exhortation was to unite themselves to the Lord with purpose of heart, since these were persons already united to him. All these acts of looking to Christ, laying hold upon him, embracing of him, and cleaving to him, are acts of faith performed under the influences of the Spirit, in consequence of union to Christ; and are such, in which believers have communion with him. He seems displeased with what I say, that "a soul can no more be said to be united to Christ by these acts, than a beggar may be said to be united to a person, to whom he applies, of whom he expects alms, to whom he keeps close, from whom he receives, and to whom he is thankful." This, he says, deserves no answer. The reason I guess is, because he can give none. However, I will take his own instance, of a distressed beloved child's looking to, embracing of, cleaving to, and hanging about its tender father, with entreaties and expectations of supply; and deny that these are uniting acts, or such as unite the father to the child, or the child to the father; but are all in consequence of a relation, a relative union, that subsisted between them antecedent to these acts.

I farther observe, that union to Christ is the foundation of faith, and of all the acts of believing, or seeing, walking, receiving, &c. That faith is the fruit and effect of union, even of what is commonly called vital union: for as there must first be an union of the soul and body of man, before he can be said to live, and there must be life, before there can be reason; so there must be a union of the soul

to Christ, before it can spiritually live: and there must be a principle of spiritual life, before there can be faith. This I thought also was fully and fitly exemplified in the simile of the vine and branches, which must first be in the vine before they bear fruit; and may be illustrated by the engrafture of the wild olive-tree into a good one; and concluded, that union to Christ is before faith, and therefore faith cannot be the bond of union. The substance of what is replied to this is, "that though we cannot produce good fruit until we are in union with Christ the living head, yet there is no absurdity in saying, that there is life produced in the soul, previous to our union with him;—and that a spiritual work (an awkward way of talking; why not the Spirit?) which begets a spiritual life in us, is necessary to *meten* (meet) us for union to him the living head." And though he approves the argument, yet does not believe the application of it agreeable to truth; namely, that because there is an union of the soul and body of man before he can be said to live, that therefore the soul of man must be united to Christ before he has spiritual life. In a word, though he agrees that there must be a principle of life, before there is any exercise of faith, yet denies that there was union to Christ, before this principle was wrought. Now let it be observed, that the union I am here speaking of, is what is commonly called vital union; an union in time, at conversion, which is no other than *Christ formed in us*; upon which a principle of spiritual life is immediately produced; for *he that hath the Son, hath life*; and then follow faith, and the exercise of it. Therefore this union cannot be by faith, nor faith be the bond of it, since it follows upon it: for though, as upon the union of the soul and body, life is immediately produced; yet the union in order of nature, must be considered previous to life. So though, upon the formation of Christ in us, called the vital union, the principle of spiritual life is immediately produced; yet the formation of Christ, or the union of him to us, must be considered antecedent to this life. No, says this man; there is life produced in the soul, previous to our union with Christ, in order to it; yea, to *meten* for it: whence it must unavoidably follow, that a man may have a principle of spiritual life, and yet be *without Christ*; be separate from him, and without union to him; contrary to the express words of the apostle, *He that hath not the Son of God hath not life*. (1 John 5:12) Besides, does this doctrine give honour to the glorious head of influence, Christ Jesus, which teaches that a man may have a principle of spiritual life, without union to him, the living head; and in order to *meten* for it, and consequently elsewhere, from another quarter? What appears most plausible, at first view, in favour of this preposterous notion, is the instance of the scion, that must have life previous to its engrafture. But pray what kind of life is it that the scion of the wild olive-tree lives, before its engrafture into the good olive-tree? it is a life agreeable to its nature: it is the life of the wild olive-tree, not of the good olive-tree. So men before conversion, before Christ is formed in them, live, not a spiritual life, a life of grace, but a life of sin; there is no principle of spiritual life, before Christ is formed in the soul. The simile of the vine and branches, in *John 15:4, 5*, he thinks is of no service to me, but rather against me; since there would be no need of the exhortation, *abide in me*, if no act or acts of ours are concerned about maintaining union with Christ: and observes, that abiding in Christ is by faith, and the same with standing by faith, *Romans 11:20*, and argues, that if our standing and abiding in Christ are by faith, then do we hold union thereby; and whatsoever holds us to union, is the bond of it. To which I need only reply, that the phrases of abiding in Christ, and standing by faith, regard the perseverance of the saints, in consequence of their union to Christ. Now though perseverance is by faith, or faith is the means of perseverance, under the powerful influence of grace; yet it does not follow that it is the bond of union since both perseverance, and faith, by which we persevere, are the effects of it. I observed, from the above passage, that "Faith is a fruit of the Spirit, which grows upon the branches that are in Christ the vine; and that these branches must be first in the vine, before they bear this fruit." This author wonders who will attempt to deny it. Very well; if no body will attempt to deny it, the cause

is given up, the point is gained: for if persons must be first in Christ the vine, that is, united to him, before they bear the fruit of faith, that is, believe in him; it follows, that union is before faith, and that faith is the fruit and effect, and not the bond of it. The simile of the wild and good olive-trees, he says, I have borrowed piece-meal, and have omitted to quote it (the text) in the margin. I own, I borrowed the simile from *Romans* 11:17, &c. as being an apposite one; but never thought, nor do I think now, that the passage has any reference to the engrafture of souls into Christ, but into a visible church-state: For if engrafture into Christ is intended, it will follow, that persons may be engrafted into him, that is united to him, and yet be broken off from him; which supposes their entire apostasy from him; which none will give into, unless they are far gone into Arminian principles. The plain meaning of the passage is, that the Jews, who rejected the Messiah, were broken off from their visible church-state, or from being the visible church of God; and the Gentiles, that believed, were taken into it: and that the Jews, when they believed, would be again grafted or taken into a visible church-state. Hence the whole of our author's reasoning, about the necessity of faith, and the removal of unbelief, antecedent to an engrafture into Christ, as founded upon this scripture, comes to nothing.

(3.) Having proved that neither the Spirit on Christ's part, nor faith on ours, is the bond of union, I proceeded to shew that the everlasting love of the Father, Son and Spirit, is the bond of the union of the elect unto them. To this, not one syllable is replied: But whereas I observe that there are several things which arise from, and are branches of this everlasting love-union, and which I apprehend make it appear that the elect are united to Christ before faith; this author has thought fit to make some remarks upon them.

I observe, from *Ephesians* 1:4, that there is an election-union in Christ from everlasting: my meaning is, that election is an act of God's everlasting love, in which the objects of it were considered in Christ; and how they could be considered in Christ, without union to him, is, what I say, is hard to conceive. So that I apprehend, that as eternal election is a display of God's everlasting love to his people, it is an instance also of their eternal union to Christ. No, says this man; election is a fore-appointing persons to an union as the choice of stones for a building, or of a branch for engrafture. Had the text in *Ephesians* 1:4, run thus, *according as he hath chosen us to be in him, or that we might, or should be in him*; this sense of election would have appeared plausible: but the words in connection with the preceding verse runs thus, *who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him*; and therefore will not admit of such an interpretation as this, "that it was according to the eternal design of God, to bestow divine and special favours upon them, *when in Christ*; or that they were chosen to divine and special blessings, *through Christ*;" but that they were blessed with these divine and special blessings *in Christ*, according as they were chosen in him. I do not say that election is the uniting act, that is, the everlasting love of God; nor do I see any absurdity, in supposing union previous to this choice, though I think they go together; but this I say, that in election, men are considered *in Christ*, and so is a proof of eternal union to him; and by this I abide, until something else is offered to confront it.

I have also said, that there is a legal union between Christ and the elect from everlasting, the bond of which is the surety-ship of Christ, and so he and they are one, in a law-sense, as surety and debtor are one: and likewise, that there is a federal union between them from everlasting; Christ being considered as head, and they as members with him in the covenant of grace. This writer is of

opinion, that the legal and federal union is one and the same; I am content they should be thought so: my design hereby is not to multiply unions, or as though I thought there were so many distinct ones, believing that God's everlasting love is the grand original bond of union, and that these are so many displays of it, proving it; and particularly, that it is before faith, the main thing I had in view. The relations of surety and debtor, head and members, conveying different ideas, I thought it proper to consider them apart; however, I am willing they should go together, provided neither of them is lost: but I observe, the former of these is entirely sunk by this author, and no notice taken of it; for though they both relate to one and the same covenant, yet are to be distinctly considered; and if Christ is not to be considered as the surety of his people, as one with them, in a law-sense, as surety and debtor are one; what foundation is there for his satisfaction for them? nay, not only so, but even the relation of head and members is dropped by this author, under a pretence that it has been already proved, that there is no being in Christ before faith, as members of his body; and goes on to consider the relation of husband and wife, which is not at all mentioned by me; and calls upon the men of the Supralapsarian scheme, to produce any text of scripture that informs us that God, in either of the persons of the Godhead, calls any of the children of men his spouse, or wife, or bride, before they are made so by a mutual covenant. The reader will be apt to conclude, from a large citation out of Dr *Goodwin*, that it was made by me under the present head; whereas it stands in another part of my book, and made, together with some others, from Dr. *Witsius*, and Mr. *Richard Taylor*, with no other view than to observe to the Gentleman I wrote the *Letter* to, that there was no reason why the assertors of eternal union should be treated *as* ignorant and enthusiastic preachers, when men of such characters as above, had, in some sense, asserted it. Now, though I do not think myself obliged to take any further notice of this citation, not being made to vindicate my sense of union, yet I cannot but observe the rudeness and pertness of the man, in treating so great a man as Dr. *Goodwin* was, in the manner he does; and at once pronounce, that what is said by him, is not worthy to be esteemed either good divinity, or good argument. He next falls foul upon a passage of mine in another part of my book, and upon another subject, where I say that the gift of God himself to his people, in the everlasting covenant, is a gift and instance of his love to them before conversion. This he denies, and says, the scriptures which mention this gift, evidently prove the contrary; the scripture he produces, is *Hebrews* 8:10, from *Jeremiah* 31:33, and observes, that this covenant is a mutual agreement between God and converted people; for you read here, says he, that the laws of God were to be written upon their hearts, and in their minds, before God is their God, and they are his people. To which I reply, that there is not the least evidence from any of these passages, that this covenant is a mutual agreement between God and any people, converted or unconverted; nor is there any such thing as a mutual covenant between God and fallen creatures; the mutual covenant talked of at conversion, is all a dream and fancy. The covenant here spoken of, is wholly and entirely on the part of God, and seems rather to respect unconverted than converted persons; since one branch of it regards the writing and putting of the laws of God in their hearts and minds, which concerted ones have already; nor is this mentioned as the cause or condition of his being their God, but rather, his being their God in covenant, is the ground and foundation of this; since this is mentioned in *Jeremiah* 32:38, previous to his promise of giving one heart, and one way, and putting his fear into them; all which suppose them unconverted. In a word, our author thinks, that the covenant of grace is not an uniting covenant, no relation arising from it between God and his people, between Christ and his members; it is only a settling the conditions, and laying a sure foundation for a federal union with his people, that is, upon the conditions of faith and repentance so that the covenant of grace from eternity, is only a foundation for a covenant. I am content he should enjoy his own sentiments, without reproaching him with inexplicable nonsense.

But since he has called upon the Supralapsarians to produce a text, wherein any of the children of men are called by God, in either of the persons of the Godhead, his spouse, wife or bride, before they are made so by a mutual covenant, I propose to his consideration, *Isaiah* 54:1, 5, 6, where Christ is called *the husband* of the Gentile church, and she *his wife*, long before it was in being; and even in the text he himself mentions, *Ephesians* 5:23. Christ is said to be the head of the church, even as the husband is the head of the wife; which includes the whole general assembly and church of the first-born, even all the elect, converted or unconverted.

The next union I mention, is the natural union that is between Christ and his people; in this, our author say's, is nothing but what agrees with the holy scriptures, and so it passes without a censure. The last I take notice of, is a representative one, both from everlasting and in time. This man imagines I have given away the cause, by acknowledging that the natural union was not in eternity, since hereby the notion of an eternal representative union is entirely destroyed; for, adds he, it is exceeding remote from all the rules of argument, to suppose that Jesus Christ represented the elect people as members in him, when he had no meaner nature than divine. This writer is, no doubt, acquainted with all the rules of argument: but what does the man mean, when he talks of Christ's having *no meaner* nature than divine? I hope the reader will excuse my warmth, when such a horrid reflection is made upon the divine nature of the Son of God; *no meaner* nature! This supposes, indeed, the human nature to be meaner, but implies the divine nature to be mean; or, where is the degree of comparison? he suggests, that Christ could not represent the elect in eternity in less he had human nature from eternity; and that there could not be a real union of the persons of the elect in eternity, without their real existence. I reply that it was not necessary, in order to Christ's being the Mediator, Head, and Representative of the elect in eternity, that he should be then actually man, only that he should certainly be so in time: besides, there was a federal union of the human nature to the Son of God from eternity, or the human nature had a covenant subsistence in he second person from everlasting. Nor was the real existence of the persons of the elect necessary to their real union to Christ, only that they should certainly exist: I call their union real, in opposition to that which is imaginary; for surely the love of Christ to the elect, from everlasting, was real, which is the bond of union, though their persons, soul and body, did not really, or actually exist. He proceeds to consider the import of some other *texts* of scripture, which, he says, we are subject to imagine favour our fond notion of eternal union; though he considers but *one*, and that is *2 Timothy* 1:9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began.* This grace he sometimes takes for a promise of grace, sometimes for grace in the covenant itself; yea, he says, it evidently intends our calling; so that according to him, our calling must be before the world began. But be it what it will, whether a promise of grace, or a purpose of grace, or grace itself, it was given *to us in Christ, before the world began*, and no that our argument depends: if we were *in Christ* when this grace, or promise of grace, was given, we were united to him; for how we could be considered *in him*, without union to him, he would do well to acquaint us.

I must, in justice to this author, before I conclude this head, acquaint my reader, that he has quoted some, what he calls plain texts of scripture, to shew that the sacred book does most evidently set aside the opinion of eternal union, yea, or of union before faith: the scriptures are, *Romans* 8:9 and 16:7, *2 Corinthians* 5:17, all which I have before taken notice of in the *Letter* he refers to; and all that he remarks is, that I will needs have it, that these scriptures intend only the evidence of union with Christ from everlasting; which sense he does not attempt to set aside; only that the phrase, *If a*

man is in Christ, he is a new creature, he says, supposes that none but new-born souls are united to him; whereas the meaning is, that whoever professes himself to be in Christ, ought to appear to be so: and yet after all this, this man has the front to say, that man are not united to Christ until they believe, has been proved by *almost innumerable scriptures and arguments*; when he only produces *three* scriptures, and not *one* argument from them. This man is resolved to carry his point at any rate, right or wrong; he sticks at nothing.

Thirdly, We now come to a point this author discovers a great item, and eager desire to be at, namely, the doctrine of God's love and delight in his elect before conversion. He has been two or three times nibbling at it before, and I have already exposed his folly in placing it in the Supralapsarian scheme, when it can no other than a Sublapsarian doctrine.

1. In my *Letter* above referred to, I write concerning the invariable, unchangeable, and everlasting love of God to his elect, and give instances of his love to them, not only in eternity, but in time, and that even while they are in an unconverted estate, from *Romans* 5:6, 8, 10, *1 John* 4:10, *Ephesians* 2:4, 5, *Titus* 3:3-6, which this writer thinks fit to pass by in silence. I then mention three gifts of God, which are instances of his love to his people before conversion, not to be matched by any after it; namely, the gift of *Himself*, the gift of his *Son*, and the gift of his *Spirit*. This man denies that either of these are given to the elect before conversion. As for the first, he says, "God never gives himself to any of the children of men until they believe;" and suggests, that the scripture I produce, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*, proves it; being, as he thinks, a mutual covenant between God and converted people: but I have shewn already, that it is not a mutual covenant between God and others; and that the promises of it suppose the persons it concerns unconverted; and, indeed, God's being the God of his people, is the first ground and foundation-blessing of the covenant; and the reason why any covenant-blessing, and among the rest, conversion, is bestowed upon any of the sons of men, is, because he is their covenant-God and Father: so that, consequently, he must stand in this relation to them before conversion. Besides, if they are his people before conversion, though not openly to themselves and others, *1 Peter* 2:10, yet secretly to him, *Psalms* 110:3, *Matthew* 1:21, he must be their God before conversion; for these two relate unto, and suppose each other. He does not deny that Christ was a gift of God's love before conversion; but fancies that I have receded from what I proposed; since, as it is expressed by me, he is only given *for* them. I answer; My proposition is, to shew that there are such gifts of God before conversion, as are instances of his love *to* his people then; and surely Christ being given *for* them, is an instance of God's love *to* them, *John* 3:16. He seems to triumph upon this, and says, "could he have proved his proposition, he had certainly laid a strong, if not an improvable (I suppose it should be immovable) foundation for his doctrine." Well, if this will do, I am able to prove that Christ was given *to* his people in his incarnation, before he was given *for* them in his sufferings and death; *To us a child is born, to us a son is given*, *Isaiah* 9:6, and I hope it will be allowed, that the gift of Christ, in his incarnation, extended not only to the believers of that age in which he was born, but to all the elect, to all the children for whose sake he partook of flesh and blood. As to the third and last of these gifts, he judges, "that the Spirit is not given to any of the children of men till they are converted, or at that very instant;" and gives broad intimations, as if he thought the was not given at all, until he is given as a comforter. The text in *John* 16:8, which my expressions refer to, he seems to intimate, does not repaid the conviction and conversion of men, but the reproving of the world. I will not contend with him about the sense of the text; it is enough to my purpose, if it will be but allowed, that the Spirit, of God is the author of real conviction and conversion; who therefore must

be considered as sent, and given, antecedent to conviction and conversion, in order to begin, carry on, and finish the work of grace, when he finds men dead in sin, devoid of all grace, in a state of nature; and therefore, surely, must be a gift and instance of God's love to them, whilst in that state.

2. In order to prove that the love, of God to his elect, from everlasting, is a love of complacency and delight, I observe, that his love to his Son, as Mediator, is such a love; and that whereas God loves his people with the same kind of love he love his Son, which I prove from *John* 18:22, it must needs follow, that the love he bears to them, is a love of complacency and delight. This author thinks I have strained and forced the text I mention beyond its real meaning; and that my notion is unfairly inferred from it; he believes I know the word *as* is of the comparative degree, and rarely intends equality: if I do not know, I am sure he cannot tell me; it is only his ignorance of the comparative degree, that will excuse him from designed blasphemy against the Son of God. His learned reviser and editor should have informed him, that *as*, of itself, is of no degree, but is according to the word to which it is joined; it is used in forming comparisons, and is an adverb of likeness and equality. He seems to be conscious that it sometimes, though rarely, intends equality; and gives himself a needless trouble to collect together several texts, where it signifies likeness: I could easily produce others, where it is expressive of equality; see *John* 1:14 and 10:15, *Philippians* 2:8, *2 Corinthians* 10:7. However, I am content it should signify likeness, and not equality, in the text mentioned; let it be a likeness of a very minute or small degree, I hope it will be allowed to be of the same kind; and if this is granted, my arguments stands good; "that if God has loved his Son with a love of complacency and delight from everlasting, and he has loved his elect with the same kind of love from everlasting, with a like love, though not to the same degree; then he must have loved them from everlasting, with a love of complacency and delight."

3. I go on to observe, that Jesus Christ loved the elect from everlasting with a love of complacency and delight, as they were presented to him in the glass of his Father's purposes and decrees; my meaning is, as they were presented to him in all that glory his Father designed to bring them to; which I prove from *Proverbs* 8:31, and see no reason why the Father's love should not be the same. This man thinks, that the text in *Proverbs*, refers to the delight Christ had in the fore-views of his people, having his own, and his Father's beautiful image impresses upon them; or rather, that it refers to a farther view which the Son of God took of the most perfect state of his members upon earth, in the kingdom-glory. And why may not the thought be carried a little farther, that Christ was not only *rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth*, in the fore-views of his people dwelling with him, and he with them, here on earth; but that his *delights were with the sons of men*, as fore-viewed by him all that ultimate glory they are to enjoy to all eternity; and then we are agreed? Now let it be observed, that this complacency and delight in them, was taken in from everlasting, as abundantly appears from the context; nor could any immediate state, as that of nature, make any alteration in this love of delight. Christ loved them before they were in a state of nature, and while they were in it, though not as considered as unregenerate and rebellious sinners, or because they were so; which is the vile insinuation all along made; but as the whole election of grace stood presented to him a *glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*; just such as he will present them to himself another day.

4. I farther observe, that God's choosing his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, is an act of love springing from delight in them, even as his choice of the people of *Israel* (which was an emblem of the choice of the true and spiritual *Israel*) was owing to the delight he had in them; to

prove which, I cite *Deuteronomy* 10:15 and add, that all the favours and blessings God bestows upon his people in time, such as bringing them out of a state of nature, or out of any distress or difficulty, in a word, their whole salvation, arise from his delight in them; for the proof of which, I mention *Psalms* 18:19 and 149:4, *Jeremiah* 32:41, *Zephaniah* 3:17. This writer is of opinion, that what I have asserted, that God's choice of his people in Christ, as an act of Love springing from delight, requires more proof than I have produced, or than any man is able to produce. I suppose, he will not deny that God's eternal choice of his people in Christ, is an act of love; if he does, let him consider *2 Thessalonians* 2:13, though he may as well deny it to be an act of love, for the same reason that he denies it springs from delight, namely that God chose them to be *holy, and without blame before him in love*; and from thence conclude, that this early choice was not the effect of his love to them, any more than of his delight in them; but that they might be objects of his love, as of his delight, when united to his Son: But surely, if they were *chosen in Christ*, they must be considered in union with him, and must be the objects both of love and delight; since Christ is the beloved Son of God, in whom he always was, is, and ever will be well pleased, and with all those that are in him. To illustrate this matter, I mention the choice of the people of *Israel*, as a representation of the choice of the people of God, which is owned to be thus far right: but when I affirm that this was owing to previous delight in them; it is said, this requires more proof than *Deuteronomy* 10:15, for it is not said, that the Lord delighted in this people, and therefore he chose them; but that he delighted in their fathers to love them, and chose their seed after them. I answer; that the love with which the Lord loved the people of *Israel*, was the same love with which he loved their fathers; and therefore if he loved their fathers with a love of complacency, so he loved them the children; which is the ground and foundation of his choosing them; see *Deuteronomy* 7:6, 7. God's bringing his elect out of a state of nature, is owing to his *great love*, *Ephesians* 2:4, 5, which, surely, it would not be called, was it separate from delight; and as that, so all after-blessings and favours spring from the same kind of love, for which I produce the above scriptures. Though my design there is not to prove by them, that God loves his elect with a love of complacency and delight while no a state of nature; my readers will not be at a loss about my design in producing of them, nor think themselves remarkably trifled with; when they cannot but observe, that my view is apparently this, that as electing and regenerating grace springing from God's love of delight in his people, so all the after-blessings of grace and glory, in one continued chain, arise from the same: whence it will appear, that God's love of complacency in his people, is invariably the same, through every state of nature, grace, and glory.

5. I have observed, that the distinction of a love of pity and benevolence, and of complacency and delight, is made by some popish schoolmen, and is subversive of the mature and perfections of God; and represents him such an one as ourselves, subject to change; that his love, like ours, alters, and by degrees increases, and, from a love of pity and benevolence, passes into a love of complacency and delight. This author seems displeased that this distinction should be ascribed to popish schoolmen, since he is apt to believe, that there *is* (it should be *are*) very *few of* that pretended church (of *Rome*, I suppose he means) so remote from the grossest tenets of Arminianism, as to allow of it. I can tell there have been many in that church, more remote from Arminianism by far, than he himself is; and should I tell him, that some of them have been Supralapsarians, it would have equal credit with him: however, be it so, that this distinction came from them, though he has no *high* opinion of popish notions, which, as I observed before, supposes that he has a *an* opinion of them, yet he shall not very willingly part with it; much good may it do him, I do not envy his possession of it; let him make the best use of it he can. He fancies that what I

have said concerning Christ being "the object of his Father's love and wrath, at one and the same time; that as he was the Son of God, he was always the object of his love and delight; but as he was the sinner's surety, and while bearing the sins of his people in his own body on the tree, he was the object of his displeasure and wrath," is as subversive of the nature and perfections of God, and represents him as liable to change as this distinction does; since here is a change from delight to the greatest displeasure, and from that to delight again. I answer, for the farther explanation of what I have said, let it be observed, that I conceive that Christ was in no other sense the object of divine wrath and displeasure, as the sinner's surety, than as he had the effects of wrath, that is, punishment due to sin, inflicted on him, which he sensibly felt; but then at the same instant, God took the utmost delight and pleasure in him, even as the sinner's surety, viewing him standing in the room and stead of his elect, with patience, courage, and greatness of soul, bearing all that was laid upon him, and giving full satisfaction to law and justice. *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, Isaiah 53:10. Therefore doth my Father love me, says Christ, because I lay down my life, John 10:17.* So that here was no change from delight to displeasure, even when and while he bore the effects of that wrath, or that itself, which was due to others.

6. I cite a passage from *Aristotle*, in which that philosopher affirms, that benevolence is properly neither friendship nor love; and that no man can be said to love, who is not first delighted with the form or idea of the object: and, for my own part, I add, I cannot see that that can be love, which is without any delight in the object said to be loved; an instance in some expressions of a man to his wife, and a parent to a child, declaring love without delight; which seem contradictory. This man at once falls foul upon the poor philosopher, as having asserted what is contrary to reason and experience; and then turning himself to me, says, "I would ask this gentleman if he never saw an object whose miserable estate engaged his compassion, and disposed him to shew friendship, by affording some relief to the miserable creature, though there was no delightful form in the object, nor any thing but misery to engage his kindness? What, is not that love, which disposes one man to relieve another in misery and necessity?" But it should be observed, that the philosopher is speaking of one thing, and this man of another. *Aristotle* is not speaking of benefaction, beneficence, or *doing well*, relieving a miserable creature; but of benevolence, *wishing well* to another: And I hope this will serve to cool his resentment against him. Let me, in my turn, ask this man, if, upon the sight of a miserable object, my pity is engaged so far as to wish him well, but give him nothing, whether this wishing well, this benevolence of mine is either love or friendship? Nay, supposing it is carried farther, and my benevolence passes into beneficence, I relieve the poor object; should not thus be considered rather as an act of humanity, than either properly of friendship or love? I confess I never thought, when I have given alms to a poor object, I did it to shew an affection of love, or as any act of friendship to him; I little thought that a relation of friendship between us arose from such an act, or that the poor creature and I commenced friends upon it. Upon the instances of love without delight, I ask what kind of love would this be thought to be? He answers, why, probably, a love of compassion and benevolence: and, as things will be circumstanced, great love too; that is, when the wife is lewd, and the son rebellious. I reply, that it is very possible, and sometimes so it is, when either of these is the case, that delight in the object continues; so that love appears to be great indeed, real, and hearty: But when things are come to such a pass, that there is no delight in the object, I cannot but be of opinion, that real hearty love and affection is gone too. And what may be said or done that looks like love, arises from the relation which still subsists, and a sense of duty which that obliges to, and not from real love and affection. But what he thinks is the strongest evidence against the notion of love being attended

with delight in the object loved, is the advice of Christ to his disciples, saying, *Love your enemies; bless them that curse you: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;* (Matthew 5:44) And I do not know but it may, and yet fall short of proving what it is brought for. I apprehend, the love with which Christ exhorts in is people to love their enemies, is not to be understood *quoad affectus*, his respecting the internal affection of love: I cannot believe that Christ requires of me that I should love a persecutor as I do my wife, my children; my real friend, or brother in Christ; but *quoad affectus*, as to the effects; that is, I am required to do those things as they lie in my way, and according to my ability, as a man would do to his neighbour, whom he loves; that is, feed him when hungry, and give him drink when thirsty. And so are we taught to understand this advice of Christ by the apostle *Paul*, in *Romans* 12:19-21. But after all, supposing it could be proved that there is a foundation for such a distinction among men, as love of pity and benevolence, and a love of complacency and delight, I would not be over confident about these things. Though I must confess I cannot see how mere pity can be love, on barely benevolence, or wishing well, it love; yet I say, supposing this, it does not follow that there is such a distinction in the love of God, especially towards the same persons, as they pass into different estates; which is to make the love of God to change by degrees, as the love of mutable creatures; and from one kind of love to pass into another, and from a lower to an higher degree: A thought to be abhorred by all those who know and believe what he says to be true; *I am the Lord, I change not*. This author next reverts to the instance which I mention of a man's saying to his wife, "I love you well, though I can take no delight in your person, nor pleasure in your company;" as a contradiction to his expressions of love; and observes, that I have wounded my notion of God's delighting in his elect, whilst in a state of nature, unless I earn prove that he dwells with, and takes pleasure in the company of these his enemies. I reply, that I do not think that God loves or delights either in the persons, or in the company of his people, considered as sinners, as unconverted persons, as in a state of nature, as enemies to him; but as considered in Christ, and viewed in all that glory he designs to bring them to. And thus as the *delights* of the Son, so the delights of the Father, from everlasting, before the earth was, were not only *in*, but *with* them: They were not only rejoicing *in* them, but delighting themselves *with* them, in the fore-views of their dwelling with each other, and enjoying each other's company to all eternity.

And thus I have gone as far in my answer, as this author has in examining the Supralapsarian doctrines. It is much, when his hand was in, that he did not take under his examination some other doctrines handled in the *letter* he refers to; such as God's seeming no sin in his people, the non-necessity of good works to salvation, mortification, and the like; which he might as well have forced into the Supralapsarian scheme, as some others. He has indeed a fling or two at the doctrine of repentance, seems greatly concerned that legal repentance is not to be valued and regarded, and thinks that this reflects upon the preaching of *John* the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; whereas it was an evangelical repentance, and fruits meet for the same, which were preached up by them. He concludes, that the repentance which I allow sinners may be exhorted to, stands more remote from the power of the creature than legal repentance; as though I thought sinners were to be exhorted to it, as within the compass of their own power: whereas my express words are, "To exhort even to evangelical repentance, as within the compass of the power of man's will, and as a condition of the covenant of grace, and a term of acceptance within God; and in order to make peace with God, and gain the divine favour, which is the rant of some men's ministry; I say, to exhort to repentance with such views, and on such considerations as these, is low mean stuff; too mean for, below and unworthy of a minister of the gospel." One vile reflection upon the doctrine of forgiveness of sins,

through the blood of Christ, I cannot omit taking notice of, when he says, "I am ready to believe that God, in infinite wisdom, does require it (legal repentance) as *necessary to forgiveness*, in all capable beings." What! is not the blood of Christ which was shed for the remission of sin, sufficient to procure it, without legal repentance being necessary to it? I observe this author is very fond of this way of preaching, and is very desirous that others would engage in it. Was I thought worthy, or capable of giving advice, my advice to him would be not only to preach repentance towards God upon the gospel-scheme, but faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; only I should be afraid the man will put *unbelief for faith*. I should advise him to content himself in making use of what talents he has in preaching the word, and not scribble in the manner he does: But if he must needs be an author, let him write upon *moral* subjects, against the prevailing *vices* of the age, open profaneness, and impiety, things he may be better acquainted with, than evangelical truths, or Supralapsarian principles.

THE DOCTRINES OF
G O D ' S E V E R L A S T I N G L O V E
TO HIS ELECT, AND THEIR
ETERNAL UNION WITH CHRIST:
TOGETHER WITH SOME OTHER TRUTHS,
STATED AND DEFENDED,
IN A LETTER TO DR. ABRAHAM TAYLOR.

S I R,

Having had the happiness of hearing, and since of reading, your two Discourses, *Of the Insufficiency of Natural Religion* (See Lime Street Lecture, ed.); I cannot but express a satisfaction with your method of treating the argument; nor would you have heard from me in this public manner, had you not, in your performance, fallen foul on some of your friends, whilst you was engaging with the common adversary.

When I heard your first discourse on this subject, I observed a paragraph which gave me some uneasiness. I determined to take notice of it to you, as I had opportunity and knowing I should be present when you condescended to submit your discourses to the correction of some friends, I purposed humbly to offer some reasons for either dropping or altering the paragraph; but, to my great satisfaction, I found myself under no necessity of doing it. The passage I refer to being omitted in reading, I concluded from hence, that upon a revisal of your discourses, you had seen reason in your own mind to strike it out but, since reading your sermons, now made public, I find it stands, and, if I mistake not;, with some additional keenness and severity: your reason for this you best know. Your words are these (A Defence if some important Doctrines of the Gospel, by several Ministers, Vol. I, p.48).

"It has been said, that during the times of our civil commotions, there was little preached up but faith in Christ; and that the duties of morality were little insisted on: it is certain that some ignorant enthusiastic preachers insisted then much on eternal union with Christ, and that sin could do a believer no harm; but all wise and thoughtful men abhorred such immoral conceits."

What I have to complain of in this passage, is as follows:

I. The lameness and impertinence of it. You observe, "It has been said, that during the times of our civil commotions, there was little preached up but faith in Christ, and that the duties of morality were little insisted on." One would have expected that you would have given an answer to this

charge, and it looks as if you had designed it, by your making mention of it, but you neither grant nor deny it; and, instead of doing either, as you ought to have done, you put off the objection, by saying, "that some ignorant enthusiastic preachers insisted then much on eternal union with Christ, and that sin could do a believer no harm." Things which are not in the charge, and no way to your purpose to make mention of. Without taking upon me to be a dictator to you, you might have with truth allowed, that during those times, faith in Christ was very much preached up, though not to the exclusion of moral duties; and, with a great deal of justness, you might have observed, that the power of godliness very much prevailed; that the duties of religion were much practiced; that the Lord's day was strictly and religiously observed; that social worship was attended on constantly; that family and closet-devotion were kept up with much strictness; and that morality, in all its branches, was in a very flourishing condition in those times, when faith in Christ was so much insisted on. This I am very sensible you are capable of observing; but you chose rather to fling at the doctrine of eternal union with Christ, and to introduce that in an awkward way, and by joining it with a disagreeable notion of sin's doing a believer no harm, to draw an odium upon some good men in those times, whom you call "ignorant enthusiastic preachers," and through them to strike at some who are now in being.

II. It does not appeal' to me matter of fact, that in those times eternal union with Christ, and that sin could do a believer no harm, were much insisted on, as you say. I know not, indeed, what acquaintance you may have with the pulpit performances of those times. For my own part I can only judge of their preaching by what they have printed; and, I presume, that if these doctrines are any where to be met with, they are to be found in the writings of such, who, in those times, were branded for *Antinomians*; such as *Eaton, Saltmarsh, Simpson, Town, Richardson, and Crisp*; whose writings I have carefully perused, and find no reason to conclude that those doctrines were *much* insisted on, as you say. By reading the works of these authors, I have been confirmed in the truth of an observation made some years ago, by the learned *Hoornbeeck*: "For I perceive, says he, while heads of doctrine are made up by the adversaries, rather than the authors themselves, out of their dissertations, books, and sermons, that sometimes their sense is not sufficiently taken, nor happily expressed; and that both here and there a great deal, indeed, is said, but not much to the purpose; and that they either do not understand, or mistake the thing in dispute." As to the doctrine of eternal union with Christ, however consistent it may be with some principles of theirs, I do not perceive that they take any notice of it; and some of them seem to have no notion of it, but tread in the common beaten path of union by the Spirit of Christ, and faith in Christ.

Eaton, in his *Honey-Comb of Free Justification*, has these words (Chp. 15. Pp.437-38): "Christ will have no foul leprous members united and made one with him; and therefore he first washeth us in his own blood, and makes us clean from all our sins, and then knits and unites us as fit members into his ownself. The order also and natural dependence of these benefits (that is, justification and union) upon one another, confirm the same; for we cannot be knit into Christ before we have the Holy Ghost dwelling in us: the Holy Ghost comes not to dwell in us before we be reconciled to God; and we are not reconciled to God before we have all our sins abolished out of God's sight, but when all our sins are abolished, and we made perfectly holy and righteous, from all spot of sin in the sight of God freely, then the Holy Ghost comes and dwells in us, and knits and unites us, as fit members, into the blessed body of Jesus Christ; then we are, by the wedding garment alone of Christ's righteousness, made, above our sense and feeling, fit brides for so glorious a Bridegroom." And in another place, he has these words (p. 443): "This union and conjunction then is the cause

that I am separated from myself, and translated into Christ and his kingdom, which is a kingdom of grace, righteousness, peace, joy, life, salvation, and glory; yea, by this inseparable union and conjunction, which is through faith, Christ and I are made, as it were, one body in spirit."

Simpson, another of those men who were called *Antinomians* in those times, expresses himself on the subject of union after this manner, when he is speaking of the use of faith in justification (Sermon III on Eph. 2:8, 9; p. 116): "So that by faith, says he, though we are assured of God's love in the first place, yet we are not only assured, but likewise Christ is applied unto us; we are united unto him, and do enjoy all things in him, and receive all good things from him." And in another place (Ibid. p. 129); "A believing man is bone of the bone, and flesh of the flesh, and one spirit with the Lord Jesus: there is a close and near union and application of Christ to the soul by faith."

Saltmarsh says nothing in what I have seen of his, concerning eternal union; and what he says of union itself, is not very intelligible; yet it seems as though he had no other notion of being in Christ, or of being united to Christ, but by faith. He observes (Free Grace, or the Flowings of Christ's Blood Freely to Sinners, p. 66-7); "That the pure spiritual and mystical fountain of the mortification of sin, is the being planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, our old man being crucified with him (Rom. 6:6). 6. Our union with Christ our Head, our Righteousness, our Vine." And, a little after, he has these words: "Now that power wherein we are perfectly mortified, is our union with Christ, our being planted in the fellowship of his death, &c. and that wherein we are imperfectly, or in part mortified, is in that transformed nature, or spiritual nature, the body of sin being in a believer, more or less, till he lay down this body and take it up a more glorious one; so as a believer is to consider himself dead to sin, only in the fellowship of Christ's death mystically, and to consider himself only dying to sin in his own nature spiritually: so as in Christ he is only complete, and in himself imperfect at the best. *We are complete in him*, saith the apostle (Col. 2:10), yet there is such a power and efficacy, and mighty working in this mystical union and fellowship with Christ, that he shall find sin dying in him from this, the Spirit working most in the virtue of this." And in another place, he says (Ibid. p. 141); "A believer hath a twofold condition, in Christ, in himself; yet he ought ever to consider himself in Christ by faith, not in himself." And elsewhere he observes (Ibid. p. 156-7): "The word says, that we are complete in Christ, and righteous in Christ; but when I repent, or love, or obey, I believe, I am in Christ; and therefore my love, and repentance, and obedience, is such as I may believe, though not in themselves, yet in him to be good and spiritual."

Town, another writer of those times, who was much charged with *Antinomianism*, says nothing of eternal union, but has many expressions in his writings, which shew that he had no other notion of union, but by the Spirit of God, and by the grace of faith, in one of his books he has these words (The Assertion of Grace, p. 4): "The righteousness of faith unites them, that is, the saints, to Christ, their Lord, head and Governor, that so henceforth they may be led by his free Spirit and swayed by the scepter of his kingdom." And in the same treatise, he asks (p. 74), Where doth the law speak a syllable of our conjunction and union with Christ through faith, whereby Christ and the believer become one body in spirit?" And in another place (p. 118); "By faith we being united and married to Christ, do by him bring forth fruits to God, even perfect obedience imputatively, and inchoative holiness through the operation of his Spirit, received by the ministry and doctrine of faith, and not of the law." Though, in another passage in the same book (p. 11, 12), he makes the ordinance of water baptism to be the saints union with, and insition (*grafting*) into Christ. His words are these:

"That ordinance, speaking of baptism, is a true, spiritual, and real engrafting of them into Christ (1 Cor. 12:13), so that faith is but the revelation of what was secret and hid before, or an evident testimony, and lively and comfortable apprehension and application in the conscience of the person of what was conferred and made his before;" that is, if I understand him, in baptism. In another of his books, he has these expressions (The Re-assertion of Grace, p. 12): "Let the poor sinful, miserable, and lost soul, first be united and married to him, in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead, and in whom she is then complete, wanting nothing (Col. 2:9, 10), then tell of duties." Again (Ibid. p. 20), "If you do truly good works, you do them in Christ, abiding in him (John 15:4), in whom you are alive, and walk continually by faith.—Now the soul cannot walk in Christ, nor have union with him, save by faith." Once more (Ibid. p. 105), "Can man's nature be changed, says he, till he be united and engrafted into Christ, the true Vine? And doth not virtue come by that insition and union?" And in some pages after (Ibid. p.126), "It is by the Spirit that the soul cometh to union with Christ." And, in another of his treatises (Monomachia; or a single Reply to Mr. Rutherford, &c. p. 37), he has these words "Faith cometh by hearing, and after faith comes actual union."

The only writers, in the times referred to, that I have met with, who assert even union before faith, are *Richardson* (Answer to Dr. Homes, p. 111-12), and *Crisp* (Christ Alone Exalted, Vol. I, Sermon VII, p. 104, Vol. III, Sermon VII, p. 597, 599, 600; Sermon VIII p. 609, 614-617), who yet speak not a word of eternal union; neither do they, or the writers above-mentioned, professedly treat of the doctrine of union in any sense, but only take notice of it as it falls in their way. I read their books with greedy expectation of frequently meeting with the doctrine of eternal union, in hopes of finding arguments for the confirmation of it, and of receiving more light into it, which I believe to be an eternal truth. Eternal union was so far from being a subject *much* insisted on in those times, as you say, that I do not find it was insisted on *at all*.

As to the notion of sin's doing a believer no harm, *Eaton*, *Saltmarsh*, *Simpson*, and *Town*, say nothing of it; nor have they any thing like it, that I have met with, in their writings; and I could easily fill up whole pages with passages out of them in which they express their abhorrence and detestation of sin, and their great regard to a holy life and conversation.

Richardson and *Crisp* are the only writers, in those times, that I have observed to make use of any expressions of this kind. As for *Richardson*, he has but one single passage which looks any thing like this notion, that sin does a believer no harm; which is this (Justification by Christ Alone, p. 21): "If *all things work together for our good*, then, says he, all falls, pains, diseases, crosses, afflictions, &c. do us no hurt, but work for our good; *all things work for our good* (Rom. 8:28)." And yet this is no more than what many sound divines have said, who never were charged with *Antinomianism*; when they assert, that all things, even the sins of God's people, are overruled by a kind and good Providence for their good, as their afflictions and crosses are; and by falls into sin doing *no hurt*, he means the hurt of punishment, as is evident from the whole of his reasoning and argument in that place. He clearly hints, in many places, at the hurt that comes by sin, with respect to a believer's peace and comfort, the damage it does to others, and the dishonor it brings to God; "Be afraid to sin, says he (Counsels, p. 98), and use means to prevent it; consider God hath forbidden it (Rom. 6). Consider sin in the nature of it, in the root and fruit of it: it is the price of blood; there is no true sweetness in sin, no contentment no satisfaction in it, why you should desire it? it fills the soul with wounds, sorrow, bitterness, shame; let experience speak." And, in another

place, he says (Counsels, p. 150-51): "We should be afraid to sin, 1. because it is forbidden by God. 2. It is dishonorable to him. 3. It encourageth others to sin. 4. It will fill our souls with sorrow to sin against so loving a Father and to dishonor him, &c. Having sinned, if but in the least measure, we should be so fain from covering it with any pretence or excuse, that we should abhor it, and ourselves for it, with the greatest detestation?" And elsewhere he says (Divine Consolations, p. 245); "Be sure ye allow yourself in no sin, but in the strength of God hate and abhor, with the greatest indignation, all sin, and the appearance of it; it is better to die than to sin. There is that which accompanieth sin, which strikes at a believer's peace and comfort; it will damp, straiten, and oppress the soul; it will hinder their comfort, joy, and peace in God, unless God doth wonderfully strengthen their faith in him; we find by experience, that sin is a lett to our faith and comfort, it having often unsettled and disquieted us in our peace and comfort, though we ought not to be so."

Crisp is the only writer that expresses himself freely and largely on this subject; and with the least guard (Christ Alone Exalted, Vol. I. Sermon X, p. 157; Vol. III. Sermon I, p. 509-14; Sermon II, p. 528-29; Sermon III, p. 46, &c.); and yet when he says, that "believers need not be afraid of their sins, his meaning is not, that they need not be afraid of sins committed, as *Hoornbeeck*, *Witsius*, and *Chaunecy*, have justly observed; and when he says, that "the sins of believers can do them *no hurt*: by *hurt* he means, the hurt of punishment, penal evil, or the penal effects of sin which believers are freed from, and therefore shall never enter into a state of condemnation, Christ having bore their sins, and made satisfaction to justice for them; but then he speaks of sin, in its own nature, as odious and dreadful to believer's, and of bitterness and evil, as the certain fruits of it. The Doctor, I verily believe, used these expressions in a sound sense, and with a good design; not to encourage persons in sin, but to relieve and comfort the minds of believers, distressed with sin; yet, I must confess, I do not like the expressions, but am of opinion they ought to be disused.

And now surely, Sir, this single author's using of this expression, and that not in the gross and vile sense of it, cannot be sufficient to bear you out, in saying, that sin s doing a believer no harm, was much insisted on in those times: I can hardly think you have any reference to *Archer's* book, called *Comfort for Believers about their Sin and Troubles*; in which the author exhorts believers not to be oppressed and perplexed for their sins: though he acknowledges that godly sorrow and true shame become them, and says, that till they have it, God will not own them. He asserts in so many words, "that we may safely say, that God is, and hath an hand in, and is the author of the sinfulness of his people." (*Horresco referens!*) and what is enough to make one shudder at the reading of, he says, that "all the sins which believers are left to, they are through and because of the covenant of grace left to them; and the covenant implies a dispensation of sinning to them, as well as other things:" And adds, "By sins are they as much nurtured and fitted for heaven, as by any thing else." All which is blasphemous, vile and abominable; and for which if I mistake not, the book was ordered to be burnt by the common hangman. I say, I can hardly think you can have reference to this author; for though he asserts this notion in the grossest sense, and in the vilest manner, yet it unhappily falls out for you, that this man was not for eternal union, but for union by faith; he frequently observes, that faith immediately unites to Christ, and is the bond of union to him, and what brings the Holy Ghost into the soul. If you had this author and his book in your eye, you should rather have said, that "union by faith, and sin's doing a believer no harm, were much insisted on in those times." But,

III. What I have further to complain of, is your joining the harmless doctrine of eternal union with that hurtful one, as it may be taken, of sin's doing a believer no harm. You could have no other view, than to bring the doctrine of eternal union into disgrace, and an odium upon the asserters of it, as if there was a strict connection between these two, and as if those who espoused the one, held the other. The notion of sin's doing a believer no harm, was never a received tenet of any body or society of Christians among us; no, not even those who have been called *Antinomians*. It is not the sentiment of those who are branded with the name in this day. I am well informed, that some churches, who are despised as *Antinomian*, have cast some out of their communion, for holding this notion in the gross sense of it. I wish some churches, that reckon themselves more orthodox, would shew a like zeal against *Arianism*, and in the behalf of Christ's proper Deity. There are, indeed, I hear, a scattered scandalous set of persons in the *Fen Country*, the disciples of one *David Culey*, who was cut off from a church in *Northamptonshire*, and was infamous for his blasphemy and scandalous life, who have imbibed this notion, and live answerably to it, but are disregarded by all persons of seriousness and sobriety. It was not a general received notion of those who are called *Antinomians*, a little before or during the time of our civil commotions. Dr. *Crisp* is the only person that speaks it out, and yet not in the gross sense of it, as has been observed. All that their adversaries have said of them, is not to be relied on; such unworthy writers as *Edwards* and *Paget*, I give no credit to. Mr. *Crandon* speaks of some *Antinomians* in *Somersetshire*, with whom he was acquainted, and he gives us a catalogue of their sentiments; but nothing like this is taken notice of by him: nay, it does not appear that the *Antinomians* in Germany, the follower of *Islebius Agricola*, from *Luther's* account of them, I held any such notion. *Sledian*, in his Commentaries, takes notice of them, and of their tenets. His short account of them is this: "This year, that is, 1538, sprung up the sect of them who are called *Antinomians*; they say, that repentance is not to be taught out of the decalogue, and oppose those who teach, that the gospel is not; to be preached, but those whose hearts are first shaken and broken by the preaching of the law: they also assert, that whatever a man's life may be, and how impure soever, yet is he justified, if he only believes the promises of the gospel." This last assertion of theirs ins somewhat ambiguous, and may seem to favor this notion, of sin's doing a believer no harm, as this author has delivered it: if his meaning is that they held that a man may be justified by faith in the gospel-promise, without sanctification; or though he allows himself in a continued impurity of life, this is a contradiction to the grace of God; but if his meaning is that they held that a man may be truly justified by faith in Christ, though his former life has been never so impure; this is a truth of the gospel, and gives no countenance to this doctrine. Of all that I have met with, none more roundly assert it than *Eunomius*, and his followers, who lived in the fourth century. "It is reported of this man, that he was such an enemy to good manners, that he should assert that the commission of any sin whatever, and a continuance therein, could not hurt any one, if he was but a partaker of that faith which was taught by him." This man was a disciple of *Aetius*, whose followers were called from him *Aetians*; of whom *Epiphanius* writes, that they were unconcerned about holiness of life, or any of the commands of God, and spoke very slightly of sin. *Iræneus* has a passage concerning the *Valentinians*, which comes up to this notion; it is this: "As that which is earthly cannot partake of salvation, for they say it is incapable of it; so again, that which is spiritual, by which they mean themselves, cannot receive corruption, by whatsoever actions they may be concerned in. Just as gold being put into dirt, does not lose its beauty, but retains its nature, nor can it receive any hurt from the dirt: so they say, that they may be concerned in some material actions, and not be at all hurt, or lose the spiritual substance: hence the most perfect of them do all those things which are forbidden, without any manner of fear." And then instances eating things sacrificed to idols, attending on the worship of the heathens, frequenting the

theatres, and indulging themselves in all fleshly lusts. The *Gnostics, Carpocratians, Saturninians, Basilidians*, with many others, embraced such-like impure notions: which, it is probable, they received from *Simon Magus*, the Father of heresies, who allowed those who believed in him and his *Helena*, to live as they list! These things I take notice of, to shew by whom this tenet has and has not been received; and, to support the justness of my complaint against you, in joining the doctrine of eternal union with it, when they never went together, as I can learn, or were ever received by the same persons.

IV. I observe that you call the doctrine of eternal union, as well as that of sin's doing a believer no harm, an immoral conceit. I do not well know what you mean by an *immoral conceit*; every imagination of the thoughts of the heart being only evil, is an immoral conceit; all sinful lusts in the mind are so: *When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth, sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death* (Jam. 1:15). An immoral conceit, properly speaking, I apprehend, is the first motion, thought, and imagination of sin rising up in the mind; how this is applicable to the doctrine of eternal union, I see not: but, I suppose, your meaning is, that the doctrine of eternal union is a conceit and fiction of some men's brains, which has a tendency to promote immorality, and encourage persons in it. That it is no conceit, which has its foundation only in the fancy and imagination of some men, but a truth contained in the sacred scriptures, I hope to make appear. Was it a mere conceit, why you should reckon it an immoral one, I know not; if it is a conceit, it is an harmless one; nor can it be reasonably thought to have a tendency to promote immorality and profaneness any more than the doctrine of eternal election has, by which the holiness of God's people is infallibly secured unto them; for *God has chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy, and without blame before him in love* (Eph. 1:4). Now how persons can be in Christ, chosen in him, and yet not united to him, or how there can be an eternal election of persons in Christ, and yet no eternal union of them to him, is what I do not understand; and as eternal election secures the holiness of the saints, so does eternal union. It is because Christ has loved them with an everlasting love, and by loving them, has united them to himself, and become the Head of them, and one with them, therefore he has given himself for them, *that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works* (Titus 2:14); and does also send down his Spirit into their hearts, to renew and sanctify them; to implant grace in them, to enable them to perform good works, in which he has before ordained that they should walk, and to hold on in faith and holiness to the end. Redemption from sin, the sanctification of our hearts, all the good works done in faith, and perseverance in grace to the end, are the fruits and effects of eternal union to Christ. In what sense then it is an immoral conceit, or how it tends to promote immorality, you would do well to tell us, or acknowledge that you have abused it.

V. You call the persons who, you say, insisted much on eternal union, "ignorant, enthusiastic preachers." One would have thought you might have spared this severe reflection, for the sake of some, who have asserted an eternal union, that are above your contempt, and very far from any just charge of ignorance and enthusiasm. Dr. *Goodwin*. speaks of an election-union, a virtual and representative one, which the elect have in Christ before the foundation of the world (Vol. I. Part I, p. 62): "As in the womb, says he, head and members are not conceived apart, but together, as having relation to each other; so were we and Christ (as making up one mystical body unto God) formed together in the eternal womb of election." Again (Vol. I. Part I, p. 64), "Were you so chosen in Christ, as that God never purposed you a being but in Christ, and then gave you this subsistence

in Christ, never casting a thought upon you out of him; then reckon of no other being but what you have in Christ. Reckon not of what you have in honour, or what you are in greatness or parts; but reckon of what you were in him, before this world was, and of all the spiritual blessings wherewith he then blessed you; and likewise of what you are now in him, by an actual union, as then by a virtual and representative one." And in another place (Ibid. Part II, p. 215), "We were one with Christ before the world was: there is one way of union then; Jesus Christ in the human nature cometh down and represents us, doth what we have to do; here is now another way of union; Why? This is the reason; for we were one with Christ, by his undertaking for us only from everlasting; but we were one with him, by an active representation, when below on earth." And elsewhere he says (Ibid. Part III, p. 40): "There is a threefold union with Christ; the first is relative, whereby we are said to be his, and he ours; as you know he is called our husband, and the church is called his wife; and before husband and wife company together there is such a relation made by marriage; and the husband may be in one place, and the wife in another, so that there can be no communion between them and yet be man and wife; so is the union between Christ and you as complete in the relation, before he acts any thing upon you, though he be in heaven, and you on earth, as if you were in heaven with him." And so in another part of his works (Vol. III. Book V, Chp. 20, p. 347); he makes union to Christ to be before the Spirit, or faith, or any grace is given: His words are these: "Union with Christ is the first fundamental thing of justification, and sanctification, and all: Christ first takes us, and then sends his Spirit; he apprehends us first; it is not my being regenerate that puts me into a right of all those privileges; but it is Christ takes me, and then gives me his Spirit, faith, holiness, &c. It is through our union with Christ, and the perfect holiness of his nature, to whom we are united, that we partake of the privileges of the covenant of grace." *Witsius* says, the elect "are united to Christ,—1. In the eternal decree of God.—2. By the union of the eternal compact, in which Christ was constituted, by the Father, the Head of all those who are to be saved.—3. By a true and real union, but what on their part is only passive, they are united to Christ when the Spirit of Christ first lays hold on them, and infuses a principle of new life;" And a little after adds; "Moreover, since faith is an act flowing from a principle of spiritual life, it is plain, that it may be said in a sound sense, that an elect man may be truly and really united to Christ before actual faith." It is evident, that he allows not only an union to Christ in God's eternal purpose, but a federal union with him from eternity, as the Head of the elect. Now for the sake of these men and others that might be named, you might have forbore the heavy charge of *ignorance* and *enthusiasm*; and if not for the sake of them, yet surely for the sake of your own Father, who asserts an eternal representative union of the elect with Christ, and that in a book of which you yourself was the editor (Mr. Richard Taylor's *Scripture Doctrine of Justification*, pp. 14, 15). His words are these "It must, indeed be granted, that God, from eternity, decreed to justify elect sinners through Christ: and that as none but they are ever justified, so all that were decreed for justification are certainly justified. It must also be granted, that God, from eternity, entered into a covenant of grace with Christ, as the Head of elect sinners; wherein Christ as their surety, undertook for their justification.—It must likewise be granted, that there was a gift of all grace made to Christ for elect sinners, as he was their Head and Surety from eternity (2 Tim. 1:9). It must be farther granted, that all elect sinners had *a representative union with Christ from eternity*. When Christ was chose as their Head, they were chose together with him, as his members." In another page (Ibid. p. 19), he says: "Believers may, with the greatest delight and comfort, take a survey of their justification, in the different gradations, or progressive steps of it. God decreed their justification, and they had a *representative union* with Christ, as their Head and Surety, *from eternity*. This lays such a sure foundation for their justification, as cannot be overturned by the joint power of men and devils:

they had a legal union with Christ, and were federally justified in him when he rose from the dead. This gave them a fundamental right to justification: they are actually united to Christ when they believe, and are then actually justified." You see that all wise and thoughtful men do not abhor eternal union as an immoral conceit: if you say that these men plead for a real and actual union by faith, you cannot deny that they also assert an union before faith, yea, an eternal union in some sense; whereas you have reproached it, as an immoral conceit, and the preachers of it, as ignorant and enthusiastic, without any exception or explanation. You would do well to explain your sense, and clear yourself. For my own part, I should not greatly care to be reckoned ignorant, and especially enthusiastic, and yet think I may, in a safe and sound sense, insist upon the doctrine of eternal union.

And now, Sir, if it would not be thought tedious, I would freely give you my sentiments concerning the doctrine of union. I am persuaded we shall not differ about the persons who are united to Christ, that these are God's elect, and they only; nor about the nature of the union itself, that it is an union of the whole persons, souls and bodies, of God's people to the whole person of Christ; though it is not a personal union, that is, such an one as the union of the divine and human natures in Christ; that it is real, solid, substantial, and not imaginary; that it is complete and perfect, and not gradual, or brought about by degrees, but finished at once, as our justification is; that it is exceeding close and near, and indissoluble, of which there can be no separation. What we are most likely to differ about, is, *when* God's elect are united to Christ, and *what* is the bond of their union to him. It is generally said that they are not united to Christ until they believe, and that the bond of union is the Spirit on Christ's part, and faith on ours. I am ready to think that these phrases are taken up by divines, one from another, without a thorough consideration of them. It is well, indeed, that Christ is allowed any part or share in effecting our union with him; though one should think the whole of it ought to be ascribed to him, since it is such an instance of surprising love and grace, than which there cannot well be thought to be a greater. Why must this union be pieced up with faith on our part? This smells so prodigious rank of self, that one may justly suspect that something rotten and nauseous lies at the bottom of it. I shall therefore undertake to prove, that the bond of union of God's elect to Christ, is neither the Spirit on Christ's part, nor faith on their part.

1. It is not the Spirit on Christ's part. The mission of the Spirit into the hearts of God's elect, to regenerate, quicken, and sanctify them, to apply the blessings of grace to them, and seal them up to the day of redemption, and the bestowing of his several gifts and graces upon them, are in consequence, and by virtue of a previous and antecedent union of them to the Person of Christ. They do not first receive the Spirit of Christ, and then by the Spirit are united to him; but they are first united to him, and, by virtue of this union, receive the Spirit of him. To conceive otherwise, would be as preposterous as to imagine, that the animal spirits, which have their seat in the head, should be communicated to, and diffused throughout the several parts of the body, without union to the head, or antecedent to an union, and in order to effect it; as this would be justly reckoned an absurdity in nature, so is the other no less an absurdity in grace. A person is first joined, glued, closely united to Christ, and then becomes one Spirit with him; that is, receives, enjoys, and possesses in measure, the same Spirit as he does, as the members of an human body do participate of the same spirit the head does, to which they are united: *he that is joined unto the Lord, is one spirit* (1 Cor. 6:17). The case is this; Christ, as the Mediator of the covenant, and Head of God's elect, received the Spirit without measure, that is, a fulness of the gifts and graces of the Spirit: These persons being united to Christ, as members to their Head, do, in his own time, receive the

Spirit from him, though in measure. They are first chosen in him, adopted through him, made one with him, become heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; and then, as the apostle says, *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father* (Gal. 4:6). Besides, the Spirit of God, in his personal inhabitation in the saints, in the operations of his grace on their hearts, and in the influences of his power and love on their souls, is the evidence, and not the bond of their union to God or Christ, and of their communion with them: For *hereby we know*, says the apostle *John* (1 John 3:24), *that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us*. And in another place (1 John 4:13), *Hereby know we, that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit*. There is, indeed, an union which the Spirit of God is the efficient cause of; but this is not an union, of God's elect to the Person of Christ, but an union of believers one with another in a church-state; which the apostle designs, when he says, *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit* (1 Cor. 12:13). The bond of this union is peace and love; hence the saints are exhorted to walk *with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* (Eph. 4:2, 3).

2. Neither is faith the bond of union to Christ. Those who plead for union by faith, would do well to tell us whether we are united to Christ, by the habit or principle of faith implanted, or by the act of faith; and since there are different acts of faith, they should tell us by which our union is, and whether by the first, second, third, &c. acts of believing. If we are united to Christ by the habit or principle of faith infused, then our union is not by faith on our part; because faith, as a principle or habit, is a gift of grace, of the operation of God, and which Christ is the author and finisher of. And if we are united to Christ by faith, as an act of ours, then we are united to Christ by a work, for faith, as an act of ours, is a work; and if by a work, then not by grace; for, *if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work* (Rom. 11:6).

I have often wondered that our divines should fix upon the grace of faith to be the bond of union to Christ, when there is nothing in it that is of a cementing and uniting nature: it is not a grace of union but of communion. Had they pitched upon the grace of love, as the bond of union, it would have appeared much more plausible; for love is of a knitting and uniting nature; it is the bond of friendship among men; it was this which knit the soul of *Jonathan* to the soul of *David*, so that *he loved him as his own soul*. This is the bond of union of saints one with another: their hearts are *knit together in love*. Hence charity or love is called *the bond of perfectness* (Col. 2:2; 3:14). It was this which so closely joined and cemented the hearts of the first Christians one to another, insomuch that *the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of one soul* (Acts 4:32). Had our divines, I say, fixed upon this grace, as the bond of union to Christ, it would have looked more feasible, and might perhaps, have been the means of leading them into the truth of the matter. Some, indeed, tell us, that we are united to Christ by faith and love; but then they do not consider love as a part of the bond of union, but only as an evidence of that faith by which we are united; or their meaning is, that that faith by which we are united to Christ, is a faith that works by love. Dr. *Jacomb* (On Rom. 8:1) indeed, having treated of a mystical union between Christ and his people, the bond of which he makes to be the Spirit on Christ's part, and faith on theirs, and of a legal union between Christ and believers, the ground of which is Christ's suretyship, speaks of a moral union between them, the bond of which is love, even "a mutual, reciprocal, hearty love between

Christ and believers; he loves them, and they love him, and by virtue of this mutual love, there is a real and close union betwixt them." And besides him, the learned *Alsted* is the only divine I have met with, who makes the bond of union to be the mutual love of Christ and his people. "This union, says he, is the mutual love of Christ and believers, or a mutual obligation of Christ and believers, to love one another." Now though there is something of truth in this, yet it is not the naked, pure, and unmixed truth of the matter; for it is not our love to Christ, but his love to us, which is alone the real bond of our union to him; he loves his people, and by loving them, unites them to himself: and this is the ground and foundation of all their communion and fellowship with him, both in grace and glory.

Faith is no uniting grace, nor are any of its acts of a cementing nature. Faith indeed, looks to Christ, lays hold on him, embraces him, and cleaves unto him; it expects and receives all from Christ, and gives him all the glory; but then hereby a soul can no more be said to be united to Christ, than a beggar may be said to be united to a person to whom he applies, of whom he expects alms, to whom he keeps close, from whom he receives, and to whom he is thankful. Faith is a grace of communion, by which Christ dwells in the hearts of his people, which is an act (of) fellowship, as a fruit of union, by which believers live on Christ, receive of his fulness, grace for grace, and walk on in him as they have received him. Union to Christ is the foundation of faith, and of all the acts of believing, as seeing, walking, receiving, &c. A man may as well be said to see, walk, and receive without his head, or without union to it, as one can be said to believe, that is, to see, walk, and receive in a spiritual sense, without the head, Christ; or as an antecedent to union to him, or, in order to it. To talk of faith in Christ before union to Christ, is a most preposterous, absurd, and irrational notion.

Faith is the fruit and effect of union, even of what is commonly called vital union. Faith stands much in the same place in things spiritual, as reason does in things natural. There must first be an union of the soul and body of man, before he can be said to live; and there must be life in him before there can be reason, or the exercise of it; man must first become a living soul, before he can be a reasonable one; so there must be an union of the soul to Christ before it can spiritually live; and there must be a principle of spiritual life before there can be any faith, or the exercise of it. Now as reason and the exercise of it, is a second remove from the union of the soul and body; so is faith, and the exercise of it, a second remove from person's union to Christ. There must be first a vital union to Christ, before there can be any believing in him. This is fitly and fully exemplified in the simile of the vine and branches, which Christ makes use of to express the union of his people to him: *Abide in me, and I in you*, says he (John 15:4, 5), *as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the Vine, ye are the branches he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.* Now faith is a fruit of the Spirit, which grows upon the branches, that are in Christ the Vine; but then these branches must first be in the vine, before they bear this fruit; for *the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit* (Prov. 12:12). The branches of the wild olive tree must first be engrafted into the good olive tree, become one with it, and so partake of the root and fatness of it, before they can bring forth good fruit. Could there be the fruit of faith in Christ's people before their union to him, then the branches would bear fruit without the vine, without being in it, or united to it, contrary to our Lord's express words. From the whole, it may safely be concluded, that union to Christ is before faith, and therefore faith cannot be the bond of union; no, not on our part. Vital union is before faith. There always was a fulness of life laid up and reserved for all those who were chosen in

Christ; there was always life in Christ the Head for all his members, which he, when it pleases him, in regeneration, communicates to them, and implants in them, though there is no activity or exercise of this life until they believe.

The everlasting love of God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, is the bond of the elect's union to the sacred Three. What may he said of the three divine Persons in general, is true of each of them in particular. They have all three loved the elect with an everlasting love, and thereby have firmly and everlastingly united them to themselves. Christ has loved them with an everlasting and unchangeable love, whereby his heart is knit unto them as *Jonathan's* was to *David*. He loved them as his own soul, as his own body, and the members of it. This is that cement which will never loosen, that union knot which can never be untied, that bond which can never be dissolved, from whence there can be no separation; for *who shall separate us from the love of Christ? I am persuaded*, says the apostle (Rom. 8:35, 38, 39), *that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*. There are several unions which arise from or are branches of this everlasting love-union, which are all antecedent to our faith in Christ.

1. There is an election-union in Christ from everlasting: God *hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world* (Eph. 1:4). This is an act and instance of everlasting love, by which the persons chosen are considered in Christ, and one with him. Christ was chosen as an head, his people as members with him. Nothing is more commonly said by those who are esteemed sound divines, than this: Now how Christ can be considered as an head, and the elect as members of him in this eternal act of election, without union to him, is hard to conceive.

Arminius and his followers, the *Remonstrants*, have frequently urged the text now mentioned in favor of election from faith foreseen, and their argument upon it is this: "None are chosen to salvation but in Christ; none are in Christ but believers, who are engrafted into Christ, and united to him by faith, therefore none are chosen to salvation, but those who are believers in sin Christ, are engrafted into him, and united with him." For they had no other notion of being in Christ, but by faith; like some others, who yet would be thought to be far from being in their scheme. But then, among other replies, they have been told by the *Anti-Remonstrants*, "That it is certain that we are chosen and regarded in Christ before we were believers; which is fully proved from several places of scripture, which plainly make it appear, that the elect have some existence in Christ, even before they believe; for unless there had been some kind of union between Christ and the members, Christ would not have been their head, nor could he have satisfied for them."

2. There is a legal union between Christ and the elect from everlasting: they are one in a law-sense, as surety and debtor are one; the bond of this union is Christ's suretyship, which is from everlasting, and in which Christ engaged, as a proof of his strong love and affections to his people. He is the surety of the better Testament, the *εγγυος*, that drew near to God the Father in the name of the elect, substituted himself in their place and stead, and laid himself under obligation to pay their debts, satisfy for their sins, and procure for them all the blessings of grace and glory. This being accepted of by God, Christ and the elect were looked upon, in the eye of the law, as one person, even as the bondsman and the debtor, among men, are one, in a legal sense; so that if one pays the debt, it is the same as if the other did it. This legal union arising from Christ's suretyship-

engagements, is the foundation of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his satisfaction for them, and also of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, and of our justification by it. Christ and his people being one, in a law-sense, their sins become his, and his righteousness becomes theirs.

3. There is a federal union between Christ and the elect from everlasting. As they were considered as one, he as head, and they as members, in election; they are likewise considered after the same manner in the covenant of grace. Christ has a very great concern in the covenant; he is given for a covenant to the people; he is the Mediator, Surety, and Messenger of it. It is made with him, not as a single person, but as a common head, representing all the elect, who are given to him, in a federal way, as his seed and posterity. What he promised in the covenant, he promised for them, and on their account; and what he received, he received for them, and on their account. Hence grace is said to be given to them in him before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9); and they are said to be blessed with *all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ* (Eph. 1:3).

4. There is a natural union between Christ and his people; for *both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one*; that is, of one nature; *for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren* (Heb. 2:11). This is an union in time, but is the effect of Christ's love before time; *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same* (Heb. 2:14). The nature he assumed is the same with that of all mankind, but was taken to him with a peculiar regard to the elect, the children, the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, who are *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*. Now this natural union, which is the fruit of Christ's everlasting love, is antecedent to the faith of New Testament saints.

5. It is sufficiently evident, that there is a representative union between Christ and the elect, both from everlasting and in time, which is independent on, and prior to their believing in him. He represented them as their head in election, and in the covenant of grace, as has been already observed; and so he did, when upon the cross, and in the grave, when he rose from the dead, *entered into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God*. Hence they are said to be crucified with him, dead with him, buried with him, risen with him, yea, to be made *to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*.

Now all these several unions take their rise from, and have their foundation in, the everlasting love of Christ to his people; which is the grand original, strong and firm bond of union between him and them, and is the spring of all that fellowship and communion they have with him in time, and shall have to all eternity. It is from hence that the Spirit of God is sent down into our hearts to regenerate and renew us, and faith is wrought in our souls by the Spirit. Faith does not give us a being in Christ, or unite us to him; it is the fruit, effect, and evidence of our being in Christ and union to him. It is true, indeed, that God's elect do not know their being in Christ and union to him, until they believe; then what was before secret is made manifest; and because things are sometimes said to be, when they are only manifested to be, hence the people of Christ are said to be in Christ, when they are made new creatures; *if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature* (2 Cor. 5:17). Being a new creature, does not put a man into Christ, but is the evidence of his being there; and without which he neither knows, nor ought he to profess himself to be in Christ: And so likewise, in another place, it is said, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his* (Rom. 8:9). He may be one of his chosen and redeemed ones, though he has not the Spirit of Christ as yet; but he cannot

know this until he has the Spirit of Christ; for *no man can say that Jesus is the Lord*, that is, his Lord, *but by the Holy Ghost* (1 Cor. 12:3). The apostle *Paul* takes notice of some that *were in Christ* before him (Rom. 16:7); all God's elect were chosen together in Christ, not one before another: They had all together a being in him; but this in conversion is made known to one before another. There are different manifestations of union to different persons, and to the same persons at different times; for which Christ prays, when he says, *that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me; and the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me* (John 17:21-23). The full manifestation of it will be in heaven, when the saints shall be with Christ where he is, and behold his glory, and enjoy uninterrupted communion with him, as the fruit of their eternal union to him.

I should now, Sir, have closed this letter, were it not for a passage in your discourse *Of the Doctrine of Grace as it Encourageth Holiness*; in which, I apprehend, you have poured much contempt on several valuable and excellent truths of the gospel: I will repeat your words, and take leave to make some few strictures on them. They are these: "There have been some, who, by their life and conversation, have shewed, that they were far from being enemies to holiness, who have amused themselves with fancies about God's loving and delighting in his elect, while they were in a state of nature; of his seeing no sin in his people, and good works not being necessary to salvation; and who have been forward to condemn pressing men to duty, as legal preaching; and to speak of exhorting to repentance, mortification, and self-denial, as low and mean stuff (See a Defense of Some Import Doctrines of the Gospel by Several Ministers, Vol. II, p. 512)."

I. I observe that you esteem the doctrine of God's loving his elect, while in a state of nature, a fancy; and that those who hold this doctrine do but amuse themselves with a fancy. I must beg leave to say, that if it is a fancy, it is a scriptural one: I would not willingly say or write any thing that is contrary to the purity and holiness of God, or has a tendency to embolden vicious persons in a course of sin and wickedness; and yet cannot help saying, that the doctrine of God's everlasting, unchangeable, and invariable love to his elect, through every state and condition into which they come, is written as with a sunbeam in the sacred writings.

1. God's love to his elect is not of yesterday; it does not begin with their love to him, *We love him, because he first loved us* (1 John 4:19). It was bore in his heart towards them long before they *were delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son*. It does not commence in time, but bears date from eternity, and is the ground and foundation of the elect's being called in time out of darkness into marvelous light: *I have loved thee*, says the Lord to the church, *with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee* (Jer. 31:3); that is in effectual vocation. Many are the instances which might be given in proof of the antiquity of God's love to his elect, and as it is antecedent to their being brought out of a state of nature. God's choosing them in Christ before the foundation of the world, was an act of his love towards them, the fruit and effect of it; for election presupposes love. His making an everlasting covenant with his Son, ordered in all things, and sure, on account of those he chose in him; his setting him up as the Mediator of the covenant from everlasting; his donation of grace to them in him before the world began; his putting their persons into his hands, and so making them his care and charge, are so many demonstrative proofs of his early love to them; for can it ever be imagined that there should

be a choice of persons made, a covenant of grace so well formed and stored, a promise of life granted, and a security made, both of persons and grace, and yet no love all this while?

2. The love of God to his elect is unchangeable and unalterable; it is as invariable as his own nature and being; yea, *God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him* (1 John 4:16). Hence it is that the blessings of his grace are irreversible, because they are gifts of him, who is *the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning*. Hence also it is that the salvation of God's elect does not stand upon a precarious foundation, as it would, if his love changed as theirs does; but *he is the Lord, who changes not, and therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed*. The several changes the elect of God pass under, through the fall of *Adam*, and their own actual transgressions make no change or alteration in the love of God. The love of God makes a change in them when he converts them, but no change or alteration is made in God's love; that does not admit of more or less; it cannot be said to be more ardent and intense at one time, than at another, it is always invariably the same in his heart. Love produced a wonderful and surprising change in him, who was afterwards the great apostle of the Gentiles, and of a blaspheming, persecuting, and injurious *Saul*, made a believer in Christ, and a preacher of the everlasting gospel: but then this produced no change in God, nor in his love. God sometimes changes the dispensations of his providence to his people, but he never changes his love; he sometimes hides his face from them, and chides them in a fatherly manner; but at all times he loves them: he loves when he rebukes and chastens, and though *he hides his face for a moment from them, yet with everlasting kindness will he have mercy on them*; for he has said, *The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed* (Isa. 54:10). There is, indeed, no sensible manifestation of God's love to his elect before conversion, or while they are in a state of nature; and it must be allowed, that the manifestations of it to their souls after conversion, are not always alike; and that God's love appears more evident in some instances and acts of it, than in others; yet still this love as in his own heart, is unchangeably and invariably the same, as it needs must be, if he is God. Since then God's love to his elect is from everlasting, and never changes upon any consideration whatever, why should God's love to his elect, while in a state of nature, be accounted a fancy, and those who maintain it, be represented as amusing themselves with a fancy?

3. There are instances to be given of God's love to his elect, while they are in a state of nature: I have already observed some instances of it to his elect, from eternity. I will just mention one or two instances of it to them in time, and which respect them, while in a state of nature. Christ's coming into this world, and dying in the room and stead of the elect, are, at once, proofs, both of his own and his Father's love to them; God so loved them, as to give his only begotten Son; and Christ so loved them as to give himself for them, in a way of offering and sacrifice for their sins; at which time they were considered as ungodly, as being yet sinners, as enemies in their minds, by wicked works, and without love to God: for the apostle says (Rom. 5:6, 8, 10), *When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life*. Now certainly these persons were in a state of nature, who are said to be "without strength, to be ungodly, sinners, and enemies;" and yet God commended his love towards them, when and while they were such, in a matchless instance of it: and so the apostle *John* makes use of this circumstance, respecting the state of God's elect, to magnify, to set off, and illustrate the greatness

of God's love (1 John 4:10): *Herein is love, says he, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* From whence it may strongly be concluded, that God loved his people while in a state of nature, when enemies to him, destitute of all grace, without a principle of love to him, or faith in him. Again, the quickening of God's elect, when dead in trespasses and sins, the drawing of them to Christ with the cords of powerful and efficacious grace in effectual vocation, are instances of his special grace and favor, and fruits and effects of his everlasting love to them. *God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ* (Eph. 2:4, 5). The time of the effectual vocation of God's people being come, fixed in his everlasting counsels and covenant, it is a time of open love to their souls, and that time becomes a time of life; for seeing them wallowing in their blood, in all the impurities of their nature, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, *he says unto them, when in their blood, live; yea, when in their blood he says unto them, live.* The spirit of God, as an instance of God's love, is sent down into their hearts in order to begin, carry on, and finish a work of grace, when he finds them in a state of nature, dead in sin, devoid of all grace, impotent to all that is spiritually good: *We ourselves also, says the apostle (Titus 3:3-6), were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another, οτε, when the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.* If God did not love his elect, while in a state of nature, they must for ever remain in that state, since they are unable to help themselves out of it; and it is only the love, grace and mercy of God, which engage his almighty power to deliver them from thence. There are three gifts and instances of God's love to his people before conversion, which are not to be matched by any instance or instances of love after conversion; the one is the gift of God himself to them in the everlasting covenant; which covenant runs thus: *I will be their God, and they shall be my people:* The other is the gift of his Son, to suffer and die in their room and stead, and so obtain eternal redemption for them the third is the gift of his Spirit to them, to convince them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. And now what greater instance is there of God's love to his people after conversion? If the heavenly glory, with all the entertaining joys of that delightful state, should be fixed upon, I deny it to be a greater instance of God's love, than the gift of himself, his Son, and Spirit; and, indeed, all that God does in time, or will do to all eternity, is only telling his people how much he loved them from everlasting; all is but as it were, a comment upon, and an opening of that ancient act of his; nor has this doctrine any tendency to licentiousness, or to discourage the performance of good works. The consideration of this, that God loved me before I loved him, nay, when I was an enemy to him that his thoughts were employed about my salvation, when I had no thoughts of him, nor concern for myself, lays me under ten thousand times greater obligations, to fear, serve and glorify him; than such a consideration as this, that he began to love me when I loved him, or because I have loved him, can possibly do. Why then should this doctrine be accounted a mere fancy, which has so good a foundation, both in the word of God, and in the experience of his people; and the maintainers of it traduced as amusers of themselves with fancies?

II. Perhaps you will say, it is not merely the notion of God's loving his elect in a state of nature, but his loving them so as to delight in them, while in that state, that you condemn as a fancy, and the defenders of it, as amusing themselves with a fancy; since you join love and delight together, when you express yourself so freely on this head. There is a distinction which you may imagine will help

you, which is that of a love of pity and benevolence, and of complacency and delight; with the first of these, say some, God loved his elect before conversion, and while in a state of nature, but not with the latter. It is an idle and ill grounded distinction of some ignorant, trifling, popish schoolmen, which some of our grave divines have been fond of, and have used, when they have thought it would serve their purpose; though it is subversive of the very nature and perfections of God, and represents him as altogether such an one as ourselves, subject to change; that his love, like ours, alters, and by degrees increases, and, from a love of pity and benevolence, passes into a love of complacency and delight; it supposes that God first views his elect in a miserable state and condition, with whose misery he is touched, and is filled with bowels of compassion and pity towards them, which occasion some velleities (a mere wish not accompanied by actions) or wishes in his mind for their good; and these rise up at length into resolutions and purposes to do them good; which when he has, at least in some measure, executed, his affections glow, his love grows more ardent, and issues in complacency and delight. If this is not to make God changeable, and bring him down into the rank of mutable creatures, I know not what is. I could tell the friends of this distinction, though it may be no news to them, and perhaps they may find their account in it, that these same popish schoolmen have distinguished the love of God into *amor ordinativus*, a love in ordination, purpose and design, and into *amor collativus*, a love in gift, which is actually bestowed. This may suit well enough with the divinity of some men, who seem to be ready to give into such schemes as these; that God's love to his elect, before conversion, is only a purpose to love them when they are converted; that eternal election, is only a decree to elect persons in time; that the everlasting covenant is made with persons when they believe, of which faith, repentance and sincere obedience, are the conditions; and that there is no reconciliation of God's elect to him before faith; that the sufferings and death of Christ only make God reconcilable, but not reconciled; with such-like things as these, which I am almost tempted to call *low* and *mean* stuff. It is high time that these distinctions about the love of God, with that of an antecedent and consequent one, were laid aside, which so greatly obscure the glory of God's unchangeable love and grace. It must be an odd sort of love among men, that is separate from delight in the object loved. The philosopher tells me, that benevolence is properly neither friendship nor love; and that as benevolence is the beginning of friendship, so delight and pleasure, at the sight of the object, is the beginning of love; and that no man can be said to love, who is not first delighted with the form or idea of the object. Indeed, I cannot see that that can be love, which is without any delight in the object said to be loved: if a man should say to his wife, I love you well, I wish you well and am willing to do you all the good offices I am able: but, at the same time, I can take no delight in your person, nor pleasure in your company; would not this be esteemed a contradiction to his expressions of love to her? So if a father should say to his child, I wish you well, I pity you in what you do amiss, and I design to do something for you, which may be for your good, but I can take no delight and pleasure in you as a child of mine; what kind of love would this be thought to be? The same may be observed in many other such-like instances.

God's love to his Son, as a Mediator, is an everlasting love; *Thou lovedst me*, says Christ (John 17:24), *before the foundation of the world*. This love was a love of complacency and delight; for Christ as Mediator, was from everlasting, *then by him*, that is, the Father (Prov. 8:30), *as one brought up with him, and was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him*. Now God loves his elect with the same love he loves his Son as Mediator. Hence Christ prays for the open and manifest union between him and his people; *That says he* (John 17:23), *the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me*. If God therefore has loved his Son,

as Mediator, from everlasting, with a love of complacency and delight, and he has loved his elect from everlasting with the same love he has loved him, then he must have loved his elect from everlasting with a love of complacency and delight: and, indeed how can it otherwise be, since the elect were always in Christ their Head, in whom they were chosen before the foundation of the world? And they could not be considered in him but as righteous persons, through his righteousness, with which God is always well pleased, because by it the law is magnified, and made honorable; and so Christ is often said to be God's beloved Son, *in whom* not *with* whom, *he is well pleased* (Matthew 3:17; 2 Pet. 1:17); which designs not his person only singly, but all the elect, as considered in him, who together with Christ, are the objects of God's eternal delight and pleasure.

It is certain that Jesus Christ has, from everlasting, loved the elect with a love of complacency and delight; for from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was, when there were no depths nor fountains, before the mountains and hills were brought into being, while as yet God had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world, Christ's delights were with the sons of men" (Prov. 8:31). The word in the Hebrew rendered *delights*, is expressive of the most intimate, sweet, ravishing delight and pleasure; and it being not only in the plural number, but also having its radical letters, especially its two first radical letters, doubled, which, in *the Hebrew* language, increases the signification of the word; it sets forth, that exceeding great delight and pleasure which Christ had in his people from everlasting; nay, he not only took delight in the persons of the elect, as they were presented to him in the glass of his Father's purposes and decrees, but took pleasure also in the fore-views of the very spots of ground where he knew his people would dwell: and hence he says, that he was *rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth* (Prov. 8:31). Now why God the Father should not, from everlasting, love the elect with the same love his son did, I know not.

Nothing is more evident than that God's choosing his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, is an act of love; and I will venture to say, it is an act of love, founded upon, and springing from his delight in them; even as God's loving and choosing of *Israel* (which was an emblem and representation of his special love to, and choice of the true and spiritual *Israel* of God) is owing to that delight he had in them; for it is said, *The Lord had a delight in thy fathers, to love them; and he chose their seed after them, even you above all the people, as at this day* (Deut. 10:15). And, indeed, all the favors and blessings which God bestows on his people in time, arise from his delight in them. His bringing them out of darkness into light, out of a state of nature into a state of grace, out of distresses and difficulties of every kind, springs from his delight in them *He brought me forth also into a large place, says David* (Ps. 18:19); *he delivered me, because he delighted in me*. In a word, the whole salvation of the elect is owing to God's love of delight, with which he loves them. *The Lord taketh pleasure in his people;* and, as a fruit and effect of that *he will beautify the meek with salvation:* He has promised to *rejoice over them, to do them good;* and it is said, *he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; and he will rest in his love, he will rejoice over thee with singing* (Ps. 149:4).

Some, perhaps, will say, that the elect, while in a state of nature, are destitute of faith, which is very true; and since *without faith it is impossible to please God* (Heb. 11:6), he can take no delight in them, while in that state. The *Remonstrants* have urged this text in favor of election, *ex fide prævisa;* and their argument upon it is this: "That if it is impossible to please God without faith, it

is impossible that any should be "chosen by God unto salvation, without faith: seeing to be chosen unto salvation, is the highest instance of God's love and good-will to man that he can shew him:" But "they have been told, by the *Anti—Remonstrants*, that though election is an act of God's great love and good pleasure, yet it may be without faith, since there is a sense in which persons may be said to please God before faith; for God is said even to *manifest his love to his enemies*, (Rom. 5:8, 10). If then he loved them when enemies, they must needs please him before they believed;" and that "although whatsoever is done without faith may be displeasing to God, yet God may be said to love some persons, whose actions displease him; so he loved the person of *Paul* before he was converted to the faith of Christ; yea, that there is a certain complacency in the person, if it be proper so to say, before his works and faith please God." And it is easy to observe, that the apostle is speaking, not of the complacency which God has in the persons of his people, but of that which he has in their works and actions. Now no works without faith can please God, such as praying, reading, hearing, and the like because *whatsoever is not of faith, is sin*. It is in this sense, that *they that are in the flesh*, that is, who are unregenerate, are in a state of nature, *cannot please God* (Rom.8:8); for it may be as well expected to *gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles*, as that good works well-pleasing to God should be done by an evil man: but though man can do nothing without faith, that can please God, yet this does not hinder, but that the persons of God's elect, as considered in Christ, may be well pleasing to God before faith, and without it.

It may be further objected, that God's elect, while in a state of nature, are *children of wrath, even as others*, and therefore cannot be the objects of God's love and delight; for how can they be children of wrath, and yet objects of love at one and the same time? To which I reply, that "a person may be the object of love and delight, and of displeasure and wrath, at one and the same time, in a different respect." It is said of the Jews (Rom. 11:28), as concerning the gospel, *they are enemies for your sakes*; but touching the election, *they are beloved for the fathers' sakes*. But this will be better exemplified in the instance of Jesus Christ, "who standing in two different relations, and sustaining two "different capacities, was at one and the same time the object of his Father's love and wrath; as he was the Son of God, he was always the object of his love and delight; but as he was the sinner's surety, and while bearing the sins of his people in his own body on the tree, he was the object of his displeasure and wrath, which he sensibly felt, and therefore it is said (Ps. 89:38), *Thou hast cast off and abhorred; thou hast been wrath with thine anointed*. And yet even then, when he poured out his wrath to the uttermost on him, on the account of his people's sins, when he ordered justice to draw its sword, and sheath it in him, his love towards him, as his Son, was not in the least abated." Thus the elect of God, being considered in different views, may be truly said to be children of wrath, and objects of love at one and the same time; consider them in *Adam*, and under the covenant of works, they are children of wrath, they are deserving of the wrath of God, and are exposed to the curse of the law; but then as considered in Christ, and under the covenant of grace, they always were, and ever will be, the objects of God's love and delight.

This doctrine, I apprehend, is no ways contrary to the purity and holiness of God's nature; it *does* not follow, that because God loves and delights in his elect, while in a state of nature, that he loves and delights in their sins: *God is of purer eyes than to behold evil*, and cannot look upon sin, with any approbation or delight (Hab. 2:13; Ps. 5). *He is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him*. We are obliged to distinguish between the persons and sins of God's people after conversion; it is allowed that God loves and delights in their persons, though he hates their sins. Now why the same distinction may not be allowed before conversion, as after, I see

not; since it is not any thing that is done by them, nor any thing that is wrought in them, that is the ground and foundation of God's love to and delight in them; but his love to and delight in them is the ground and foundation of all that he does for them, or works in them. No doubt, what he works in them is well-pleasing in his sight, but their acceptance with God, and their persons being well-pleasing to him, does not lie in this, but in the beloved. When, Sir, these things are considered by you, I hope you will no longer esteem it a fancy, that God should love and delight in his people while in a state of nature. But I go on,

III. To consider another evangelic truth, which, indeed, is the sum and substance of the gospel, and with the proof of which the scripture abounds, though you are pleased to condemn it a fancy, and that is, that "God sees no sin in his people." I know this doctrine has been most odiously traduced, and most widely misrepresented; but, I hope, when some few things are observed, it will plainly appear not to be a fancy, or a freak of some distempered minds, but a most glorious and comfortable doctrine of the gospel, and without which *the* gospel must cease to be *good* news and *glad* tidings to the sons of men.

1st, When it is asserted that God sees no sin in his people, the meaning is not, that there is no sin in believers, nor any committed by them, or that their sins are no sins, or that their sanctification is perfect in this life.

1. Sin is in the best of saints; to say otherwise is contrary to scripture, and to all the experience of God's people; *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us* (1 John 1:8). The ingenuous confession of the saints, their groans and complaints, and that continual war between flesh and spirit they feel in themselves, are so many proofs of sin's being in them; nay, it is not only in them, but it lives in them. It is true, indeed, they do not live in sin, for then there would be no difference between them and unregenerate persons; to live in sin, is not only unbecoming, but contrary to the grace of God: but still sin lives in believers; though there is an inward principle of grace, and a mortification of the outward actions of sin, and a *putting off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts*; yet this old man is not changed, nor removed, much less destroyed. Moreover, sin is not merely in believers now and then, by fits and starts, as we say, but it *dwells* in them. Hence the apostle calls it, *Sin that dwelleth in me* (Rom. 7:17, 20); where it is not idle, but active and busy; it hinders all the good, and does all the mischief it can; it makes war against the soul, and sometimes brings it into captivity.

2. Sin is not only in the best of saints, but is also committed by them: *There is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not* (Eccl. 7:20); nor is there any sin, but what has been, or may be committed by believers, excepting the sin against the Holy Ghost: their daily slips and falls, their frequent prayers for the discoveries of pardoning grace, and the application of Christ's blood, which cleanseth from all sin, confirm the truth of this. It is true, the apostle *John* says, that *whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God* 1 John 3:9); that is, as born of God, he neither does, nor can commit sin. What is that which is born of God? The *new creature*; the other *I*, distinguished from sin that dwelleth in him this never did, nor can commit sin; there are an *old* man and a *new* man in regenerate persons; the new man never sins, the old man does nothing else but sin; there are *flesh* and *spirit* in the saints; all sinful works are the works of the flesh, as all good works are the fruits of

the Spirit. The work of grace, though imperfect, is not impure; nothing impure springs from it, nor is any thing impure to be attributed to it.

3. The sins of believers are sins, as well as the sins of others; they are of the same kind, and are equally transgressions of the law, as others are murder and adultery, committed by *David*, were sins in him, as well as they are as committed by others; yea, oftentimes the sins of believers are attended with more aggravating circumstances than the sins of other men, being acted against light and knowledge, love, grace and mercy. Though believers are justified from all sin by Christ's righteousness, and have all their sins pardoned through Christ's blood, yet their sins do not hereby cease to be sins. Justification from sin by Christ's righteousness, and pardon of sin through Christ's blood, free them from obligation to punishment due to sin, but do not destroy the nature of sin.

4. The work of sanctification is imperfect in this life it is a good work begun, but not finished; there is something lacking in the faith of the greatest believer; love is not come to its full growth and as for knowledge, it is but in part. There is a twofold sanctification; the one in Christ, this is complete and perfect; the other is derived from Christ, and wrought in the soul by the Spirit of Christ; this at present is imperfect. There is indeed a perfection of parts, but not of degrees; that is to say, the new creature has all its parts, but these are not grown up to the perfection they will arrive unto. The best of saints need fresh supplies of grace, which they would not, were they perfect: they disclaim perfection in themselves, though they wish for it both in themselves and others; when therefore it is said that "God sees no sin in his people," neither of these things are designed by it.

2ndly, God's seeing no sin in his people, does not impeach his omniscience: nor is it to be considered as referring to the article of providence, but to the article of justification as I shall shew presently. God is omniscient, he knows and sees all persons and things; nothing is or can be hid from his all-seeing eye: *His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings; there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves* (job 34:21, 22). All the actions of men, whether good or bad, are known to him, with their secret springs and principles from whence they flow; he sees the sins of his own people, as well as the sins of others, both in their first motions, and in their open productions; *The Lord's throne is in heaven, his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men! the Lord trieth the righteous* (Ps. 11:4, 5). About this there is no debate; they must be stupid indeed, if there be any; for my part, I never heard of any who deny that the omniscience of God extends to the sins of his people; it never was thought of, or designed, by this assertion, to limit or deny the omniscience of God; nor is it limited or denied by it. Though the phrases of *seeing* and *knowing*, are used as synonymous in the article of providence, yet never in the article of justification; there they are always distinguished: knowledge and sight are two things the one belongs to the attribute of God's omniscience, the other to the attribute of his justice: when therefore it is said, that God sees no sin in his people, the meaning is not, that he does not with his omniscient eye, see and know sin to be in them; but he does not see any iniquity in them with his eye of *justice*, or so as to *punish* them for their sins, or require satisfaction at their hands for them.

3rdly, Nor is the meaning of this proposition, that "God sees no sin in his people," that he takes no notice of them, nor resents them, nor chastises them, in a fatherly way, on the account of them. God does not, indeed, punish his people for their sins in a way of *vindictive* wrath and justice; for this is contrary to his justice, and must overthrow the satisfaction of Christ; for either Christ has perfectly

satisfied for the sins of his people, or he has not; if he has not, they must satisfy for them themselves; if he has, it is contrary to the justice of God to punish for sin twice, or to require satisfaction, both of the surety and the sinner: but though God does not punish his people for their sins, yet he *chastises* them in a fatherly way; he takes notice of their sins, lays his hand upon them, in order to bring them to a sense and acknowledgement of them; *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail* (Ps. 89:30-33).

4thly, Though God sees sin in his people, as being but in part sanctified, yet he sees no sin in them, as they are perfectly justified; though he sees sin in them, with his eye of omniscience, yet not with his eye of revenging justice; though he sees them, in respect of his providence, which reaches all things, yet not in respect of justification; though he takes notice of his people's sins so as to chastise them in a *fatherly* way, for their good; yet he does not see them, take notice of them, and observe them in a *judicial* way, so as to impute them to them, or require satisfaction for them: *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them* (2 Cor. 5:9): No, he has imputed them to Christ, he has beheld them in him, he has charged them to him, and Christ has made full satisfaction for them; and therefore *who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died* (Rom. 8:33, 34). God will not require satisfaction at the hands of his people for their sins; he will not punish them on the account of them; they shall never enter into condemnation; for *there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit* (Rom. 8:1). Was God to see sin in his people in this sense, and proceed against them in a forensic way, he must act contrary to his justice and set aside the satisfaction of his Son. A few things will make it plainly appear that God sees no sin in his justified ones, as such:

First, This will be evident, if we consider what Christ has done with respect to the sins of his people. These have been removed from them to him; they have been placed to his account, imputed to him, and laid upon him. *All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all* (Isa. 53:6); which he has bore in his own body, on the tree; yea, he is *the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world*; he has removed the iniquity of his people in one day: *As he was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their sins, so he has washed them from their sins in that blood of his which cleanseth from all sin; by his righteousness he justifies them from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; and by the sacrifice of himself, he has put away sin for ever; yea, he has finished transgression, made an end of sin, has made reconciliation for iniquity, and has brought in everlasting righteousness*. This is the language both of the Old and New Testament, and if this be the case, as it certainly is, God does not, and cannot see iniquity in his people, since all their iniquity has been transferred on Christ, and it is all done away by him.

Secondly, This will be yet more evident, if we consider what God the Father has done on the account of the blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction of his Son. He has freely forgiven all the sins of his people for Christ's sake; he has covered them with a covering of mercy, so as they are not visible; he has blotted them out of his sight, so as they are not legible to the eye of justice; yea, he has cast them all behind his back, and into the depths of the sea; insomuch that the *iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be*

found: such strong expressions as these from the mouth of the Lord of hosts, will sufficiently bear us out in asserting, that "God sees no sin in his people."

Thirdly, Add to this, the view in which the people of God are to be considered, and are considered by Father, Son, and Spirit, being clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and washed in his blood; they are complete in Christ; they are without fault before the throne, *without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*: Christ says to them, *Thou art all fair, my love; and there is no spot in thee* (Cant. 4:7). The church is a perfection of beauty in his esteem; all the saints are perfectly comely through the comeliness he has put on them; yea, they are, in the sight of God, in the eye of justice, unblameable and unproveable; and if so, then surely God sees no iniquity in them. One must transcribe a considerable part of the Old and New Testament to give the full proof of this doctrine.

If this is a fancy, it is the glory of the Bible, and the marrow of the Gospel; what most displays the riches of God's grace, the efficacy of Christ's blood, the completeness of his righteousness, and the fulness of his satisfaction it is the foundation of all solid hopes of future happiness, what supports the life of faith, and is the ground of a believer's triumph. One would have thought, Sir, you might have forbore so severe a reflection on this truth, of God's seeing no sin in his people, since it is the $\tau\omicron\ \rho\eta\tau\omicron\nu$, the express words of the sacred oracles: *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel* (Num. 23:21). I proceed,

IV. To another truth decried by you as a fancy; the assertors or which are ridiculed, as amusers of themselves with a fancy, which is, that "good works are not necessary to salvation." I am sensible, in some measure, what controversies have been in the world about this subject, and what extremes have been run into on both sides the question. There was a sharp contention among the *Lutherans* on this head. *George Major* asserted, that "good works are necessary to salvation:" on the other hand, *Nicholas Amsdorsius* said, that they were "noxious and pernicious to salvation:" neither of these positions are defensible, as they thus stand: Not the former; for though good works are necessary, upon many accounts, to answer several valuable ends and purposes, yet not necessary to salvation; though they ought to be performed by all God's justified and saved ones, yet not in order to their justification and salvation; though the people of God ought to maintain good works for *necessary uses*, yet these necessary uses do not design salvation, but other things, as I shall shew presently. Nor is the latter of these positions to be defended; for though good works are not *necessary* to salvation, yet not *noxious* and pernicious to it, unless when they are placed in the business of salvation, to the displacing of Christ and his righteousness; and then they are so far from helping forward, that they hinder the salvation of souls, being an *ignis fatuus*, which leads out of the way of salvation. The Papists and Protestants have warmly contested this point: the former say that good works are necessary to salvation, *per viam efficientiae*, "by way of efficiency or causality," to merit or procure salvation; which is the only sense in which the proposition can well be understood for if good works are necessary to salvation, it must be to procure it; for in what sense else can they be necessary to it? This is denied by the latter, and by them fully confuted; though some have made use of some distinctions, in order to qualify and soften this proposition, that good works are *necessary* to salvation, by which they have betrayed the truth into the hands of the enemy, I shall attempt to shew,

First, That good works are in no sense necessary to salvation.

Secondly, What they are necessary to, or what are the necessary uses of them

First, I affirm that good works are *not* necessary to salvation in any sense.

1st, They are not necessary to salvation by way of causality, as having any causal influence on our salvation, or any part of it. Christ is the sole author of salvation; he came into this world to effect it; he has done it, it is finished, it is complete and perfect in itself; it needs nothing to be added to it to make it so: Christ is a rock, and his work is perfect; he is a Saviour in whole, and not in part; he will admit of no copartner or assistant in this matter. Good works have no concern, as causes, in our salvation; God, in saving persons, does not act according to them, nor by them, nor in consideration of them; for *he hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began* (2 Tim. 1:9). And says the same inspired writer elsewhere (Titus 3:5); *not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but, according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost*. God saves his elect by Christ a way of pure grace and mercy, to the exclusion of good works having any hand therein; *For by grace ye are saved*, says the apostle (Eph. 2:8, 9), *through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast*. Good works are not to be placed in any rank of *causes* of our salvation whatever.

1. They are not the impulsive or moving causes of salvation. Nothing out of God can move him to do any thing; good works did not move him to take any one step relating to the salvation of his people; they did not move him to choose them unto salvation by Jesus Christ; he chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, before they had done either good or evil; and so not because they *were*, but that they *might* be holy. This act of his sprung from his good will and pleasure, and is an instance of pure grace. Hence it is called *the election of grace* (Rom. 11:5, 6); and, adds the apostle, *if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work*. Good works are the *fruits*, not the *causes* of electing grace; nor did these move God to make a covenant of grace with his elect in Christ, in which the scheme of salvation was fixed, the whole of it secured, and all blessings and promises put into the hands of the Mediator; nor was it good works that moved God to send his Son to obtain salvation, but his own free love and grace; nor what moved Christ to give himself for his people, since at that time they were *without strength, ungodly, sinners, and enemies to him*; in a word, it is not good works, but grace, which moves God to justify, pardon, adopt, regenerate, sanctify and glorify any of the sons of men.

2. Good works are not the efficient, procuring, or meritorious causes of salvation; for they are imperfect in the best of men; and were they perfect, yet the requisites of merit are wanting in them; for,

(1.) That by which we would merit, must not be due to him, of whom we would merit. Now all our works are previously due to God; he has a right to all our obedience, prior to the performance of it; and therefore *when we have done all those things which are commanded us, we have done but that which was our duty to do*.

(2.) That by which we would merit, must be some way or other be profitable to him, of whom we would merit: but *can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself? Is*

it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it any gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man, as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man (Job 22:2, 3; 35:7, 8).

(3.) That by which we would merit, must be done in our own strength, and not in the strength of him, of whom we would merit: we must not be obliged to him for any thing in the performance of it; whereas all our sufficiency to think a good thought, or do a good action, is of God without him we can do nothing; it is by the grace of God we are what we are; and it is by the grace of God we do what we do; and therefore to him all the glory belongs.

(4.) There must be some proportion between that by which we would merit, and that which we would merit. Now there is a just proportion between sin and the wages of it, but none between good works and eternal salvation; *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.6:23).*

In fine, if good works were the efficient procuring causes of salvation, then Christ died in vain; his obedience and sufferings must be useless, and of no effect; besides, boasting would not be *excluded*, which is God's design in fixing the method of salvation in the manner line has; for if men were saved by works, they would have whereof to boast.

3. Good works are not coefficient causes or con-causes of salvation, with Christ; they are not adjuvant or helping causes of it; they do not assist in, or help forward the business of salvation; it is done without them; Christ will not admit of any rival-ship in this matter: his own arm has brought salvation to him; he has alone effected it, and is the sole author of it; and therefore good works are needless in this respect. It is a rule in philosophy, *Quod potest fieri per pauca, non debet fieri per plura*; "What can be done by few, ought not to be done by more." There is a fulness, a sufficiency in Christ to salvation, therefore good works are not necessary to salvation.

4. Good works are not *causa sine qua non*, of salvation they are not conditions of salvation, or that without which persons cannot be saved; as is evident from the instances of the thief upon the cross, of elect infants dying in infancy, and of multitudes of others, as it is hoped, whom God calls in the last hour, upon their death—beds, who live not to perform good works. Now if good works are necessary to salvation, and persons cannot be saved without them, there none of those persons mentioned can be saved.

2dly, There are some worthy divines who utterly deny the efficiency or causality of good works in salvation, who yet think that this proposition, that "good works are necessary to salvation," may stand safely, and in a good sense, admitting some distinctions, which I shall briefly take notice of, and are as follow;

Some say, that good works are not necessary to salvation as causes, yet they are necessary, as means. This cannot be true, because every mean is the cause of that unto which it is a mean: and then good works must be tire causes of salvation, which has been disproved already. If good works are the means of salvation, they must be either the means of procuring it, or of applying it, or of introducing God's people into the full possession of it; they are not the means of procuring

salvation, for that is procured by Christ. alone without them; nor are they the means of applying it in regeneration or effectual vocation, because, properly speaking, before regeneration, or effectual vocation, there are n good works done by the sons of men they must be first regenerated, and called by grace; there must be an application of salvation; the gospel must become the power of God unto salvation, before they are capable of performing good works: *We are his workmanship*, says the apostle (Eph. 2:10), *created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*. Nor are they the means of introducing God's people into the full possession of salvation; *for they that die in the Lord, rest from their labours, and their works follow them*. They do not go beforehand to prepare the way for them, or to introduce them into the heavenly glory. Good works are not necessary, as means, either for the application or possession of salvation, neither for the incohesion or consummation of it.

Others make use of a distinction, which is *Bernard's*: which is, that though good works are not *causa regnandi*, "the cause of reigning," yet they are *via ad regnum*, "the way to the kingdom." But it ought to be observed, that *Bernard* does not say that they are *via ad regnum*, but *via regni*, "the way of the kingdom;" between which there is a great difference; for good works may be the way or course of such, who are of the kingdom of grace and belong to the kingdom of glory, when they are not the way to either. *Christ is the way, the truth and the life*; the only true, way to eternal life. Good works are to be performed by all that are in the way, Christ: they are the business of all such that walk in this way but they themselves not the way, unless it can be thought that good works *are* Christ.

Others say, that good works are necessary to justification and salvation; not *quoad efficientiam*, "as to the efficiency of them," but *quoad præsentiam*, "as to the presence of them;" and though they have no causal influence on salvation, yet the presence of them is necessary to salvation. That the presence of good works is necessary to all those who are justified and saved, that are capable of performing them, and have time and opportunity to perform them, I allow but that it is necessary to their justification and salvation, I deny; for if it is necessary, it must be necessary either as a cause, or a condition, or a mean of justification and salvation; either of which has been disproved already.

Others say, that they are necessary antecedent to salvation, and that they are necessary to it, as the antecedent to the consequent: but, from the instances before mentioned, of the thief on the cross, of elect infants dying in infancy, with those whom God calls by his grace on their death-beds, it appears that salvation is where good works do not go before. It is true, indeed, that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord* (Heb. 12:14), that is, without internal holiness, without a principle of holiness in the heart. This must be supposed to be in the persons instanced in; but then there may be this, where there is no external holiness, or any performance of good works before men; and that either through incapacity, or through want of time and opportunity. And now lest it should be thought that I imagine that the performance of good works are unnecessary, I shall proceed,

Secondly, To shew in what sense they *are* necessary, and what are the necessary uses of them; for to say, that because they are not necessary to salvation, that therefore they are unnecessary to any thing else, is very illogical; though the scriptures no where say that they are necessary to salvation, yet they direct us to *learn to maintain good works for necessary uses* (Titus 3:14); which are these following:

1. They are necessary on the account of God, who has commanded them; We are under his law as creatures, and ought to do his will and pleasure; and as new creatures are under greater obligation still; we ought to perform good works in respect to the commands of God, to testify our obedience and subjection to him, and to shew the grateful sense we have of his mercies, both spiritual and temporal, as well as to answer some ends of his glory: *Herein*, says Christ (John 15:8), *is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit*. Nay, we not only glorify God ourselves by our good works, but are the means of others glorifying him likewise: Hence, says our Lord (Matt. 5:16), *let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven*.

2. Good works are necessary on the account of ourselves. They are useful to evidence the truth of our faith to the world, and discover to them the certainty of our election and vocation, who have no other way of judging of either, but by our outward conversation; hereby we adorn the profession we make of Christ and his gospel; so that his name, his ways, truths, and ordinances, are not blasphemed, or spoke evil of through us: yea, hereby we exercise a conscience void of offence, both towards God and man.

3. Good works are necessary on the account of our neighbors, who as they are often injured by evil works, are helped and profited by good works. One part of the moral law is, to love our neighbor as ourselves: now as a turning from this holy commandment tends to our neighbor's injury, so a conformity to it issues in his good.

4. Good works are necessary on the account of the enemies of religion. A good conversation recommends the Gospel, and the truths of it, and may be a means of winning persons over to it; and if not, yet it silences the ignorance of foolish men, and shames such, and stops the mouth of those who reproach the Gospel of Christ, as a licentious doctrine, and falsely accuse the good conversation of the saints. From the whole, I hope, it appears on the one hand, that good works are necessary, and not trifling and indifferent things, that may, or may not, be done; or that they are useless, unnecessary, and insignificant; and on the other hand, that it is no fancy, but matter of faith, and what ought to be abode by, that good works are *not* necessary to salvation.

V. I observe that you describe such as assert that God loves and delights in his elect, while in a state of nature; that he sees no sin in his people, and that good works are not necessary to salvation, as persons "forward to condemn pressing men to duty, as legal preaching; and to speak of exhorting to repentance, mortification and self-denial, as low and mean stuff." The same complaint you make in another place.

1st, I cannot but wonder that you should esteem such culpable or blame-worthy, who condemn pressing men to duty, as legal preaching; for pressing men to duty, can be no other than legal preaching, or preaching of the law since duty can be referred to nothing else but the law, which obliges to it. Should they condemn pressing men to duty, as criminal, or deny that there ought to be any preaching, or that there is any use of the law, you might justly have blamed them. The duties which the law requires, ought to be in their place insisted on in the ministry of the word; they should be opened and explained; men should be taught their duty to God and one another; they should be pressed: that is, if I understand it, be *exhorted* unto it, with gospel-motives and arguments, such as the apostles frequently make use of in their epistles. They should, at the same time, be told where grace and strength lie, and are to be had to assist them in it. The preaching of

the law is of use both to saints and sinners; it is made useful by the Spirit of God to convince of sin; *By the law is the knowledge of sin* (Rom. 3:20); though by it is no knowledge of a Saviour from sin; it shews the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the deformity of nature, the imperfection of man's obedience, and what is requisite to his justification before God; though it leaves him ignorant of that righteousness which can only answer its demands, and render him acceptable in the sight of God. The law is a rule of walk and conversation to believers, as it is in the hands of Christ, and given out by him, as King of his church it contains the perfect and acceptable will of God; it points out what is, or what is not to be done; it is in its own nature spiritual, just and good, and very agreeable to the regenerate man, *who delights in the law of God, after the inward man*. But then *pressing* men to duty, is preaching the law, and that must needs be *legal* preaching, though it ought not to be branded within any odious or invidious character; for all duty belongs to a law; grace and promises of grace, belong to the gospel, but precepts and duty to the law. We have had a controversy among us lately about *preaching Christ*, in the latitude and restrictive way; and, no doubt, the people have been much edified and instructed by it; but men may controvert to the end of the world, it can never be proved, that preaching good works is preaching Christ, or that pressing men to *duty*, is preaching the *gospel*; unless it can be thought that good works are Christ and that the law is gospel. I am entirely for calling things by their right names; preaching duty, is preaching the law; preaching the free grace of God, and salvation by Christ, is preaching the gospel; to say otherwise, is to turn the gospel into a law and to blend and confound both together. Some very worthy divines, whose names I forbear to mention, did formerly talk of gospel-commands, gospel-threatenings, and gospel-duties, which, to me, are contradictions in terms; and I fear that this loose and unguarded way of talking, tended to pave the way for *Neonomianism* among us, which some few years ago, gave the churches so much disturbance, and the bad effects of which we still feel.

2dly, "Exhorting to repentance, you say, is spoken of by these persons as, "low and mean stuff;" but you do not tell us what kind of repentance is meant, or with what views, or upon what considerations an exhortation to it is given. There is an evangelical and a legal repentance: *Evangelical repentance* has God for its object, and is called *repentance toward God* (Acts 20:21). It is the gift of Christ, who *is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins* (Acts 5:31); and is one of the graces of the Spirit of God, which he implants in the hearts of his people. It is that sorrow and concern for sin, which springs from and is heightened and increased by the discoveries of God's love; it is accompanied with views, or, at least, hopes of pardoning grace and mercy; it is a godly sorrow (2 Cor. 7:10), *ἡ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη*, "a sorrow according to God," agreeable to the mind and will of God; a divine sorrow, which springs from divine principles, and proceeds on divine views: or it is a sorrow for sin, as it is committed against a God of holiness, purity, grace and mercy; *which godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of*; and therefore by no means to be spoken slightly of. Nor can exhortations to such kind of repentance, be treated as low and mean stuff, without casting contempt on. *John* the Baptist (Matt. 3:2; 4:17), Christ, and his apostles: who made use of them, either to shew the necessity of repentance, or to encourage the exercise of this grace in the saints, or to stir them up to an open profession of it, and to bring forth fruits in their conversation meet for the same. *Legal repentance* is a work of the law, and consists in outward confession of sin, and external humiliation for it, and an inward horror, wrath and terror, upon the account of it. It is a sorrow and concern for sin, not as it is in its own nature exceeding sinful, or as it is an offense to God, and a breach in of his law, but as it entails upon the sinner ruin and destruction; This is the *sorrow of the world, which worketh death*; and may be where true evangelical repentance never was, nor never

will be, and therefore is not to be valued and regarded. Now to exhort to this kind of repentance, or even to evangelical repentance, as within the compass of the power of man's will, and as a condition of the covenant of grace, and a term of acceptance with God, and in order to make peace with God, and gain the divine favor, which you know is the rant of some men's ministry; I say, to exhort to repentance within such views, and on such considerations as these, is low and mean stuff, too mean for, below, and unworthy of, a minister of the gospel.

3dly, You mention exhorting to *mortification* and self-denial, as treated by some, in the same slight and contemptuous manner. You know very well that much of what has been said and written concerning mortification, is low, mean, and trifling, and it would be mortification enough to be obliged to hear and read it. I confess, I have often been at a loss what divines mean by mortification of sin; if they mean a destroying the being of sin, a killing, a taking away the life of it in believers, which seems to be their meaning; this is contrary both to Scripture and all the experience of God's people. The word of God assures us, that sin is in believers, and they find it to be in them; yea, to be *alive* in them, though they do not live *in* sin. The old man is, indeed, *put off*, concerning the former conversation, but not put to death; he remains and is alive, and is sometimes very active, though he lies in chains, and is under the power and dominion of mighty and efficacious grace. There is a mortification of sin by the death of Christ; *The old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed* (Rom. 6:6). Christ has abolished, destroyed, made an end of sin; through Christ's bearing the sins of his people in his own body on the tree, and through his death they *are dead to sin, and live unto righteousness*. But sin is not dead in them; there is no such thing as a mortification, a killing or destroying the inward principles of sin in believers, nor is it to be expected in this life. If, indeed, by mortification of sin, is meant a weakening the power of sin, so as that it shall not have the dominion over the saints; this is readily granted to be found in them: but then it will be difficult to prove that ever this is called *mortification* in Scripture. The mortification the Scripture speaks of, and exhorts to, does not design the mortification of the inward principles of sin, but the outward actings of it; it is a mortification of an external course of living in sin, and not a taking away the life of sin in the soul, as is evident from those places where any mention is made of it; *mortify therefore*, says the apostle (Col. 3:5, 7), *your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; in which ye also walked some time when ye lived in them;* which last words shew, that the apostle has respect to a walk, a conversation, a course of living in these sins; so when he says (Gal. 5:24), *they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts*, he means the works of the flesh, and the actings of unruly passions and deceitful lusts, as appears from the context; and when exhortations to mortification of sin, in this sense, are given, a special regard should be had to the gracious influences of the blessed Spirit; for, as the apostle says (Rom. 8:13), *If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live*.

As for *self-denial*, perhaps no persons are found more in the practice of it, than those you have described, however averse they may be to exhortations to it, made without taking any notice of the grace and assistance of the Spirit of God, as necessary to the exercise of it. They choose to suffer reproach, the loss of good name and reputation, to forego popularity, wealth, and friends, to be traduced as *Antinomians*, and reckon any thing, rather than to drop, conceal, or balk any one branch of truth, respecting Christ and free grace. None are more ready to deny self-righteousness than they are, and to submit to the righteousness of Christ, on which they alone depend for justification before God, and acceptance with him; nor are any persons more powerfully and

effectually taught *to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.* And, you, Sir, are so kind as to say, that such who have amused themselves with what you call *fancies*, "by their life and conversation have shewed that they were far from being enemies to holiness." And you further add, "Far be it from us to charge some, who have gone into this way of thinking and talking, with turning the grace of God into wantonness."

I conclude, Sir, with assuring you, that I write not this with an angry and contentious spirit; I am willing to submit these things to the Scriptures of truth, which are the only rule of faith and practice; and would gladly enter into a sober controversy, and try whether they be mere *fancies*, or parts of that faith which was once delivered to the saints. If, Sir, you should think fit to give me an answer to this letter, I desire you would not so much attend to my inaccuracies in writing, which I know you are able to correct, as to the truths themselves herein asserted and defended. I wish you success in your learned studies.

I am, SIR, *With all due respect,*

Yours, &c.

THE LOVE OF GOD

CONSIDERED.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:5

And the Lord God direct your hearts into the Love of
God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

One principal part of the apostle's design in writing this epistle was to satisfy some persons in this church, who were shaken in mind, and troubled, as though *The day of Christ was at hand*. He assures them, therefore, in the second chapter, that it was not; for there were several things to be done previous thereunto: such as the removal of the Roman empire; the great apostasy that was to befall the churches; and the setting up the man of sin, the Papal Antichrist. He therefore exhorts them to steadfastness in the doctrines of the gospel; and wishes them a great many good things. In the beginning of this chapter, he desires them to pray for him, and the rest of the ministers of the gospel; hints what he would have them pray for, and the reason why. *Finally, brethren, pray for us; that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified; that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for all men have not faith*. And then, for their comfort, expresses his assurance of their final perseverance. *But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil*. As also, his great confidence of their cheerful and universal obedience to the commands of God, saying, *And we have confidence in the Lord, touching you, that ye both do, and will do, the things which we command you*. In order to which, he puts up a prayer for them, in the words of the text. *The Lord direct your hearts, &c.* So that the words are a prayer of the apostle consisting of two petitions, namely, *That the Lord would direct their hearts into the Love of God*. And, that the same Lord would also *direct their hearts into the patient waiting for Christ*. It is the former of these that shall insist upon at this time. In order to explain which, I shall make the following enquiries,

- I. What are we to understand by the Love of God.
- II. What it is to have our hearts directed into it.
- III. Who this Lord is, who is prayed unto to do this for us. And,
- IV. What is the great usefulness of having our hearts so directed.

I. What we are to understand by the Love of God. This may be understood either actively or passively. Actively, of the love wherewith we love God. Or, passively, of the love wherewith we are loved by God. In other words, by it may be meant, either our love of God, or God's love to us; and seeing the words will admit of either sense, I shall consider them in both. And by the Love of God, may be meant, *our love to God*; concerning which, let the following things be observed.

1. That this is the sum and substance of the moral law; at least, it is the main and principal part thereof, as may easily be collected from our Lord's answer to the lawyer's question, in Matt. 22:35, 40. The lawyer's question is, *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?* Christ's answer is, *thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*;

this is the first and great commandment. Love to God, urged under the gospel dispensation, is the same with that enjoined by the law of Moses. Christ and Moses agree in this, as appears from Deut. 4:4, 5. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* This is no new commandment of the gospel; only it is renewed under the gospel dispensation, and pressed with stronger motives.

2. Let it also be observed, that every man by nature, is destitute of love to God: nay, there is not only a want of affection, but even an aversion to him; yea, an enmity against him. *For the carnal mind is enmity against God.* One part of the character given of the Heathens (Rom. 1:30) who were left of God and given up to their own lusts, is that they were **θεοσυγεις**; which signifies, not only that they were hateful to God, but that they were *haters of God*. Likewise in the account the apostle gives of the degeneracy which shall be in the latter day, he says, (2 Tim. 3:4) *Men shall be lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God.* And this is not only the case of those persons now mentioned, but of all mankind even of God's elect themselves, while in a state of nature. For they, as well as others, are *enemies in their minds, by wicked works*. They live in a state of rebellion, and commit open acts of hostility against the God of heaven. *They stretch out their hands against God, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty.* They run upon him, even on his neck, *upon the thick bosses of his buckler.*

3. Let it be further observed, that love to God is a grace implanted in the heart, by the Spirit of God. This is one of the fruits of the Spirit; and is mentioned at the head of them, Gal. 5:22. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, &c.* It is, with other graces, wrought in the soul at regeneration. That grace of the Lord, which comes in with it, flows into the sinner's heart at conversion; is *exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*. These two graces always go together; being implanted at one and the same time: by one and the same hand. And faith, particularly, works by love: and love is usually most warm, active, and vigorous, at first conversion. Insomuch, that the Lord takes special notice when it is left by us; according to Jer. 2:2. *Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.* Which leads me to observe,

4. The fervour of this love often abates; though the grace itself can never be lost. This frequently arises from the aboundings of sin, both in ourselves and others. *Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold,* according to Matt. 24:12. Very often, also it arises from an immoderate pursuit after the things of this world. Hence the apostle, 1 John 2:15, advises, *not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world:* for, says he, *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* That is, there is but little evidence of love to God, in that man's heart, whose affections are set upon the things of this world. These things, though they cannot destroy the grace, where it is once wrought; yet they strike a very great chill upon it. The grace of Love indeed, cannot be lost; but then it may be left, as it was by the church at *Ephesus*, of whom the Lord complains, Rev. 2:4, saying, *Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.* He does not say, because thou hast *lost* it; the word signifying not *Amittere*, to lose; but *Remittere*, to remit, or abate, in the fervour of it. And this, all the people of God, more or less, sooner or later, experience to their great sorrow: especially in the day in which we live. Therefore,

5. There is great need to pray, with the apostle, that *the Lord would direct our hearts into this love*. That is, that he would work upon our hearts, and excite our love to God: stir and blow it up into a flame. This he does, by shewing us the vanity of all earthly enjoyments: what God is in himself, and what he is to his people. How worthy he is of their highest affection; and more especially, by *shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts*; than which nothing can more effectually do it. *For we love him, because he first loved us*, 1 John 4:19. A sense of this, invigorates our love, ravishes our souls, and obliges us to say with the Psalmist, *Whom have I in heaven but thee; and there is none upon earth, that I desire besides thee*. Psalm 73:25. But I choose rather,

By the love of God here, to understand *God's love to us*; concerning the nature and glory of which, take the following hints.

1. As to the original of it, it is free and sovereign, Nothing out of God moved him to it. He did not set his love upon us, because of any loveliness in us; or because of any love in us to him. Not because of any loveliness in ourselves. For we were in no wise better than others, being *by nature the children of wrath*. Nor because of any love in us to him; for his love is prior to ours, as the cause is to the effect. And, indeed, he loved us, *before we had done either good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand*. No other reason can be given of God's loving his people, but his own **Ευδοξία**; his Sovereign good will and pleasure. Nor ought any other to be sought for, he loves them because he will love them. And though, perhaps, this may not be allowed to be a sufficient reason, by your men of reason; yet it is what the Holy Ghost thought fit to give us, and we should be satisfied with it, Deut. 7:7, 8. *The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people (for ye were the fewest of all people); but because the Lord loved you*.

2. As to the objects of God's love, it is special and discriminating. He loves some, and not others. It is true, he has a general love and regard to all his creatures. He *is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*. They all share in the bounties of his providence. He makes his sun to shine on the evil and on the good. He sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. But then, he has chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure. Hence he bestows peculiar blessings on those to whom he bears a peculiar love. David says, Psalm 106:4, *Remember me with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people*: very plainly intimating, that it was special and discriminating; of a different nature from that which he bore to others. A full instance of this distinguishing love, we have in Mal. 1:2, 3, *I have loved you, saith the Lord; yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and hated Esau*. And, as I said before, no other reason can be given of this distinction, which God makes among the lost sons of Adam, but his own sovereign will; who *will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and will be gracious to whom he will be gracious*, let a wrangling world say what they please.

3. As to its commencement, it is from eternity. God has loved his people with an everlasting love; and therefore with loving-kindness he draws them to himself in time. Many are the instances which might be given, in proof of the antiquity of this love. His choosing them in Christ, before the foundation of the world, was an act of his love, for *Electio præsupponit dilectionem*. Election presupposes love. His entering into an everlasting covenant with his Son, on the account of those he chose; his setting him up as the Mediator of that Covenant, from everlasting; and his donation of grace to them, in him, before the world began; are so many demonstrations of his early love to

them. As also, his putting their persons into the hands of Christ, and so making them his care and charge. Because *he loved the people* (Deut 33:5), *all his saints are in his hand*. Now, can it ever be imagined, that there should be a choice of persons; a covenant of grace, so well formed and stored; a promise of life granted; and security given both for person and grace, and yet no love all this while? No, these things prove his love, and this love does not commence with ours; nor, indeed, with time; but bears date from eternity.

4. As to the duration of it, it is to eternity; for it reaches from one eternity to another. *Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end*. He loves them to the end of time, and will love them throughout the endless ages of eternity; for he rests in his love towards them, and from it there can be no separation. *For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*. Rom. 8:38, 39.

5. As to the degree of it, it is unparalleled. It appears very great in the conversion of a poor sinner. Hence, says the apostle, Eph. 2:4, 5, *God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ*. But in sending his Son to die for sinners, it appears yet greater. *Scarcely for a righteous man* (says the apostle, Rom. 5:7, 8) *will one die; but God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*. There is in those words a very beautiful gradation. The apostle seems to allude to the distribution of the Jewish people; among whom were three sorts of persons. One sort they called *Righteous persons*, very strict observers of the letter of the law; but did no more than just what they were obliged to do by the law. There was another sort called, *Good men*. These were very generous and liberal to the poor, and towards defraying all the expenses of the temple service, in which they exceeded the strict demands of the law. But then there was a third sort, called *Wicked men*; the profligate and abandoned part of the people, given up to their own lusts, and the very refuse of mankind. Now it is as if the apostle should say, scarcely for one of these *righteous persons* will one die, who will do no more than just what he is obliged to; yet, peradventure, for one of these *good men*, who were so generous (and, consequently, had the affections of the people) some would even dare to die. But who will die for those *wicked, profligate, and abandoned wretches*? Not one; but *God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*. Matchless, unparalleled grace!

6. As to the nature and quality of it, it is unchangeable. It is as invariable as his own nature; nay, it is his nature: *for God is love*. (1 John 4:16) The blessings of his grace are irreversible, because they proceed from him, who is *the Father of lights, with whom there is nor variableness, nor shadow of turning*. Hence also it is, that our salvation does not stand upon a precarious foundation; which it would do, if his love to *us* changed, as ours to him does. But he is the Lord, who changes not; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. God sometimes changes the dispensations of his providences towards his people; but never changes his love. He sometimes hides, and he sometimes chides; but at all times he loves. When he hides his face from his people, for a moment; he still, *with everlasting kindness will have mercy on them*. *For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee*. (Isa. 54:8, 10) Love makes alterations in the condition of God's people; but those alterations make no change in God's love. Love made a

strange alteration in the state of the apostle Paul; who, of a persecuting, blaspheming, and injurious *Saul*, was made, not only a believer in Christ, but a preacher of the everlasting gospel. But this wonderful change in him, produced none in God, nor in his love. But if things be so, you'll say, "Then God loves his people with the same love, before conversion, as after." And where is the great hurt of saying so? For once, I will assert, he does; and a very few considerations will bring you to an acknowledgment of it. Let us a little consider, the instances of God's love, before and after conversion, and compare them together; from whence we may be able to conclude which exceeds. I might take notice of God's love in choosing them in Christ; in making a covenant of grace with him, on their account; and in putting both their persons and their grace into his hands which are all great instances of love, before conversion. But I shall only observe to you three great gifts of Gods love to his people before conversion; which, I think, can never be equaled by any instance after conversion. And they are these,

1. God's gift of himself to them: for God has, in his everlasting covenant (and this long before conversion) made over himself unto his people. The tenure of which runs thus, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

2. The great gift of his Son to them, and for them; in which he has shewn the exceeding greatness of his love towards them. *Herein is love*, says the apostle, *not that we loved God:* (so far from it, that we were enemies to him; for it was, while *we were yet sinners*, that Christ died for us) *but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* (1 John 4:10; John 3:16; Rom. 5:6, 8, 10)

3. The great gift of the Spirit, who is sent into the hearts of God's people, previous to conversion, in order to effect that great work; namely, to *convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.* And now, having observed these things, I am ready to ask, Can any *greater* instance of God's love to his people, after conversion, be produced? If the heavenly glory itself should be mentioned, with all the joys of that delightful state; I deny it to be a greater instance of God's love, than the gift of himself, or that of his Son, or that of his Spirit. And, indeed, all that God does in time, or will do to eternity, is only telling his people, how much he loved them from everlasting; all is but, as it were, a comment upon that ancient love of his. If, then, no greater instance of love can be produced, after conversion, than was before, we need neither to be afraid, nor ashamed to say, That God loves his people with the same love before conversion, as he does after.

This doctrine, I am sensible, is not easily digested; and therefore, many distinctions are formed, in order to lay it aside. Some distinguish God's love into *Antecedent* and *Consequent*; a distinction without any foundation in the word of God; and is, indeed, in itself a mere jargon of words, which convey no proper ideas of God's love: but such as are derogatory to the glory of his being and perfections, and serve only to introduce confusion and distress in the minds of men.

There is another distinction of God's love, which I have observed pretty much obtain among persons, though as groundless as the former. It is this, God loves his people before conversion, with a love of benevolence, or goodwill. He wishes them well; but he does not love them with a love of complacency, till after conversion. But purely the Lord Jesus Christ loved his people, with a love of complacency, before conversion; for, it is said, from *the beginning, or ever the earth was*, his *delights were with the sons of men.* (Prov. 8:23-31) The Hebrew word translated *delights*, is not

only in the plural number, but its radical letters are doubled; which, according to the usage of that language, always increases the signification of the word: so that it is expressive of *the exceeding greatness* of Christ's delight and complacency, which he took in his people. Nay, he seems to have taken a pleasure in the fore-views of the very places where he knew his elect should dwell: for it is said, that he was *rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth*. And now, why God the Father should not love them with the same love the Son did, I cannot see. God's love is invariably the same, as his nature and essence are. It does indeed appear more in some acts of God than in others and is more clearly manifest at one time than another; but in itself it is always the same. All the difference between God's love before, and after conversion, lies in the *manifestation* of it. It is manifested at, and after conversion; and that sometimes more, and sometimes less; but was not at all manifested before. But the change is in us, and not in God's love.

But if this doctrine be true, you will say, God must love his people in their sins. Well, and where is the hurt of saying he does? It would have been miserable, to all intents and purposes, with you and me, had he not done so. When he saw us wallowing in our blood, in all the impurity of our nature, with our numerous sins and transgressions attending us; had not then his time, been a time of love, had he not then spread his skirt over us, and manifested his covenant grace to us, we had never been his. Perhaps it may be replied, according to this notion, God takes pleasure in the sins of his people, but where is the reason so to conclude? What, can no distinction be made between God's taking delight in the *persons* of his elect, and his taking delight in their *sins*? The distinction is allowed after conversion; that God loves the persons of his people, though he hates their sins. And why may not the same distinction he allowed before, as after conversion? We know that God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, or look upon iniquity: that he takes no pleasure in sin, neither shall evil dwell with him, but hates all the workers of iniquity. We abhor and detest all notions to the contrary; yet firmly believe the unchangeableness of God's love to his people. It may be asked, how is it possible that a person should be a child of wrath, and an object of love, at one and the same time? For the elect of God are by nature children of wrath even as others: how then at the same time can they be the objects of Love? I answer, how was Jesus Christ the object of his Father's Love and wrath, at one and the same time? Why it was as he bore two different characters, and stood in two different relations to his Father; viz. That of a *Son*, and that of a *surety*. As he was the Son of God, he was always the object of his love and delight; but as he was the sinner's surety, he was the object of his wrath and displeasure. Hence it is said, *thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wrath with thine anointed*, (Psa. 89:38) with thy Messiah, or Christ. But yet even when he poured forth his wrath upon him to the uttermost, on account of the sins of his people; when he ordered Justice to draw the sword, and sheath it in him, his love towards him was not in the least abated. Thus also the elect of God, considered in different views, may be truly said to be the children of wrath, and yet objects of love at one and the same time. Considered in Adam, and under a covenant of works, they were *children of wrath*; exposed to the curses of God's righteous law, and liable to the wrath of God. But as considered in Christ, and under the covenant of grace, they always were, and ever will be the objects of God's love.

Nor has this doctrine any tendency to encourage licentiousness; or to discourage the performance of good works; or to prejudice true humiliation for sin; but all the reverse. The consideration of this, that God loved me, before I loved him; nay, when I was an enemy to him; that his thoughts were running out on my salvation, when I had no thoughts of him, or concern for myself; lays me under ten thousand times greater obligations to serve, fear, and glorify him, than a supposition that he

began to love me, when I began to love him, or because I did so, can possibly do. This may be a full answer to those who ask where is the usefulness of this doctrine?

7. If we inquire into the excellency of God's love, it is preferable to all creature enjoyments; *thy loving kindness is better than life*. And if so, it must be better than all the comforts and pleasures of life. The streams of this river of God's love, *make glad the city of God*. A sense of it makes the believer cheerful under all his trials, and fixes his confidence in God. *How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings*. Psalm 34:7. But I proceed,

II. To enquire what it is, to have our hearts directed into this Love. And,

1. To have our hearts directed into the love of God, is to be led into it, as it were, by *a straight line*; for so the word **κατευθύ ναι**, here used, properly signifies. Now it is the work of the Spirit of God, to lead souls into the love of God, directly, at once, in a straight line; and not in a round about way, as some persons are led, being directed by false guides; who tell them, they must go through the valley of humiliation, and up the hill of obedience, before they can get into the love of God. But the Spirit of God; leads the soul directly into it, independent of all its obedience and humiliation for sin: which love, when directed into, will set persons in the road of obedience, and put them upon humiliation for sin, in another way and manner.

2. To have our hearts directed into the love of God, is to be led into it further and further; so as to be *able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth of it*. This work is progressive, and may very well be represented by Ezekiel's waters; which were first up to the ankles, then to the knees, and then to the loins; but after that, they were waters to swim in, a river that. could not be passed over, Ezek. 47:3-5.

3. To have our hearts directed into the love of God, is to be led into it, so as to know our own particular interest in it. Thus the apostle Paul knew that God loved him in particular, and was persuaded that nothing should be able to separate him from it, Rom. 8:38, 39.

4. To have our hearts directed into the love of God, is so to be led into it, as to have our hearts affected with it; and influenced by it. A man may have notions of God's love in his head, who never felt the power of it upon his heart: and I am afraid that some persons are more solicitous to have their heads filled with notions about it, than to have their hearts and lives influenced by it. But our apostle does not pray, that the Lord would direct their *heads* but their *hearts*, into the love of God. I now proceed,

III. To enquire who is meant by the *Lord* here; who is prayed unto to do this for the saints. The word **κύριος**, here used, is commonly in the New Testament applied to Jesus Christ; though the Holy Spirit is also sometimes signified thereby, as in 2 Cor. 3:17. *Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*. And, I am of opinion, that by the *Lord*, in our text, we are to understand the Holy Spirit; for he is very manifestly distinguished from God the Father, into whose *love*, and from Jesus Christ, into whose *patient waiting for*, the hearts of the saints are to be directed. So that we have here a proof of the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons. Besides, we are furnished from hence, with more arguments than one, in favour of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost;

who is not only called *the Lord*, which is expressive of dominion: but is also said to *direct the heart*; which none but God can do. For *the king's heart*, and so every man's heart, is *in the hands of the Lord*, and in his only; *as the rivers of waters, he turneth it whithersoever he will*: (Prov. 21:1) and especially, he must be God, that can direct the heart *into the love of God*; which is one of *the deep things of God*, which the Spirit of God only can search into, and reveal to us. Besides, prayer is here directed to him; which is so considerable a part of divine worship, that it is sometimes put for the whole of it, as in Rom. 10:13, and therefore would never be offered up to the Spirit, was he not the true God. Now it is the work of the Spirit, to direct souls into the love of God. He not only takes of the things of Christ (his person, blood, and righteousness) and shews them to us, and our interest in them; but he takes also of the things of the Father, and particularly *his love*, he sheds it abroad in our hearts, and directs our hearts into it; and, in so doing, acts the part of a Comforter to us. I now come,

IV. To enquire into the usefulness of having our hearts directed into the love of God. And,

1. It is very useful to increase our love to God. Never was love to God, to Christ, to his gospel, people, ways, and ordinances, more cold than it is now. Great need there is to have it revived and increased; and nothing can more effectually do it, than this, to have our *hearts directed into the Love of God*. It was this, which, being let down into our hearts, first produced our love to God; and which only can animate and excite it, when it is grown cold. According to the perception we have of God's love to us, does our love to him rise. *Her sins, which were many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, same loveth little*, Luke 7:4.

2. It is very useful to promote our love to one another. There is a very visible decay of brotherly love among the saints, in this day; as is manifest from those discords, divisions, contentions, and backbitings, which every where abound in churches. Now nothing is more likely to retrieve our love to one another, than to have our hearts directed into the love of God. The primitive saints having a large effusion of the Spirit upon them, and a large sense of the love of God to them, were full of affection to each other. Insomuch that they had no need to be stirred up; for they were taught of God to love one another. Nay, even in *Tertullian's* time, so strong and vehement was their love to each other, that the very Heathens could not but take notice of them, as they walked about the streets, and say, *Vide, ut se invicem diligant. See, how they love one another!* No greater incentive to this duty is there than the love of God and of Christ. Hence the apostle John, after having discoursed of the love of God in sending his Son to die for sinners, thus argues, *Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another*: well knowing, that nothing could more vehemently provoke unto it.

3. It is very useful to enlarge our obedience to God. And indeed, it seems to be with this view, that the apostle puts up this petition here. In the preceding verse he expresses his confidence in these Thessalonians, that they both did, and would do, the things that were commanded them: and in order to that, he prays, that *the Lord would direct their hearts into the love of God*; knowing, that nothing would more enlarge their hearts, to run with cheerfulness in the ways of God's commandments. 'Tis this which constrains souls to live to the glory of God; and makes even those that were slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Never was there more need of having our hearts directed into the love of God than now ; when there is such a neglect of duty among professors; not only in their closets and families, but also in the church of God.

4. It is very useful to enable us to mourn for sin aright. We have great reason to be humbled before God, and to mourn both for our own sins, and for the sins of others. But we never mourn more, nor better, than when impressed with a sense of God's love. It is this which throws our humiliation for sin into a proper channel. Our sorrow for it never rises higher; nor are our shame for it, and detestation of it more increased, than when we are made sensible of God's pacifying love towards us. See Ezek. 14:61-63. It was a look of love from Christ that sent Peter out of the hall to weep bitterly, after he had so shamefully denied his Lord; and it was a discovery of Christ's love to the poor woman, which fetched those floods of tears from her eyes, and which put her upon washing Christ's feet therewith, and wiping them with the hairs of her head.

5. It is very useful to enable us to bear the cross of Christ cheerfully; and perhaps that may be the reason why this other clause is added, *And unto the patient waiting for Christ*. This may intend, either a patient waiting for Christ's second Advent, and is what our version seems to regard; or a patient bearing the cross for the sake of Christ. The words in the original, will admit of either sense. It is the saints' duty to bear all reproaches and trials, patiently, for the sake of Christ; and that, in imitation of him who has left them an example. And great need they have to *consider him, who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself; lest they be weary, and faint in their minds*. And not only a consideration of Christ's person, but a sense of God's love is very requisite to support them under adverse dispensations of providence; which when they have, they glory in tribulations; *knowing, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us*. (Rom. 5:3-5) Wherefore the apostle maybe thought to pray, that their hearts might be directed into the love of God, in order that they might patiently bear all things for the sake of Christ. Thus having considered the nature of God's love, and shewn you what it is to be directed into it, I shall close all with those hearty petitions of the apostle in the two last verses of the preceding chapter . . . *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work*.

(Part 1: See Sermon 11b. for Part 2)

THE STABILITY OF
THE COVENANT OF GRACE,
THE SUPPORT OF A BELIEVER
UNDER
OUTWARD AND INWARD TROUBLES.

2 SAMUEL 23:5

Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

THE preceding verses have already been considered; an introduction, therefore, to the present discourse, is unnecessary: suffice it to say, our text contains part of the last words of David; in which we may observe,

I. A concession, or something that is granted, that things were not altogether right, or so with David as he desired and wished. *Although my house be not so with God.*

II. A strong expression of his faith in God, as his covenant God; *yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant.*

III. The nature and excellency of this covenant described, 1. *As an everlasting one.*
2. *Ordered in all things;* and, 3. *sure.*

I. Here is a concession, or something granted, that things were not altogether right, or so with David as he desired and wished: *Although my house be not so with God.*

1. By his *house*, may be meant his *kingdom* and *government*, In this sense we find the word used in the seventh chapter of this book; which the Lord, by Nathan, assures David that he would make him a house. Though he does not allow him to build the Temple, which he was desirous of; yet, says he, verse 11th, *the Lord telleth thee, that he will make thee a house:* that is, that he would establish a kingdom under him, and in his posterity, as it is explained in the next verse: *and when thy days be fulfilled, and thou, shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.* That is what is meant by making him a house; and this is still further explained in the 16th verse, where it is said, *and thine house*

and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee. Thine house and thy kingdom: the last clause explains the former, and plainly shows what is meant by his house. In this sense we may understand it here; for a kingdom is as a house, or family to a king, and the subjects are as his children, and a good prince is the father of them: such a one was David.

Now David was sensible that the kingdom which was in his hands, which he had the government of, was not like the kingdom and government of the Ruler, ruling in the fear of God, before described. *Mine house is not so with God:* so bright, so splendid, so glorious as the kingdom and government of this great and illustrious person, whom I have been speaking of, who is like the light of the morning, even a morning without clouds, when the sun riseth; like the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain: but so it is not with me, with my kingdom and government. "Nevertheless, he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, though it is not so." Or, it may be read thus, *Although my house, or kingdom, be not firm and stable:* so some cause to render the words. "Though it is in some respects tottering;" it has been so in various instances; yet he hath made me an everlasting covenant.

When he was first set upon the throne, Abner set up Ishbosheth over the ten tribes, in opposition to him. When that difficulty was over, and David was made king over all Israel, in process of time, a son out of his own bowels, Absalom, rebelled against him; and caused him not only to flee from Jerusalem, but even to pass over Jordan's river, to be in safety from this rebellious son. When this rebellion was quashed, there was an insurrection made by Sheba, who blew his trumpet, and said, *We have no part in David; neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse; every man to his tents, O Israel* (2 Sam. 20:1): and all Israel it is said followed after him; only Judah clave to David. And after this, just before his death, (and it may be immediately before he uttered these his last words), Adonijah usurped the throne, and got himself proclaimed instead of Solomon. Now with respect to all this, he might say, "Although my house, my kingdom, is not stable and firm, but in a tottering condition; yet God hath made with me an everlasting covenant." In which he may have respect either to the covenant of royalty, that there should not want one to sit upon his throne; and which in some sense may be said to be an everlasting covenant; for so it is represented in Jeremiah 33:20, 21; *If (says the Lord) ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night; and that there should not be day and night in their season: then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne.* Now David may have respect to this covenant of royalty. Though his kingdom had been tottering, yet the covenant that God had made with him would be firm and sure. Indeed some writers, especially Jewish ones, understand this in a quite different sense. Not as expressing any disorder in David's kingdom and government; but the reverse; they understand it thus, "Although my house be not so with God, so tottering, so unstable, and uncertain as the things before mentioned" The morning is sometimes a morning without clouds, as expressed *in* the preceding verse; and the sun rises with great brightness and clearness: at other times it is a morning with clouds; the heavens are covered with darkness, and all is gloomy, and every thing uncomfortable. Sometimes it is fine weather, at other times foul sometimes the sun shines, at other times it is in a cloud; but my house, my kingdom is not so uncertain and unstable. But then this must be understood with respect to his more remote and glorious offspring, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ; whose throne is for ever and ever, and of whose government, and the peace thereof, there shall be no end whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and who reigns over the house of Jacob, and upon the throne of David, for ever and ever.

2. By his *house* may be meant his *family*. Although my house, my family is not so with God; some cause to render it, "though my house or my family is not, with God, mean, low, and despicable," as it had been in comparison with some families in Israel, (as he himself intimates when he says), Who am I, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? (2 Sam. 7:18). That is, what am I, a poor creature of mean extraction, and what [is] my family that I sprung from, that thou shouldst raise me to so much dignity? Jesse's father was a mean person, comparatively speaking his family small in Israel, and Bethlehem his native town and place of residence, one of the least of the thousands of Judah, Now with respect to this he might say, "although my house, my family is comparatively small; nothing in it for which any particular and special favour should be bestowed upon me, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant." Or this may have respect to the disorders in his family, to the many evils committed by one and another therein. They were guilty of some of the grossest crimes. Ammon committed incest with his sister. Absalom rebelled against his father. Adonijah usurped the throne: all which pressed hard, no doubt, upon this good man; and therefore he might say, "although my house, my family, be not right with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant."

These things prove that grace does not run in a carnal line, comes not by natural descent. Good men are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. There is nothing in carnal descent, or nothing to be depended upon on that, account. This however must be a sensible affliction to this great and good man, to observe such disorder in his family, such sins committed by his children; but still this did not affect his covenant interest: *although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant.*

The afflictions of God's people, whether personal or domestic, do not affect their covenant interest. *That* remains always the same; David's afflictions were many; *remember David and all his afflictions* (Ps. 132:1). The phrase denotes his afflictions were not few, but many, very many. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous* (Ps. 34:19); but these do not at all affect their covenant interest, *that* remains unshaken notwithstanding all their afflictions, trials and exercises. The love of God towards them is the same, his affection for them is the same, he has the same special regard unto them: and takes the same special notice of them. He never withdraws his covenant mercy from his people. Covenant interest continues notwithstanding all these things. It is said the *covenant of peace shall never be removed* (Isa. 54:10): and it follows in the very next verse, *O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted.* Of the very same persons this character is given, "afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted;" concerning whom God had that very moment said, "my loving kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." So that covenant interest continues firm and unshaken, notwithstanding all afflictions. These are never to be considered as arguments against covenant interest; no, they are rather to be considered as evidences of it. For such whom the Lord loves he rebukes and chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives; whom he receives into covenant, and into covenant as a son of his. He often afflicts them; but then it is when it is necessary he should deal with them. Afflictions are fruits of the covenant of grace. This is what is said in covenant, *if his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments: if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him; nor suffer my faithfulness to fail: my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out from my lips* (Ps. 89:30, 34). The afflictions of God's people make for their good. They *work together*

for good; sometimes for their temporal good; as in the case of Joseph. For their spiritual good, the exercise of their graces; and that they may be made more and more partakers of his holiness. And for their eternal good; *for these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us afar more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* (2 Cor. 4:17).

3. By his house, he may mean himself; or, at least it is applicable to himself, his own heart; although my soul, my heart, be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Our Lord compares the man that hears his words, and acts according to them, to a wise man that builds his house upon a rock; and one that does not, to a foolish man, that builds his house upon the sand (Matthew 7:24, 27); that is, that builds *himself*, his faith, his hope, and his eternal affairs and concerns upon the one, or upon the other. So this phrase here is applicable to David, or any other good man's self, his own heart or soul, although that is not so with God; not so right as he could wish and desire nevertheless, covenant interest remains.

1. Though there be a great deal of sin, as there is in all good men a great many failings and infirmities in their lives and conversation, as there are in the best men upon earth: nevertheless, interest in the covenant of grace continues. David was very sensible he had a great deal of sin in him, and that sin had been committed by him: O how does he bewail and lament himself under a sense of his sin. *Innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities are more than the hairs of my head: therefore I cannot look up* (Ps. 40:12), with delight, boldness, and pleasure, as I had used to do. Again he says, *mine iniquities are gone over my head as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. There is no soundness in my flesh, because of my sin* (Ps. 38:3, 4). It is so with every good man, more or less. It was so with the apostle of the Gentiles. *In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing* (Rom. 7:18). *I see a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members* (Rom. 7:23). And yet covenant interest remains. Though a man finds many workings of corruption in his heart, and breakings forth of it in his life; nevertheless covenant interest continues. Original and actual sin, were no bar to the admittance of God's people into the everlasting covenant of grace. He knew very well what they would be. He knew that they would be transgressors from the womb: that their neck would be as an iron sinew, and their brow as brass. He saw all this, and yet this was no hindrance, obstruction, or objection at all to his admitting them into his everlasting covenant of grace. Indeed, he is sometimes represented after the manner of men, as if he were struggling in his mind; expostulating with himself what he should do in this case: *How shall I put thee among the children?* (Jer. 3:19). Take thee into the everlasting covenant, and bestow blessings of grace upon thee; *and give thee a goodly heritage of the host of nations*; an eternal inheritance. How shall I do it when thou art, or wilt be so vile a creature? But grace overcomes all these struggles and difficulties, as they are, humanly speaking: hence it is said, *I will be their Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty* (2 Cor. 6:18).

Sin, in the whole compass of it, in its blackest colors, was foreseen, and yet no bar to the admission of these persons into the everlasting covenant of grace. All the impurity of their nature, and the whole course of sin, during a state of unregeneracy, did not hinder covenant grace taking place in effectual vocation. Notwithstanding all that impurity of nature, in which the Lord's people are brought forth into the world, and in which they continue; and notwithstanding they go on fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; they being, by nature, children of wrath, even as others; yet such is the great love wherewith the Lord has loved them, that he quickened them when dead in

trespasses and sins. Though they are like the wretched infant cast out into the open field, to the loathing of their persons in the day they were born, lying in all the impurity of nature, and act agreeable to their nature; yet this did not prevent the Lord from looking upon them with a look of love; or hinder him from casting his skirt over them, and entering into covenant with them that is, manifesting his covenant to them, and they openly becoming his. Notwithstanding all their trespasses, original and actual, through the blood of this covenant, (so the blood of Jesus is called; Heb. 13:20), they are delivered out of the pit wherein is no water: and are encouraged to turn to the strong hold, as prisoners of hope. And they are, by this blood, cleansed from all sin. So covenant interest continues. "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."

2. Though it may be with the people of God, as it was with David; that they are guilty of many backslidings after conversion, after they are called by divine grace; nevertheless covenant interest continues. David was sensible he had been guilty of many backslidings; particularly in the case of Bathsheba and Uriah; and he continued a long time without a sense of the evil he had fallen into; but covenant interest still remained. In virtue of this, Nathan the prophet was sent to him, to convince him of his evil, bring him to a sense of it, to own and acknowledge it before God; and at the same time to inform him that he should not die, because his iniquity was put away: though at the same time, he is also told, that evil should spring out of his house; God would chastise him for the evil he had been guilty of; nevertheless his loving-kindness he would not utterly take from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. So it is with the people of God, more or less. What is said of literal Israel, may be said of spiritual Israel, *My people are bent on backsliding from me* (Hos. 11:7): and, as the same prophet says, "Israel slideth back, as a backsliding heifer" (Hos. 4:16). As an heifer that cares not to be under the yoke; so the Lord's spiritual Israel are guilty of great departures from the Lord. O what sad departures do they sometimes make from the living God, through the power of unbelief in their hearts, therefore they are called upon to "remember from whence they are fallen, and repent, and do their first works (Rev.2:5)." Yet, notwithstanding all, this covenant of grace still continues: covenant love is still the same. I will heal all their backslidings, and will love them freely. Notwithstanding their backslidings I will make it appear that I still love them, that my love is a free love: not depending upon any conditions in them. And I will make it known by forgiving their iniquities, for that is meant; or by making fresh applications of pardoning grace. In what a light is this set, in the forty-third chapter of the Prophecy of Isaiah: *they made him to serve with their sins, they wearied him with their iniquities*: by which is to be understood, that they were guilty of sins of omission and commission. Yet, says the Lord, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own name's sake, and will not remember thy sins* (Hos. 4:25). Covenant grace was still the same.

Covenant relation, therefore, is not broken off by these backslidings and apostasies from God. No; this is most clear from what is said in Jeremiah 3:14. "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you." *Turn, O backsliding children*: what strange things, what wonders in grace are here! children, and yet backsliders! backsliders, and yet, children! children of God still. Turn, O backsliding children, *for I am married unto you*: the relation of husband and spouse still continues. The marriage relation still subsists notwithstanding all your sins. So again in the 22nd verse; *Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings*: and the answer is, *behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God*. Faith gets strength by such declarations of grace,

and, notwithstanding all these backslidings, says, *thou art the Lord our God..* Thou art our covenant God.

3. The dear children of God are liable to various temptations of Satan; and sometimes are prevailed upon to do those things that are disagreeable to their heavenly Father: yet covenant interest remains. "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an ever lasting covenant." David had his temptations. We have mention made of a very sore one; Satan stirred him up to number the people of Israel (1 Chron. 21:1). He fell in the temptation, he suffered much, and his people too, through it, but still covenant interest remained. The best of men are liable to temptations. Peter was. *Simon, Simon* (says our Lord), *Satan hath desired to have thee*; to have thee in his hands; to do with thee as he would; to harass, distress, and confound thee, *but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*. The great apostle of the Gentiles, had a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him: and extremely distressed he was with it. He besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him; so it is with all the people of God at one time or another. Those very persons, the Corinthians, whom the apostle describes as being *washed, justified, and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God*; he intimates, in the following verses, that they were liable to the temptations of Satan. Thus the best of men experience his temptations. Nay, even the Son of God himself did, *he was in all points tempted as we are* (Heb. 4:15); and that as violently as ever any of the people of God were; for what greater temptations can they be harassed with, than those with which he was assaulted? But, notwithstanding all the temptations of God's people, yet covenant interest remains. Our Lord has a sympathizing spirit with them, and rebukes the tempter. He says, *the Lord hath chosen Jerusalem to rebuke thee*. "Is not this one that I have chosen? is not this one that I have called by my grace: snatched as a brand out of the burning, and saved from everlasting ruin? and shall this dear child of mine fall by thy hand? the Lord rebuke thee Satan! What hast thou to do with him? he is one of mine." The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, he knows the fittest time to do it, and he does do it: though he suffers the enemy to go about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, yet he does not suffer him to destroy any of his own children. What is the reason of all this? Covenant interest continues. *Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant*.

4. They may be, and often are in great darkness of soul, and under great distress on that account; yet covenant interest remains. David knew what darkness and distress of soul was; hence those warm and fervent breathings of his *Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thyself in times of trouble?* Again, *Thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled*. This has been the case of the best of men in all ages. The man that obeys the voice of the servants of the Lord, may walk in darkness and see no light. It is said, even of the church in general, that he hides his face from her; yet she expresses her confidence. *When I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me* (Micah 7:8); she was satisfied covenant interest still continued. Indeed unbelief prevails frequently in such dark and distressing circumstances; and the people of God are brought into such reasonings and doubts, in their own minds, about their covenant interest, as to say, *the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me* (Isa. 49:14), when it is impossible he should; *for they are engraven on the palms of his hands, and their walls are continually before him*. And though he does hide his face from them for a moment, yet with everlasting kindness will he gather them; for as he has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth; so hath he sworn that he will no more be wrath with them, or rebuke them. Even though the mountains may depart and the hills be removed; yet

his loving-kindness shall never depart, nor the covenant of his peace be removed. So that darkness of soul, the hidings of God's face, divine desertions, are no arguments against covenant interest.

5. The people of God are subject to great coldness, indifference, sleepiness, sluggishness, and slothfulness; it often attends them, as it did the Church when she said, *I sleep but my heart waketh* (Sol. Song 52); but still we find she was recovered out of this frame of soul, and brought to the exercise of strong faith in the Lord: *this is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem* (Sol. Song 5:16). All the virgins, wise and foolish, slumbered and slept.. This may befall the best of *men*, and yet notwithstanding that, their covenant interest remains.

6. Faith, hope, love, and other graces may not be in lively exercise. Faith is sometimes very low. All that a believer can say at most, is, *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief*; but that does not affect covenant interest; it does not depend upon the lively exercise of grace. *Though we believe not, yet he abides faithful*: He is faithful to his promises, let it be with us as it will. Hope is sometimes in a very poor plight; almost gone. The church says, *the Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him* (Lam. 3:24): even the very same that before had said, *my strength and my hope is perished from the Lord* (Lam. 3:18). Yea, the same may be said of other graces; though low and upon the decline, covenant interest still remains. All this is supposed in the phrase, *although my house be not so with God*.

II. Here is a strong expression of covenant interest; *yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant*. What is this covenant that God had made with David? and with whom made? It cannot be the *covenant of works made with Adam*. A covenant was made with him consisting of these terms, that if he acted according to it, he should live; if not, he should die. And Adam was the federal head of all his offspring, and a type of him that was to come, our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:14). But now this covenant is broken *this is no everlasting covenant. They have transgressed my covenant as Adam* (Hosea 6:7). This is not a covenant ordered in all things and sure; far from it: hence the covenant of grace is said to be, a *better covenant, established upon better promises* (Heb. 8:6). Here is no provision made in this covenant for the pardon of sin; no provision made for a justifying righteousness; no provision made for life and salvation, This, therefore, can never be the covenant meant; for David says, *this is all my salvation*: but there is no salvation by the covenant of works. As no justification, so no salvation from thence. David is speaking of a covenant, from whence he derived abundance of comfort under the most distressing circumstances he could be in; but there is no such comfort to be derived from the covenant of works. By the law is the knowledge of sin; but not of a Saviour from sin. That law convinces men of sin, and curses every transgressor; dooms them to everlasting destruction, and so brings upon them a spirit of bondage. This, therefore, cannot be the covenant.

Nor yet the *covenant of circumcision* (as it is called) *made with Abraham*: that is done away, being a yoke that neither the Jews nor their forefathers could bear. This was so far from being ordered in all things and sure, that the apostle declares, to those who complied with it, *Christ is become of no effect unto you. Whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace* (Gal. 5:4).

Nor is this the *Sinai covenant*; for that was not an everlasting one. It is abolished and done away. Not ordered in all things and sure, for it gave way; otherwise there would have been no need for a second, as the apostle argues (Heb. 8:7).

The covenant which the sweet Psalmist of Israel, in his last dying words, has respect unto, is the *covenant of grace*: founded on grace; filled with the blessings of grace. It is called the *covenant of peace* (Isa. 44:10), because a grand article of it is peace and reconciliation with God, by Jesus Christ. He was sent to be our peace; to make peace for us by the blood of his cross. It is called a *covenant of life* (Mal. 2:5), because a grand article in this covenant is life, and it secures everlasting life to his people; for this is one grand promise of it, that God hath promised unto us, eternal life (1 John 2:25).

Now this covenant is said to be made with David: made with his son and antitype, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, who bears his name. *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant* (Ps. 89:3). A covenant projected by God the Father: it was proposed by him to his Son Christ Jesus, who agreed unto it. A mere creature cannot make a covenant with God; for what has man to give to God, to agree upon with God? What terms can he propose, or have proposed, that he is capable of performing? None at all. When, therefore, God is said to make a covenant with men; the meaning is, he manifests his covenant made with Jesus Christ from all eternity. Therefore, when David says, *he hath made with me an everlasting covenant*; the meaning is, he hath made it manifest to me, that I have an interest in his everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. This is the meaning of, *Hearken unto me, and thou shalt live, and I will make with thee an everlasting covenant* (Isa. 55:3). Can any suppose, that when one, under the influence of grace, hearkens to God, then God begins to make a covenant with him? no, the meaning is, God will manifest his covenant love and grace; shew them their interest in the blessings and promises thereof, so that their faith shall lay hold on this covenant, as David did under all those distressing circumstance he was in. Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant: I clearly see my interest in it, and by faith lay hold upon it, and upon the blessings and promises of it.

I should now have considered the nature of this covenant that David saw his interest in. That it is an *everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure*; but I must defer these things, with what follows, to another discourse.

(Part 2: See Sermon 11a. for Part 1)

THE STABILITY OF
THE COVENANT OF GRACE,
THE SUPPORT OF A BELIEVER
UNDER
OUTWARD AND INWARD TROUBLES.

2 SAMUEL 23:5.

Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow.

In our last discourse of this text, Three things were proposed for consideration.

- I. David's concession, that things were not so with him, as he desired and wished.
- II. The strong expression of his faith in God notwithstanding; as having made a covenant with him.
- III. The nature of this covenant described as everlasting; ordered in all things, and sure.

The two former have been enlarged upon: what remains to be considered, is,

III. The nature of this covenant. It is said to be an *everlasting* one. That is, from everlasting to everlasting. It bears date from all eternity, and will continue so for evermore. It springs from the everlasting love of God to his people: that is the source of it. God hath loved his people with an everlasting love; not only with a love, which shall abide for ever; but with a love which was from all eternity; for, our Lord says to his Divine Father, *Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me; and thou lovest me before the foundation of the world* (John 17:23, 24). Now this covenant of grace, springs from this love of God; and is as early as that. Jehovah said, in his eternal mind, mercy, love and grace shall be built up for ever; and in order to it, makes this covenant (Ps. 89:2, 3). The basis and foundation of this covenant are, the purposes, decrees, and counsels of the most High; for he does all things after the counsel of his own will; and it may be depended upon, as a most sure and certain thing, that an affair, of so much importance as the covenant of grace is, could not be made

any otherwise than after the counsel of his will, and depends upon that counsel; and his counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.

Jesus Christ is the Mediator of this covenant; so he is more than once called, in the epistle to the Hebrews. As such, he was set up from everlasting; from the beginning, or ever the earth was: and therefore the covenant of grace, of which he is Mediator, must be as early. He could not be the Mediator of a covenant, without the covenant itself. Add to this, that the sum and substance of this covenant was from everlasting. David considers the promises of it, and especially that grand promise in it, *everlasting life by Christ*, that was made before the world was; as it is expressly said, Titus 1:2, *In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began*. Now, there could be no such a promise as this, unless there was a covenant so early. All the blessings of this covenant are of as ancient date. They are styled the *grace* (or blessings of grace) *given us in Christ before the world began* (2 Tim. 1:9).

And as this covenant is from everlasting, so it is to everlasting, for God *hath commanded his covenant for ever; Holy and Reverend is his name* (Ps. 111:9): that is, he hath ordained and established this covenant of grace, so as to continue for ever; nothing shall ever be able to subvert it, or make it null and void. Notwithstanding all that is done by, or done unto, these covenant ones, God will not break his covenant, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips. Though they sin, and he chastises them for their sins; yet his loving-kindness he will not utterly take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness, in keeping the covenant, to fail. Though they may so provoke him, by their carriage and behavior, as to cause him to remove his face from them; yet his loving kindness shall not depart, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed. This is a covenant that will never wax old, will never give way to another, or be succeeded by another; as the old covenant did, and was: no, it is an everlasting one, upon all accounts.

In the next place, it is *ordered in all things*. Ordered in all things to advance the glory of all the Three Divine Persons; who are jointly concerned therein. To advance and secure the glory of God the Father, and his eternal choice of persons to everlasting life and happiness, in all his purposes and decrees concerning them; which, through this covenant taking place, have their full and complete accomplishment. As also to advance the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God; who is the Mediator, surety, and messenger of this covenant: the federal head and representative of the body the church, and the Saviour thereof; that in all things he may have the preeminence. And to advance the glory of the blessed Spirit; whose office it is to be the applier of the grace of this covenant to take of the things of God and of Christ, and shew them unto those who are interested in them; and to convey and apply all grace, needful for them in time, till they come into an eternal world. This covenant is *ordered in all things*, for the security of all the covenant ones; who are all, for their safety, put into the hands of Jesus Christ, the Mediator, who is able to keep them from falling, and to present them, faultless, before the throne of his Father. In whose hands they being put, are safe; for, as he will never suffer them to fall from thence, so none are able to pluck them out of his hands. This covenant is ordered in all things; all provision is made in it, for the good of the covenant ones, in time and in eternity. In this covenant are contained all spiritual blessings, all grace, all things pertaining to life and godliness: provision is made for the sanctification of the hearts of God's chosen, the justification of their persons, and the pardon of their sins. In short it contains all things needful for them here, and eternal glory and happiness hereafter.

And then it is a covenant that is *sure*. Sure to Christ, the Covenant Head; and sure to all the seed. Sure to Christ. All the promises made to him are sure as, that *he shall see his seed; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand*. And that he should be exalted on high; therefore, when he fulfilled the work, he said, *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee, before the world was* (John 17:4,5). It is sure to all the seed, and spiritual offspring: all the promises of it made to them, in him, are yea, and amen. All the blessings and mercies of it, are the sure mercies of David; and the more sure, as they are put into the hands of Christ, their covenant head and representative: so their spiritual and eternal life is hid with Christ in God: safe and secure: and because he lives, they shall live also.

But I go on to consider the latter part of the text, in which,

I. David expresses his raised expectations upon this covenant; his great regard unto it, and affection for it: *This is all my salvation, and all my desire*.

II. All this is maintained, notwithstanding the circumstances in which he then was: *Although he maketh it not to grow*. Though it was not a growing time and season with him and his; yet this his covenant was all his salvation, and all his desire.

I. We shall consider his raised expectations upon this covenant; his great regard unto it, and affection for it, or to Christ, the covenant head, with whom this covenant was made for the words may as well regard the one, as the other. The supplement may as well be, for *he* is my salvation, and all my desire; as well as it may be supplied, as we do, *this* is all my salvation, &c. And, in as much as these two agree together, and fall in with each other, and indeed are not separated one from the other, we shall consider the words in both senses; as they may respect both the *covenant* which our version directs to, and as they may respect the *Covenant Head*, or he that is the Ruler over the people, before described.

1. As it may respect the *everlasting covenant ordered in all things, and Sure*: "for this is all my salvation, and all my desire." *All my salvation* (as if David should say), is provided for in it, and secured by it; flows from it, and depends upon it. "This is all my salvation;" or, "All my salvation is here;" a very comprehensive phrase, which includes temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation. All salvation is of the Lord. *Salvation*, (says the Psalmist) *belongs unto the Lord* (Ps. 3:8): temporal as well as spiritual and eternal salvation, belongs to him: he is the author thereof, and to him the glory should be given; and particularly, the salvation of his people: *the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; and he is their strength in the time of trouble* (Ps. 38:39). Even temporal salvation is of the Lord, as their covenant God and Father too; for he is their King and their God, working salvation in the midst of the earth: and every temporal deliverance is wrought for them by their covenant God, and in virtue of this covenant made with them. Covenant ones are saved in this covenant, in a temporal way, in order to be called. Saved they are from many evils in a providential way, while in an unconverted state, in order to be effectually called by the grace of God: and, indeed, all their temporal mercies are covenant mercies, as they come from a covenant God, and in a covenant way; when the mercies of the wicked, though the same for substance as theirs, are not covenant mercies. They are sometimes curses unto them; for the Lord *curses their very blessings* (Mal. 2:2). Hence it is, that the people of God have what they have, in a temporal way, with the favour of the Lord:

hence it is, that a *little that a righteous man hath, it is better than. the treasures of many wicked:* they are blessed, and they are loaded day by day, comparatively speaking, with benefits; for God is the *God of salvation*, in a temporal sense, and to God the Lord belong the issues from death (Ps. 68:20). But more especially, spiritual and eternal salvation is here meant, *Spiritual salvation*; by which is meant, the salvation of the spirit or soul: that salvation, which concerns the spiritual and everlasting good of God's people, called the *salvation of the soul* (1 Pet. 1:9): and everlasting salvation, because it always continues. The fruits, effects, benefits and blessings thereof always remain; and therefore called an everlasting salvation. *Israel shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation* (Isa.45:17). Now this began in the thoughts of God's heart; which were thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give them an expected end. In the purposes, resolutions, and determinations of his mind, who appointed his people, not unto wrath, which they deserved: but to obtain salvation, by the death of his Son. He, from the beginning, even from all eternity, chose them, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, as the *means*, unto salvation, the *end*, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. In virtue of those thoughts, which were thoughts of peace, and not of evil, this salvation becomes secured unto them for whom he predestined to everlasting life, them he also glorifies; that is, they are everlastingly saved. The scheme of this salvation was framed in the council of grace and peace, said to be between them both; that is, between the Father and the Son. Jesus Christ acted as the wonderful counselor. He is the angel and messenger of the great council; as in the Greek version (Isa. 9:6). God was in him, reconciling, or drawing the model and scheme, the means of reconciliation and salvation.

In the covenant of grace it was eternally settled who should be the saved ones, or partake of this great salvation; namely, those the Lord had a design of grace and mercy towards: and a love for; whom he determined to shew mercy unto, even the vessels of mercy, afore appointed unto glory. All that he hath given unto his Son, put into his hands, and made his care and charge; concerning whom he declares, that it is his will, that of all that he gave him, he should lose none, but raise it up at the last day. Even the whole Israel of God shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation; consisting of Jews and Gentiles, the whole election of grace throughout the whole world; who are the *all men* God would have to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.

It was also settled who should be the *author of this salvation* unto them: not angels, for Jehovah puts no trust in his servants, for he charges them with folly: nor men themselves, who are not equal to such a work as this, but the Son of God; of whom the Lord says, *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them; not in this, that, and the other way, but by the Lord their God.* This was proposed to the Son of God, and he became our surety and Saviour. Jehovah said to him, *Thou art my servant, O Israel:* or, it is my will and pleasure it should be so; *in whom I will be glorified;* and, *if it is a light thing for thee to raise up the tribe of Jacob, and restore the presence of Israel,* I will enlarge thy commission; thou shalt be *a light to the Gentiles,* and the *salvation of my people, to the ends of the earth,* or of all my chosen ones throughout the whole world. This was the proposal that was made to him; to which he agreed. When the question was put, Who shall go for the salvation of those chosen ones? he made answer, and said, "Here am I, send me:—lo I come, to do thy will, O my God." A covenant, a compact, and agreement was made immediately between the Father and the Son, upon this affair of so great importance and in consequence of this, he was sent in the fulness of time. Herein is love, the love of God the Father, in that he sent his Son to be the Savior of the world; and he sent him in the fulness of time agreed upon in this covenant. Christ came to seek and save them that were lost. This is the sum of the everlasting gospel, which is no

other than a transcript of this covenant. *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.* Moreover, all the *blessings of salvation* were provided and secured in this covenant; and therefore it may with great propriety be said, "this is all my salvation." It was not only settled who should be the saved ones; but what blessings they should be partakers of, and should enjoy to all eternity. Now these are *all spiritual blessings* (Eph. 1:3), which were given us in Christ before the world began, and upon which account this covenant is said to be, in the text, *ordered in all things*. For instance, one of these blessings is *peace*; from which this covenant, as before observed, is called the covenant of peace. It was foreseen there would be a breach between God and his creature man: that peace and reconciliation would be necessary. This was provided for; Christ was proposed to be the Peace-maker. *He shall make peace with me* (Isa. 27:5); and accordingly he became their peace, and made peace by the blood of his cross. *Pardon of sin* is another blessing of this covenant, not to be had by the covenant of works; such who sinned against Moses' law died without mercy. Through the blood of this everlasting covenant is the remission of sins: one promise of it runs thus, *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more*; and without shedding of blood there is no remission. *Justification* is another blessing of salvation, provided for in this covenant, Jehovah the Father appointed this work unto his Son, which he agreed to, even to bring in everlasting righteousness; and God promised that he should justify many upon the foot of that righteousness, and as a covenant God he does do it. *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles* (Rom. 3:29)? He is; that is, the covenant God of the one, as well as of the other. Now how does this appear? Why in this instance, in as much as *he justifies the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith*; so that the justification of men, by the righteousness of Christ, received by faith, is a blessing of grace, which God, as a covenant God, bestows upon his people. Provision is also made in this covenant for *the sanctification* of the Lord's people. Another promise of it is, *I will put my laws in their minds and write them in their hearts. I will sprinkle clean water upon them, and they shall be clean. I will give them a new heart and a new spirit. I will take away the stony heart, and give a heart of flesh*. What an ample provision is here made for the sanctification of the covenant ones! Faith, repentance, and every grace are laid up in this covenant. *Adoption* is another blessing of salvation, and is secured in the covenant of grace. When God puts any among the children; it is a putting them into the covenant of grace; as he says, *I will be their Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters*. Upon this follows *heir-ship*; for, if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. Heirs together of the grace of life. Heirs of an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Heirs of salvation, as they are called (Heb. 1:14).

Well then, this being the case, that in this covenant it is provided *who* shall be saved, *the Saviour*, and the *blessings to be enjoyed*; with great propriety may it be said, *all our salvation is in this covenant*. It is secured by it, flows from it, and depends upon it. Then adds David, *this is all my desire*: and it is no wonder that it should be his desire, when all his salvation was in it; and it is every gracious soul's desire, to see more clearly his interest in it. David saw his interest in it no doubt; but still he desired to see it more clearly, as every good man does, that he may more strongly *take hold on the covenant*, as it is expressed in Isaiah 56:4. Take hold on a covenant God, on Christ the Mediator of the covenant, and of the blessings and promises of it, and claim them as his. Every good man desires to be led more and more into this covenant, into the nature, fulness, and glory of it. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant*. Those to whom any thing of this covenant has been shewn, cannot but be desirous of being shewn more of it;

and especially their full interest in it. They desire also to have a fresh application of covenant grace, and covenant blessings to them, which God hath promised. He says, *hear and your souls shall live, and I will make with you an everlasting covenant*: the meaning is, that he would manifest and apply unto them, the blessings of this covenant. It is the desire of every good man, that knows any thing of the covenant of grace, and the scheme of salvation by it, to be saved in this way; by and through the covenant of grace, and not of works. It is natural for men, until they are better enlightened, to desire to be saved by a covenant of works; first-convictions generally lead this

way, as in the three thousand persons: say they, *what shalt we do?* They talked of nothing but *doing*: so the apostle Paul, when first enlightened, said, *Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?* And the jailor, *what shall I do to be saved?* And it is natural for every man to think and say, he must *do* something to be saved. But one that is better enlightened into the covenant of grace and the scheme of salvation, desires to be saved by this covenant of grace, and no other; saved by grace, and not by works. *This is all my desire*; or, *my delight and pleasure*; so the word here used signifies. And O! the delight a good, a spiritual man, has in the covenant of grace, and in the promises of it particularly, which are exceeding great and precious; and which being opened and applied to him, are like *apples of gold in pictures of silver*: he rejoices in them, when they are brought and applied unto him, more than one that finds great spoil. This is all his desire, comfort, and solace, in the most trying circumstances. When he beholds his interest in this covenant, he can *glory even in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope*. Covenant love is shed abroad in his heart, by the Spirit. Let it be as it will with him, whatever changes he passes through, this covenant, the blessings and promises of it, are the same; therefore he is not moved.

2. These words are applicable to the Ruler over men, before described; or the federal head with whom this covenant is made, and with his people in him; that is, our Lord Jesus Christ: so the supplement may as well be, *He is all my salvation, and all my desire*: i.e. Christ is so. "He is all my salvation:" He is styled "God's salvation." *I have waited for thy salvation* (Gen. 49:18): so called, because he is the salvation or Saviour of God's providing and appointing: and at other times he is called the salvation of his people, because they are the subjects of salvation; and they, under the influence of divine grace, choose him as their salvation or Savior, and will have no other, as Job said, *He also shall be my salvation*; and David, *He is all my salvation*; that is, he is the author of it. He was appointed to this work: he came, having salvation. He came with power and authority, as Mediator, to effect it; and he came (which was his end in coming), to seek and to save them that were lost; and is become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. He is the *only* author of salvation. There is salvation in him and no other. Saints are not to expect it from any other: nor will a truly sensible sinner, look to any other for salvation. *All* their salvation is in him; not a *part of it only*, but the whole of it. A sensible sinner looks to Christ for his *whole salvation*. He is the author of *complete salvation*. The redemption which he has wrought out, is a plenteous one; for he saves his people from all iniquity: saves them out of the hands of all that hate them; saves them to the uttermost. It is a complete salvation; and they that are saved are complete in him; and under the influence and witnessing of the blessed Spirit, they can claim their interest in him, and say, "He is all *my* salvation:" and in this the sensible sinner glories. What would it have been to David if that little word *my* were left out? if he could only have said, "He is all salvation?" But this was his peculiar support and happiness, that he could add, "He is all *my* "salvation, and all *my* desire." The most desirable one or, all desirable. He is said to be the *desire of all nations* (Hag.

2:7); that is, he ought to be so; of right, he should be so. In him all the nations of the earth are blessed, he is the desire of all sensible souls: these, with the church, will say, *with my soul have I desired thee; and the desire of my soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee*. He is desirable, on various accounts; on account of the glory of his person, the transcendent excellencies which are in him; he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. His glory is as the only begotten of the Father; he is possessed of all divine perfections; he is fairer than the children of men: white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands; or, as in our text, *all desire*. And he is the desire of his people, on account of that fulness of grace there is in him: not only because the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him: but because it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness of grace dwell, for the supply of his people; and out of which they are supplied. They may say, as the Psalmist did, *the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want*. He is all their desire, as a Saviour, or on account of that salvation he is the author of: *whom have I in heaven but thee* (says the Psalmist) *and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee*. None among the angels in heaven, none among all the men upon earth, to be desired with Jesus Christ. There is such an efficacy in his blood for cleansing from sin; such an excellency in his righteousness, that a sensible sinner desires to be found in him, not having on his own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God, by faith. There is such a virtue in his sacrifice, for the expiation of sin, that he has put away sin for ever; and they are *perfected that are sanctified* (Heb. 10:14). There is so great salvation wrought out by him; so full, free, complete, perfect, lasting, and durable; so suitable to the circumstances of the sinner, that makes him all desire. *He is all my desire*. Truly gracious souls, that know any thing of him, they desire to know more of him: know more of his person, offices, and grace; to know more of him, and the power of his resurrection. And no wonder they should, since, *this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*: hence they make use of all the means of grace, for the improvement of their knowledge; that they may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and arrive, at last, to the perfect knowledge of him; to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Here all their desire is, not only to know him, but to have more communion with him: they know the sweetness of communion with Christ, and God in Christ; and when they have it, they can say with the apostle, *truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*. They pant after him, as the hart pants after the water-brooks: saying, when shall we come and appear before God in Sion? His tabernacles are amiable and lovely; they long for his courts; their souls even faint for the living God, a day in his courts being better to them than a thousand elsewhere. Whenever they enjoy fellowship with Christ, it is so desirable to them, that they could wish it always continued: They say, with the disciples on the mount, *it is good for us to be here*; or to be absent from the body, that they may be present with the Lord. At certain seasons, their hearts are so drawn out after communion with him, that they desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better.—Thus, He is all their salvation, and all their desire.

II. All this is maintained, notwithstanding the circumstances in which David was, when he said these words, "All my salvation, and all my desire; *although he maketh it not to grow*." Although I am in such circumstances, am not in so flourishing a state as I could wish, yet this covenant is all my salvation: or, this Ruler over men (who is said to be as time tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain), is all my salvation, and all my desire.

This may be understood both literally, and figuratively. *Literally*, of the natural produce of the earth and so the Psalmist may be considered in the like circumstances, and uttering the same expressions

of faith as Habakkuk, when he says, *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation:* I will rejoice in my covenant God, in what he is unto me, and hath provided for me. So says David here, "He is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he makes it not to grow:" though there might be a drought and famine in the land as lately had been.

Or this may be understood *figuratively* of a spiritual growth in grace; for there is such a thing as growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Faith sometimes glows exceedingly, love increases, hope abounds; and every grace is in lively exercise. At other times it is not so. Now, *although he make it not to grow:* although I am not in so flourishing a condition with respect to the exercise of my graces, yet he is all my salvation, and all my desire: or, this covenant of grace made with me, is all my salvation, and all my desire; things are all safe there, though I am uncomfortable, with respect to my frames. Salvation does not depend upon our frames, nor upon the lively exercise of grace in us; it depends upon the unalterable covenant.

Or this may have respect to David's *family*, particularly, *although he make it not to grow:* although my family are not in growing, increasing and flourishing circumstances; though one breach after another is made in it: first, Ammon cut off, then Absalom, and though so many uncomfortable things are there; yet this is all my salvation, and all my desire. Though the horn of David is not made to bud, as is promised; yet. this is all my salvation.

Or, rather this may have respect to the Messiah, the righteous One that should spring forth. "Although that branch does not spring forth as yet:" or thus, "Shall not this branch spring forth? Verily it shall; for a rod shall grow out of Jesse." Now David knew, that though things were not so well as he could wish, yet this was his comfort, that there was an everlasting covenant made, in which his salvation was secured; though, as yet, the Messiah, the branch had not sprung forth, which he believed would, and which the Lord promised by Jeremiah, (23:5). So by one of the latter prophets, "Behold, I bring forth my servant the 'Branch.'" Now this is all my salvation, and all my desire; although this branch, as yet, does not grow up out of its place, which he firmly believed, in virtue of this covenant, it would do.

But I shall now come to a close. Let us be led hereby to adore and admire the wonderful and distinguishing grace of God; that he should make such a provision in an everlasting covenant for any of the sons of men, in Christ Jesus. God was under no obligation so to do: it all flows from his free and unmerited love, that here are such promises made in it, and such blessings of grace provided. And notwithstanding those disorders we may be under at times, let not this weaken our faith in covenant interest; for notwithstanding them, as David observes, covenant interest abides. Although my house, my family, heart, life, and every thing else, is not as I could wish; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant. Such who are interested in this covenant, need not fear wanting any good thing: it is ordered in all things. There is nothing that they need, but what is in this covenant; nor can they be in any condition of life whatever, but here is a promise made in this covenant, suited to their case and circumstances. I may say, they need not fear wanting any good thing; for here grace and glory are provided. Blessed are they that put their trust in him. And let us earnestly desire that we may be more and more led into the nature and fulness of this covenant: may the desire of our souls be more and more towards it; may we see our interest in the blessings

and promises of it; and find them to be the support of our souls in all the circumstances of life, and in the views of death and eternity.

**COVENANT INTEREST IN GOD,
AND A VIEW OF WHAT IS IN HIM,
AS A COVENANT-GOD,
A SUFFICIENT
ENCOURAGEMENT TO HIS PEOPLE,
IN THE WORST OF TIMES.**

1 SAMUEL 30:6. LAST CLAUSE.

But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

David was at this time in as great distress, if not greater, than ever he was in all his life. He had been persecuted from place to place by Saul, and his life often in imminent danger; but then he had friends along with him, to comfort and encourage him, to protect and defend him to the utmost of their power; but now it was otherwise: yet he encouraged himself in the Lord his God. Ziklag, the place where he and his men had dwelt for some time, the Amalekites taking *the* advantage of his absence, came and burnt and destroyed it; carried captives the wives and concubines of his men, and his own wives also. This occasioned a general discontent, and even a mutiny among the people; so that David's people, his own friends, spoke of stoning him: but notwithstanding all this, David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

At this time of distress, he was at the eve of his outward grandeur and glory: for much about this time, very likely at the very time, that battle, from whence he was providentially withdrawn, was fought between Saul and the Philistines, in which Saul and his Sons were slain; which paved the way for David to ascend the throne of Israel. So sometimes it is, that when God is about to work salvation from his people, to bestow upon them great favors whether in a way of providence or grace, he suffers them to be brought into the greatest straits; that his power, wisdom, and goodness may be the more visible.

But David knew nothing of this for the present; his state was very distressing, hopeless, and helpless, as to human appearance: nevertheless he encouraged himself in the Lord his God. He encouraged *himself*, for he had none to encourage him; they all spake of stoning him. He encouraged himself, not by virtue of any power of his own, but through the influence of the divine Spirit; which impressed his mind, directed him to God, and enabled him to exercise faith upon him: he encouraged himself in *the Lord his God*. In the Lord; not absolutely considered, for God is a

consuming fire; but he strengthened, he encouraged himself in the Lord his God, his covenant God and Father.

The observation I make upon this, is, that covenant interest in God, and a view of what is in God, as Covenant Lord, are a sufficient encouragement to his people, in their greatest distresses and, in enlarging on this observation, I shall consider,

I. That the people of God have their times of trouble and distress.

II. That God is their covenant God; and this is a source of support and comfort to them under their troubles. And,

III. That a view of what is in God, is enough to encourage the saints in the worst of times. David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

I. The people of God have their times of trouble and distress. The apostle Paul seems to distinguish between *trouble* and *distress*, when he says, *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed* (2 Cor. 4:8). Troubled on every side, from every quarter, all around; look which way we will, there is nothing but trouble, and yet not distressed: that is, not so distressed as to be reduced to despair, as is afterwards explained; or to be brought to ruin and destruction; for it follows, *perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed*.

The people of God, in all ages and periods of time, have been poor, and afflicted with divers sorts of afflictions, temporal and spiritual; but this is the favor bestowed upon them, that they shall trust: they are enabled to trust, they do trust in the name of the Lord their God. Their afflictions and troubles are partly outward, and partly inward: some are outward afflictions; such as affect their bodies, their families, and estates; or arise from the world, and the men of it, their reproaches and persecutions; and these come not by chance, but are by divine appointment. They are appointed to these afflictions, and these afflictions are appointed for them; these are a legacy their great Lord and Master hath bequeathed them, *In the world ye shall have tribulation* (John 16:33). There are many tribulations through which the saints enter the kingdom they attend them all the way, more or less, to the heavenly glory. They follow them to their entrance into the kingdom; then they leave them, and not till then. These troubles and afflictions are all in love, and are directed by the hand of a tender Father; yet, nevertheless, no affliction is joyous, but grievous to the flesh.

There are other troubles, trials, and exercises which are internal, and more especially affect the soul, or the spiritual state of God's people; I mean, their comfortable spiritual state. Nothing can affect, so as to destroy, their state and standing in Christ; but there are many things which distress them, with respect to their spiritual frames, and comfortable spiritual state. Sometimes they are under the hidings of God's face and, as his presence gives them the greatest pleasure; so his absence, the greatest pain and uneasiness. When he hideth his face, their souls are troubled; and upon this follows darkness, and sometimes such darkness, that they can see no light. This being the case of good men, that they walk in darkness, and have no light (Isa. 50:10); no joy, comfort, and peace in a sensible manner; hence follows many doubts and fears in them, relative to their case. They are ready to fear that a work of grace was never begun in them, or that they shall never hold on and out unto the end, but fall short of heaven at last: without are fightings, and within are fears.

Unbelief sometimes prevails to a very great degree, and their language is like that of the Psalmist, *Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* (Ps. 77:8, 9). Unbelief reads all this in the affirmative. You may well imagine God's people are in distress, when this is their case. Sometimes their distresses arise from the temptations of Satan: who is a very busy adversary, and goes about, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; though he cannot do this, with respect to the people of God, yet he can, and is, often suffered to distress them. Yea, he is said to desire to winnow one as wheat, as Peter; and he buffets another, as in the case of Paul, he throws his fiery darts thick and fast, and these give a great deal of pain and uneasiness. To all these may be added, the corruptions of their nature, which are suffered sometimes to prevail very much in them: they find a law in their members, warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin and death; which makes them say, "Oh! wretched men, that we are." These old Canaanites left in the land, are as pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides, that give them great distress.

II. God is the covenant God of his people, and that is a source of support and comfort to them under all their troubles and distresses. David says, "Fear was on every side; but I trusted in thee, O Lord I said, thou art my God" (Ps. 31:13, 14). God is the God of his people, not only in a general sense, as he is the God of the spirits of all flesh; not in a national sense, as he is the God of the Jews. He avouched them to be his people, and they avouched him to be their God; but he is the God, the covenant God of his people, in a more special sense, in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things, and sure; the tenor of which runs thus, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God" (Jer. 32:28). This covenant interest is made manifest in effectual vocation, when God calls his covenant ones effectually by his grace; which makes it clearly appear that they are his covenant ones. Then, they who are not a people, that is, who were not known to be a people of God, either by themselves or others, openly appear to be his people; for the application of covenant blessings unto them is an undeniable proof of their interest; for, to whomsoever covenant blessings are applied, such must be most certainly interested in the covenant of grace.

Now this covenant interest always continues, it never can be dissolved, let the saint come into what condition he will, let him be in what trouble or distress he may, covenant interest always abides. Afflictions that are laid upon him, of one kind or another, are no arguments at all disproving his covenant interest; rather are proofs of the same; for, in the covenant it is provided, that when the Lord's children forsake his law, and walk not in his statutes, he will visit their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless his loving-kindness he will not utterly take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. His covenant he will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips (Ps. 89:30, 34). Even the sins and corruptions of God's people, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this world, do not, cannot dissolve covenant interest; for Jehovah knew beforehand, when he took his people into this covenant, what they would be; that they would be called transgressors from the womb; that their neck would be as an iron sinew, and their brow as brass; and yet this did not hinder their admission into this covenant; and consequently cannot be a reason for dismissing them from it: besides, in this covenant of grace there is provision made for the forgiveness of the sins of God's people. One principal promise runs thus, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34). That darkness and desertion, those doubts and fears, and unbelief, which attend God's people, cannot destroy their covenant interest: that still continues the same, whether they are in the light or in the dark, whether in comfortable or

uncomfortable frames, covenant interest is always invariably the same. As it was with the head, so it is with the members; as it was with our head, Christ Jesus, when suffering, and God withdrew his presence from him, and he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Forsaken he was; but God was his God still: so it is with the members, they may be forsaken, God may hide his face from them, they may be in darkness, and in the deeps; yet they may say my *God* still. So says the church, *My God will hear me; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me: he will bring me to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness* (Micah 7:7, 8, 9). Covenant interest always abides; and is the source of comfort to the saints in all their distresses; for he, that is their covenant God, will be their God and their guide unto death (Ps. 48:14).

III. There are such things in God, as are a sufficient encouragement to his people in the worst of times and they may, through the strength of divine grace, as David did, encourage themselves in the Lord their God. Thus, for instance,

1. There are *the mercy, grace, and love* of our heavenly Father, of our covenant God: he has proclaimed his name, *the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin* (Ex. 34:6, 7). Upon this declaration of grace, David might well, and so every believer also, with the greatest assurance, affirm, *Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful* (Ps. 116:5).

Now this yields relief to the people of God, when first awakened to a sight and sense of their state and condition by nature. This relieves them in their first soul trouble: namely, the declarations of the grace, mercy, and love of God. As Benhadad's servants argued with their master, *We have heard, that the kings of the house of Israel, are merciful kings; let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes on our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; peradventure he will save thy life* (1 Kings 20:31). So poor sinners, when they are first awakened to a sight and sense of their vileness, the just demerit of their sins, and time consequences of them, having heard, through the report of the gospel, that the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, is gracious and merciful; they are encouraged to go and throw themselves upon his grace and mercy, and say, as the publican did, *God be merciful to me a sinner*. Not that they cast themselves upon the absolute mercy of God; but upon the mercy of God, as it streams through the blood and righteousness of Christ; which is the sense of that request of the publican, "God be merciful to me," through the propitiatory sacrifice of thy Son. It is a view of this that encourages sinners in their first distress of soul, to go to God, and venture their souls upon his mercy. *Let Israel* (and so let every sensible sinner) *hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy; and with him there is plenteous redemption* (Ps. 130:7): that is, there is mercy streaming through that plenteous redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a declaration of the grace and mercy of God, that is a relief to poor sensible souls, under the first workings of the Spirit of God upon their hearts: whereby they are encouraged to hope for pardoning grace, and to obtain it, as the apostle says he did, *I, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy* (1 Tim 1:13). So likewise it is a relief unto them, after having fallen into sin, and when brought again to repentance: when they stand in need of fresh discoveries of forgiving love. In affliction the Lord is pleased to reveal himself unto them in this manner, and apply his pardoning grace unto them: they find him to be a kind, merciful, and tender-hearted Father to them: *like as a father pitieth his children: so the Lord pitieth them that fear him* (Ps. 103:13). He sympathizes with them in all their troubles; in all their afflictions he is afflicted; his bowels yearn towards them when they are in distress; and though he may seem sometimes to

frown upon them in his providence, yet he changes his dispensations towards them, in love, saying, *Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? verily he is, for since I spake against him, in a providential way, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.*

God, the covenant God of his people, is full of mercy, grace, love, kindness, and tenderness unto them at all times; and this is an encouragement unto them to trust in him. In a view of this, they may do as David did, encourage themselves in the Lord their God; and the rather, in as much as this mercy, grace, and love always continue the same. The mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him: his love to his people is an everlasting love: his loving-kindness never departs from them: nor can any thing separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus their Lord.

Well then, let the saint be in what trouble and distress he will, if he can but be directed and is but enabled to look unto the grace and mercy of God, as a covenant God, always the same; it will yield him relief in the worst of times.

2. There is the *power* of God, which is great and unlimited. "Twice have I heard this, (says the Psalmist) that power belongs to God." There are not only one, or two, but there are many instances of the almighty power of God: he, who is almighty, is able to save his people, when in the greatest distress. His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear. When they cry unto him in their distress, pray to him for deliverance, they pray to a God that can save them to the uttermost; save them out of all their troubles. *This poor man cried* (says David, and it may be, he means himself particularly), *and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.* So this poor man, and the other poor man, and thousands of poor saints, in all ages, have cried unto the Lord in their distress, and he has saved them out of all their troubles.

He has power and ability to fulfil all the promises which he has made unto his people; and they are many, exceeding great and precious. Abraham had a special promise made to him, and the fulfillment of it was attended with many difficulties, insurmountable to carnal reason; yet he staggered not at the promise, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. And what was it kept up his faith in the view of those difficulties that attended the accomplishment of the thing promised? Why, it was this, he was persuaded that God *was able also to perform* (Rom. 4:21). God, the covenant God of his people, is of such power, that he is able to supply all their wants, let them be what they will; to supply all their need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus, he is able to support them under their greatest trials, and he has promised to do it; he has said, "Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God; I will help thee; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee, with the right-hand of my righteousness." And when he puts underneath everlasting arms, they are a sufficient support. He is able to protect and defend them from all enemies. They that trust in him, as their covenant God, are as mount Sion, that can never be removed; for as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about his people, from this time forth, even for evermore. He is a wall of fire round about them, to preserve them, and to annoy their enemies: he is a glory in the midst of them. They are kept, as in a garrison, by his power through faith unto salvation he is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus. He is able to keep them from falling; from a total and final falling away, and present them faultless before the throne of his majesty: and he will exert his

power in the preservation of them safe to his everlasting kingdom and glory. Now a view of this power in God, of his ability to do these things, and much more, is a sufficient encouragement to saints in the worst of times.

3. There is the *unchangeableness* of God; which also, when believers have a view of, it relieves them under the greatest distresses. He is the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning not the least appearance of a change in him. He is the Lord, that changeth not; and therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed: they cannot be consumed; they cannot be destroyed who are interested in an unchangeable God. He is unchangeable in his love to them: he never varies in that, let them be in what condition they will, or let his appearance to them be what it may, in the external dispensation of things, his love is always the same. If he chides them, if he chastises them, in a providential way, on account of their sins, yet his loving-kindness he doth not take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. If he hide his face from them, to rebuke them, on one account or another, because of some misbehavior of theirs; yet still he loves them: his loving-kindness does not depart from them; having loved them, he loves them to the end. His love is everlasting; as it commenced in eternity, it will continue to all eternity; invariably and unchangeably the same. There may be different dispensations towards them, as I have suggested; they may be in different frames of soul, and not always have the like apprehensions of the love of God *yet* that in itself is the same.

He is unchangeable in his *counsels* and *decrees*; particularly in that relative to the everlasting salvation of his people. This is a foundation of solid comfort, even of everlasting consolation; so says the apostle, "Wherein God, to shew the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things (his counsel, which is immutable; and his oath annexed to it, which is likewise so) in which it was impossible for God to lie; we might have strong consolation, who have fled, for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us" (Heb. 6:17, 18).

God is unchangeable in his *promises*, which he hath made to his people. He is not a man, that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent, or change his mind. What he hath said, he will do; what he hath proposed, he will most certainly fulfil. Not one of the good things he hath promised, in covenant, has ever fallen to the ground, or ever shall. For all his promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, to the glory of God by us.

He is unchangeable in the *blessings of his grace*. These are the sure mercies of David; sure to David's son, and sure to all his seed. They are irreversible ones. Upon whomsoever they are bestowed, they remain; they are never revoked; God never repents of them. His Son also is as unchangeable as himself. The eternal Word. The Chaldee paraphrase upon the text respects this, and reads it thus; "And David strengthened himself in the Word of the Lord his God." In that eternal Logos, that Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God. *Strengthened himself* in Him; or, to use the apostolic language, he became strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, who is the same, yesterday, today, and for ever; unchangeable in his nature, person, offices, and grace. He hath, particularly, an unchangeable priesthood; an unchangeable virtue in his righteousness, to justify from all sin; in his blood to cleanse from it; and in his sacrifice, to make expiation for it. A view of this unchangeableness in God, and Christ, is a sufficient encouragement to the saints under all their distresses, be they what they may.

4. The *faithfulness of God*. This is a wonderful attribute. *Who is like unto thee, says the Psalmist, or to thy faithfulness round about thee?* (Ps. 89:8). God is faithful to himself; faithful to his promises and counsels. His counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. All true, and faithfully fulfilled. He is faithful to every promise of his. Hence the apostle describes him as faithful who hath promised, who also will do it. He is faithful to his covenant. He will not break his covenant upon any account whatsoever, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. He is faithful to his Son. As Christ is faithful to him that appointed him, even his divine Father; so Jehovah the Father is faithful to his Son with respect to all the promises he made to him, concerning his own glory as Mediator, and the good of his covenant people. And he is faithful to his covenant people, notwithstanding their unfaithfulness and unbelief; for though we believe not, says the apostle, he abides faithful.

Now a consideration of this perfection of our covenant God, is sufficient to support and encourage us under the greatest distresses in life. The same may be observed indeed of every perfection of his; as, his omniscience, omnipresence, and the like. He is omniscient. He knows all persons and things; and the knowledge he has of his people is special and particular. It is not merely a general knowledge, as he knows all his creatures; but is joined with the greatest affection to them. In this sense we are to understand it, when he is said to *know them that are his*. He knows all the world, and all the men in it; but not in the sense in which he knows his covenant ones. His knowledge, being connected with the greatest affection to them, his eyes are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cries, in a different manner from what they are upon, and to others. Indeed the eye of his providence is particular. "He is the Saviour" of all men, especially of those "that believe" (1 Tim. 4:10): and the eyes of the Lord, run to and fro, to shew himself strong in a remarkable manner, on the behalf of those whose hearts are upright towards him. He knows their persons, and their wants. Their desires are before him, and their groanings are not hid from him. This is a great encouragement to them.

So the *Omnipresence* of God. He is a God at hand, and not a God afar off. He is nigh to all them that call upon him in truth. It was the peculiar privilege of Israel of old, that they had God so nigh unto them in all things they called upon him for (Deut. 4:7): so have all the saints and people of God. He is the eternal God, from everlasting to everlasting: He which was, and is, and is to come; and he has been, and is, the dwelling place of his people in all generations. He is the ever-living God, to protect, preserve, and bring them safe to the everlasting enjoyment of himself. Thus, a view of what God is, in himself, and of what is in our covenant God and Father, are a sufficient encouragement in the worst of times. David *encouraged himself in the Lord his God*.

But I must draw to a conclusion. You may be directed from hence where to go, and to when to apply in times of trouble: not to the creature, or an arm of flesh; but to the Lord as your covenant God. When refuge *fails* you, and no man cares for your soul, then say, as David did, *Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living* (Ps. 143:5). This doctrine may serve to support the people of God under all the vicissitudes that attend them in this life, in body, soul, or estate. This may be a relief to them, that they have to do with, and are interested in a covenant God; whose love and covenant are unchangeable, and therefore the sons of Jacob shall not be consumed. What may not such persons expect, who have Jehovah for their covenant God? They may say, as Jacob did, they have all things; they have enough. The Lord is their shepherd; he is their shield, and their exceeding great reward. They have nothing to fear from their enemies, spiritual or temporal. They may say, as David did, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?* (Ps. 27:1). If God

be for them, if he is on their side, if he is their covenant God and Father, who shall be against them? or what does it signify who are against them? Happy that people whose God is the Lord! they may expect every blessing of grace here, and eternal glory hereafter. His grace will be sufficient to carry them through all the trials of fire, and bring them safe to glory. He, who is their God, is a sun and shield; he gives grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

THE EYES OF THE LORD

UPON, AND HIS POWER ENGAGED ON THE BEHALF

OF THOSE

WHOSE HEARTS ARE UPRIGHT TOWARDS HIM.

2 CHRONICLES 16:9

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.

Notwithstanding Asa, king of Judah had received such remarkable tokens of divine goodness and power, in appearing for him, when Zarah the Ethiopian came out with a vast army against him, so that he obtained a complete victory over him, and returned with a large spoil; yet, when Baasha, king of Israel, attempted to build a city upon his borders, he distrusted the providence of God; betook himself to the king of Syria, and sent him gold and silver out of his own treasury, and out of the treasury of the house of the Lord, to prevail with him to break the league which he had entered into with the king of Israel, and make a diversion in his favour; which was accordingly done. Upon which, the prophet Hanani came unto him, and said, *Because thou hast relied on the King of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God; therefore is the host of the King of Syria escaped out of thine hand.* Then he reasons with him upon that remarkable success which he had against the Ethiopians. *Were not the Ethiopians and the Sabines, a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand.* Intimating, that had he relied upon the Lord his God now, and not upon the king of Syria, that the Syrian army would have been delivered into his hands. The reason is given in the words I have read, *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.* In speaking to which words, I shall

- I. Inquire what we are to understand by the *eyes of the Lord*.
- II. In what sense these are said to run to and fro throughout the whole earth.
- III. The end of their running thus.

I. What we are to understand by the *eyes of the Lord*? These words are not to be understood literally, or in a corporal sense; for though the various parts of a human body are, in Scripture, attributed to God; yet we are not to entertain such a gross notion of the divine Being, as if he had a body consisting of parts like ours. When, therefore, any thing of this kind is ascribed to him, it is only expressive of some power, or action done by him, which is similar thereunto. *Hast thou eyes of flesh, or seest thou as man seest?* No, Jehovah has not eyes of flesh; he does not see as man sees.

Man can only see things that are near him, not at any great distance; but *the eyes of the Lord*, as in our text, *run to and fro throughout the whole earth*. Man's eyes can only see and observe objects, one after another; but the eyes of the Lord behold altogether; all objects throughout the whole universe, at one and the same time. The eyes of man can only see when there is light; but light and darkness are both alike to the Lord. Only external objects are to be seen by the eyes of men; but the eyes of the Lord discern internal things; the heart of man, and the recesses of it. The eyes of men are often deceived; but the sight of *God* never. His are not eyes of flesh; nor does *he see* as man sees. But this is to be understood figuratively of him; and in our text, designs his all-seeing providence and that, as concerned in a special manner with his own people; who are described as having their *hearts perfect towards him*.

This phrase, *The eyes of the Lord*, designs sometimes his general providence, as it respects every individual person. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, throughout the whole universe, beholding the evil and the good; evil men and good men; their dispositions and actions, whether good or bad; but here, and elsewhere, the *eyes of the Lord*, intend his all-seeing providence, as concerned in a special manner with his people. So we find in the prophecy of Zechariah, *seven eyes* are said to be *upon one stone*, laid before Joshua; which stone seems to be none other than that *cut out of the mountain without hands, the stone which the builders refused, and is made the head of the corner*; the foundation and chief corner stone, our Lord Jesus Christ. The eye of God, in its full perfection, signified by *seven eyes*, is said to be upon that stone. It is also upon every one that is laid upon that stone; built upon that sure foundation which is matter of joy, as it is said, in the fourth chapter of that book. *They shall rejoice when they see the plummet in the hand of Zerubabel, with those seven: they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro throughout the whole earth*. The very phrase used in our text.

The eyes of the Lord are pure and holy. *He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*. Sin is the abominable thing which his righteous soul hateth; being contrary to his nature, repugnant to his will, and a breach of his righteous law. It makes men abominable in the sight of God. *How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water*. He is not a God that takes pleasure in sin, neither shall evil dwell with him. *He hates all the workers of iniquity*, who make a trade and business of sinning. His eyes, as they are set upon the wicked, are upon them for evil, *I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good*. And again. *The eyes of Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, to destroy it* (Amos 9:4-8). The eyes of the Lord, as they are set upon his own people, are like the eyes of doves expressive of mildness, gentleness, tenderness, and love: but as they are set upon wicked men, his eyes are as flames of fire; expressive of wrath and vengeance; sparkling with rage and fury. *The face of the Lord is against them that do evil*; his countenance is a terrible one, and the effect of it is to cut them off from the face of the earth. But his eyes are set upon the righteous in a favorable way. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry* (Ps. 34:15). His eyes of providence are upon them, attended with love, mercy, and kindness. He takes delight in them, as they are clothed with the righteousness of his Son; for none are righteous, but such who are made so by his righteousness. No man is justified in his sight *by the works of the law*; but such as are clothed with the righteousness of Christ are accepted before him. He beholds them with pleasure, and he never turns his eyes from them. They are upon them for good. The eyes of some are full of envy; but his eyes are full of goodness. *Is thine eye evil* (envious) *because I am good*, kind, and bountiful? Such is the eye of the Lord towards his people, his righteous ones. It is good and bountiful. His eye is upon them to bestow all needful good; to

cause all things to work together for good. His eye is an eye of love, grace, and mercy unto them. *The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy.* This is no other than his grace and mercy, which are from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him; and that according to his sovereign will and pleasure, who hath *mercy on whom he will have mercy*, and is *gracious to whom he will be gracious*, He looks upon his people with complacency and delight. *His countenance beholds the upright.* His own people are his *Hephzibah*, in whom he delights; his *Beulah*, to whom he is married: and as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so does he over them: yea, he rests in his love towards them, and rejoices over them with abundance of joy.

It is further said of the eyes of the Lord, that they try the righteous. *His eyes behold, and his eyelids try the children of men. The Lord tries the righteous;* he distinguishes them from others, even in the way of his providence; for though he *is the Saviour of all men, yet especially of them that believe.* He distinguishes them by the gifts of his grace; which he makes them partakers of, while others are not: so that they have abundant reason to say, with admiration *Who hath made us to differ?* In this sense are we to understand the eyes of the Lord, as they are concerned with his own people; which are no other than his all-seeing providence, accompanied with his love and mercy towards them.

Now these eyes of his love and mercy were set upon them from everlasting, in his eternal councils and decrees. *He loved them with an everlasting love.* He looked upon them and chose them, in his Son, *before the foundation of the world*, to be holy and happy. He *blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things* in Christ. Jesus. He gave them grace in Christ before the world began. He put them into the hands of his Son, made them his care and charge; and said unto him, as their surety, *Feed the flock of slaughter.* To which he agreed, and said, *I will feed the flock of slaughter; even ye, O poor of the flock.*

His eyes are upon them in time, even as soon as they are brought into the world. He takes them under his special protection, from their mother's womb; so says the apostle, *Who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace.* Not that he called him by his grace as soon as he was born; but so early he distinguished him by a special providence over him, in order to his being effectually called by grace in due time. This he observes concerning others, as well as himself. *Who hath saved us, and called us;* saved us to be called; saved us, in a special providential way. The Lord's eyes are upon all his people in a peculiar manner, as soon as they are born; and all the while they are in a state of unregeneracy. This is remarkably manifest in the case of the apostle Paul, I am now speaking of. What notice is taken of him in the sacred history, before he was effectually called by grace! When Stephen, the proto-martyr, was stoned, it is said, the *witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul:* and, further it is observed, that *Saul was consenting unto his death.* There were multitudes consenting unto his death besides Saul; but he is particularly taken notice of, that the grace of God might be magnified in his conversion. It is further said, *Saul made havoc of the Church. Saul was breathing out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of Christ.* Thus you see what notice was taken of him; how God's eye was upon him, even before he was called by grace; and that because he was a chosen vessel of salvation. So our Lord said to Nathaniel, *Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.* Before he was called either in a ministerial way, or effectually by the grace of God, the eye of the Lord was upon him. The Lord's eyes are upon all his people, even in this state, until the time comes in which they are to be effectually called. There is a time for every

purpose under heaven; and there is a time for God's calling his people by his grace; for they are all of them called *according to his purpose*. Now till this time Jehovah waits; *waits to be gracious to them*; waits as it were with longing eyes, till the time is up; and with respect to some, he waits even till the eleventh hour: and his long-suffering towards his people, whether it be longer or shorter, always ends in salvation; for *the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness*; but is willing *that all should come to repentance*. When the set time is come, he passes by them, looks upon them; and his time is a time of love. He looks upon them not with loathing and contempt; but with commiseration. When no eye pities them, he looks upon them; and shews mercy to them. He looks upon them, while in their blood, and says unto them, *live*; and washes them from all their pollutions and defilements. He looks upon them, when in the hands of Satan; and snatches them from thence: observes them to be as brands in the burning, and takes them from thence. He looks upon them, and sees them in a *pit, wherein is no water*; in the *mire and clay*; and taking them from thence, he *sets their feet upon a rock and establishes their goings*. Thus he looks upon them with an eye of pity and compassion.

The Lord's eye still continues upon his people after conversion. He watches over them night and day, lest any hurt them. They are *en graven upon the palms of his hands, and their walls are continually before him*. As the Lord said concerning the temple at Jerusalem, *Mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually* (1 Kings 9:3); so his heart and his eyes are perpetually upon them: and, as it is said of the land of Canaan, *The eyes of the Lord are always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even to the end of the year*: so the eyes of the Lord are upon his people, not only from the beginning of one year, to the end of it, but from the beginning of their life, unto the end of their days. Let us now inquire,

II. In what sense we are to understand this phrase, *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth*? We have seen that these eyes of the Lord signify the all seeing providence of God, attended with his grace, mercy, and love; as concerned with his people in a special manner. But in what sense are we to consider these eyes of the Lord, as *running to and fro throughout the whole earth*?

The Omniscience of God reaches throughout the world, and to all creatures. He looks down from heaven, and beholds the sons of men; he looks upon the inhabitants of the earth, and considers all their works, whether they be good or bad. His eyes are upon the ways of men, whether right or wrong. He beholds all their goings, every step they take, whether in or out of the way of God. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves for the darkness and the light are both alike to him. He fills heaven and earth with his presence. His general providence reaches to all creatures. He preserves man and beast; not only upholds them in their beings, but supplies their wants. The eyes of all are upon him, and he satisfieth the desire of every living thing. As in one age of the world and another, he has a people in various parts of the earth: so the all-seeing eye of his providence has been concerned, in a special manner with them; and extends to them, be they where they will. The children of God, those whom he hath predestinated to the adoption of children, according to the council of his will from everlasting, are said to be *scattered abroad*; some are in one place, and some in another. Hence Christ is said to come to gather these together, to reconcile them to God, by being a propitiation, not for the sins of the Jews only, but for all the people of God throughout the whole world: therefore, when he gave a commission to his ministering servants, he bid them go into all the world, and *preach the gospel to*

every creature; He so orders it in providence, that he either sends the gospel to them, or he brings them to it; or, however, calls them by his grace, and encourages them to look unto Christ, who says, *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else*. Hence we read of *songs of praise from the uttermost parts of the earth* (Isa. 24:16); songs of electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, regenerating, and sanctifying grace, from persons in the uttermost parts of the earth, that are partakers of his grace.

Let the wicked be where they may, they shall not escape his notice: *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down: and though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them*. So let the children of God be where they may, He will find them out. He is the great Shepherd of the sheep; and he will search for them in whatsoever corner they are; and where they have been scattered in the dark and cloudy day. The special providence of God reaches them all, attended with his grace, mercy, and goodness.

When, therefore, his eyes are said *to run to and fro throughout the whole earth*, on the behalf of these; we are not to suppose any local motion, or change of place, in God; for he is omnipresent. Though he is said, sometimes, in condescension to our capacities, to *bow the heavens and come down*, and to *return to his place*; yet these expressions are to be understood after the manner of men; and not as true in a literal sense. When his eyes are said to run to and fro, it is expressive of his watchfulness over his people. As those who are watchful look here and there, and are very diligent in their observations; so the Lord watches over his people. He expresseth himself in this very language, *As I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them to build, and to plant, saith the Lord* (Jer. 31:28). He opens his eyes upon such poor worthless creatures as we are; for *he that keepeth Israel, that watches over them, neither slumbers nor sleeps*. The phrase is expressive of his readiness, and swiftness, to assist his people in times of difficulty and distress; and answers to that request of the church, where she says, *Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart, upon the mountains of spices*. Thus the Lord is a present help in time of trouble. He is ready at hand to assist his people: he helps them, and that right early. His eyes run to and fro, here and there, on their behalf; and this in order to counter-work Satan, who is said to *go to and fro in the earth* (Job 1:7); and is by the apostle represented as *a roaring lion, that goeth, about seeking whom he may devour*. Now the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the earth, to counter-work this adversary; to watch over his people, that they may not be hurt and destroyed by him. He hath, as before observed, those that are the objects of his love and care, in various parts of the earth and his eyes run to and fro every where on their behalf. *Fear not, I will be with thee*, I will bring thy seed (spiritual converts) *from the East, and gather them from the West. I will say the North give up, and to the South keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends the earth*. Thus you see what is the meaning of this figurative expression, and the propriety of using this phrase; because of the people of God being in different parts of the world, and because of the exquisite care the Lord takes of them. They are under his special notice; and therefore let them be where they will, his eyes are upon them. I now come,

III. To the end, or use, of the eyes of the Lord running to and fro throughout the whole earth. It is *to shew himself strong on the behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards him*. Here we shall

1. Consider the descriptive character of those who are so peculiarly the objects of his care and special providence. They are described as having their hearts perfect towards God.

2. The exertion of divine power on their behalf. He will shew himself strong on the behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards him.

1. The descriptive character given of them who are the care of providence in a special way of grace, mercy, and love: they are such *whose heart is perfect towards God*. What! is it possible any man's heart should be perfect towards God? It seems, we read of several persons, concerning whom this testimony is borne. It is said of Solomon, that *his heart was not perfect, as was the heart of his father, David*; which plainly implies, that the heart of David was perfect; and yet that great and good man had many blemishes in his life: but it seems his *heart* was sound and perfect. So it is said of Asa, even to this very Asa to whom our text has an oblique respect, that *his heart was perfect all his days*; and yet here is an intimation of some imperfection in him. Which may be reconciled thus: The bent of his heart was, in the main, towards God; and his heart was perfect, as to the outward worship of God; but not as to the inward exercise of grace, particularly faith, in as much as he relied not upon the Lord as he should have done, but upon the king of Syria. Hezekiah appeals to God himself, and says, *Lord, remember how I have walked before thee with a perfect heart*: and David, in the strength of divine grace, resolves to *walk in his house with a perfect heart*; but how are we to understand this phrase, *a perfect heart*?

No man's heart is so perfect in the present state, as to be entirely free from sin. The apostle Paul, speaks of sin *dwelling in him*; *It is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me. When I would do good, evil is present with me. I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* This great, this good, this holy man, who had as perfect a heart, I am persuaded, as ever any man upon earth had, excepting our Lord Jesus Christ, was not so perfect, as to be free from indwelling sin. The beloved disciple, the apostle John, that lay in our Lord's bosom, and enjoyed so much fellowship with him, bears testimony to this, and says, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*. And long before this great and good man, Solomon, the wisest of men, had made this observation, that *there is not a just man upon earth, who doeth good, and sinneth not. In many things we all offend*. A man may be justified from all sin, and in that sense, be free from it; *so all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses*. In that sense, a man may be perfectly righteous. So Noah was, of whom this character is given. *He was a just man, and perfect in his generation*. How was he perfect? not by his own righteousness; no; he was *a preacher of righteousness* by faith; and no doubt he was justified by the righteousness he was a preacher of: and that was the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. In and by this righteousness, men are made perfectly comely. All their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake; so that *when they are sought for they shall not be found*. God sees no iniquity in them: they are without fault before the throne: but in themselves they are not perfect. The heart of man is extremely, is desperately wicked; and therefore every sensible sinner prays as David did, that God would *cleanse him from secret faults, and keep him from presumptuous sins*. Though God *sprinkles clean water upon* his people, in justifying and pardoning them; cleansing them from all their filthiness and abomination; yet, with respect to themselves, who can say they are pure, and free from sinful thoughts? No man is perfect in this sense.

No man is perfectly holy. Though the work of holiness and grace is begun in them by the Spirit of sanctification, it is but begun; it is not perfected. *The God of peace will but wholly* those who are in any measure justified; but as yet they are not *perfectly* sanctified. Nor are the graces of the Spirit of God, wrought in their hearts, perfect. Faith is not perfect; there is something wanting in the faith of the strongest believer. The disciples of our Lord had reason to pray, *Lord increase our faith*. Love also is imperfect in the best of saints. There is room always to pray, *that their love to God, Christ, and one another, may abound yet more and more*. Hope is imperfect; sometimes very low, as it was with the church, when she said, *My hope and my strength are perished from the Lord*. Patience likewise is not perfect, in submission to the will of God, under afflictive dispensations of providence. Therefore, says the apostle, *Let patience have its perfect work*. Knowledge is imperfect. *The path of the just, is indeed, as the shining light, which shines, more and more unto the perfect day;* but the perfect day is not yet come. We know but in *part*. There is such a thing as *growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord*. Whereas there would be no room for it, if this were perfect. No man's heart is perfect in this life. None are free from sin, completely holy; nor are the graces of the Spirit of God in them, arrived at perfection. But when the heart is said to be *perfect*, the meaning, I apprehend is, *sincere and upright*. When the ten tribes came to make David king over all Israel, it is said, *they came with a perfect heart*; that is, in the uprightness and sincerity of their souls. They were quite cordial in what they came about. So David and his people express their great admiration, that they should be enabled, by the Lord, to offer so willingly, with *a perfect heart*, for the service of God. They did what they did heartily, sincerely, and without any grudging. In this sense we are to understand it here; *whose heart is perfect*. Such in whom God has created a right spirit, are styled in Scripture the *upright in heart* (Ps. 97:11). Their faith is unfeigned, their hope is without hypocrisy, and their love without dissimulation.

Their faith is unfeigned. *The end of the commandment is love, out of a pure heart, and faith unfeigned*. Such an unfeigned faith Timothy is said to have. Now there is a faith, which is feigned; such as that of Simon Magus, who said he believed, when he was in *the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity*. But faith is unfeigned, when a man with *the heart believes unto righteousness*. Hope also is unfeigned, where it is true. There is, indeed, *the hope of the hypocrite*; which will be of no avail when *God takes away his soul*. But true hope is unfeigned. It is *a good hope through grace*. It is founded on the person, blood, and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. The true grace of love is without dissimulation. It is not in tongue only, or in word; but in deed, and in truth. Love to Christ is in sincerity of heart; and love to the brethren, is *with a pure heart fervently*, as the apostle says. Now, where these graces are unfeigned, free from all guile and hypocrisy, the heart may be said to be *perfect*. The worship of God also, should be from the heart, and in a spiritual manner. In some, indeed, it is merely formal and customary: *they draw nigh to God with their mouths, and honour him with their lips*, when their hearts are removed far from him. In others it is otherwise: they draw nigh to God with their hearts; they call upon him in truth, in the uprightness of their souls; their worship is performed under the influence of the Spirit of God; and their hearts con-concerned therein. Now such, in a gospel sense, may be said to have *a perfect heart*. But I proceed to consider,

2. The exertion of divine power on their behalf. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro in behalf of such persons, *to shew himself strong*; or (as in the margin of some of your Bibles), *strongly to hold with such*; to be on their side, or take their part to relieve and protect them. The Lord is, in himself, strong. He is the mighty God: the Almighty. He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength. *If I speak*

of strength, lo, he is strong. If I speak of mighty men on earth, or of mighty angels in heaven, they are nothing in comparison of God. *Who is a strong Lord, like unto thee? and to thy faithfulness round about thee? He hath a mighty arm: strong is his hand, and high is his right hand,* to do things exceeding great and wonderful. He hath, in a variety of ways, shewn himself to be strong; as in creating all things out of nothing; in upholding all things by the word of his power; in the redemption of lost sinners; in delivering their souls out of the hands of Satan, who is stronger than they: in all these, and in other instances, he has shewn himself to be strong. But particularly in a way of providence; as it is concerned for his people. *His eyes run to and fro through the whole earth, to shew himself strong on the behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards him.* He shews himself strong in supplying their wants, whether spiritual or temporal; for he is *able to supply all their need, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ.* He is able to do more for them than they are able to ask or think. He shews himself strong, in supplying them with every thing needful for time and eternity: in supplying and supporting them under all their afflictions and temptations. He will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear; but will, with the temptation, make a way for their escape. He who hath encouraged them to cast their burden upon him, hath promised to sustain them: hath said, that *the righteous shall never be moved:* and he is as good as his word. He upholds his people with the right hand of his righteousness; puts underneath everlasting arms, and shews himself to be the mighty God, by supporting them under such trials and exercises, which otherwise, would be intolerable. His eyes run, to and fro throughout the whole earth, on the behalf of his people, in strengthening them under all their weaknesses. They are poor weak creatures. Sensible are they of it, and cry unto him for strength. He hears their cries, strengthens them with strength in their souls, with might in their inner man; and makes them strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. He strengthens them to perform every duty required of them, and to exercise every grace wrought in them; to withstand every temptation which besets them, and every corruption which arises up in their hearts, to bear what he is pleased to lay upon them; and to do the work appointed for them in their day and generation.

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro, to protect and defend them. Sin, Satan, and the world, are too strong for them. They would never be able to stand their ground, were it not for the assistance and protection which they have from God, in a way of special providence and grace. But he not only places his angels as guards over them, but he likewise appoints *salvation to be walls and bulwarks* for them. Yea, he himself is *a wall of fire round about them,* and *a glory in the midst of them.* Thus does he *shew himself strong in their behalf.* Happy are the persons that are under his special care in all these instances.

Let us now praise and adore the grace of our God, if we have any reason to hope and believe, that we have been under his special providential care ever since we have had a being: and especially if he has distinguished us by the blessings of his grace and goodness. Truly we have abundant reason to bless and praise his holy name, if he hath dealt with us after this manner. In how many instances must it have been bad with us, if his eyes had not been over us; if they had not run to and fro, to shew himself strong on our behalf, in things temporal? And how sad would have been our condition, if he had not expressed his love to us, in calling us by his grace? Let what he hath done for us encourage us to put our trust in him for the future. Let us not rely upon the creature. This was Asa's sin who, notwithstanding all that God had done for him, distrusted his providence: relied upon the creature, and not upon his God. O let us take warning, and not act after this manner; but

trust in the living God. Our great concern, under a sense of all should be, to live to his honour. Let us now attend to the advice that Solomon gives at the dedication of the temple, *Let your hearts be perfect with the Lord your God; to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.*

THE CHARACTER
AND
END OF THE WICKED,
CONSIDERED.

2 SAMUEL 23:6, 7.

But the Sons of Belial, shall be, all of them, as thorns thrust away: because they cannot be taken with hands; but the man that shall touch them, must be fenced with iron, and the staff of a spear: and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.

This is the closing part of the last words of David; and it is the reverse of what has been said before, as the adversative particle *but* shews, with which the words are introduced: "*but* the sons of Belial." These are opposed to the Ruler over men; the Messiah, who is just, ruling in the fear of God. He is said to be as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain; but these are as thorns: or, they are opposed to David, who expresses his faith in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; in which they have no interest; so far from it, that they are thrust away as thorns. He declares, that this covenant was all his salvation, and all his desire; but as for these sons of Belial, they shall be utterly consumed, burned up with fire in the same place.

The words are applicable to bad rulers and governors in general; as distinguished from, and opposed unto, him that ruleth in the fear of God. They are represented as such who are not righteous in the administration of government; who have not the fear of God before their eyes, and upon their hearts. The sons of Belial, instead of being helpful, are hurtful to those over whom they rule; not like the just Ruler, said to be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth; a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain. But wicked Rulers are not like him; instead of making those they govern cheerful and comfortable, as he does, they give them pain and sorrow; are like thorns thrust into the hand. This agrees entirely with an observation the wise man makes, that *when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice*; they are cheerful as the morning; *but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn* (Prov. 29:2); they are grieved, they are distressed, they are made uneasy by the sons of Belial, who are as thorns; and therefore, if possible, they are to be removed, they are to be thrust away. But in as much as they are not tractable, gentle, or easily managed, some violent measures must be used, as here suggested, *the man that shall touch them, must be fenced with iron, and the staff of a spear*. And though it is difficult for men to remove such sort of persons from the rule and government they are in; yet sometimes God does it for them in a remarkable way. Thus Nebuchadnezzar was driven from among men, and sent to the beasts of the field. And sometimes they are thrust away, both root and branch, as Saul and his family were; to which some apply this passage.

The words are applicable also to the wicked Jews in particular, and their rulers, who opposed themselves unto the Messiah; the person that is clearly described, and so much spoken of in the context, whom they received not, when he came to them; but rejected him as a King, threw off his yoke, and would not have this man to reign *over* them. Though many messages and kind invitations were sent, they rejected him; would not attend the gospel of grace, the external ministration of the word and ordinances: and not only so, but abused the messengers that came with these kind invitations; which exasperated the King who sent them; who, according to the parable, sent his army, the Roman army, and burnt up the city of Jerusalem; and they were burnt up in the same place. The greatest part of the Jewish nation were gathered together at Jerusalem, and were destroyed in it, at the last destruction by the Romans.

Again. The words are applicable to Antichrist; that man of sin, that lawless one; who may well be called Belial, the son of perdition, and who has many children signified sometimes by Jezebel. Jezebel is said to have children which God will destroy (Rev. 2:23). These are the worshippers of the beast, and have his mark on their forehead; who shall be cast into everlasting burnings, and the smoke of their torment shall ascend for ever and ever: even those very kings, who formerly gave their kingdoms to the antichristian whore, will be filled with hatred to her, and burn her flesh with fire. Rome, or Babylon, the metropolis of the antichristian kingdom, *shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God, who judgeth her* (Rev.18:8); so that all the images in this text are suitable enough to this catastrophe.

But the words may be understood very well of wicked men in common; who may be all of them, especially the most vile and abandoned, called sons of Belial; as they often are in Scripture: those who were so vile as to go about to seduce the inhabitants of any city in Israel to idolatry, are called children of Belial (Deut. 13:13). The sons of Eli are said to be sons of Belial, being very wicked persons, given up to lewdness, and abandoned to all manner of wickedness. So Nabal, a vile, churlish and ill-natured man, is, by his servants, called a son of Belial. Our master, say they, is such a son of Belial, there is no living with him: nay, Abigail his wife, gave him the same name. Those who stood up as witnesses against Naboth, are called men of Belial, who made no conscience of any thing; having no fear of God before their eyes. So many others of like complexion are thus called in Scripture.

In this light we may understand the passage before us: "But the sons of Belial," *wicked men*, who are enemies to Christ, the King before spoken of, "shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands; but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron, and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place." In which words we may observe,

I. The descriptive character of wicked men, by their name, *Sons of Belial*; and by a comparison made of them, *as thorns*.

II. The issue, end, punishment, and utter destruction of these; thrust away, and burned with fire in the same place. This will be the end of the sons of Belial.

I. We shall consider the descriptive character given of wicked men, *sons of Belial*. Belial is thought to be a name of Satan. This is generally supposed to the sense of that passage, 2 Corinthians 6:15,

What concord hath Christ with Belial? that is, with Satan and the etymology of the word, as differently given, well agrees with him; whether it signifies one without a yoke, or one that is unprofitable, or one that is in a low estate and never rises higher; all agree with Satan and his angels.

Belial, one without a yoke. Satan and his principalities and powers, cast off the yoke of God; would not be subject unto him, and to his laws; threw off their allegiance to him, and apostatized from him; left their first state and habitation, set up a kingdom for themselves, and set a prince over them, who in Scripture is called, *Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils* (Matthew 12:24). These, by their apostasy, became unprofitable to God, and hurtful to men; as in many instances appears: and they, by their sin, were brought into so low a state and condition, as never to rise from thence: they have been cast out of heaven down to hell, there they are, and will never regain their former state, or rise up to that honour and dignity they before possessed as there is no place, we are told, found for them in heaven (Rev. 12:8).

Belial, (as the original word signifies that which is very wicked, abominable, and abandoned) is a name which well suits this grand apostate, who is emphatically in Scripture called, *the wicked one* (1 John 5:18). Now this Belial has sons or children, seed or offspring. It was threatened immediately upon the fall of our first parents, in which he had the chief hand, that God would put enmity between the seed of the woman, and seed of the serpent; the old serpent the devil, this Belial: and we read of the children of the devil. *In this the children of God are manifest*, says the apostle, *and the children of the devil*, by such and such things there observed (1 John 3:10). They are evidently distinguished one from the other, and may be known from their different actions and course of living. *Children of the Devil*. Particularly this title is given to the worst and vilest of men, such who are notorious for any crime or crimes; so the apostle Paul gave it unto Elymas, who endeavoured to pervert the Roman pro-consul from the right ways of God; *thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness* (Acts 13:10). And as children are of the same nature, and often appear to be of the same disposition and temper as their parents, and alike in their practices; this appears in those who are called the sons of Belial, or children of the devil: they are of their father the devil, and they appear to be so, because the lusts of their father they will do. Is he a liar, and the father of lies? they are children that will lie; they *go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies* (Ps. 58:3). Is he a murderer from the beginning? malicious, revengeful, blood-thirsty? this is their character, *living in malice, hateful, and hating one another* (Titus 3:3). Cain is said to be that wicked one, a child of Belial, as appears by the slaying of his own brother.

But, as I have hinted, this word *Belial* admits of various significations, according to the different etymology given of it by learned men, and all agree with wicked men as when it is thought to signify one without a yoke, or one that is unprofitable, or one in a low estate, and rises not from that state; all well agree with wicked men, the sons, or children, of Belial. They are *without a yoke*. In whatever sense we may take this word, or find it used in Scripture, (as sometimes it signifies the chastening hand of God, which he lays upon his own people, and which it becomes them to bear quietly and patiently), *it is good for a man*, Jeremiah says, *that he should bear the yoke in his youth* (Lam. 3:27); that is, the correcting, chastening hand of God. He should be inured to it, by which he may learn many things to his profit and advantage. This yoke sometimes presses hard, and is grievous to the flesh; for no affliction is joyous, but grievous; especially to a carnal man, and even to the people of God, when they are first exercised therewith. Thus Ephraim complains, that he was

like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; impatient, and unwilling to bear it, desirous of shaking it off, and being delivered from it. Now wicked men, even in this sense, may be said to be sons of Belial, without a yoke; for *the rod of God is not upon them* (Job 21:9). The chastening, correcting rod of God is not upon them; that rod which is upon the back of the righteous, which a wise man bears, and who hath appointed it, and receives instruction from it, that rod is not upon the wicked; they are without this rod, without this yoke. *They are not in trouble, as other men* (Ps. 73:5); not chastened as other men are, even good men. These are the wicked that prosper in their wickedness, as Asaph and Jeremiah observe, (Ps. 73; Jer. 12:1). God does not deal with these sons of Belial, as with his own children; he lays his rod, his yoke upon them; *he scourges every son whom he receives. If ye be without chastisement, (says the apostle) whereof all are partakers, (that is, all the children of God), then are ye bastards, and not sons* (Heb. 12:8); then ye appear to be sons of Belial, and not children of the living God: for the sons of Belial are without this yoke, without the fatherly chastisements, and corrections of God.

Or rather, we may consider the yoke in a figurative sense, as signifying rule and dominion, whether human or divine. Sometimes it signifies the rule and government of masters over servants. *Let as many servants as are under the yoke, under the rule and government of their masters, count their own masters worthy of all honour.* Sometimes it signifies rule of a higher kind, even regal power and government; so the people of Israel requested of Rehoboam, when he came to the throne, that he would make their yoke lighter, or his government easier, than was the yoke or government of his father. Now this yoke, or government, taken in a civil sense, is to be submitted to; and all good men will be subject to principalities and powers. They will submit themselves to every ordinance of man, that is not contrary to the law of God and their own consciences: but sons of Belial, children without a yoke, are such as *despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities* (Jude 7); and such as do so, are in Scripture expressly called the children of Belial. When Saul was chosen king, we are informed *the children of Belial said, how can this man save us* (1 Sam. 10:27)? And they despised him, and gave him no presents, which was usual at the accession of a king to the throne, by way of acknowledging him as their king, and of their subjection to him; but the sons of Belial would not do that.

Divine rule or government, may be signified by the yoke; but wicked men, sons of Belial, are without this yoke. The *ceremonial law* is sometimes called a yoke, which neither the Jews nor their forefathers were able to bear, as it consisted of various commands, the breach of which rendered persons liable to death; and hence many were, through fear of death, all their life-time subject to bondage; therefore, it is no wonder it was to men, especially to wicked men, *a weariness*; as it is said to be, *what a weariness is it?* (Mal. 1:13). And not only that, but the *moral law* may be called a yoke; it is bidding upon all mankind. Our first parents had this law written upon their hearts, which was the rule of their obedience to God. They broke it, they cast away this yoke, and apostatized from God; yet, nevertheless, there are some remains of it to be found, even in the Gentiles themselves; who appear to have the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another. This law is of such a nature, that every man is obliged by it; for the sum and substance of this law is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul; and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

A good man, a man that has the grace of God implanted in him, is very desirous to be under this yoke; for though those who believe in Christ are delivered from the law, in which they were held,

as it is a covenant of works (for they are not under the law, but under grace, and are delivered also from the curse and bondage of it); yet they are under it as a rule of walk and conversation, in the hands of Christ, delight in the law of God after the inner man, and serve it with all their hearts; though with the flesh they serve the law of sin, But as for wicked, carnal, and unregenerate men, children of Belial, they are without this yoke; they cast it off, and do not choose to have any thing to do with it. As for the wicked, says the Psalmist, *they are far from thy law*: far from it, indeed they do not care to come nigh, or be under it; they despise it, and cast it away from them. Instead of its being before them, to read it, and meditate on it; instead of having it before them as the rule of their lives and actions, they cast it behind their backs, determined to have nothing to do with it. God has wrote unto them the great things of his law, but they are reckoned by them as strange things. Such is the enmity of the carnal mind against God and his law, that it is not subject unto it, neither indeed can be; there is such a contrariety between the law of God and a wicked man. The law is holy, just, and good; but he is carnal, and sold under sin, in the worst sense of this expression: it is, I say, quite contrary to him, and therefore the natural man disapproves of it, despises it, casts it away from him; and every thing he does, thwarts and contradicts this law. The thoughts and the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, are evil, and that continually, which this law condemns. His words and actions, as they are against the will, so they are against the law of God; every sin whatever, in thought, word, and deed, is a transgression of this law: no carnal man is subject unto it; however he may be externally, yet not internally, from the heart. He cannot be so, unless his heart is changed; unless the stony heart is taken away, and an heart of flesh is given: unless a new and right spirit is renewed within him, and the Spirit of God enable him to walk in the statutes and judgments of the Lord, to do them. A man must have this law written in his heart, by the Spirit of God, or he will never be willing to obey it: he must be made willing in the day of the Lord's power, or he will never be contented to bear the yoke of the law, but will be a son of Belial, one that is without a yoke.

If this be the case of a wicked man, as it certainly is, that he is without the yoke of God's righteous law; then we may be sure he must be without the yoke of Christ, and cannot bear that, though our Lord says, *Take my yoke upon you, and I will give you rest for your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light* (Matthew 11:30). Now let this be understood either of the gospel, or the ordinances of Christ, or indeed of both, a son of Belial is without the yoke; he cannot bear the *doctrines of it*. The gospel, when it comes in power, and not in word only, into the heart of a poor sinner, brings light and life along with it: such an one receives the truth in the love of it, and receives the love of the truth: rejoices at it, is greatly delighted with it, yields a professed subjection to it: and, from the heart, obeys that form of doctrine delivered to him; for which the apostle expresses so much thankfulness with respect to the Romans (Rom. 6:17). But to a wicked man, a son of Belial, this is a galling yoke; he cannot bear it. Of this, and the other truth, he says, "This is an hard saying, who can bear it?" as the doctrines of distinguishing grace, the doctrine of election, and others; particularly the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God, without the works of the law, by the imputed righteousness of Christ, is such a yoke he cannot put his neck under; he cannot take it upon him. Self-righteous persons cannot. It is said of the Jews, they went about to establish their own righteousness, and submitted not to the righteousness of the Son of God; they could not bend their necks to this doctrine, this yoke, as it may be called, even a sinner's justification before God, by Christ's imputed righteousness. The doctrines of the gospel strike not only at those principles that men value, but at such practices as they are fond of, and therefore they cannot bear this yoke: "For the gospel of the grace of God, which hath appeared to all men, teaches, that

denying ungodliness and worldly lust, men should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world:" but these sons of Belial do not approve of it.

A wicked man cannot bear the ordinances of Christ, though they are not grievous. None of his commands are so to a good man, one who has received the grace of God; no, he readily yields obedience to them; he makes haste (as the Psalmist says he did), to keep his commandments he readily obeys them from the heart; willingly, cheerfully, from love, and in faith, and without trusting to, or depending on, a submission to these ordinances in the business of his justification before God, and acceptance with him. But wicked men cannot bear this yoke of Christ's ordinances; their language is, *Let us break their bands asunder, and east away their cords from us.* They reject the counsel of God against themselves, as the scribes and pharisees did, who despised the baptism of John. Thus we see, that this character *Belial*, as it signifies one without a yoke, agrees with wicked men in common; they are without the yoke of the chastening hand of God; without the yoke of the moral law; and without the yoke of the gospel, and the ordinances of Jesus Christ. Neither the one nor the other do they care to submit their necks unto. Again,

This word *Belial*, according to others, signifies one that is *unprofitable*. And this is the account the apostle gives of all men in general, Jews and Gentiles, that *they are together become unprofitable* (Rom. 3:12). A wicked man, a son of Belial, is unprofitable to God, unprofitable to men, unprofitable to himself; and indeed every man is unprofitable unto God; for, can *a man be profitable unto God?* says Eliphaz, *as he that is wise may be profitable to himself* (Job 22:2); no, he cannot. Even a wise and good man, with all his goodness, cannot be profitable unto God; for his goodness does not extend to him. David says, *My goodness extendeth not to thee* (Ps.16:2), can be of no avail unto thee; for if a man's way is righteous, what gain is it to the Lord? what does he receive at his hands? Nothing at all that can be really beneficial to him, so as to lay him under any obligation; for *who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* (Rom. 11:35). When a man has done all he can in a way of righteousness, he has done but what was his duty, and must sit down and call himself *an unprofitable servant* with respect to God. Now if good men cannot be profitable to God, certainly *wicked men* cannot. Good men may be profitable in glorifying God, and causing others to glorify him; or promote the interest of religion by their purses, or the gifts bestowed upon them, but still no man can be profitable unto God, to yield him such benefit as can add to his essential glory and happiness; for if any addition could be made to his happiness, he would not be a perfect being as he is. Now if good men, with all their goodness cannot be profitable unto God, surely wicked men cannot; they are sons of Belial, they are abominable in themselves, and to every good work reprobate: nor are they profitable unto men. One good man may be profitable to another, even to wicked men: "the righteousness of a man may profit the son of man," as Elihu owns (Job 35:8); and that is the reason the apostle gives, why those who believe in Christ should be careful to maintain good works, *because these things are good and profitable to men* (Titus 3:8). Though they are not profitable to God, they are profitable to men; they set good examples to them: besides there are many things in them that are really beneficial unto men. Saints are the salt, of the earth: and if there were no such persons, the earth would lose its savor, and be in a sad condition. Many temporal advantages wicked men enjoy, by means of good men; and saints, in various ways, are capable of serving one another in love: but a wicked man, a son of Belial, is good for nothing; he is unprofitable to the generation in which he lives. *Evil communications corrupt good manners:* or men of evil communications, that are bad in their lives and conversations, are hurtful among those with whom they live, and with whom they converse.

They are also unprofitable unto themselves. One that is wise and good, may be profitable to himself, as Eliphaz suggests in that aforementioned text, (Job 22:2). A truly wise man, that is so in a spiritual sense, may be profitable to himself; for godliness hath gain annexed to it: it has the promise of this life, and of that which is to come. A wise and good man, building his house upon a rock, it is to his advantage; the house stands against blustering storms and rains. A man that hath an interest in Christ, as is the case with every wise and good man, has gain thereby; gain that is greater than that of gold and silver. The wise virgins, having oil in their lamps, it is profitable to them; for, when the bridegroom comes, they will not be at a loss for a lamp or oil, but be invited to come into the bride-chamber with him. But wicked men, the sons of Belial, are not profitable to themselves; for *what fruit* (says the apostle) *had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?* (Rom. 6:21); none at all, but quite the reverse. Though a son of Belial, a wicked man, may be able, by various means, licit or illicit, to obtain a large share of the things of this life, what will it be unto him? what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? he is a son of Belial, unprofitable.

There is another sense in the term Belial, at which I have hinted, and that is, it may signify one that is *very low and never will rise up* from that state to a higher one. Man, by the fall was brought into a low estate, a very low estate indeed: which may be hinted at in the 136th Psalm, *Who remembered us in our low estate; for his mercy endureth for ever.* Man was upon the pinnacle of honor, but is become like the beasts that perish. He is fallen from that pinnacle into the pit wherein is no water, into an horrible pit of mire and clay. Some are raised out of it, to an high estate: the children of God are. The Lord lifteth up them that are cast down; he raiseth up them that fall: *he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.* These were raised up in Christ, when he was raised from the dead: are raised up in effectual vocation, when their feet are set upon a rock, and their goings established; and will be raised to glory and happiness, and sit on the same throne with Christ. But these are the children of God: as for the sons of Belial, they will never rise; they are left in that low estate into which sin has brought them. One is taken, and the other left (Matthew 34:40). These are the ninety-nine left in the wilderness: they are left in this low estate, and here they will live and die; and in hell they will lift up their eyes, and behold Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Saints in heaven are in a raised condition; but the sons of Belial will never rise thither. No, there is a gulf fixed, the immutable decree of God, which they cannot pass; so that they will never rise from their wretched state, to that high estate of glory the saints are in: they are sons of Belial, without a yoke; law, and will never rise to that high estate of honor and dignity.

These, in our text, are compared to *thorns*. *The sons of Belial shall be as thorns:* to which wicked men are often compared in Scripture. *Though* (says the Lord to Ezekiel) *briars and thorns be with thee, be not afraid of them* (Ezek.2:6): though thou be among wicked men, comparable to briars and thorns. So the church of Christ is said to be as a *lily among thorns* (Sol Song 2:2). Thorns bear into fruit. Can men gather grapes of thorns? they cannot expect it. Wicked men are called the *unfruitful works of darkness* (Eph. 5:11): they bear no fruit, have not the fruits of the Spirit of God, neither his grace in them, nor his righteousness upon them. Like thorns they are hurtful, pricking, and grieving to the saints and people of God. They are so, by their lives and conversations: so Lot's righteous soul was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; so the lives of Isaac and Rebecca were made grievous and uneasy by the daughters of Heth, by their manners and behaviors; so David was in very distressing circumstances when he dwelt in Meshech, and sojourned in the

tents of Kedar; and so the prophet Isaiah, by being among a people of unclean lips, of which he complains, (Isa. 6:5).

Wicked men are like thorns to the people of God, by their evil words, their ill speeches to them: this is what is suggested in the passage referred to in Ezekiel; "be not afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee:" though the men thou art with are like thorns, pricking, grieving, and distressing as briars and thorns; yet be not afraid of them, or of their words. The words of wicked men are sometimes very sharp and cutting to the people of God; especially when they reproach them on the account of their religion and their God, as David says, *As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say unto me daily, where is my God?* (Ps. 42:10). So by their persecutions, in one shape and another, they are like thorns, pricking and piercing the saints: and even there are many sons of Belial, who are professors of religion, that are like thorns too; compared to the thorny ground, among whom the seed of the word is cast, and which becomes unprofitable, through the cares of the world over-topping the seed sown. Such are all those who will be rich, and who are overreaching in their business and occupation of life; of whom it is said, *the best of them is a briar; the most upright of them is sharper than a thorn hedge* (Micah 7:4). All slothful professors of religion, who are slothful in business, not fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, are like the field of the sluggard, covered with nettles and thorns. So all such, whose lives and conversations are not as becomes the gospel of Christ, these are as prickling thorns, very grieving to the true professors of religion, the children of God; *of whom* (the apostle says) *I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ* (Phil.3:18). In a word, all those who, by evil principles and bad notions of religion, apostatize from the truth of the gospel, are by the apostle compared to the earth which bringeth forth thorns and briars, who are nigh unto cursing and their end to be burned (Heb. 6:8). This brings me to consider,

II. The issue, end, punishment, and utter destruction of these sons of Belial. They are said to be thrust away, and at last to be utterly burnt with fire in the same place. *They shall be all of them as thorns thrust away.* But now thorns, in order to be thrust away, must be rooted up, or cut down, or they cannot be thrust away; they must be rooted up, as wicked men will be. *The wicked*, says the wise man, *shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it* (Prov. 3:22); so David declares, *the Lord shall destroy them, and root them up out of the land of the living*, as thorns may be rooted up. And these must be cut down as cumberers of the ground; for if a barren fig-tree cumberers the ground, then much more briars and thorns, These are cut down, sooner or later, and they are thrust away with contempt and indignation. *Nigh unto cursing*: who will be, and are, cursed by the righteous law of God; for *cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* Thrust away out of time into eternity, suddenly, hastily, in a moment, and in wrath. A tempest shall bear them away; the storm and tempest of divine wrath; for it is God that thrusts them away. He drives the wicked man into darkness, and chases him out of this world. A son of Belial is driven away in his wickedness; while the righteous hath hope in his death. And he will be thrust away in the great day, from the presence of the Lord, as Adam, when he apostatized, was driven out of Eden's garden; and as Cain, when he had been guilty of that shocking sin of murder, was driven from the presence of God; so wicked men will be driven from his presence. They will hear him say, depart from me, ye cursed, I know you not. Then they will be *burned with fire in the same place*: with the fire of God's wrath; *for his fiery indignation shall devour the adversaries.*

Wicked men, whenever their consciences are awakened, are apprehensive there is nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment, and of fiery indignation: now this will break forth at the last day, and consume them. This indignation is sometimes compared to a furnace of fire, and sometimes to a lake of fire; into each of which, thorns and briars are sometimes cast. Thus, as the tares are bound up in bundles and cast into the fire, so the wicked, the sons of Belial, will be gathered by the angels, and cast into a furnace of fire, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:42). This is also expressed by a lake of fire; a lake which burns with fire and brimstone, into which the sons of Belial will be cast, and where they will be burnt. This is called in Scripture, *everlasting fire*. *Everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*; that will be always burning, and never shall be quenched. And it will be intolerable, so that language imports, *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fires? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* This will be the end, this will be the punishment of those who are the sons of Belial.

You see now from hence, of what account wicked men are with God. They are no other than sons of Belial, children without a yoke, unprofitable, low creatures, and will never rise from that state; and like thorns, are only fit to be burnt. You see what will be the end, the issue of these persons; everlasting destruction. They will be burnt with the fire of God's wrath, which will endure for ever; the smoke of their torments will ascend up for ever and ever. There is no escaping this, but in, and through our Lord Jesus Christ, and by applying to him for life and salvation. If any of you are seeking to flee from the wrath to come, which is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men; and should be asking, Whither shall we flee? Not to rocks or mountains, whether in a literal or figurative sense. Not in a literal sense; they will do no service. Nor in a figurative sense, your own works of righteousness; these will not screen you. There is no other way of escaping the wrath to come, due to the sons of Belial, but by fleeing for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before you in the everlasting gospel; by fleeing to Christ, turning to him, the strong hold, as prisoners of hope; and, being justified by his blood, you shall be saved from wrath, through him. It is he, and he only, who delivers from wrath to come.

JEHOVAH'S DECLARATION,

BEHOLD THE MAN IS BECOME AS ONE OF US,

CONSIDERED.

GENESIS 3:22

And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.

In the three first chapters of Genesis, we have an account of the rise and ruin of the world, and of all human nature. The first chapter gives us a compendious narration of the creation of the universe, in that gradual procedure, which the Former of all things was pleased to take therein; and particularly of the formation of man, the chief of all God's works in this lower world. The second chapter informs us of that happiness which man enjoyed, during his continuance in a state of innocence; namely, that he was the favourite of heaven; lord of this lower world; had all creatures in subjection to him; was blessed with the enjoyment of all the conveniences and delights of nature, being placed in the most pleasant and fruitful spot in all the globe: where he had a large knowledge of God, and much communion with him. Nevertheless, *man, being in honour, abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish:* for in this third chapter we hear of his defection from God, and we are told who was the principal instrument of it; by what artful methods he effected it; as also the dreadful consequences which followed the arraignment, conviction, and condemnation of the several parties concerned in this grand rebellion; and the sentence passed on each of them by God, the Judge of all. The account of which is continued almost to the words which I have read; which were spoken by God himself, and respect his fallen creature, man; in which may he observed these two things;

I. A declaration, either of man's present, or of his past condition.

II. A prevention of his eating of the tree of life.

I. Here is a declaration made by Jehovah himself, either of man's present, or of his past condition. *And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us.* In which may be considered, 1. The person speaking, *the Lord God.* 2. The persons spoken to, to whom the man is said to be like; or, who are the Us, here mentioned. 3. The persons spoken of, *the man* or the *Adam.* 4. The matter contained herein, and the manner in which it was delivered.

1. It may be proper to consider, *who* it is that speaks these words; and we are told that it is Jehovah Eloim, *the Lord God.* *And the Lord God said.* By whom I understand, the second Person in the Trinity, the promised Messiah; who continues speaking from verse 8. This was the sense of the

ancient Jewish church; as is manifest from their Targums, or paraphrases on this book. Verse 8, is thus paraphrased by *Onkelos*. *And they heard the voice of the Word of the Lord God, &c.* as it is also by *Jonathan ben Uzziel*. Verse 9th by the Jerusalem Targum, thus, *And the Word of the Lord God called unto Adam, &c.* As is verse 10th, both by *Onkelos* and *Jonathan*, after this manner: *And he said, I heard the voice of thy Word in the garden, &c.* Now this was no other than the same person whom the Evangelist John, in the beginning of his gospel calls the Word; of whom he says, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* And thus the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases the words of our text: *And the Word of the Lord God said, Behold the man which thou hast created, &c.* Besides, the person here speaking, appeal's in such character, and performs such offices, as manifestly discovers him to be the Messiah; who here gives a specimen of all his three offices of King, Prophet, and Priest. He acted the part of a Judge, in arraigning his creature man at his bar; proceeding in a legal way against him; convicting him of his treason, and then passing sentence upon him: which is one branch of Christ's Kingly office: *For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.* He acted the part of a Prophet, in the discovery he made of life and salvation to fallen man, through the promised seed: and who so proper a person to do this, as the Son of God; who was privy to all God's counsels and resolutions concerning it? by whom it was to be effected, and who was to be the great Prophet in Israel, by whom *Grace and Truth* were to come. He also acted the part of a Priest, in making coats of skins and clothing Adam and his wife with them. These were the skins of slain beasts, which, very probably, were slain in sacrifice, and were typical of Christ, the great sacrifice; who, as the great High Priest, made reconciliation for sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness; in which robe of his he enwraps all his people.

Moreover, I make no doubt, but this glorious *person*, appeared in a human form, to our first parents in Eden; and there brought them the messages of grace: for, not to insist upon the audible voice they heard, and the interlocutory discourse which passed between them; why may it not be supposed that he appeared in a human form, to our first parents in the garden, as a prelude of his future incarnation; and for the confirmation of their faith in it, as well as he did to Abraham in the plains of Mamre; and to Jacob, when as a man, he wrestled with him, until break of day; and as well as to many others? And, perhaps, it may be a rule which will admit but of few, if any, exceptions, that wherever, in the Old Testament, we read of God, speaking with an audible and articulate voice, or appearing in any visible form, that the Son of God, the promised Messiah, is there intended; and it may be, our Lord has respect to this, when he says to the Jews, speaking of his Father, *Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.* (John 5:7) And, indeed, who so proper to speak, or visibly to appear, when there was any necessity for it, as the Word, who was to be *made flesh, and dwell among us.* From hence may be observed,

1st. The existence of Christ before his incarnation. The followers of *Socinus* deny this: and assert, that he did not exist before his taking flesh of the virgin. But this truth appears from many undeniable instances. He existed in the times of Moses, and the Prophets; was before Abraham; as he himself says, *Before Abraham was, I am.* (John 8:58) He existed in the beginning of all things; for, *In the beginning was the Word.* Nay, he was *before all things: and by him all things consist.*

2dly. The true and proper Deity of Christ. That the person here speaking, is truly and properly God, is manifest from that awe and dread of his majesty, which fell upon our first parents: from his perfect knowledge of Adam's case, and of the condition which he had brought himself and his

posterity into; the authority which he had exercised in the arraignment and trial of man; the discovery he made of the way of life and salvation, by the seed of the woman, which before was a secret hid in God's heart from everlasting; to all which may he added, that he is expressly called Jehovah Elohim, *the Lord God*, in the words of our text; which is a name that belongs to none but the most High God. See Psalm 83:18.

3dly. That what is said in those words, *Behold, the man is become as one of us*, whatever is meant by them, (which we shall hereafter enquire into) is certainly true; seeing it is the Lord God who says it: as also, that the prevention of man, from eating of the tree of life, mentioned in the latter part of the verse, was for man's good, and not his hurt: seeing it is the Lord God, who brought the message of grace unto him, and clothed him and his wife with coats of skins, who prevented it.

2. The persons spoken to, are next to be enquired after; or who are intended by the Us, to one of whom the man is said to be like. And,

1st. Some Jewish interpreters, who are also followed by some Christians, say, that these words are spoken *Regio more*, after the manner of kings, who in all their edicts and proclamations use the plural number. But this aulic way of speaking, did not obtain very early in the eastern nations; and, perhaps, was first introduced by the Romans. Nor can any instance be produced in the sacred writings, of any one man, though ever so great, proud, and arrogant, speaking only of himself in the plural number. And as for those Scriptures, which are commonly insisted on, they are rejected by a learned Jew, (R. Aben Ezra, in Gen 1:26) as *false witnesses*. Besides, when princes do issue out their mandates, edicts, and proclamations, it is with the advice of their privy council; which is the reason of their using this way of speaking: so that this subterfuge is like to do but little service to the antitrinitarians.

2dly. Others would have the angels here meant, to whom the Lord God thus speaks. But these are not his associates and companions; much less of equal dignity and authority with him. They were never made his privy council. He did not advise with them; nor were they assisting to him in the formation of man: neither was it after their image and likeness that he was created. They are God's servants, to do his will; *are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation*. But,

3dly. By the Us in our text, I apprehend, we are to understand the three Persons in the Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit: the same Us, who said, *Let Us make man in Our image; after Our likeness*. This way of speaking is also used by our Lord, John 14:23. *Jesus answered and said unto him, I any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*: where two persons, at least, his Father and Himself, are intended. This being the sense of our text, makes it appear that the doctrine of the Trinity is no novel doctrine. It is not only the doctrine of the New, but also of the Old Testament, It is true, it is more clearly revealed in the New Testament, than it was in the Old; though even there we have abundant testimonies of it. Nothing does more fully and compendiously contain it, than that form of words prescribed and used in baptism, Matt. 28:19. *Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. Nor is there any greater evidence of it, than at our Lord's baptism, recorded in Matt. 3:16, 17. Hence it was an usual saying of the ancients, *Go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the Trinity*. But though it was more

manifestly discovered, in the New Testament; yet it was not unknown to Moses and the Prophets: nay, it was revealed to our first parents in Eden's garden.

3. The person who is spoken of, is *the man*. We read of *two* Adams in Scripture, the first and the second. *The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven*: the true Messiah, sent from thence to be the Redeemer of lost sinners. Agreeable to this, some Jewish writers had a notion of *two* Adams; the one heavenly, the other earthly: the one, as one with God from eternity; the other, as not only another person, but another thing from God, and rejected by him.

Now the question is, which of these two Adams is here meant? The above said Jewish writers understand it of the *heavenly* Adam; and take the words to be the words of the Lord God, directed to the angels; declaring to them, after the miserable fall of man, the mystery of his redemption, and who was to be the author of it, viz. the Adam that was with God from eternity; who was one with him, and in all things like unto him. The latter part of the text they interpret, of the prevention of this heavenly Adam's immediate entrance upon the work of Redemption; which was deferred to a longer time; and say, that an angel was dispatched, as a messenger, to acquaint the fallen Adam of it, lest he should be pressed down with overmuch sorrow, for being the cause of ruin to himself, and to all his posterity. In which account, though there is something fabulous, yet it shews, that the ancient Jewish church had some notion of man's redemption by Christ, as the *second* Adam. He, however, is not intended here; but, by *the man*, we are to understand our first parents, Adam and Eve, who both are called by this name. Gen. 5:2. *Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created*. They were both created after God's image and likeness; and both fell in the transgression. But,

4. The matter contained in these words, and the manner in which they are delivered, are next to be considered. The generality of interpreters understand them as an irony, or sarcasm; a flout or jeer at man's deception by Satan; who told our first parents, that they should *be as gods, knowing good and evil*: by which deceitful bait they were drawn into transgression, and ruined. Now whatever hidden meaning Satan might have in this speech of his to them (which might be like those ambiguous oracles of his, by which he imposed upon the Gentile world), yet it is certain, that our first parents understood it, of an equality with the most High God; which became a snare, and proved their ruin. He might indeed, mean, that they should be as angels, who are called *Elohim, Gods*, in Psalm 8:5; and so *Jonathan*, in his Targum, paraphrases Gen. 2:5. And perhaps, Satan might design such angels as he and his company were; which was verified. For, by their sin, they came to have the woeful experience of good and evil; even as those apostate spirits had. Yet, I say, it is manifest, that Adam and his wife understood him otherwise. Now the Lord God here is supposed to upbraid man with it, and in an ironical way says, *Behold the man is become like one of us*. As if he had said, "See how much like a God, like one of us, the man looks; as Satan falsely promised him, and he vainly expected. See how he stands before us, with his coat of skin upon his back; and before he had that, he was obliged to sew fig-leaves together to make aprons, to cover his nakedness. Behold, how he is filled with shame and confusion for his folly. Does this man look like a God? Is this the Divinity that was promised, and which he affected? This is he, who aimed at a more exalted station than that in which he was created: but how is he sunk into the lowest condition of life!" So that the words seem to be much like those which were spoken by Pilate (when Christ was brought, clad with a purple robe and a crown of thorns upon his head, who then said to the

Jews, in a sarcastic way, *Behold the man!*). (John 19:5) Not that we are to imagine, that the Lord God here rejoiced at man's misery, or insulted over him in it; for he had compassion on him; remembered him in his low estate; and, in his love and pity, redeemed him. But he took this method, to bring man to a thorough conviction of his sin, to shame, and true repentance for it: as also, more fully to lay open the devil's treachery; the crafty wiles he uses to deceive mankind; that so our first parents might not be ignorant of his devices. Though I must confess, I can scarce think that the words are to be understood ironically: for it is not very easy to imagine, that our great Messiah, at his first entering on his office of publishing the gospel, should, as one expresses it, "Complete his first sabbath, with a jest on poor man's misery." Seeing, as the same author observes, "We don't read of another, broken on his poor church, in all his ministry." I am, therefore, most inclined to think, that those words are spoken *seriously*, and express real matter of fact, and may be understood, either,

As a declaration of man's present state and condition; who, though fallen from a state of innocence, must now be considered as believers in Christ, and as restored and renewed by grace; so that he may well be said to be, *as one of us*. For,

1. Adam stood clothed with Christ's righteousness, which was typified by the coats of skins, which the Lord God made for them; on which account he appeared as one of the Trinity, even as the Lord Jesus, whose righteousness was put upon him; for he who hath that imputed to him, *is righteous, even as he is righteous*. There is so much likeness between Christ and believers, on that account, that he and his church are called by one and the same name. See Jer. 23:6. and 23:16.

2. Adam being now renewed by grace, was conformed to the image of Christ, who is *the first-born among many brethren*; which is what all the elect of God are predestinated to, and therefore, *as one of us*. This new creation image is wrought by the Spirit; and is increased by those transforming views he gives us of the glory of Christ's person, and will be completed in the other world; when saints shall *be like him, and see him as he is*.

3. Adam must now be considered as in union with the Father, Son, and Spirit, as all believers are: which union is so strict and full, that he might well be said to be, *as one of us*. It is expressed by Christ, in such terms as fully evince it, John 17:21. *That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us*. The meaning of which will more fully appear, when we are removed from this state of imperfection.

4. Adam was now in a state of friendship with God. It is true, sin had separated chief friends, and made a breach upon that former amity, which was between God and man: but now man was reconciled to God, through the appointed death of the Son of God; who, to Adam's faith, was now slain both in the promise, and in the type: and he was also under the reconciling work of the Spirit of God, to the way of salvation, by the promised seed. Or,

These words may be considered, as expressive of Adam's condition before the fall; for they may be rendered thus, *Behold, the man was as one of us*; which, I apprehend, is the truest reading; as well as the genuine sense of the words. This sense I also find is given and approved by a learned Jewish writer; and suits man in his first creation; who was in the image, and after the likeness of God, which consisted,

1st. In the form and constitution of his body. The body of Christ, which was *prepared* by God for him, is, undoubtedly, the glory of human nature; it being *curiously wrought*, like a piece of needle-work, *in the lowest parts of the earth*. That is, in the Virgin's womb, by the power of the blessed Spirit; or in the secret thoughts of God's eternal mind. For, in the *book* of his eternal purposes, *all the members thereof were written, which in continuance* (i.e. in the fulness of time) *were fashioned, when as there was none of them*, really and actually existing. Now it seems as though, according to the idea of Christ's human body, in God's mind from everlasting, the body of Adam was formed. Christ indeed, is said to appear *in the likeness of sinful flesh*; to *partake of the same flesh and blood with the children*, and *to be made in all things like unto his brethren*; but then, they are also said to be, *of his flesh and of his bones*. But whether it be so or no, that Adam's body was formed according to the idea of Christ's body, that was in God's mind from everlasting; yet this is certain, that the bodies of the saints, at the resurrection, will be *fashioned like to the glorious body* of Christ, according to Phil. 3:21. And why Adam's body may not be supposed to be formed according to the idea of it, in God's mind, I see no reason to conclude. Wherefore, it might be very well said of him, especially in his state of innocence, before he had sinned, and his body became subject to weakness, diseases, and mortality, that he *was as one of us*. But this is not all that this likeness and image consisted in: for,

2dly. It also appeared in the rectitude of his mind, for *God made him upright*, though he afterwards sought *out many inventions*. Man came out of his Maker's hands a holy creature. God left an impress of holiness upon him; so that he was, in some measure, like him. Hence the work of renovation is called, *The new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness*. (Eph. 4:24)

3dly. This image of God, in which man was created, appeared in that wisdom and knowledge, with which he was endued; of which some instances are on record: as, his giving names to all creatures; his knowing his wife, as soon as brought to him, who she was, and from whence she was taken; as also, his knowledge of good and evil, which is the particular thing instanced in our text, *Behold, the man was as one of us, to know good and evil*. Though I know this is produced as an objection against the sense of the words; and it is asserted that Adam did not know good and evil before the fall. It is true, he did not know evil in the same sense; as it is said of Christ, that *he knew no sin*. (2 Cor. 5:21) That is, he did not know it, so as to commit it; but he knew the nature of it, its contrariety to God's revealed will, its due desert, and wretched consequences; and so did Adam. Nay, I will venture to say, that in this sense Adam had a more exquisite and complete knowledge of good and evil before his fall, than he had afterwards.

4thly. This image consisted also in his dominion over the creatures. He was made Lord of all, upon his first creation, Gen. 1:26. So that there appeared some resemblance of the Divine Majesty in him; which universal subjection of all creatures to him, is very particularly and beautifully described, in Psalm 8:5-8. Thus *the man was as one of us*; in which words there may also be a comparison of his past with his present state, though one branch of it is not expressed; *Behold the man was as one of us*. But what is he now? He is strangely altered; he is not the man he was: his body, which was before hale, robust, and free from all diseases, is now become feeble and languid; subject to all manner of distempers, and to death itself. It is now a mere house of clay, which has its foundation in the dust; and must shortly be reduced to its first origin. His soul, which was created upright, is now destitute of its original righteousness, and filled with all unrighteousness. His

understanding, which was replete with wisdom and knowledge, is now darkened. The man that was the darling of heaven, and in perfect friendship with his Maker, is now alienated from him; and he that was Lord of this world, and had all creatures in subjection to him, is now a slave to his own lusts, and afraid of those creatures which were made for his use. A strange and sudden alteration indeed! so that man, in his fallen state, appears far from being possessed of that free-will, which the Jews ascribe unto him, and endeavour to establish from those words, *Onkelos*, one of their paraphrasts, rendering the words thus, *And the Lord God said, Behold the man is the only one in the world of himself, to know good and evil*. So much for the first part of the text, which contains a declaration either of man's past or present condition.

II. Here is a prevention of him, from his eating of the tree of life. *And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever*. Which words are elliptic, or defective, and may be supplied, either thus, *There's danger lest he put forth his hand*; or, *we must take care, that he does not*; or, *the man must be drove out of paradise, lest, &c.* as we find in the following verses he was. So that the sense may be this, The man in his primitive state, was *as one of us*; but now, by his sin, he has brought himself into a deplorable condition. He is quite altered; he is not the man he was before; and seeing he is so much degenerated, what will not his corrupt heart prompt him to, and his wild imagination put him upon? It may be, to put forth his hand, and eat of the tree of life, that he may live for ever: therefore, it is highly expedient to put him out of the garden, lest he should make such an attempt.

Two things are needful to be enquired into. I. What this tree of life was. II. Why Adam was prevented from eating of it, after his fall.

I. It may be proper to consider, what this tree of life was. That it was a real tree, in the garden of Eden, which bore this name, and not merely figurative and allegorical, I make no question; any more, than that the garden, and all the trees therein, were so. It is highly probable, that it might be useful for the invigorating of Adam's body, the keeping it in a good temperament, and the continuation of the life thereof, during his state of innocence. But what kind of plant it was, what fruit it bore, its just description and proper qualities, I shall not pretend to tell: but that it was symbolical I believe will scarcely be denied. And

1. It was a memorative sign, or symbol, of the dependence of his life upon God. As often as he saw, and eat of it, he was put in mind, that it was God who gave him life, and that it was his visitation, that preserved his spirit. That his life, and the preservation of it, were wholly owing to God, that in him he lived, and moved, and had his being.

2. it was a confirmative sign, or symbol, to him, of the continuance of his life, so long as he was obedient to the divine will. I will not say, that it was a confirmation of his being translated after a time, to a heavenly and supernatural life, had he continued in an entire conformity to the divine will: because I am persuaded that God never designed that man should attain eternal life, merely by his obedience to the law of works. For, says the apostle, (Gal. 3:21) *If there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law*. But that was never God's intention. He had provided another way in his everlasting councils.

3. It might also be typical of Christ, or at least, Christ is called so, in allusion to it, both in the Old and New Testament, (See Prov. 3:18; Rev. 2:7 and 22:2, 14.) because he is the author and donor, both of spiritual and eternal life. As Mediator, he asked it of his Father, in the council and covenant of peace. He procured it by his blood, and it is now secured in his person; for *our life is hid with Christ in God*. But,

II. Why was Adam, after his fall prevented from eating of this tree? Some have thought, that there was either a natural, or a supernatural virtue, abiding in this tree, after the fall; so that, could Adam have eaten of it, it would have perpetuated his life, either for many hundred years; or else for ever; and that the reason why God prevented access to it was either, 1. *Compassion* for him, that he might not live a long and tedious life, attended with affliction and sorrows, to which he was now subject: Or, 2. By way of *punishment*, that he might not be able to elude the sentence of death, which was passed upon him.

But neither of these seems feasible. Not the *former*; because one would think, that if this tree had possessed such a virtue as to prolong his life, it would also have preserved him from all bodily afflictions and distempers. Not the *latter*; because it was impossible that the sentence should be eluded in any such way, which was the just desert of sin; and what God's veracity was engaged to make good. Besides, had such a powerful virtue continued in this tree, after the fall of man, every body knows, that God, who put that virtue in it, could have removed it at pleasure so, that if Adam had eaten up the whole tree, it would have been of no significancy to him; nor would it have answered any such end. This is manifest from the daily food we eat: from which, if God withholds a blessing, or takes away the natural virtue, it will not yield any nourishment to our bodies. For, *man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*. (Matt. 4:4) So that there was no reason, on this account, for such a guard about this tree, as that of *cherubims and a flaming sword, which turned every way* to defend it. The true reason, therefore, of this prevention was,

3. That Adam might have no hope nor expectation of life, from that, or any thing else, but Christ the promised Messiah. Adam might think, as this tree was useful to him, in his state of innocence, to preserve his life, that it would be so now; and thereby be tempted to forget the promised seed, from whom he had reason to expect life and salvation. And now, that he might not lie under this temptation, the Lord God thought it expedient to thrust him out of Paradise, and place a guard about the tree. For there is nothing that man is more prone to, than to seek life any where but in Christ. There seems to be a natural aversion to that. *Ye will not come to me*, (says Christ) *that ye might have life*. No, they had rather go to mount Sinai, yea, travel all the globe over, than go to Christ, for life, could they but obtain it any other way. But God has resolved upon this, as the only way of life and salvation; and that man shall not come at it, by his own works of righteousness, be they what they will. And therefore, has so guarded this way, that he who seeks for righteousness and life, by his own doings, runs upon the flaming sword of justice; and whilst he is endeavouring to insure his own salvation, he is pulling ruin upon himself. Upon the whole, I do not consider these words as having respect to the event, or what would have been, if Adam had eaten of this tree; but the vain opinion, and the foolish expectation, that he might have entertained, of securing his life by it. Having thus explained the words, I shall briefly deduce two or three inferences from them.

1. Learn hence, the wretched and vile nature of sin. How soon was man, the chief of God's works in this lower world, ruined by it! Nay, the whole world was laid under a curse for his sake. *Sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* Rom. 5:12.

2. See the vanity of seeking life by our own performances. It is not only, what God has not established; but also, what he is resolved against.

3. Observe the grace of God, in providing a Saviour for lost man; and how early the discovery of it was made to him. A Saviour was provided before that sin was committed, which required one; and was revealed, before the man was driven out of the garden, that he might have no reason to despair of life.

4. Let us not, then, lay hold on any vain pretences for life; such as those of our own doings, services, and performances. But let us look to Christ alone; for he *is a tree of life, to them that lay hold upon him; and happy is every one that retaineth him.* Prov. 3:18

THE PLAGUE
OF
A MAN'S OWN HEART,
WHAT IT IS; TO WHOM DISCOVERED;
AND THE
Encouragement given to such Persons to expect
PARDON OF ALL THEIR SINS.

1 Kings 8:38

—Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart.

The whole verse reads thus: *What prayer and supplication soever he made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart; and spread forth his hands towards this house (to complete the sense, it follows) then hear thou in heaven, thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, &c.*

These words are part of the prayer which Solomon offered up to God, at the dedication of the temple. After he had addressed the divine Being, by mentioning several of his attributes, and expressed his admiration that he should dwell upon the earth among men; he requests of God, that not only the present prayers might be graciously answered; but that all the future supplications of the Israelites, whether as a body of people, or individuals, might be regarded. In a more particular manner he entreats of the Lord, that when those who shall be sensible *of the plague of their own hearts*, and distressed by it, apply to him for relief, that he would hear and forgive. Thus the words I have read are introduced: now, what I shall endeavour to do, will be,

I. To shew you what the plague of the heart is what is meant by it, and what may be learned from it.

II. The knowledge that some persons have of the plague of their own heart. I say, some persons; because it seems clear, from the very manner in which the words are expressed, that all do not know the plague of their own heart.

III. What those persons may do, who are thus sensible of the plague of their own heart. They may spread out their hands to the Lord, and look towards his holy temple, in hope of having relief from thence; and even the forgiveness of their sins.

I. I shall inquire what is meant by the plague of the heart; and what we may learn from this expression, Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart.

In the first place, this plainly suggests, that the heart of man is not whole and sound. It is unhealthful; it is distempered; it is attended with a very grievous disease; for what more grievous than the plague? The disease of the heart of man is sin, and particularly indwelling sin; the sin of our nature, which has its seat in the heart. Every sin is a disease, as is clear from what the Psalmist says, *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases* (Ps. 103:3). Here diseases and iniquities are represented as the same; and the healing of these diseases is signified by the forgiveness of iniquity.

Now as every sin is a disease, so more especially indwelling sin, or the sin of our nature. This is a natural and hereditary disease to the sons of men; there are some bodily diseases, which come immediately from parents to children; and of this sort, in a moral sense, is the sin of our nature. We are, by nature, children of wrath; and the reason is, we are by nature, sinners; otherwise, we could not have been by nature children of wrath. Sin is natural to us: it is as natural for one of Adam's fallen race to sin, as it is to do any act whatever. It is natural to men; it is derived to them in a natural way. It is hereditary: we are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; born in sin, and so are called, *transgressors from the womb*. As our first parent Adam was, and as our immediate ones are, so in course must their offspring be; for *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one*.

This disease is epidemical and universal; all are tainted and affected with it. There are diseases in a natural sense which are called epidemical, which, when they come into a village, a town, or a country, go through them; but then, be they as epidemical or universal as they may, there are always some that escape; but in this case, there is not one, no not one of Adam's race. For almost six thousand years there has not been one of Adam's posterity that has escaped this disease; except the man Christ Jesus, who descended not from him; by ordinary generation; otherwise, all mankind have been infected with this plague, this pestilential disease, sin. *All*, says the apostle, *are under sin*. *We have before proved, says he, that both Jews and Gentiles*; which is a division of all mankind into its proper parts, and includes the whole, *we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin* (Rom. 3:9): all under the power of sin; involved in the guilt of sin; and liable to punishment for it. This is the case of all mankind: all have sinned in their first head, Adam. *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*. Yea, Jehovah himself is represented as looking down from heaven, taking a survey of the children of men, of their qualities and actions; and the result of this survey is, that *they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one* (Rom. 3:10, 11, 12). Now if there were any person free from this infectious disease, sin; undoubtedly the omniscient eye of God would observe it. It is most manifest, then, that there are none of all the individuals of human nature that have escaped it: all are infected with it all; the body, and the members of it: the soul, and all the powers thereof. It may be said, of men in general, as it is of the body of the people of Israel, that *the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint*. It is an epidemical disease.

It is a very nauseous and loathsome disease: the Psalmist speaks of it as such, *My loins are filled with a loathsome disease* (Ps. 38:7). He had respect to sin, or the fruit, and effect of it; for he had before observed, that there was *no soundness in his flesh, nor any rest in his bones*, because of his sin (Ps. 38:3). This disease makes a person loathsome to Jehovah; who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. This is a disease that mankind are very early infected with; therefore, the apostate sons of Adam are represented by an infant *cast out into the open field, to the loathing of its person in the day that it was born*. Being infected with such a disease as this, it cannot but be loathsome in the eyes of God: and sin, that makes us loathsome in the sight of God, makes us loathsome in our own sight too, when we are led to take a proper view of it. Hence those words of the apostle Paul, who had a large experience of the nature, force, and power of indwelling sin; *O wretched man, that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* (Rom. 7:24); or from this dead body, which I carry about with me. Do but represent unto yourselves how loathsome it must be for a living man to have a dead body fastened to him, and be obliged to carry it along with him wherever he goes; and to have it wherever he is. Just so it is with the people of God, who have any knowledge of this pestilential disease, this body of death, which they continually carry about with them.

This is a disease, also, that is mortal in itself, a deadly disease; as the plague is generally supposed to be. There are diseases which are not unto death; but the disease of sin is unto death. We read of one sin in particular which is unto death. It is emphatically so, namely, the unpardonable sin; because it is *not forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come* (Matthew 7:32). But every sin is, in its own nature, deserving of death. *The wages of every sin, is death* (Rom. 6:23); eternal death. This disease is incurable, except by the grace of God and the blood of Christ. What Jeremiah says of the people of Israel, that their *bruise was incurable, and their wound grievous*, because there was none to plead their cause that they might be bound up, and they had no healing medicines, may be said of all mankind, with respect to this disease of sin. It is incurable by any methods they themselves are capable of making use of, or others for them: *When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound; then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb; yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound* (Hosea 5:13). So let a sinner, that is diseased with sin, use whatever means he can, short of Christ, and his blood, they will be all ineffectual. Christ is the only physician that can cure the plague of the heart; and his blood is the sovereign balm. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? yes; and that Physician is Christ, that balm is his blood.

Now the disease I am speaking of, is called the plague: *the plague of the heart*. The plague is a distemper which, you all know, is very threatening, wasting, and destroying; and exceeding shocking and distressing. It is called the *pestilence that walks in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon day* (Ps. 91:6). It destroys its thousands and ten thousands, when God gives it a commission; as in the case of David's numbering the people. It was sent at his own choice, and no less than seventy thousand persons were immediately destroyed by it. Whenever we hear of the plague breaking out in any of the countries abroad, to which our ships trade; we are always alarmed, lest they should, with the goods brought from thence, bring that dreadful distemper along with them; and all proper caution is taken to prevent, it. Whenever we hear of it nearer our borders, in a neighboring country, what an alarm does it give us? About forty years ago (This sermon was preached, Sept. 19, 1762), or it may be somewhat more, some of you may remember it broke forth in Marseilles, in France. What a consternation were the inhabitants of this city in! How many meetings for prayer were set up, and held for some time. But there is a plague nearer than this, it is

in the heart of every man, and yet little or no notice is taken of it. A plague of more fatal consequences than a temporal disease is. The latter only destroys the body, but this destroys the soul to all eternity, unless it is cured by the grace of God, and the blood of Christ. It is the plague of the heart; and we carry it about with us.

The word here made use of, is sometimes used of the plague of leprosy; as in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the book of Leviticus. Persons infected with that plague (after it was a clear case that so it was with them) *put a covering upon their upper lip*, and cried, *unclean, unclean* (Lev. 13:45). All sinners, like wise who are made sensible of the leprosy of sin, and that they are infected with it, humbly flee to Christ, the great physician, and say, as the leper in the gospel, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*. This leprosy of sin, is not only like that, which was outward in a man; but like that got into a house, which could not be removed 'till the house was pulled down. Of this kind is the plague of the heart; the leprosy of sin in us; for it is an inward, spreading one; there is no removing of it 'till this earthly house of our tabernacle is taken down. Hence, says the apostle, *We, in this tabernacle, do groan, being burdened*.

These hints may serve to give you some idea of the plague of a man's heart, indwelling sin and corruption. But,

Secondly. I shall give you a fuller view of this plague of the heart, by laying before you the state and condition of the heart of man, according to the scriptural account of it; which is this: A man's heart is wicked yea, wickedness itself. So it is said in Psalm 5:9. Their inward part, that is, their heart, is *very wickedness*. It is not only wicked, but wickedness itself; not only wickedness, but extreme wickedness; that is, extremely wicked. The carnal mind is said to be *enmity against God* (Rom. 8:7): not barely an enemy to God, but *enmity* itself; which expresses the great degree of enmity in the carnal mind of man, to God and all that is good.

Sin is not only sinful; but it is exceeding sinful: and it is made so to appear to a truly enlightened mind, as it was to the apostle Paul; who tells us, that sin by the commandment, became exceeding sinful. Such is the heart of man. It is wicked, wickedness itself: it is sinful, exceeding sinful; yea, it is the seat of all sin.

The corruption of nature, most properly the plague of our heart, is represented by the apostle, as that which *dwells* in us: *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me* (Rom. 7:17). By sin that *dwelt in him*, he means not any particular sin, distinct from others; but an assemblage of sins, corruptions, lusts, iniquities; for he afterwards represents it, not only as a person, but as a *law*, having power and authority; and, as a *body*, consisting of divers members, divers lusts and pleasures (Titus 3:3). The heart of man is like Babylon; a *cage of every unclean and hateful bird, and the hold of every foul spirit*. It is the seat and source of all sin. It is the forge, where all is hammered; for the evil heart devises evil imaginations. There is the mint of sin; it comes from thence. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man (Matthew 15:19, 20). Out of the abundance of the wickedness of the heart, the mouth speaketh bad things. All the evil actions of life have their rise from hence: and you may judge hereby of the malignity of man's heart, what a plague is there. It is so bad, that Jeremiah says, *it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked* (Jer. 17:9). It is deceitful. There is deceitfulness in every sin: particularly in indwelling sin,

the corruption of our nature. The apostle cautions the Hebrews to exhort one another daily, lest any of them should *be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin* (Heb. 3:13). The old man is said to be *corrupt according to the deceitful lusts* of which he consists. So deceitful is man's heart, and the lust that dwells there, that even the best of men have been deceived thereby. Not only the apostle Paul was deceived by it, before his conversion, agreeable to that saying, *Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me; and by it slew me*: but even after conversion, the best and wisest of men have been deceived by their own hearts, and the deceitfulness thereof. For a man promises himself that in sinning, which he never enjoys. He promises to himself a great deal of pleasure in sinning: hence divers lusts and pleasures are joined together, as if they were one and the same; or, as if men, in serving the one, enjoyed the other. This is proposed, this is expected; but is it enjoyed? No; the pleasures expected from sin, are all an illusion, all a dream; that fantastic pleasure which is enjoyed, is a short-lived one. The pleasures of sin are but for a season, and issue, at last, in bitterness and death. Sin, though it is rolled in the mouth, and kept under the tongue as a sweet morsel, proves, in the end, as the poison of asps.

Men promise themselves much profit in sinning, which they never enjoy. This was the temptation of our first parents, with which they were imposed upon, and deceived. Satan suggested they should *be as Gods, knowing good and evil*. This was the bait, *more knowledge*; whereas, by dallying with the temptation, instead of gaining more knowledge, they lost in good measure, what they had. A man's heart promises him much profit in sinning; that he shall gain much riches in the way of illicit trade, and other unlawful practices; but how frequently is he disappointed and were it otherwise, *What would it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*

Sometimes men propose to themselves and expect a great deal of honour among ungodly men, by following their examples, and complying with their customs; but how often are they disappointed! Besides, when the conscience comes to be awakened, and when the apostle's question is regarded, *What fruit had ye in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed?* they will readily acknowledge, they had none at all.

A man proposes to himself liberty in sinning but does he enjoy it? No; he is brought into more and more bondage. *While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption* (2 Pet. 2:19). *Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage* (2 Pet. 2:19). Whoever commits sin, is the servant of sin, the slave of it: *Is Ephraim a servant? is he a home-born slave?* Verily he is and so is every ungodly man.

They promise themselves peace; that they shall have peace, though they walk every man after the imagination of his own evil heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: but do they enjoy it? No: for while they are crying, *peace, peace, sudden destruction comes upon them*. How deceitful is the heart of man! That is promised which is never enjoyed. There is nothing in a man's heart to be trusted to: *he that trusteth in his own heart, is a fool*: even he that trusts in the goodness of his heart, in the supposed integrity of his heart, and of his conversation, which he supposes springs from thence. Persons of this character, *trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others*. They trust in themselves, that they *are rich, and increased in goods, and stand in need of nothing*: when, at the same time, *they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*; and will find themselves most miserably deceived another day. The heart of man is deceitful: the plague is in it; indwelling sin, and corruption. There is nothing more deceitful than the heart of man. It is

exceedingly wicked; wicked to the highest degree of wickedness: which seems to be the meaning of the expression.

All that is in the heart of man is wicked. The thoughts and the imagination of the thoughts of the heart are so, according to Genesis 6:5. So in Matthew, chapter 15 verse 19, *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts*. Men's thoughts are evil. The thought of wickedness is sin; abominable in the sight of God. The apostle therefore exhorts Simon Magus to pray that the thoughts of his heart might be forgiven (Acts 8:22). The sensible sinner has reason to hope for this; therefore the wicked man is encouraged to forsake his way, and the righteous man his thoughts, and to turn to the Lord, who will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55:7); both evil thoughts and evil actions. Yea, the imagination of the thoughts is evil: the first formation of evil thoughts; or those motions, as the apostle calls them, of sin, which are in our members (Rom. 7:5), are evil. You read of some that thought themselves wise men, and good men; but became vain in their imaginations, and their evil hearts were darkened (Rom. 1:21): and of others, more openly profane, that resolved to walk according to the imagination of their evil hearts (Jer. 8:12). Every thought, and every imagination of the heart, of man are evil., *God is not in all their thoughts* (Ps. 10:4); nor, indeed, in any of their thoughts. His thoughts are not like theirs. His are holy, theirs are unholy: his are thoughts of peace, theirs are thoughts of evil. No good thoughts arise from the wicked heart of man. No good things come out of this Nazareth; for there is no good thing in it. Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is evil; only so, and always so. The imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is said to be evil from his youth (Gen. 8:21): hence he is represented as like the troubled sect, which cannot rest, continually casting up mire and dirt (Isa. 57:20). The affections of the heart are inordinate; all out of course; run in a wrong channel, and to wrong objects. Men are *lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God*.

Their hearts are set upon the world and the things of it; the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life. The mind of man is corrupted, depraved, distempered. There is vanity in it; hence men are said to walk in the vanity of their minds. They are empty of all that is good; yea, they are averse thereunto; for *the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be*. The mind is darkened by sin, has no light into divine and spiritual things; is darkness itself; calls evil good, and good evil; puts darkness for light, and light for darkness. The understanding being depraved, it passes a wrong judgment on things. Conscience being darkened, does not perform its office: being in many seared, as it were, with a red hot iron; and in every one it is evil. Happy those who have their *hearts sprinkled*, by the blood of Jesus, *from an evil conscience*. Their will is stubborn and inflexible. It is not subject to God's law, nor to his gospel. It is like the adamant, and called *a stony heart* (Ezek. 11:19). Now, by all this, and much more, which the Scripture says on the subject, we may judge of the state of the heart of man; and in a good measure learn what is meant by *the plague* of it. It must be in a most sad condition, while under the influence of this pestilential disease.

Further. The plague of the heart is very deep and secret: it is an evil which none are acquainted with but a man's own conscience and God. Secret sins, heart sins, these may be called the plague of the heart. *Lord* (says the Psalmist) *thou hast set our secret sins in the light of thy countenance* (Ps. 90:8). Secret sins, which are in their own hearts; or, if committed, none but God and their own hearts are privy to them. Yea, there are some sins that a man himself is not privy to; they pass through his heart, and he, not being always upon his guard, cannot take notice of every thing that is

done. Even a good man cannot; hence David says, *Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults* (Ps. 19:12).

Or, the plague of the heart may denote such sins as are in a particular manner predominant in a man's heart. There are some sins which may be termed a man's *own way* (Isa. 53:6); constitutional sins, or sins which most *easily beset* (Heb. 12:1). In some pride, in some the lust of impurity; in others ambition, and so on. These are common and prevailing sins in the hearts of men, and may be called *the plague of their hearts*; and which give great distress to those who have the grace of God. They find them to be a plague: indeed their daily experience proves it.

There is an expression in a parallel text where the same thing is intended, though in somewhat different language. *Then* (says Solomon) *what prayer, or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore, and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hand in this house; then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive* (2 Chron. 6:29, 30). What is called in Kings, the plague of his own heart, is here denominated *his own sore*, and *his own grief*. This may a little enlarge our idea of the plague of the heart. A *man's own sore*, and *his own grief*. His *sore*; that which gives him a great deal of pain and uneasiness, as a sore does. So the corruption of nature does to a sensible sinner; when he is *pricked to the heart*, wounded through a sense of sin, how grievous and intolerable is it! *The spirit of a man may sustain his infirmity*, the outward infirmity of his body; he may be able to bear it, with some degree of patience; but *a spirit wounded* with a sense of sin, *who can bear?* This is a sore which is very painful indeed! *Every man his own sore, and his own grief*. Sin causes grief; and nothing more than the inward corruption of nature. David, we find expressing his grief on this account. *I go mourning all the day long; for my loins are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my flesh* (Ps. 38:6, 7); and so all good men do. They are like the doves of the valley, every one mourning for his own iniquity; especially the sin of his nature, which is his own. Hence Jabez's prayer to the Lord, was, *Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me* (1 Chron. 4:10): the corruption of nature, and its breakings forth.

This is what Solomon calls a man's *sore* and *grief*; because it produces grief to the people of God. They are grieved, because it is contrary to the holy nature of God, and his righteous law; against the Lord, who is their Maker, their Benefactor, their God, and Father: against him, who hath shewn so much favor to them, and expressed so much love towards them. It cuts them to the heart that they should sin against this God; and that his name should be dishonored in any measure by them, as it is by sin. It causes the enemy to open his mouth; and the way of truth is evil spoken of. This grieves the people of God: and because hereby the Holy Spirit of God is grieved, *Grieve not the Holy Spirit* (Eph. 4:30): and then the apostle goes on to mention various sins whereby the Spirit of God may be grieved. He who convinces them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; he who hath been their comforter, and is the Spirit of faith in them, the Spirit, of adoption to them, and the earnest of their heavenly inheritance; that he should be grieved by them is grievous to themselves. So, likewise, because hereby they are deprived of communion with God. Iniquity, in this respect, separates between God and the soul. They are filled with confusion, distress, and contrition of mind, as Peter was through his fall. But thus much may suffice for the opening of *the plague of the heart*. From all this somewhat may be gathered, and your own experience will furnish you within more, upon this humiliating subject. But

II. There is a knowledge of this. Some persons have a knowledge of it, and some have not. This is supposed in the text, by "All thy people Israel, which shall *know*, every man the plague of his own heart." That is, as many of them as shall know the plague of their own hearts; suggesting, that all do not. Some do not know this. Carnal men do not. Only spiritual persons, that are under the influence of the Spirit of God, who *convincés of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment*. As for others, they know nothing of the plague of their own heart. They may possibly know something of the nature of sin, the difference between moral good and evil, by the light of nature, the laws of men, and the general notions obtained among men; but they know nothing of the *spring* of evil actions, of indwelling sin, the fountain of iniquity. To this they are strangers; and more especially such as are grown up to work all iniquity; whose consciences are cauterized, or seared with a hot iron. *All those who are whole*, know not the plague of their own hearts. *The whole need not a physician, but those that are sick*. The former need a physician as much as the latter; but they know not that they stand in need of one. The reason of which is, they do not know the plague of their own hearts; and therefore, in their own apprehensions, they need no physician. It is quite the reverse, however, with *those that are sick*; that is, who are sensible of the sickness: for, otherwise, all men are sick; but our Lord means, them that are sensible of it, as Ephraim was: "When Ephraim saw his sickness" (Hos. 5:13). Now those who are sensible of their sickness, feel their need of a physician; but those who are insensible of sickness, are like him, whom the wise man describes as upon *the top of a mast*; who says, *They have stricken me, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not* (Prov. 23:35). So it is with such insensible sinners as are whole in their own esteem. Those who think themselves increased in goods, and in need of nothing, do not know the plague of their own hearts. Those who imagine they need no repentance, do not know the plague of their own hearts. The pharisee knows not the plague of his own heart: for his language is, *I am not as other men are*. The apostle Paul did not know the plague of his own heart, at the time to which he refers, when he says, *Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless*. The perfectionist knows not the plague of his own heart; if he did, he would not say, he is free from sin. Job says, *If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloths should abhor me* (Job 9:30, 31). *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves* (1 John 1:8): but good men know the plague of their own hearts; being enlightened by the Spirit of God, convincing them of sin, of righteousness, and judgment. Such as are made light in the Lord, and made acquainted with salvation by him; are made light, so as to know themselves and the plague of their own hearts. Those in whose hearts God has commanded the light to shine, not only see *the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*; but they see the vileness of their nature, and the corruption of their hearts and that they know this, appears from the ingenuous confession of sin, which they make; not only of the outward actions of sin, which they commit; but also of indwelling sin. For while they are confessing the one, they are naturally led to the other; as the Psalmist was, *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me* (Ps 51:5). This appears from the groanings of the saints; for they groan being burdened, burdened with indwelling sin. So David says, (when speaking of sin, on which account he had no rest in his bones), *My groaning is not hid from thee* (Ps. 38:9). Saints, under the New Testament speak the same language (for the people of God, under different dispensations, have the same experience in this respect). *O wretched man that I am*, (says the apostle), *who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* (Rom. 8:24). It appears by the feeling they have of a *law in their members, warring against the law of their minds*; fighting one against the other; so that they cannot do the things that they would. It appears from their non-dependence upon any religious duties performed by them; for however outwardly religious they may appear, in the sight of others, they are sensible of imperfection in their services; they know

there is not a just man upon earth, that does good, and sinneth not; that there is strange distraction of mind, wanderings of thoughts, and a mixture of sin even in their most holy things. They cannot, therefore, depend upon any thing done by them; but acknowledge, when they have done all they can, that they are but unprofitable servants. It appears also, by their prayers against the plague of their own hearts. This leads us to consider,

III. What those persons may do, who are sensible of the plague of their own hearts. They may spread out their hands to the Lord, and make supplication to him, under a sense of their great depravity. They may pray that the Lord would keep them from the plague of their own hearts; that it may not break forth to the grieving of their souls, or the dishonor of the divine name; and that they be not destroyed thereby. Was David, when reflecting on the power of his enemy, induced to say, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul?* So the saints, when they behold the force of corruption in them, fear they shall some day perish thereby: yet in the midst of all their discouragements, they can spread out their hands to God, and pray that he would mortify those corruptions of nature. Though the Lord hath said, he *will subdue their iniquities*; it becomes them to pray that no iniquity may have dominion over them: that this house of Saul might grow weaker and weaker, while that of David grows stronger and stronger: that the inward man might be renewed day by day, and the old man put off, according to the former conversation: that though it be not destroyed, it may be weakened; and also, that the Lord would grant fresh manifestations of forgiving love, for sins of heart, as well as of life and conversation.

Upon the whole, this may serve to humble us before the Lord; when we consider what we are, what we have about us, and what is in us; namely, *the plague of the heart*. It is enough to humble the proudest heart, when sensible of it; and cause the words of Job to be adopted, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer? I have heard of thee, by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I repent and abhor myself in dust and ashes.*

This also may lead us to wonder at the grace of God, that he should have any regard to such diseased and corrupted creatures as we are; and that God should *dwell upon earth*, in the hearts of sinful men, as in verse the twenty-seventh. This is marvelous grace, indeed! This may lead us, who know the plague of our own hearts, to be thankful to God, that he has not left us to that blindness persons are under the influence of, who talk of the goodness of their hearts; and see no need of the cleansing blood of Jesus, that healing balsam. Blessed be God, he hath not left us to this. Such neither know the disease, nor the physician; neither know the plague of their own hearts nor how they are to be cured of it. God, blessed be his name! hath opened our eyes to see our disease; and hath shewn us who the Physician is. Let it then be our great concern, *to shew forth the praises of him, who hath called as out of darkness, into his marvelous light.*

A

**DISSERTATION CONCERNING THE
ETERNAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST,**

Shewing

By Whom It Has Been Denied And Opposed,

and

**By Whom Asserted And Defended In All Ages Of
Christianity.**

The eternal Sonship of Christ, or that he is the Son of God by eternal generation, or that he was the Son of God before he was the son of *Mary*, even from all eternity, which is denied by the Socinians, and others akin, to them, was known by the saints under the Old Testament; by *David* (Ps. 2:7, 12); by *Solomon* (Prov. 8:22, 30), by the prophet *Micah*, chapter 2, verse 2. His Sonship was known by *Daniel*, from whom it is probable *Nebuchadnezzar* had it (Dan. 3:25), from which it appears he was, and was known to be, the Son of God before he was born of the virgin, or before his incarnation, and therefore not called so on that account. This truth is written as with a sun-beam in the New Testament; but my design in what I am about is, not to give the proof of this doctrine from the sacred scriptures, but to shew who first set themselves against it, and who have continued the opposition to it, more or less, to this time; and on the other hand, to shew that sound and orthodox Christians, from the earliest times of Christianity to the present, have asserted and defended it. I shall begin with,

I. The first century, in which the Evangelists and Apostles lived; what their sentiments were concerning this doctrine, is abundantly manifest from their writings. The persons in this age who opposed the divine and eternal Son-ship of Christ were,

1st, *Simon Magus*, father of heresies, as he is justly called; he first vented the notion afterwards imbibed by *Sabellius*, of one person in the Godhead; to which he added this blasphemy, that he was that person that so is. Before he professed himself a Christian he gave out that he was some *great one*; he afterwards said, he was the one God himself under different names, the Father in *Samaria*, the Son in *Judea*, and the holy Spirit in the rest of the nations of the world;^[1] or as *Austin*^[2] expresses it, he said that he in mount *Sinai* gave the law to *Moses* for the Jews, in the person of the father; and in the time of *Tiberius*, he seemingly appeared in the person of the Son, and afterwards as the holy Ghost, came upon the apostles in tongues of fire. And according to *Jerom*^[3] he not only said, but wrote it; for it seems, according to him, he wrote some volumes, in which he said, "I am

the Word of God, that is, the Son of God." *Menander* his disciple took the same characters and titles to himself his master did.^[4]

2dly, *Cerinthus* is the next, who was contemporary with the apostle *John*, of whom that well known story is told,^[5] that the apostle being about to go into a bath at *Ephesus*, and seeing *Cerinthus* in it, said to those with him, "Let us flee from hence, lest the bath fall upon us in which *Cerinthus*, the enemy of truth is:" he asserted that Christ was, only a man, denying his deity,^[6] and in course his divine and eternal Sonship; he denied that Jesus was born of a virgin, which seemed to him impossible; and that he was the son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, as other men are^[7] of their parents. *Jerom* says,^[8] at the request of the bishops of *Asia*, *John* the apostle wrote his gospel against *Cerinthus* and other heretics, and especially the tenets of the Ebionites, then rising up, who asserted that Christ was not before *Mary* hence he was obliged plainly to declare his divine generation; and it may be observed, that he is the only sacred writer who in his gospel and epistles speaks of Christ as the begotten and only begotten Son of God, at least speaks mostly of him as such.

3dly, *Ebion*. What his sentiment was concerning Christ, may be learned from what has been just observed, about the apostle *John's* writing his gospel to refute it; and may be confirmed by what *Eusebius*^[9] says of him, that he held that Christ was a mere man, and born as other men are: and though he makes mention of another sort of them, who did not deny that Christ was born of a virgin, and of the Holy Ghost, nevertheless did not own that he existed before, being God the Word and Wisdom. Hence *Hilary* calls^[10] *Photinus*, *Ebion*, because of the sameness of their principles, and *Jerom*^[11] says. *Photinus* endeavoured to restore the heresy of *Ebion*; now it is notorious that the notion of the Photinians was the same with the Socinians now, who say, that Christ was not before *Mary*; and so *Alexander* bishop of *Alexandria*^[12] observes of *Arius* and his followers, who denied the natural sonship and eternal generation of Christ, that what they propagated were the heresy of *Ebion* and *Artemas*.

Besides the inspired writers, particularly the apostle *John*, who wrote his gospel, as now observed, to confute the heresies of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, and in vindication of the deity of Christ, and his divine and eternal generation, there are very few writings if any in this century extant. There is an epistle ascribed to *Barnabas*, contemporary with the apostle *Paul*, in which are these words,^[13] having made mention of the brazen serpent as a figure of Jesus, he adds, "what said *Aliases* again to Jesus the son of *Nave*, putting this name upon him, being a prophet, that only all the people might hear that the Father hath made manifest all things concerning his Son Jesus in the son of *Nave*, and he put this name upon him, when he sent him to spy the land—because the Son of God in the last days will cut up by the roots the house of *Amalek*: behold again Jesus, not the son of man, but the *Son of God*, manifested in the flesh by a type.—Likewise *David* said the *Lord said to my Lord*.—See how *David* calls him Lord, and the Son of God:" by which it appears that he believed that Christ was the Son of God before he was manifested in the flesh or became incarnate; and that he was the Son of God according to the divine nature, as well as the Son of *David* according to the human nature, which he also expresses in the same paragraph. And elsewhere he says,^[14] "For this end the Son of God came in the flesh, that the full sum might be made of the sins of those who persecuted the prophets," so that according to him Christ was the Son of God before he came in the flesh or was incarnate.

Clemens Romanus was bishop of *Rome* in this century, and though the book of *Recognitions*, ascribed to him, are judged spurious, yet there is an epistle of his to the Corinthians^[15] thought to be genuine: in which, after speaking of Christ our Saviour, and the high priest of our oblations, and the brightness of the magnificence of God, and of his having a more excellent name than the angels, observes, that the Lord thus says of his own Son, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; thereby declaring his belief, that Christ is the proper Son of God, and begotten by him. *Ignatius* was bishop of *Antioch* in this century, after the first bishop of that place *Evodius*, and was early in it, if any truth in these reports that he was the child Christ took in his arms, when he rebuked his disciples; and that he saw Christ after his resurrection; but though these are things not to be depended on, yet it is certain that he lived in the latter end of the first century, and suffered martyrdom in the beginning of the second. Several epistles of his are extant, in which, as well as by words, he exhorted the saints to beware of heresies then springing up among them, and abounding, as *Eusebius* observes;^[16] meaning the heresies of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus* about the person of Christ: and says many things which shew his belief, and what was their error. In one of his epistles^[17] he exhorts to decline from some persons, as beasts, as ravenous dogs, biting secretly, and difficult of cure; and adds, "there is one physician, carnal and spiritual, begotten and unbegotten. God made flesh, in a true and immortal life, who is both of *Mary* and of God." In a larger epistle to the same,^[18] thought by some to be interpolated, though it expresses the same sentiment; "our physician is alone the true God, the unbegotten and invisible Lord of all, the Father and *begetter* of the only begotten one; we have also a physician, or Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son before the world, and the word, and at last man of the virgin *Mary*;" and afterwards in the same^[19] epistle still more expressly, "the Son of God, who was begotten before the world was, and constitutes all things according to the will of the Father, he was bore in the womb by *Mary*, according to the dispensation of God, of the seed of *David* by the Holy Ghost." And a little farther,^[20] "be ye all in grace by name, gathered together in one common faith of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, and the first-born of every creature: according to the flesh indeed of the family of *David*: ye being guided by the Comforter." A plain account, as of the divine Sonship and Humanity of Christ, so of the doctrine of the Trinity. In another epistle^[21] of his, he speaks of Jesus Christ, "who was with the Father before the world was, and in the end appeared," that is, in human nature in the end of the world; and exhorts all to "run to one temple of God, as to one altar, as to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from one Father, and being in him and returning to him." And a little lower he adds, "there is one God, who hath manifested himself by Jesus Christ his Son, who is his eternal word." And father on he says, "study to be established in the doctrines of the Lord, and of the apostles, that whatsoever ye do may prosper, in flesh and spirit, in faith and love, in the Son, and in the Father, and in the Spirit." A full confession of the Trinity, one of the principal doctrines he would have them be established in. All which is more fully expressed in the larger epistle^[22] to the same persons: speaking of Christ, he says, "who was begotten by the Father before the world was; God the Word, the only begotten Son, and who remains to the end of the world, for of his kingdom there is no end." Again, "there is one God omnipotent, who hath manifested himself by Jesus Christ his Son, who is his Word; not spoken, but essential, not the voice of an articulate speech, but of a divine operation, begotten substance, who in all things pleased him that sent him." And father on, "but ye have a plerophory in Christ, who was begotten by the Father before all worlds, afterwards made of the virgin *Mary* without the conversation of men." And in the larger epistle^[23] of his to other persons, he thus speaks of some heretics of his time; "they profess an unknown God, they think Christ is unbegotten, nor will they own that there is an holy Spirit: some of them say the Son is a mere man, and that the Father, the Son and the holy

Spirit, are the same:—beware of such, lest your souls be ensnared." And in an epistle to another people[24] he says, "there is one unbegotten God the Father, and one only begotten Son, God the Word and man, and one comforter the Spirit of truth." And in an epistle[25] ascribed unto him he has these words, "there is one God and Father,—there is also one Son, God the Word—and there is one comforter, the Spirit;—not three Fathers, nor three Sons, nor three Comforters, but one Father, and one Son, and one Comforter; therefore the Lord, when he sent his apostles to teach all nations, commanded them to *baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; not in one of three names, nor into three that are incarnate, but into three of equal honor and glory." *Lucian*, that scoffing, blasphemous heathen, lived in the times of *Trajan*, and before, as *Suidas* says, wrote a dialogue[26] in derision of the Christian religion, particularly of the doctrine of the Trinity: which dialogue, though it is a scoff at that doctrine, is a testimony of it, as held by the Christians of that age; and among other things, he represents them as saying that Christ is *the eternal Son of the Father*. I go on,

II. To the second century, in which the same heresies of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus* were held and propagated by *Carpocrates*, the father of the *Gnostics*,[27] by *Valentinus* and *Theodotus* the currier, whose disciples were another *Theodotus* a silversmith, and *Asclepiodotus* and *Artemon* also, according to *Eusebius*. [28]

1st. *Carpocrates* was of *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, and lived in the beginning of the second century: he and his followers held that Christ was only a man, born of *Joseph* and *Mary*, of two parents, as other men,[29] only he had a soul superior to others; which, having a strong memory, could remember, and so could relate, what he had seen and had knowledge of, when in the circumference (as they express it) and in conversation with his unknown and unbegotten Father; and which was endowed with such powers, that he escaped the angels, the makers of the world; and was so pure and holy, that he despised the Jews, among whom he was brought up; and afterwards returned to his unknown Father; his soul only, not his body.[30] There seems to be something similar in this notion of the human soul of Christ, to what is imbibed by some in our day.

2dly, *Valentinus*. He came to *Rome* when *Hyginus* was bishop of that place, flourished under *Pius*, and lived till the time of *Anicetus*. [31] He and his followers held, that God the creator sent forth his own Son, but that he was animal, and that his body descended from heaven, and passed through the virgin *Mary*, as water through a pipe; and therefore, as *Tertullian*, observes,[32] *Valentinus* used to say, that Christ was born *by a virgin*, but not *of a virgin*. This is what divines call the heretical elapse; which yet those disavow, who in our day are for the antiquity of the human nature of Christ before the world was; though how he could be really and actually man from eternity, and yet take flesh of the virgin in time, is not easy to reconcile.

3dly. *Artemon* or *Artemas* who lived in the time of *Victor* bishop of *Rome*. He held that Christ was a mere man[33] and pretended that the apostles and all Christians from their times to the times of *Victor*, held the same;[34] than which nothing could be more notoriously false, as the writings as *Justin*, *Irenæus*, &c shew: and' it is said that by him, or by his followers, the celebrated text in *1 John* 5:7, was erased and left out in some copies. [35]

4thly, *Theodotus* the currier held the same notion he did, that Christ was a mere man; for which he was excommunicated by *Victor* bishop of *Rome*: which shews the falsity of what *Artemon* said; for

if *Victor* had been of the same opinion, he would never have excommunicated *Theodotus*. *Eusebius* says, this man was the father and broacher of this notion,[\[36\]](#) before *Artemon*, that Christ was a mere man; and denied him to be God. Yea, that he was not only a mere man, but born of the seed of man.[\[37\]](#) Though *Tertullian* says, that he held that Christ was only a man, but equally conceived and born of the holy Ghost and the virgin *Mary*, yet inferior to *Melchizedec*.[\[38\]](#)

The contrary to these notions was asserted and maintained by those apostolical men, not only *Ignatius*, who lived in the latter end of the preceding century, and the beginning of this, as has been observed, but by *Polycarp*, *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, and others.

1. *Polycarp*, bishop of *Smyrna* a disciple and hearer of the apostle *John*, used to stop his ears when he heard the impious speeches of the heretics of his time. This venerable martyr, who had served his master Christ eighty six years, when at the stake, and the fire just about to be kindled upon him, witnessed a good confession of the blessed Trinity in his last moments, putting up the following prayer; "O Father of thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of thee; God of angels and of powers, and every creature—I praise thee for all things; I bless thee, I glorify thee, by the eternal high priest Jesus Christ thy beloved Son, through whom, to thee with him in the holy spirit, be glory, now and for ever, *Amen*."[\[39\]](#)

2. *Justin*, the philosopher and martyr, in his first apology[\[40\]](#) for the Christians, has these words; "The Father of all, being unbegotten, has no name—the Son of him, who only is properly called a Son, the Word, begotten and existing before the creatures (for at the beginning by him he created and beautified all things) is called Christ." And in his second apology he says, "We profess to be atheists with respect to such who are thought to be Gods, but not to the true God and Father of righteousness, etc.; him, and his Son who comes from him, and has taught us these things, and the prophetic Spirit, we adore and worship." Afterwards he speaks of the *logos*, or word, the *first birth* of God:" which, says he, we say is begotten without mixture." And again "We speak that which is true, Jesus Christ alone is properly the Son begotten by God, being his Word, and first-born, and power, and by his will became man; these things he hath taught us." And in his dialogue with *Trypho* the Jew, who is represented as objecting to him, "What thou sayest that this Christ existed God before the world, and then was born, and became man, does not only seem to be a paradox to me, but quite foolish." To which *Justin* replies, "I know this seems a paradox, especially to those of your nation, — but if I cannot demonstrate, that this is the Christ of God, and that he pre-existed God, the Son of the maker of all things, and became man by a virgin, in this only it would be just to say, that I am mistaken, but not to deny that this is the Christ of God, though he may seem to be begotten a man of men, and by choice made Christ, as asserted by some: for there are some of our religion who profess him to be Christ, but affirm that he is begotten a man of men; to whom I do not assent, nor many who are in the same mind with me." In which he plainly refers to the heretics before mentioned, who thought that Christ was born of *Joseph* and *Mary*. And in another place, in the same dialogue, he says, "I will prove from scripture that God first *begat of himself before all creatures*, a certain rational power, which is called by the holy Spirit, the Glory of the Lord, sometimes the Son, sometimes Wisdom, sometimes the Angel, sometimes God, sometimes the Lord and the Word." And then, after observing there is something similar in the Word begetting a Word without any rejection or diminution, and fire kindling fire without lessening it, and abiding the same; he proceeds to give his proof from the words of *Solomon*, Proverbs 8 where "the word of wisdom testifies, that he is the God who is *begotten* by the Father of all, who is the word and

wisdom and the power and the glory of him that *generates*." And then observes, that "this is the *birth* produced by the *Father*, which *co-existed* with the *Father before all creatures*, and with whom the *Father* familiarly conversed, as the word by *Solomon* makes it manifest, that he the beginning before all creatures is the *birth begotten by God*, which by *Solomon* is called *Wisdom*." And in another place, in the same dialogue, on mention of the same words in *Proverbs* he says, "Ye must understand, ye hearers, if ye do but attend, the *Word* declares that "this birth was *begotten by the Father before all creatures*, and that which is *begotten* is *numerically* another from him that *begets*." What can be more express for the eternal generation of the *Son of God*, and that as a distinct person from his *Father*!

3. *Irenaeus*, a martyr, and bishop of *Lyons* in *France*, and a disciple of *Polycarp*. He wrote five books against the heresies of *Valentinus* and the Gnostics, which are still extant; out of which many testimonies might be produced confirming the doctrine of the *Trinity*, and the deity of *Christ*. I shall only transcribe two or three passages relating to the divine Sonship and generation of *Christ*. In one place he says,^[41] "Thou art not increated and man, nor didst thou always *co-exist with God*, as his own word did, but through his eminent goodness, hast now had a beginning of beings; thou sensibly learnest from the word the dispositions of *God* who made thee; therefore observe the order of thy knowledge, and lest, as ignorant of good things, thou shouldest, transcend *God* himself" And again,^[42] "should any one say to us, how is the *Son brought forth by the Father*? we reply to him, This bringing forth or *generation*, etc. or by whatsoever name it is called; no man knows his existing *unspeakable* generation; not *Valentinus*, not *Marcion*, not, *Saturninus*, nor *Basilides*, nor angels, nor archangels, nor principalities, nor powers, only the *Father* who hath *generated*, and the *Son* that is *generated*; therefore seeing his generation is ineffable, whoever attempts to declare such productions and generations (as the above heretics did) are not in their right minds, promising to declare those things which cannot be declared." And elsewhere, he says,^[43] "The *Son*, the *Word* and *Wisdom*, was always present with him (*God*), and also the *Spirit*, by whom, and in whom, he made all things freely and willingly; to whom he spake, saying, *Let us make man*, etc." And a little after, "that the *Word*, that is, the *Son*, was always with the *Father*, we have abundant proof;" and then mentions *Proverbs* 3:19 and *Proverbs* 8:22, etc.

4. *Athenagoras*, who flourished at *Athens*, in the times of *Antoninus* and *Commodus*, to which emperors he wrote an apology for the Christians, in which he has these words,^[44] "Let not any think it ridiculous in me that I speak of *God* as having a *Son*, for not as the poets fable, who make their *Gods* nothing better than men, do we think either of *God* and the *Father*, or of the *Son*; but the *Son of God* is the *Word of the Father*, in idea and efficacy *for of him, and him are all things made*, seeing the *Father* and the *Son* are one; so that the *Son* is in the *Father*, and the *Father* is in the *Son*, by the union and power of the *Spirit*; the mind, and word of the *Father* is the *Son of God*; now if any through the sublimity of your understanding would look further and inquire what the *Son* means, I will tell him in a few words, that he is the *first birth of the Father*; not as made, for from the beginning, *God* being the eternal mind, he had the word in himself (the $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\omega$, or reason) being *eternally rational*, (that is, "never without his word and wisdom) but as coming forth is the idea and energy of all things." For which he produces as a proof *Proverbs* 8:22 and then proceeds, "Who therefore cannot wonder, to hear us called atheists, who speak of *God* the *Father*, and of *God* the *Son*, and the holy *Spirit*, shewing their power in unity and their distinction in order?" A little farther,^[45] he strongly expresses the doctrine of the *Trinity in Unity*; "We assert *God* and the *Son* his *Word*, and the holy *Ghost*, united indeed according to power, the *Father*, the *Son*, the *Spirit*, for

the Mind, Word and Wisdom, is the Son of the Father, and the Spirit an emanation, or influence, as light from fire."

5. *Theophilus*, bishop of *Antioch*, flourished under the emperor *Antoninus Verus*: in a treatise of his^[46] he has these words concerning the Word and Son of God, "God having his λογον ενδιαθετον, internal word within himself, *begat him*, when he brought him forth with his wisdom *before all things*; this word he used in working those things that were made by him, and he made all things by him. — The prophets were not when the world was made; but the wisdom of God, which is in him, and the holy word of God, was always present with him;" in proof of which he produces Proverbs 8:27, And in another place,^[47] speaking of the voice *Adam* heard, says, "What else is the voice, but the word of God who is his Son? not as the poets and writers of fables, who say, the sons of the gods are born of copulation; but as the truth declares, the internal Word being always in the heart of God, before any thing was made, him he had as his counselor, being his mind and prudence, when God would do what he counseled, he begat the Word, and having begotten the Word, the first-born of every creature, he always conversed with his Word," for which he quotes John 1:1-3.

6. *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, flourished under the emperors *Severus* and *Caracalla*, towards the latter end of the second century, he bears a plain testimony to the doctrine of the Trinity, concluding one of his treatises thus,^[48] "Let us give thanks, praising the only Father and the Son, both teachers, with the holy Spirit, in which are all things, in whom are all things, and by whom all are one, — to whom "be glory now and for ever, *Amen*" He speaks^[49] of Christ the perfect word, as born of the perfect Father; and says^[50] of the Son of God, "that he never goes out of his watchtower, who is not divided nor dissected, nor passes from place to place, but is always every where, is contained no where, all mind, all paternal light, all eye; who sees all things, hears all things knows all things by his power, searches powers, and to whom the whole militia of angels and gods (magistrates) is subject. — This is the Son of God, the Savior and Lord whom we speak of, and the divine prophecies shew." A little after he speaks of him as, "*begotten without beginning*, that is, eternally begotten, and who, before the foundation of the world, was the Father's counselor, that wisdom in whom the almighty God delighted; for Son is the power of God; who before all things were made, was the most ancient word of the Father. — Every operation of the Lord has a reference to the almighty; and the Son is, as I may say, a certain energy of the Father." This ancient writer frequently attacks and refutes the Carpocratians, Valentinians, and Gnostics, and other heretics of this and the preceding age. I proceed,

III. To the third century, The heresies which sprung up in this age respecting the Person, Sonship, and Deity of Christ, were those of *Berullus*, who revived that of *Artemon*, and of the Noetians or Sabellians, sometimes called Patripassians, and of the Samosatensians.

1st, *Beryllus*, bishop of *Bostra* in *Arctia*, who for some time behaved well in his office, as *Jerom* says,^[51] but at length fell into this notion, that Christ was not before his incarnation; or as *Eusebius*^[52] expresses it, that our Lord and Savior did not subsist in his own substance before he sojourned among men, and had no deity of his own residing in him, but his Father's; but through disputations he had with several bishops and particularly with *Origen*, he was recovered from his error and restored to the truth.

2. The Noetians, so called from *Noctus*, and afterwards Sabellians, from *Sabellius*, a disciple of the former; those held that Father, Son, and Spirit, are one person under these different names. The foundation of their heresy was laid by *Simon Magus*, as before observed. They were sometimes called Praxeans and Hermogeniaus, from *Praxeus* and *Hermogenes*, the first authors of it, who embraced the same notions in this period, and sometimes Patripassians, because, in consequence of this principle, they held that the Father might be said to suffer as the Son.[\[53\]](#)

3. The Samosatensians, so called from *Paul of Samosate*, bishop of *Antioch*, who revived the heresy of *Artemo*, that Christ was a mere man. He held that Christ was no other than a common man; he refused to own that he was the Son of God, come from heaven; he denied that the only begotten Son and Word was God of God: he agreed with the Noetians and Sabellians, that there was but one person in the Godhead;[\[54\]](#) of these notions he was convicted, and for them condemned by the synod at *Antioch*.[\[55\]](#)

The writers of this age are but few, whose writings have been continued and transmitted to us; but those we have, strongly opposed the errors now mentioned; the chief are *Tertullian*, *Origen*, and *Cyprian*, besides in some

fragments of others.

1. *Tertullian*, He wrote against *Praxeus*, who held the same notion that *Noctus* and *Sabellius* did, in which work he not only expresses his firm belief of the Trinity in Unity, saying;[\[56\]](#) "nevertheless the economy is preserved, which disposes Unity into Trinity, three, not in state or nature, essence) but in degree (or person) not in substance but in form, not in power but in species, of one substance, of one state, and of one power, because but one God, from whom these degrees, forms and species are deputed, under the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," And that he means three distinct persons, is clear from what he afterwards says: "whatsoever therefore was the substance of the Word, that I call a person, and to him I give the name of Son; and whilst I acknowledge a Son, I defend a second from the Father." The distinction of the Father and Son from each other, and the eternal generation of the one from the other, are fully expressed by him "this rule as professed by me, is every where held; by which I testify, the Father, Son, and Spirit are inseparable from each other; —for Lo, I say, another is the Father, and another is the Son, and another is the holy Spirit; —not that the Son is another from the Father, by diversity, but by distribution; not another by division, but by distinction: —another is he that *generates*, and another he that is *generated*: —a "Father must needs have Son that he may be a Father, and the Son a Father that he may be a Son." And again, he explains the words in *Proverbs* 8:22. (*The Lord possessed me*) of the generation of the Son; and on the clause, *when he prepared the heavens, I was with him*, he remarks, "thereby making himself equal to him, by proceeding from whom he became the Son and first born, as being *begotten before all things*; and the only begotten, as being alone begotten of God." On these words, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, he observes[\[57\]](#) to *Praxeas*, "If you would have me believe that he is both Father and Son, shew me such a passage elsewhere, *The Lord said unto himself, I am my Son, this day have I begotten my self*." And in another work[\[58\]](#) of his, he has these words, speaking of the Word, "this we learn is brought forth from God, and by being brought forth *generated*, and therefore called the Son of God, and God, from the unity of substance; —so that what comes from God, is God, and the Son of God, and both one:" that is, one God.

2. *Origen*. Notwithstanding his many errors, he is very express for the doctrine of the Trinity, and the distinction of the Father and Son in it, and of the eternal generation of the Son: he observes^[59] of the Seraphim, in Isaiah 6:3 that by saying, "*Holy, holy, holy*, they preserve the mystery of the Trinity; that it was not enough for them to cry *holy* once nor twice, but they take up the perfect number of the Trinity, that they might manifest the multitude of the holiness of God, which is the repeated community of the trine holiness, the holiness of the Father, the holiness of the only begotten Son, and of the holy Spirit." And elsewhere,^[60] allegorizing the show-bread, and the two tenth deals in one cake, he asks, how two tenths become one lump? because, says he, "we do not separate the Son from the Father, nor the Father from the Son (John 14:90, therefore each loaf is of two tenths, and set in two positions, that is in two rows, for if there was one position, it would be confused, and the Word would be mixed of the Father and the Son, but now indeed it is but one bread for them is one will and one substance; but there are two positions; that is, two proprieties of persons (or proper persons for we call him, the Father who is not the Son: and him the Son who is not the Father:" Of the generation of the Son of God he thus speaks,^[61] "Jesus Christ himself, who is come, was begotten of the Father before every creature was." And again,^[62] "it is abominable and unlawful to equal God the Father in the *generation of his only begotten Son*, and in his substance, to any one, men or other kind of animals: but there must needs be some exception, and something worthy of God, to which there can be, no comparison, not in things only, but indeed not in thought: nor can it be found by sense, nor can the human thought apprehend, how the unbegotten God is the Father of the only begotten Son: for *generation is eternal*, as brightness is generated from light, for he is not a Son by adoption of the Spirit extrinsically, but he is a *Son by nature*."

3. *Cyprian*. Little is to be met with in his writings on this subject. The following is the most remarkable and particular;^[63] "the voice of the Father was heard from heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased hear ye him*; — that this voice came from thy paternity, there is none that doubts; there is none who dares to arrogate this word to himself; there is none among the heavenly troops who dare call the Lord Jesus his Son. Certainly to thee only the Trinity is known, the Father only knows the Son, and the Son knows the Father, neither is he known by any unless he reveals him; in, the school of "divine teaching, the Father is he that teaches and, instructs, "the Son who reveals and opens the secrets of God unto us, and the holy Spirit who fits and furnishes us; from the Father we receive power, from the Son wisdom, and from the holy Spirit innocence. The Father chooses, the Son loves, the Holy Spirit joins and unites; from the Father is given us eternity, from the Son conformity to him his image, and from the holy spirit integrity and liberty; in the Father we are, in the Son we live, in the holy Spirit we are moved, and become proficient; eternal deity and temporal humanity meet together, and by the tenor of both natures is made an unity, that it is impossible that what is joined should be separated from one another." As for the Exposition of the Creed, which stands among *Cyprian's* works, and is sometimes attributed to him, it was done by *Ruffinus*, and the testimonies from thence will be produced in the proper place.

4. *Gregory of Neocaesarea*, sometimes called *Thaumaturgus*, the wonder-worker, lived in this century, to whom is ascribed^[64] the following confession of faith; "One God, the Father of the living Word, of subsisting wisdom and power, and of the eternal character, perfect begetter of the perfect One, Father of the only begotten Son: and God the Son, who is through all. The perfect Trinity, which in glory eternity and kingdom, cannot be divided · nor alienated. Not therefore anything created or servile is in the Trinity, nor any thing super-induced, nor first and last; nor did the Son ever want a Father, nor the Son a Spirit: but the Trinity is always the same, immutable and

invariable." And among his twelve articles of faith, with an anathema annexed to them, this is one: "If any one says, another is the Son who was before the world, and another who was in the last times, and does not confess, that he who was before the world, and he who was in the last times, is the same, as it is written, let him be anathema." The interpolation follows; how can it be said, another is the Son of God before the world was, and another in the last days, when the Lord says, *before Abraham was, I am*; and because *I came forth from the Father, and am come*; and again, *I go to my Father*?"

5. *Dionysius*, bishop of *Alexandria*, was a disciple of *Origen*: he wrote against the Sabellians,^[65] but none of his writings are extant, only some fragments preserved in other authors. And whereas *Arius* made use of some passages of his, and improved them in favor of his own notions, *Athanasius* from him shows the contrary, as where in one of his volumes he expressly says,^[66] that "there never was a time in which God was not a Father; and in the following acknowledges, that Christ the Word, Wisdom and Power, always was; that he is the eternal Son of the eternal Father; for if there is a Father, there must be a Son; and if there was no Son, how could he be the Father of any? but there are both, and always were. The Son alone always co-existed with the Father. God the Father always was; and the Father being eternal, the Son also is eternal, and co-existed with him as brightness with light." And in answer to another objection, made against him, that when he mentioned the Father, he said nothing of the Son; and when he named the Son, said nothing of the Father; it is observed,^[67] that in another volume of his; he says, that each of these names spoken of by me; are inseparable and indivisible from one another; when I speak of the Father, and before I introduce the Son, I signify him in the Father; when I introduce the Son; though I have not before spoken of the Father, he is always to be understood in the Son."

6. The errors of *Paulus Samosate* were condemned by the synod at *Antioch*, towards the latter end of this century, by whom^[68] a formula or confession of faith was agreed to, in which are these words. "We profess that our Lord Jesus Christ was *begotten of the Father before ages*, according to the Spirit, and in the last days, born of a virgin, according to the flesh." The word ομοουσιω , *consubstantial*, is used in their creed. Towards the close of this century, and at the beginning of the next, lived *Lactantius*, (for he lived under *Dioclesian*, and to the times of *Constantine*) who asserts,^[69] that God, the maker of all things, begat "a Spirit holy, incorruptible, and irreprehensible, whom he called the Son." He asks,^[70] "how hath he procreated? The divine works can neither be known nor declared by any; nevertheless the scriptures teach, that the Son of God is the Word of God." Nothing more is to be observed in this century. I pass on,

IV. To the fourth century, in which rose up the: Arians and Photinians, and others, 1st, The Arians, so called from *Arius*, a presbyter of the church at *Alexandria*, in the beginning of this century, who took occasion from some words dropped in disputation by *Alexander* his bishop, to oppose him, and start the heresy that goes under his name; and though the eternal Sonship of Christ was virtually denied by preceding heretics, who affirmed that Christ did not exist before *Mary*; in opposition to whom the orthodox affirmed, that he was *begotten, of the Father before all worlds*; yet *Arius* was, the first, who pretended to acknowledge the Trinity, that actually and in express words set himself to oppose the eternal Sonship of Christ by generation; and argued much in the same manner as those do, who oppose it now: for being a man who had a good share of knowledge of the art of logic, as the historian observes,^[71] he reasoned thus: "If the Father begat the Son, he that is begotten, must have a beginning of his existence, from whence it is manifest, that there was

a time when the Son was not; and therefore it necessarily follows, that he had his subsistence from things that are not;" or was brought out of a state of non existence into a state of existence. He understood *generated* in no other sense than of being *created* or *made*; and asserted, that he was created by God before time, and was the first creature, and by which he made all others; in proof of which he urged Proverbs 8:22 taking the advantage of the Greek version, which, instead of *possessed me*, reads *created me the beginning of his ways*. His sentiments will more fully appear from his own words in his epistles to *Eusebius of Nicomedia*, and to his own bishop, *Alexander of Alexandria*; in his letter to the former, he says,^[72] "Our sentiments and doctrines are, that the Son is not unbegotten, nor a part of the unbegotten in any manner, nor out of any subject matter, but that by will and counsel he subsisted before times and ages, perfect God, the only begotten, immutable; and that before he was begotten or created, or decreed or established, he was not, for he was not unbegotten; we are persecuted because we say, *the Son had a beginning*, but God is without beginning: for this we are persecuted, and because we say, that he is of things that did not exist (that is, out of nothing;) so we say, that he is not a part of God, nor out of any subject-matter; and for this we are persecuted." And in his letter to his bishop, he thus expresses himself,^[73] "We acknowledge one God, the only unbegotten; — that this God begot the only begotten Son before time, by whom he made the world, and the rest of things; that he begot him not in appearance, but in reality; and that by his will he subsisted, immutable and unalterable, a perfect creature, but as one of the creatures, a birth, but as one of the births — We say, that he was created before times and ages, by the will of God, and received his life and being from the Father; so that the Father together appointed glories for him; — The Son without time was begotten by the Father, and was created and established before the world was; he was not before he was begotten, but without time was begotten before all things, and subsisted alone from the alone Father; neither is eternal nor co-eternal, nor co-unbegotten with the Father, nor had he a being together with the Father." What he held is also manifest from his creed,^[74] which he delivered in the following words, "I believe in one eternal God, and in his Son whom he created before the world, and as God he made the Son, and all the Son has, he has not (of himself,) he receives from God, and therefore the Son is not equal to, and of the same dignity with the Father, but comes short of the glory of God, as a workmanship; and in less than the power of God. I believe in the holy Ghost, who is made by the Son."

The Arians were sometimes called Aetians, from *Aetius*, a warm defender of the doctrine of *Arius*, and who stumbled at the same thing that *Arius* did; for he could not understand, the historian says,^[75] how that which is begotten could be co-eternal with him that begets; but when *Arius* dissembled and signed that form of doctrine in the Nicene Synod, *Aetius* took the opportunity of breaking off from the Arians, and of setting up a distinct sect, and himself at the head of them. These were after called Eunomians, from *Eunomius*, a disciple of *Aetius*; he is said^[76] to add to and to exceed the blasphemy of *Arius*; he with great boldness renewed the heresy of *Aetius*, who not only after *Arius* asserted that the Son was created out of nothing, but that he was unlike to the Father.^[77] Hence the followers of these men were called Anomoeans. There was another sect called Nativitarians, who were a sucker or branch that sprung from the Eunomians, and refined upon them; these held that the Son had his nativity of the Father, and the beginning of it from time; yet being willing to own: that he was co-eternal with the Father, thought that he was with him before he was begotten of him, that is, that he always was, but not always a Son, but that he began to be a Son from the time he was begotten There is a near approach to the sentiments of these in some of our days.

The Arians were also called Macedonians, from *Macedonius* a violent persecutor of the orthodox, called Homoousians,"[78] who believed that the Son is of the same substance with the Father; but this man afterwards becoming bishop of *Constantinople*, refused to call him a creature, whom the holy scripture calls the Son; and therefore the Arians rejected him, and he became the author and patron of his own sect; he denied the Son was consubstantial with the Father, but taught, that in all things he was like to him that begat him, and in express words called the Spirit a creature,[79] and the denial of the deity of the holy Spirit is the distinguishing tenet of his followers.

2dly, The Photinians rose up much about the same time the Arians did, for they are made mention of in the council of *Nice*, but their opinions differ from the Arians. These were sometimes called Marcellians, from *Marcellius* of *Ancyra*, whose disciple *Photinus* was, and from him named Photinians. He was bishop of *Syrmium*; his notions were the same with *Ebion*, and *Paul* of *Samosate*, that Christ was a mere man, and was only of *Mary*; he would not admit of the generation and existence of Christ before the world was.[80] His followers were much the same with our modern Socinians, and who are sometimes called by the same name. According to *Thomas Aquinas*,[81] the Photinians, and so the Cerinthians, Ebionites, and Samosatensians before them, as they held that Christ was a mere man, and took his beginning from *Mary*, so that he only obtained the honor of deity above others by, the merit of his blessed life; that he was, like other men, the Son of God by the Spirit of adoption, and by grace born of him, and by some likeness to God is in Scripture called God, not by nature, but by some participation of divine goodness.

These heresies were condemned by the several councils and synods held on account of them, and were refuted by various sound and valuable writers who lived in this century: to produce all their testimonies would be endless: I shall only take notice of a few, and particularly such as respect the Sonship of Christ.

1. The tenets of *Arius* were condemned by the council held at *Nice* in *Bythia*, consisting of three hundred and eighteen bishops, by whom was composed the following creed or agreement of faith, as the historian calls it:[82] "We believe in one God the Father Almighty, the maker of all things, visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten, begotten of the Father, that is, out of the substance of the Father, God of God, light of light, true God of true God; begotten not made, consubstantial (or of the same essence) with the Father, by whom all things are made which are in heaven and in earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, descended and became incarnate, and was made man and suffered, and rose again the third day; ascended up into heaven, and will come to judge the quick and the dead. And we believe in the holy Spirit. As for those that say, there was a time when the Son of God was not, and before he was begotten was not, and that he was made of what does not exist (out of nothing), and say, he was from another substance, or essence, or created, or turned, or changed; the holy catholic and apostolic church anathematizes."

2. *Athanasius* was a famous champion for the doctrines of the Trinity, the proper Sonship of Christ, and his eternal generation; to produce all the testimonies from him that might be produced in proof of those doctrines, would be to transcribe a great part of his writings; it may be sufficient to give his creed; not that which is commonly called the Athanasian creed, which, whether penned by him is a doubt, but that which stands in his works, and was delivered by him in a personal disputation with *Arius*, and is as follows; which he calls an epitome of his faith.[83] "I believe in one God the

Father, the almighty, being always God the Father; and I believe in God the Word, the only begotten Son of God, that he co-existed with his own Father; that he is the equal Son of the Father, and that he is the Son of God; of the same dignity; that he is always with his Father by his deity, and that he contains all things in his essence; but the Son of God is not contained by any, even as God his Father: and I believe in the Holy Ghost, that he is of the essence of the Father, and that the Holy Spirit is co-eternal with the Father and with the Son. The Word, I say, was made flesh." After this I would only just observe, that *Athanasius* having said that the Son was without beginning and eternally begotten of the Father, farther says,[\[84\]](#) that he was begotten ineffably and inconceivably; and elsewhere he says,[\[85\]](#) "it is superfluous or rather full of madness to call in question, and in an heretical manner to ask, how can the Son be eternal? or, how can he be of the substance (or essence) of the Father, and not be a part of him?" And a little farther, "it is unbecoming to inquire how the Word is of God, or how he is the brightness of God, or how God begets, and what is the mode of the generation of God: he must be a madman that will attempt such things, since the thing is ineffable, and proper to the nature of God only, this is only known to himself and his Son."

3. *Alexander*, bishop of *Alexandria*, whom *Arius* opposed, and should have been mentioned first, in an epistle of his to *Alexander*, bishop of *Constantinople*,[\[86\]](#) acquaints him with the opinion of *Arius*, that there was a time when the Son of God wits not, and he that was not before, afterwards existed, and such was he made, when he was made as every man is; and that the Son of God is out of things that are not, or out of nothing; he observes to him, that what was his faith and the faith of others, was the faith of the apostolic church: "We believe in one unbegotten Father, — and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; not begotten out of that which is not, but from the Father; that exists, not in a corporal manner by incision, or deflections of divisions, as seemed to *Sabeilius* and *Valentinus*, but in a manner ineffable and inexplicable."

4. *Epiphanius* wrote a volume against all heresies, and attempts a confutation of them: and with respect to the Arian heresy, he thus writes;[\[87\]](#) "God existing incomprehensible, has begat him that is incomprehensible, *before all ages and times*, and there is no space between the Son and the Father, but as soon as you understand a Father, you understand a Son, and as soon as you name a Father you shew a Son; the Son is understood by the Father, and the Father is known by the Son; whence a Son, if he has not a Father? and whence a Father, if he has not begat an only begotten Son? For when is it the Father cannot be called a Father, or the Son, a Son? Though some think of a Father without a Son, who afterwards comes to a proficiency and begets a Son, and so after the birth is called the Father of that Son: the Father who is perfect, and never wants perfection, making a progress or proficiency in the deity."

5. *Hilary*, bishop of *Poitiers* in *France*, wrote against the Arians, and says many things in opposition to their tenets, concerning the Sonship of Christ, and his eternal generation; among others, he says[\[88\]](#) "the unbegotten *begot* a Son of himself *before all time*, not from any subjacent matter, for all things are by the Son, nor out of nothing, for the Son is from him himself. — He begot the only begotten in an incomprehensible and unspeakable manner, before all time and ages, of that which is unbegotten, and so of the unbegotten, perfect and eternal Father, is the only begotten, perfect and eternal Son."

6. *Faustinus* the presbyter, wrote a treatise against the Arians; who observes, that they sometimes use the same words and phrases the orthodox do, but not in the same sense; they speak of God the

Father and of God the Son, but when they speak of the Father, it is not of one who truly begets, and when they speak of the Son, it is of him as a Son by adoption, not by nature; and when they speak of him as a Son begotten before the world was, they attribute a beginning to him, and that there was a time when he was not; and so they assert him to be of things not existent, that is, of nothing. He asks, "How is he truly a Father, who, according to them, does not beget (truly)? and how is Christ truly a Son, whom they deny to be generated of him?" And again, "How is he the only begotten of the Father, since he cannot be the only begotten, other Sons existing by adoption? but if he is truly the only begotten by the Father, therefore because he only is truly generated of the Father." And elsewhere,[\[89\]](#) "They say God made himself a Son; if he made him out of nothing, then is he a creature, and not a Son. What is he that you call a Son, whom you confirm to be a creature, since you say he is made out of nothing? therefore you cannot call him both a Son and a creature; for a Son is from birth, a creature from being made." And again,[\[90\]](#) "In this alone the Father differs from the Son, that the one is a Father, the other a Son; that is the one begets and the other is begotten; yet not because he is begotten has he any thing less than what is in God the Father" (Heb.1:3). Once more[\[91\]](#) "God alone is properly a true Father, who is a Father without beginning and end, for he did not sometime begin: he is a Father, but he was always a Father, having always a Son begotten of him, as he is always the true God, continuing without beginning and end."

7. *Gregory*, bishop of *Nazianzum*, gives many testimonies to the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Sonship and generation of Christ, against the Arians and Eunomians: among which are the following: "We ought, says he,[\[92\]](#) to acknowledge one God the Father, without beginning and unbegotten; and one Son, begotten of the Father; and one Spirit, having subsistence from God, yielding to the Father, because he is unbegotten, and to the Son, because he is begotten; otherwise of the same nature, dignity, honor and glory." And elsewhere he says,[\[93\]](#) "If you ask me, I will answer you again, When was the Son begotten? When the Father was not begotten. When did the Spirit proceed? When the Son did not proceed, but was begotten before time, and beyond expression. — How can it be proved, that they (the Son and Spirit) are, co-eternal with the Father? From hence, because they are of him, and not after him, for what is without beginning is eternal." And then he goes on to answer the several objections made to the generation of the Son by the Eunomians. Again he says,[\[94\]](#) "Believe the Son of God, the word that was *before all ages begotten* of the Father before time, and in an incorporeal manner; the same in the last clays made the Son of man for thy sake, coming forth from the virgin *Mary* in an unspeakable manner." And elsewhere he says,[\[95\]](#) "Do you hear of generation? do not curiously inquire how it is. Do you hear that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father? do not be anxiously solicitous how it is: for if you curiously search into the generation of the Son, and the procession of the Spirit, I shall curiously inquire into the temperament of the soul and body, how thou art dust, and yet the image of God? How the mind remains in thee, and begets a word in another mind?"

8. *Basil*, called the great archbishop of *Caesarea Cappadocia*, wrote a treatise against *Eunomius*, in which he says,[\[96\]](#) "As there is one God the Father always remaining the Father, and who is for ever what he is; so there is one Son, born by an eternal generation, who is the true Son of God, who always is what he is, God the Word and Lord; and one holy Spirit, truly the holy Spirit." Again,[\[97\]](#) "Why therefore, O incredulous man, who dost not believe that God has an own Son, dost thou inquire how God begets? if truly thou askest of God how and where also, as in a place and when as in time; which, if absurd to ask such things concerning God, it will be more abominable not to believe." And a little after he says,[\[98\]](#) "If God made all out of nothing by his will, without labor,

and that is not incredible to us; it will certainly be more credible to all, that it; became God to beget an own Son of himself, in the divine nature, without passion, of equal honor, and of equal glory, a counselor of the same seat, a co-operator consubstantial with God the Father; not of a divers substance, nor alien from his sole deity; for if he is not so, neither is he adorable, for it is written *thou shall not worship a strange God.*"

9. *Gregory*, bishop of *Nyssa*, the brother of *Basil*, wrote against *Eunomius*, in which we have this passage.[\[99\]](#) "He (*Eunomius*) does say, that he (the Son) was truly begotten before the world. Let him say of whom he was begotten: he must say of the Father entirely, if he is not ashamed of the truth; but from the eternal Father there is no separating the eternity of the Son; the word Father "contains a Son."

10. *Ambrose*, bishop of *Milan*, after having said many things in opposition to *Arius*, *Sabellius*, *Phontius*, and *Eunomius*, observes, that "when you speak of a Father, you also design his Son, for no man is a father to himself; and when you name a son, you confess his father, for no man is a son to himself; therefore neither the son can lie without the father, nor the father without the son; therefore always a father and always a son." He has also these words:[\[100\]](#) "You ask me, how he can be a son if he has not a prior father? I ask of you also, when or how you think the Son is generated? for to me it is impossible to know the secret of generation; the mind fails, the voice is silent; and not mine only, but that of the angels; it is above angels, above powers, above cherubim, above seraphim, and above all understanding, if the peace of Christ is above all understanding (Phil, 4:7), must not such a generation be above all understanding?" And in another place,[\[101\]](#) "God the Father begat the Word *co-eternal* with himself and co-omnipotent, with whom he produced the holy Spirit; hence we believe that the substance of the Son and of the holy Spirit existed before any creature, out of all time; that the Father is the begetter, the Son is begotten, and the holy Spirit the holiness and the Spirit of the begetter and the begotten."

11. *Jerom* the presbyter, and a noted writer in this century, speaking of the Arians says,[\[102\]](#) "Let them understand, that they glory in vain of the testimony in which Wisdom speaks of being created in the beginning of the ways of God, and begotten and established; for it, according to them, he was created, he could not be begotten or born: if begotten or born, how could he be established and created?" And a little after he says "God, the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a Father according to substance (or essence,) and the only begotten is not a Son. by adoption, but by nature; whatsoever we say of the Father and the Son, this we know is said of the holy Spirit." Here the creed of *Damasus* might be taken notice of, in which he says, "God has begot a Son, not by will nor by necessity, but by nature;" and in the explanation of it, it is said, "Not because we say the Son is begotten of the Father by a divine and ineffable generation, do we ascribe any time to him, for neither the Father nor the Son began to be at any time; nor do we any otherwise confess an eternal Father, but we also confess a co-eternal Son." Also *Ruffinus's* exposition of the apostles creed, which stands among *Jerom's* works, "when you hear of a Father, understand the Father of a Son, the image of his substance; but how God begat a Son do not discuss, nor curiously intrude into the depth of this secret.[\[103\]](#)

12. The errors of the Photinians were not only confuted by the several above writers, but *Photinus* himself was condemned by the synod at *Syrmium*, of which place he had been bishop; and in the formula of faith agreed on therein, among others, are the following articles,[\[104\]](#) "We believe in

one God the Father almighty, the creator and maker of all things; — and in his only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who was *begotten of the Father before all ages*; — and in the holy Spirit: — and as to those that say, that the Son is of things that are not, (or of nothing) or of another substance, and not of God; and that there was a time or age when he was not, the holy and catholic church reckons them as aliens. — If any one dare to say, that the unbegotten or a part of him was born of *Mary*, let him be anathema: and if any one say that he is the Son of *Mary* by prescience, and not begotten of the Father before the world, and was with God by whom all things are made, let him be anathema. — If any one says, that Christ Jesus was not the Son of God before the world was, and ministered to the Father at the creation of all things, but only from the time he was born of *Mary* was called Son and Christ, and then received the beginning of deity, let him be anathema, as a Samosatenean."

13. The formulas, creeds, and confessions of faith, made by different persons, and at different places, besides the Nicene creed, and even some that differed in other things from that and from one another, yet all agreed in inserting the clause respecting their faith in Christ, the only begotten Son, as *begotten of the father before all ages*, or *the world was*; as at *Antioch, Syrmium, Ariminum, Selucia, and Constantinople*.[\[105\]](#)

14. Before the Nicene creed was made, or any of the above creeds, this was an article of faith with the orthodox Christians, that Christ was the eternal begotten Son of God. From the Writings of *Cyril*, bishop of *Jerusalem*, who lived in the fourth century, may be collected a symbol or creed containing the faith of the church, and in which this article is fully expressed;[\[106\]](#) that Christ "is the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, the true God by whom all things are made;" and which article he strongly asserts and defends; and the creed which he explains, is thought to be the[\[107\]](#) same which the first and ancient church always professed, and from the beginning; and perhaps is what *Eusebius*[\[108\]](#) refers unto, who was bishop of *Caesarea in Palestine*, when he declared his faith in the council at *Nice*; our formula, says he, which was read in the presence of our emperor (*Constantine*) most dear to God, is as we received it *from the bishops that were before us*; and as when catechized and received the laver (that is, were baptized,) and as we learnt from the divine writings, and is in this manner, "We believe in one God the Father Almighty, — and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the only begotten Son, the first-born of every creature, *begotten of God the Father before all worlds*, by whom all things are made, etc." Nor indeed was the word ὁμοουσιος , *consubstantial*, which expresses the Son's being of the same substance, nature and essence with the Father, a new word,[\[109\]](#) devised in the council of *Nice*; for it was in use before,[\[110\]](#) as *Athanasius* has proved from the same *Eusebius*. "The bishops, he says, (that is, those assembled at *Nice*) did not invent these words of themselves, but having a testimony from the Fathers, so they wrote; for the ancient bishops near a hundred and thirty years before, both in the great city of *Rome*, and in our city (*Alexandria*) reproved those that said that the Son was a creature, and not *consubstantial* with the Father;" and this *Eusebius* who was bishop of *Caesarea*, knew, who first gave into the Arian heresy, but afterwards subscribed to the synod at *Nice*; for being confirmed, he wrote to his own people thus,[\[111\]](#) "We find, says he, some sayings of the ancient and famous bishops and writers, who use the word *consubstantial* in treating of the deity of the Father and of the Son." And certain it is, that it is used by *Gregory of Neocaesarea*,[\[112\]](#) who lived before the council of *Nice*, and by the synod at *Antioch* in their creed,[\[113\]](#) held A. D. 277.

V. In the fifth century Arianism continued and prospered, having many abettors, as well as many who opposed it: other heresies also arose, and some in opposition to the Sonship of Christ.

1st. *Felicianus*, the Arian, argued against it thus, "If Christ was born of a virgin, how can he be said to be co-eternal with God the Father?" To whom *Austin* replied, "The Son of God entered into the womb of the virgin, that he might be again born, who had been already begotten before, he received the whole man (or whole humanity) who had had already perfect deity from the Father, not unlike was he to the begetter, when being everlasting he was begotten from eternity, nor unlike to men when born of his mother."

2dly, *Faustus*, the Manichee, asserted, that according to the evangelists, Christ was not the Son of God, only the Son of *David*, until he was thirty years of age, and was baptized: to which *Austin* replied, "The catholic and apostolic faith is, that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is the Son of God according to Deity, and the Son of *David*, according to the flesh: which we so prove from the evangelic and apostolic writings, as that no man can contradict our proofs, unless he contradicts limit express words." [\[114\]](#)

3dly, The Priscillianists asserted that Christ is called the only begotten Son of God, because he only was born of a virgin; to which *Leo Magnus* makes answer, "Let them take which they will, their tenets tend to great impiety, whether they mean, that the Lord Christ had his beginning from his mother, or deny him to be the only begotten of God the Father; since he was born of his mother, who was God the Word, and none is begotten of the Father but the Word." [\[115\]](#)

The writers in this century are many, who have plainly and strongly asserted the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ: as *Augustine*, *Chrysostom*, *Proclus* archbishop of *Constantinople*, *Leo Magnus*, *Theodoret*, *Cyril of Alexandria*, [\[116\]](#) *Paulinus*, *Victor*, *Maximus Taurinensis*, etc. it may be abundantly sufficient only to mention the following formulas, or confessions of faith.

1. Of *Augustine*, bishop of *Hippo*, or of *Sennadius*, presbyter of *Marseilles in France*, to whom it is sometimes ascribed: "We believe there is one God, the Father, Son, and holy Spirit; the Father because he has a Son, the Son because he has a Father; the holy Spirit because he is from the Father and the Son (proceeding and co-eternal with the Father and the Son,) — the eternal Father, because he has an eternal Son, of whom he is the eternal Father; the eternal Son, because he is co-eternal with the Father and the holy Spirit; the eternal holy Spirit, because he is co-eternal with the Father and the Son." [\[117\]](#)

2. Of *Flavianus*, bishop of *Constantinople*, which he delivered in conc. *Constantinop.* A. D. 448 approved of by the synod at *Chalcedon*, A. D. 451. "Our Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and body; *begotten* indeed of the *Father*, without beginning and *before the world*, according to deity, but in the end, in the last days, the same was born of the virgin *Mary* for our salvation, according to humanity; consubstantial with the Father, according to deity, consubstantial with his mother according to "humanity; for of two natures we confess that Christ is after the incarnation in one subsistence, in one person. we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord." [\[118\]](#)

3. Of the council at *Chalcedon*, consisting of six hundred and thirty Fathers; "Following the holy fathers, say they, we all harmoniously teach and confess our Lord Jesus Christ: that he is perfect in deity and perfect in humanity, truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and body; co-essential with the Father according to the deity, and co-essential with us according to the humanity, in all things like unto us, excepting sin, but *begotten of the Father before the world*, according to the deity: and in the last days, for us and our salvation, was of the virgin *Mary*, the mother of our Lord, according to the humanity, etc."[\[119\]](#)

VI. In the sixth century were a sort of heretics called *Bo-o-nosians*, who held that Christ was not the proper but adoptive Son; against whom *dustinian* bishop of *Valae* in *Spain* wrote;[\[120\]](#) and Arianism spread and prevailed under the Gothic kings in several parts. *Fulgentius* speaks of the tenets of the Arians in this time, that the Word or Son of God was not of the same substance with the Father.[\[121\]](#) This author wrote an answer to ten objections of theirs: to the first, concerning diversity of words and names used, he replies, "When Father and Son are named, in these two names a diversity of words is acknowledged, but neither by those two different words the nature of both is signified, for the diversity of those names does not divide the natures, but shows the truth of the generation, as from one true Father, we know that one true Son exists." To the second objection, concerning the ineffability of generation, he observes, "because the generation of the Son is unspeakable, it is not unknowable, nor does it follow, because it cannot be declared, that it cannot be known."[\[122\]](#)

Chilpericus, king of the *Franks*, endeavored to revive the Sabellian heresy, but was opposed by *Gregory Furnensis*:[\[123\]](#) besides *Fulgentius* and *Gregory*, there were others in this age who asserted and defended the eternal generation and Son-ship of Christ, as *Fortunatus*, *Cassiodorus*, *Gregorius Magnus*, and others;[\[124\]](#) and even by a synod consisting of Gothic bishops,[\[125\]](#) in number sixty three. In the same century the famous *Boetius* declares his faith in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the holy Ghost; that the Father has a Son begotten of his substance, and co-eternal with him, whose generation no human mind can conceive of.[\[126\]](#)

VII. In the seventh century, towards the beginning of it, rose up that vile impostor *Mahomet*, as bitter an enemy to the true, proper and eternal Sonship of Christ, as ever was, for which he gave the following brutish and stupid reasons; "because God did not need a Son, because if he had a Son, they might not agree, and so the government of the world be disturbed."[\[127\]](#) Reasons which require no answer, Not to take notice of the several councils at *Toletum*, held in this century, in which the article of Christ's eternal Son-ship was asserted and maintained, I would observe what is said in a Roman synod, consisting of a *hundred and twenty five* bishops, in which *Agatho* the Roman pontiff presided; "We believe, say they, in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in his only begotten Son, who was begotten of him before all worlds."[\[128\]](#)

VIII. In the eighth century, the notion that Christ, though the true, proper, and natural Son of God according to the divine nature, yet according to the human nature was only the Son of God by adoption and grace, an adoptive Son, was propagated by *Elipandus* and *Felix*, Spanish bishops; but condemned by the council at *Frankfort*, called by *Charles* the Great;[\[129\]](#) and the eternal Sonship and generation of Christ was asserted and maintained by *Damascene*, *Bede*, *Albinus*, and others.[\[130\]](#)

IX. In the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, the controversies were chiefly about Image-worship, Transubstantiation, etc. yet in these and the following centuries, we have testimonies from various writers to the truth of Christ's proper and eternal Sonship by generation; it would be too numerous to produce them all; it will be sufficient to say, it was not opposed by any, but plainly and strongly affirmed by *Rabanus*, *Macerus*, and *Haymo* in century 9 by *Theophilact*, in century 10 by *Anselm*, in century 11 by *Peter Lombard* and *Bernard*, in century 12 by *Thomas Aquinas* and *Albertus Magnus*, in century 13, but in these and the following centuries, till the Reformation, Satan had other work to do than to stir up men to oppose the Trinity, or any of the divine persons in it, having enough to do to support the hierarchy of *Rome*, and the peculiar tenets of Popery, against the witnesses who rose up at different times to oppose them, and to endeavor to carry the pride and tyranny of the bishop of *Rome* to the highest pitch possible.

X. When the Reformation began in the sixteenth century, and spread throughout many nations in *Europe*, great evangelical light broke forth among the Reformers; and Satan fearing his kingdom would greatly suffer hereby, went to his old game again, which he had played with so much success in the first ages of Christianity, namely, to stir up an opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity, and the person of Christ; which was first begun by *Servetus in Helvetia*, who afterwards came to *Geneva* and there ended his life.[\[131\]](#) *Blandrata*, infected with his principles, went into *Poland*, and there artfully spread his poison in the reformed churches, assisted by others, and which at length issued in a division in those churches; when *Faustus Socinus*, who had imbibed some bad notions from the papers of his uncle *Laelius* about the Trinity, came into *Poland*, and joined the Antitrinitarians there, and strengthened their cause, and where the notions of him and his followers took root and flourished much: and from thence bays been transplanted into other countries, Those men, who were men of keen parts and abilities, saw clearly that could they demolish the article of Christ's Son-ship by eternal generation, it would be all over with the doctrine of the Trinity; and therefore set themselves with all their might against it.[\[132\]](#) *Socinus* himself says of it,[\[133\]](#) not only that it is error and a mere human invention, and which he represents as if it was held to be *more animantium*; but that it is most absurd, most unworthy of God, and contrary to his absolute perfection and unchangeable eternity;[\[134\]](#) and asserts, that Christ is not called the only begotten Son of God, because generated of the substance of God; and that there is no other, nor ever existed any other only begotten Son of God, besides that man, Jesus of *Nazareth*: and expressly says, it clearly appears, that the human nature of Christ is the person of the Son of God; and elsewhere[\[135\]](#) makes the same objection to Sonship by generation as *Mahomet* did, for he says, "Those who accommodate the Word *brought forth* in Proverbs 8:24 to the Son, are not according to the judgment of the Homoousians, to be reckoned very distant from the blasphemy of the Turks, who when they hear that the Christians say, God has a Son, ask, Who is his wife?" And in this article concerning the Sonship of Christ, and also with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, the Remonstrants,[\[136\]](#) in the seventeenth century and onwards, seem to agree with them; but the contrary has been maintained by all sound divines and evangelical churches, from the Reformation to the present time, as appears by their writings and harmony of confessions: so that upon the whole it is clear, that the church of God has been in the possession of this doctrine of the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ, from the beginning of Christianity to the present age, almost *eighteen hundred years*; nor has there been any one man who professed to hold the doctrine of the Trinity, or of the three distinct divine persons in the unity of the divine essence, that ever opposed it, till the latter end of the *seventeenth* century: if any such person in this course of time can be named, let him be named: none but the followers of *Simon Magus*, *Cerinthus*, *Ebion*, *Carpocrates*,

the Gnosticks, etc. in the two first centuries, and then by the Sabellians, Samosatensians, Arians, Photinians, Mahometans, Socinians, and more lately by the Remonstrants, such as are Antitrinitarians. The only two persons I have met with who have professed to hold the doctrine of the Trinity, as it has been commonly received, that have publicly expressed their doubts or dissatisfaction about the phrase *eternal generation*, I mean such as are of any note or character, for as for the trifling tribe of ignorant writers and scribblers, who know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm, I make no account of them; I say, I have met with only two of this sort. The one is *Roell*, a Dutch Professor at *Franeker*, who lived at the latter end of the last century; this man professed to believe that there are three distinct divine persons, the Father, Son, and Spirit, and that these three are one; that the second person in the Trinity was begotten by the Father from all eternity, and that this is the first and chief reason that he is called a Son; nor did he object to the use of the phrase *eternal generation*, nor did he disuse it, but explained it to another sense than that in which it was commonly taken, that is, that it only signified the co-existence of the second person with the first, and communion of nature with him. But as the same may be said of the first and third persons, the phrase of generation so understood might be said of them as well as of the second; he therefore was obliged to have recourse to the economy of salvation, and the manifestation of the three persons in it. [\[137\]](#) On the whole, he was opposed by the very learned *Vitringa*, [\[138\]](#) and his opinion was proscribed and condemned by almost all the synods of the Dutch churches, and he was forbid by the authority of his supreme magistrate to propagate it; and most of the synods have decreed, that the candidates for the ministry shall be examined about this opinion, before they are admitted into the ministry. [\[139\]](#) The other person, who has objected to the eternal generation of the Son of God, is Dr. *Thomas Ridgeley*, Professor of Divinity in *London*, towards the beginning of the present century: [\[140\]](#) who strongly asserts, and contends for the doctrine of a Trinity of divine distinct persons in the Godhead, and yet strangely adopts the Socinian notion or Sonship by office, and makes the eternal Sonship of Christ to be what he calls his mediatorial Sonship. There is indeed a third person of great fame among us, Dr. *Isaac Watts*, who has expressed his dissatisfaction with the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God, but then he is not to be reckoned a Trinitarian, being so manifestly in the Sabellian scheme, as appears by his *Dissertations* published in 1725. Inasmuch that the celebrated *Fred. Adolphus Lampe*, who published his *Theological Disputations* concerning the holy Spirit, two or three years after, spares not to reckon him among the grossest Sabellians: his words are, [\[141\]](#) "Nuperius novum systema Socinianum de Trinitate Angtie J. WATS edidit, additis quibusdam dissertationibus eam illustrantibus, quarum quinta ex professo de spiritu S. agit. Existimat quidem sect. o. p. 126. eatenus se a Socino, Schlictingio, Crellio esse distinguatum, quod virituum in Deo non accidentalem, sed essentialem, seu substantialem pro spiritu S. habeat: hoc tamen ita facit, ut non censeat hanc notionem constanter ubique obtinere: nam saepius "cum crassioribus Sabellianis spiritum S. esse Deum psum, p. 130. s. 49. defendit."

Upon the whole, setting aside the said persons, the testimonies for and against the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ stand thus:

For Eternal Generation, etc.

Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Athenagoras, Theophilus of *Antioch*, Clemens of *Alexandria*, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Gregory of *Neocesaria*, Dionysius of *Alexandria*, the *three hundred and eighteen* Nicene Fathers; Athanasius, Alexander bishop of *Alexandria*,

Epiphanius, Hilary, Faustinus, Gregory of *Nazianzum*, Basil, Gregory of *Nyssa*, Ambrose, Jerom, Ruffinus, Cyril of *Jerusalem*, besides the *many hundreds* of bishops and presbyters assembled at different times and in different places, as, at *Syrmium*, *Antioch*, *Arminum*, *Seleucia*, and *Constantinople*, and elsewhere;

Against It,

Simon Magus, Cerinthus, and Ebion, and their respective followers; Carpocrates and the Gnostick, Valentinus, Theodotus the currier, Artemon, and others their associates; Beryllus of *Bostra*, Praxeus, Hermogenes, Noctius and Sabellius, the Samosatenians, Arians, Aetians, Eunomians and Photinians, the Priscillianists and Bonotians; Mahomet and his followers; the Socinians and Remonstrants; and all Anti-trinitarians; Augustine, Chrysostom, Leo Magnus, Theodoret, Cyril of *Alexandria*, Paulinus, Flavianus, Victor, Maximus Tauriensis, *six hundred and thirty fathers* in the council at *Chalcedon*; Fulgentius, Gregory Turnasis, Fortunatus, Cassioclorus, Gregorius Magaus, the *many* bishops in the several councils at *Toletum*, the Roman synod of a *hundred and twenty-five* under Agatho, Damascene, Beda, Albinus, and the fathers in the council of *Francford*, with many others in later times, and all the sound divines and evangelic churches since the reformation.

Now since it appears that all the sound and orthodox writers have unanimously declared for the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ in all ages, and that those only of an unsound mind and judgment, and corrupt in other things as well as this, and many of them men of impure lives and vile principles, have declared against it, such must be guilty of great temerity and rashness to join in an opposition with the one against the other; and to oppose a doctrine the Church of God has always held, and especially being what the scriptures abundantly bear testimony unto, and is a matter of such moment and importance, being a fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion, and indeed what distinguishes it from all other religions, from those of Pagans, Jews and Mahometans, who all believe in God, and generally in *one* God, but none of them believe in the Son of God: that is peculiar to the Christian religion.

THE FULNESS

OF THE

MEDIATOR

A Sermon,

Preached *June 15, 1736*, to the Society that support the

Lord's-day Evening Lecture, Near *Devonshire-Square*

COLOSSIANS 1:19

For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.

The apostle, after his usual salutation to the church at *Colosse*, with a great deal of pleasure, takes notice of their faith in Christ, and love to all the saints, puts up several petitions on their account, of an increase of spiritual knowledge, holiness, fruitfulness, patience and strength; gives thanks for some special blessings of grace he and they were partakers of; such as meetness for heaven, deliverance from the power of darkness, a translation into the kingdom of Christ, redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins; and then take an occasion to set forth the glories and excellencies of the person of Christ; who, he says, verse 15 *is the image of the invisible God*, the natural essential, eternal, uncreated, perfect and express image of his Father's person, whom no man hath seen at any time; *and the firstborn of every creature*: Not that he was the first creature God made, which will not agree with the apostle's reasoning in the next verse, *for by him were all things created*; and will be liable to this manifest contradiction, that he was the creator of himself; but the meaning is, either that he is the only begotten of the Father from all eternity, being the natural and eternal Son of God, who, as such, existed before any creature was brought into being; or that he is *the first parent*, or bringer forth of every creature; as the word will bear to be rendered, if, instead of *πρωτότοκος*, we read *πρωτοτοκόος*, which is no more than changing the place of the accent; and may be very easily ventured upon, seeing the accents were all added since the apostle's days, and especially, seeing it makes his reasoning in the following verses appear with much more beauty, strength and force; he is the first parent of every creature, *for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist*. Next the apostle proceeds to consider Christ in his office-relation, and mediatorial capacity; *and he is the head of the body the church*, even of the general assembly and the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; all the elect of God, over whom he is an head of dominion and power, and to whom he is an head of influence and supply; he adds, *who is the*

beginning, both of the old and new creation, *the first-born from the dead*, who first rose from the dead by his own power to an immortal life, is set down at the right hand of God, has all judgment committed to him, *that in all things he might have the preeminence*; for which he is abundantly qualified, since *it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*. The method I shall take in considering this passage of scripture will be this:

- I. To inquire what fulness of Christ is here intended.
- II. To give some account of the nature and properties of it.
- III. To shew in what sense it may be said to dwell in Christ.
- IV. To make it appear, that its dwelling in Christ is owing to the good will and pleasure of the Father.

I shall inquire what fulness of Christ is here intended; since the scriptures speak of more than one: And,

First, There is the personal fulness of Christ, or the fulness of the deity, which is said by our apostle (Col. 2:9), in this same epistle, to *dwell* in him; *for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. There is no perfection essential to deity, but is in him; nor is there any the Father has, but he has likewise. Eternity is peculiar to the Godhead: Christ was not only before *Abraham*, but before *Adam*; yea, before any creature existed; he is *the alpha and omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending; which is, and which was, and which is to come*: (Rev. 1:8) he is *from everlasting to everlasting*. Omnipotence, or a power of doing all things, can only be predicated of God. The works of creation, providence, redemption, the resurrection of the dead, with other things, in which Christ has been concerned, loudly proclaim him to be *the Almighty*. Omniscience, another perfection of deity, may easily be observed in Jesus Christ; *he needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man*; (John 2:25) he is that *living word of God, who is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*, or to whom we must give an account; (Heb. 4:12, 13) who in a short time will make *all the churches*, yea, all the world know, that he it is *which searcheth the reins and hearts*. Omnipresence and immensity are proper to God, and are to be found in Christ Jesus, who is in heaven at the same time he was here on earth; which he could not be, if he was not the omnipresent God; any more than he could make good the promises he has made, that he will be with his people when they meet in his name, and with his ministers unto the end of the world; nor could he be present with the churches in all places, as he certainly is; nor fill all things, as he certainly does. Immutability only belongs to God: Christ is *the same yesterday, today, and for ever*. (Heb. 13:8) In short, independence and necessary existence, which are essential to Deity, are to be ascribed to him; for he is God of himself: Though as man and mediator, he has a life communicated to him from the Father; yet as God, he owes his being to none; it is not derived from another, he *is over all, God blessed for ever*; and must, therefore, be *the true God and eternal life*. If any perfection of Deity was wanting in him, *the fulness*, all the fulness of it could not be said to dwell in him, nor he be said, as he is, to be *equal with God*. Now some think that this is the fulness designed in our text, and read it, *the fulness of the Godhead*, which seems to be transcribed from another passage in this epistle already mentioned;

and suppose that this suits well the apostle's design in proving the primacy and preeminence of Christ over all things: But it should be observed, that the fulness of the Deity possessed by the Son of God, does not depend on the Father's will and pleasure; but is what, as such, he naturally and necessarily enjoys by a participation of the same undivided nature and essence of the Father and Spirit, and therefore cannot be the fulness here intended.

Secondly, There is a relative fulness which belongs to Christ, and is no other than his body the church, of which he is head, who is called *the fulness of him that filleth all in all*; (Eph. 1:32) and for this reason, because she is *filled* by him. When all the elect are gathered, the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, and all *Israel* saved; when these are filled with all the gifts and grace of God designed for them, and are grown up to their just proportion in the body, and have attained to *the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*; then will they strictly be, and may be truly called so. Some interpreters are of opinion, that this is the fulness here meant: But, though the Church dwells in Christ, and he in her, and that through the good will and pleasure of the Father; and though she is complete in Christ, and is said to be his fulness; yet, properly speaking, she is not so yet, at least in such sense as she will be: Nor is she ever said to be *all fulness*, as in the text, and therefore cannot be here intended.

Thirdly, There is a fulness of the fitness and abilities in Christ to discharge his work and office as mediator, which greatly lies in his being both God and man, or in the union of the two natures, divine and human, in one person. Hereby he becomes abundantly qualified to be *the day's-man betwixt us*, able to lay his hand upon us both; or in other words, to be *the mediator between God and man*; to be both *a merciful and faithful high-priest, in things pertaining to God, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people*: (Job 9:33, 1 Tim. 2:5, Heb. 2:17) For being man, he had somewhat to offer in sacrifice to God, and was thereby capable of making satisfaction in that nature which sinned, which the law and justice of God seem to have required, and also of conveying the blessings of grace procured by him to elect men; for which reason, he *took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham*. The holiness of Christ's human nature greatly fitted him to be an high-priest, advocate and intercessor, and very often an emphasis is put upon this in the sacred writings; as when he is said (John 3:5, Heb. 9:14, 1 Pet. 1:10) *to take away sin, and in him is no sin, to offer up himself without spot to God*, and we are said to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, *as of a lamb without spot or blemish*: And, indeed, such a redeemer is proper for us, such an advocate suit us, who is Jesus Christ *the righteous*: such an high-priest *became us*, is every way fit for us, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*. Being God as well as man, there is a sufficient virtue in all his actions and sufferings to answer what they were designed for; in his blood to cleanse from all sin, in his righteousness to justify from it, and in his sacrifice to expiate and atone for it. Being the mighty God, he could travel in the greatness of his strength, draw nigh to God for us, offer up himself to God, bear our sins, and all the punishment due unto them, without failing or being discouraged; his own arm alone was capable of bringing salvation to himself and us; there is nothing wanting in him, to make him a complete Savior of the body, and head of the church. Now, this may be taken into the sense of our text, yet is not the whole of it: For,

Fourthly, There is dispensatory, communicative fulness, which is of the Father's good will and pleasure, put into the hands of Christ, to be distributed unto others: And this is principally designed here, and is,

A fulness of nature. Christ is the head of *every man*, and *the head over all things to the church*; God has appointed him *heir of all things*, even in nature: The light of nature is in him and from him; and he is *the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*: (John 1:9) The things of nature are all with him, and at his disposal; *the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*; (Ps. 24:1) and he gives it to his chosen and special people in a peculiar manner: The blessings of nature are wisdom's left hand blessings, as those of grace are her right hand ones: *The world, and they that dwell therein*, are his, even the men of the world; the wicked part of the world are, in some sense, given unto him to be subservient to the ends of his mediatorial kingdom and glory. *Ask of me*, says the Father to him, (Ps. 2:8, 9) *and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*; which cannot be understood of the chosen vessels of salvation; since it follows, *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel*.

A fulness of grace. Christ is said to be *full of grace and truth*; (John 1:14, 16) and it is of this fulness that the believer receives, *and grace for grace*; a sort of a fulness out of it, all kind of grace, every measure, and every supply of it.

(1.) There is a fulness of the Spirit of grace, and of the gifts of the Spirit in Christ; For he is *the Lamb in the midst of the throne, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God*; (Rev. 5:6) not seven distinct personal subsistencies; but the phrase designs the one blessed Spirit of God, and the perfection of his gifts and grace, signified by the number *seven*, which, in the most enlarged sense, dwell in Christ; *the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of fear of the Lord* (Isa. 11:2) rest upon him; he is *anointed with the oil of gladness*, the holy Ghost, *above his fellows*, any of the sons of men, who are made partakers of his grace and glory; *for God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him*. (Ps. 45:7) All those extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghost, with which the apostles were filled on the day of Pentecost, were given from Christ, as the head of the church; who, when he ascended to heaven to fill all things, *received gifts for men*, and gave them to them, to qualify them for extraordinary work and service: And he has been in all ages since, more or less, bestowing gifts on men, to fit them for *the work of the ministry*, and for *the edifying of his body the church*, and *the residue of the spirit is with him*.

(2.) There is a fulness of the blessings of grace in Christ. The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, as well as sure, it is full of all spiritual blessings. Now this covenant is made with Christ, it is in his hands, yea, he is the covenant itself; all the blessings of it are *upon his head*, and in the hands of our antitypical *Joseph*, even *on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brethren*; and therefore, if any are blessed with these blessings, they are blessed with them *in heavenly places in Christ*; And, indeed, in a very strange and surprising manner do they come from him to us, even through his being made a curse for us; for he was *made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through him*: particularity, there is in Christ a fulness of justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace.

There is a fulness of justifying grace in him. One part of his work and office, as mediator, was *to bring in everlasting righteousness*; a righteousness answerable to all the demands of law and justice, which should answer for his people in a time to come, and to last for ever: such a righteousness he has wrought out and brought in, by which justice is satisfied, the law is magnified

and made honourable, and with which God is well pleased: whence he is truly called, *the Lord our righteousness* and *the Sun of righteousness and strength*, (Jer. 23:6, Mal. 4:2) from whom alone we have our righteousness. Now this righteousness wrought out by the Son of God, is in him, and with him, as the author and subject of it; and to him are sensible souls directed, to him they look, and to him they apply for it; and every one for themselves say, as their faith grows up, *surely, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*: From him they receive this *gift of righteousness*, and with it an *abundance of grace*, as flow, an overflow of it. As it was freely wrought out for them, it is freely imputed to them, and bestowed upon them, without any consideration of their works; and is so full and large, that it is sufficient for the justification of all the elect, and that from *all things*, from which they could not be justified in any other way.

There is also a fulness of pardoning grace in Christ. The covenant of grace has largely and fully provided for the forgiveness of the sins of all the Lord's people. One considerable branch of it is, (Heb. 8:12) *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember more*. In consequence of this covenant, and the engagements of Christ in it, his blood has been *shed for many, for the remission of sins*. The issue of which is, that *in him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*; (Matt. 24:28, Eph. 1:7) which, as it is entirely free, the riches, the glory of grace and mercy are eminently displayed in it, so it is large and abundant, full and complete; for God, pursuant to the covenant of his grace, and looking upon the precious blood of his Son, forgives all the trespasses of his people, past, present, and to come: Through the man Christ Jesus is preached unto us, and bestowed upon us, the free and full forgiveness of our transgressions. This is the declaration of the gospel; and what makes it good news and glad tidings to sensible sinners, that *whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*.

There is likewise a fulness of adopting grace in Christ. The blessing of the adoption of children springs originally from the love of the Father: *Behold*, says the apostle *John*, (1 John 3:1) *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be call the sons of God*. Predestination to it is by, or through Jesus Christ: The enjoyment of it is greatly owing to the redemption which is in him, for he came *to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*. (Gal. 4:5) The right, the privilege, the liberty of becoming the sons of God, is actually given forth from Christ, to them that receive him and believe in him; so that those who are the children of God, are openly and declaratively so *by faith in Christ Jesus*.

Add to this, that there is a fulness of sanctifying grace in Christ. The whole stock and fund of the saints holiness is in Christ's hands; he is their *sanctification*, as well as their *righteousness*; it is of his fulness they receive one sort of grace, as well as another: All the holiness is derived to them from Christ, which they are made partakers of in life, and which is made perfect in the hour of death; for *without holiness, even perfect holiness, no man shall see the Lord*. (Heb. 12:14) In the first work of conversion, a large measure of sanctifying grace is given forth from Christ; when *the grace of our Lord is exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*. (1 Tim. 1:14) As he is *the author and finisher of faith*, he is the author and finisher of every other grace; every measure of it is owing to him, every supply of it is from him: There is a fulness of all grace in Christ, to supply all our wants, support our persons, and to carry us safely and comfortably through this wilderness: There is a fulness of light and life, of wisdom and knowledge, strength and ability, joy, peace, and comfort in him: all spiritual light is in him, and from him. As all that light which

was scattered throughout the whole creation, was on the fourth day collected together, and out into that great luminary the sun, so all fulness of spiritual light dwells in Christ, *the Sun of righteousness*, from whom we receive all we have: which by degrees grows, increases, and *shines more and more unto the perfect day*: All spiritual life is in him, *with him is the fountain* of it; from him we have the living principle of grace, and by him it is maintained in us unto eternal life. *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, and from him they are communicated to us. As in him is righteousness to justify us, so in him is strength to enable us to oppose every corruption, withstand every enemy, exercise every grace, and discharge every duty. Though we cannot do any thing of ourselves, and without him can do nothing; yet through him strengthening us we can do all things. In a word, there is a full fountain, and a solid foundation of all spiritual peace, joy and comfort in Christ: *If there is any consolation* to be had any where, it is *in Christ*; it arises from and is founded upon his person, blood, righteousness and sacrifice; in a view of which a believer is sometimes *filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*: For as *the sufferings of Christ*, those which we suffer for Christ, *abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ*. (2 Cor. 1:5) There is a grace in Christ sufficient for us to bear us up under, and bear us through all the trials, exercises and afflictions of life; to make us fruitful in every good work: and to cause us to hold on and out unto the end. There is a fulness of fructifying and persevering grace in Christ.

(3.) There is a fulness of the promise of grace in Jesus. There are many *exceeding great and precious promises*, suited to the various cases and circumstances of the children of God. There never has been a case a believer has been in since the creation of the world, and I may venture to say, there never will be one to the end of it, but there is a promise given forth suitable to it. The covenant of grace is full of these promises; from thence they are transcribed into the gospel, and are spread all over the Bible; and what is best of all, *all the promises of God are in Christ yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us*; (2 Cor. 1:20) they are all put into his hands for our use, and are all safe and secure in him, who will see to it, that they are actually and fully accomplished not only the grand *promise of life*, even of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, *is in Christ Jesus*, but all other promises are in him likewise: So that whosoever are partakers of them, are partakers of them *in him, by the gospel*.

3. Besides the fulness of nature, and of grace, which is in Christ, there is also the fulness of glory, and of eternal life and happiness. God has not only out the grace of his people, but their glory also into the hands of Christ. Their portion, their inheritance, is reserved for them with him: where it is safe and secure. They are *heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*; so that their estate is sure unto them. As their *life of grace*, so their *life of glory is hid with Christ in God*; and *when Christ who is their life shall appear, then shall appear with him in glory*; which will greatly consist in being like Christ, and seeing him as he is. The saints will be like to Christ, both in body and soul. Their bodies which are redeemed by his blood, and are members of him, will be *fashioned like unto his glorious body*, in spirituality, immortality, incorruption, power and glory; and *will shine forth like the sun*, with brightness and lustre, *in the kingdom of their Father*. Their souls will be made like to Christ in knowledge and holiness, so far as creatures are capable of. They will then *see him as he is*; behold his mediatorial glory, view him *for themselves, and not another*; will be inexpressibly delighted with the excellencies of him, and always continue with him, and be in his presence; *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore*. Now all this is secured in Christ for the saints; all which they may expect; on this they may depend; for *this is the*

record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:11) Thus all fulness of nature, grace and glory, is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I proceed.

II. To give some account of the nature and properties of this fulness; particularly the fulness of grace, And,

It is a very ancient. We are not to suppose that this fulness was first put into Christ's hands upon his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God; for though he is then said to have received gifts for men, and to have given them to them, because there was then an extraordinary distribution of the gifts and grace of the Spirit to the apostles, yet God had given the Spirit to Christ without measure long before. The disciples in the days of his flesh, in his state of humiliation, when *the word being made flesh dwelt among them, beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* (John 1:14) And long before them *Isaiah* saw this branch of his glory, *his train filling the temple.* All the Old-Testament saints looked to him, believed in him, and depended on him, as their living Redeemer; one and all said, *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.* (Isa. 14:24) They were supplied with both out of this fulness: they *drew water with joy, out of the wells of salvation* in Christ; and were saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, even as we are. Yea, this matter is to be carried still higher, not only to Old-Testament times, or to the foundation of the world, but even into eternity itself. For as early as the elect were given to Christ, so early was grace given to them in him; which was before the world began; as early as the choice of them in him, which was before the foundation of the world, so early were they blessed with all spiritual blessings in him; as early as Christ was the mediator of the covenant, and that was as early as the covenant itself, which was from everlasting; so early was this fulness of grace deposited with him. *The Lord possessed me,* says Wisdom or Christ, that is, with this all fulness of grace, *in the beginning of his ways* of grace; he began with this, before *his works of old,* of creation and providence; *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was,* (Prov. 8:22, 23) as the mediator of the covenant, entrusted with all the blessings and promises of it. Now this serves greatly to set forth the eternity of Christ's person, the antiquity of his office, and the early regard Jehovah had to his chosen people; which strongly expresses his wondrous love, and distinguishing grace towards them.

This fulness is a very rich, and an enriching one. It is a fulness of truth, as well as of grace; for Christ is *full of grace and truth*, which the gospel largely opens to us; every truth of which is a pearl of great price, and all together make up an inestimable treasure, more valuable than all the riches of the *Indies*. Now in Christ *are laid up and hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* (Col. 2:3) What a rich and enriching stock, fund, and fulness of truth, is there in Jesus Christ! The promises of grace are *precious* ones to all those who have seen grace that is in them, to whom they have been opened by the Holy Spirit of promise, and have been by him suitably and seasonably applied; to such they are exceeding precious indeed, they are like *applies of gold in pictures of silver*, rejoiced at more than at a great spoil, and preferred to all the riches of the world; and these, as has been observed, are all *in Christ*. There are not only riches of grace, but riches of glory in Christ, even *unsearchable riches*, which can never be traced out or told over; which are solid and substantial, satisfying, lasting and durable. Through the poverty of Christ we are enriched with those riches here and hereafter; and this serves much to enhance the glory, excellency, freeness and fulness of his grace: *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* (2 Cor. 8:9).

This fulness is entirely free, with respect to the spring and source of it, the distribution of it, the persons concerned in it, and the manner in which they receive from it. The source and spring of it is the sovereign goodwill and pleasure, grace, and love of God. *It pleased the Father* to lay it up in Christ: He was not induced to it by any thing in his people, or done by them; for it was laid up in Christ antecedent to their having done good or evil. He could not be influenced by their faith and holiness to do it; since these are received out of it: *For of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace;* (John 1:14) one grace as well as another, every sort of grace, and faith, and holiness among the rest: nor could he be moved to it by their good works; seeing these are fruits of that grace which is derived from it. It is indeed said to be for them that *fear him*, and *trust in him*; but these phrases are only descriptive of the persons who have received from it, and are made so by it; not that their fear and faith were the causes or conditions of it: for then the goodness of God would not be so largely displayed in it, as the *Psalmist* (Ps. 31:19) suggests; when he says, *O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought, or appointed, or made for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men!* And as it was freely laid up, it is as freely distributed; our Lord gives it out *liberally, and upbraideth not*; he gives this *living water* to all that ask it of him, yea, to them that ask it not; he gives more grace, large measures, fresh supplies of it, to his humble saints, readily and cheerfully, as they stand in need of them; he withholds no good things from them that walk uprightly. The persons to whom it is given are very unworthy, and yet heartily welcome. Whoever is *thirsty*, and has a will to come, may *come and take the water of life freely*; such *who have no money*, nor anything that is of a valuable consideration, who have neither worth, nor worthiness of their own, may *come and buy wine and milk, without money, and without price*. And whereas this fulness of Christ, this *well of grace is deep*, and we have *nothing to draw with*, faith, the bucket of faith is freely given: that grace, by which we receive of it, is *not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*; and with this we *draw water with joy out of the full wells of salvation*, which are in Christ Jesus.

This fulness is inexhaustible. *As the whole family in heaven and in earth is named* of Christ, so it is maintained by him. If by the family in heaven we understand the angels, as it was usual with the Jews to call them a family, and *the family above*; what large measures of confirming grace have the elect angels received from Christ! For he is the head of grace to them, as well as to us: *we are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power*. (Col. 2:10) Or, if by *the family in heaven*, is meant the saints who are gone to glory; what a vast deal of grace has been expended out of this fulness to bring them thither! The grace of our Lord has been abundant, superabundant; it has flowed, and overflowed; there has been a pleonasm, a redundancy of it in the case of a single believer. O what must the aboundings of it have been to all the saints in all ages, times and places, since the foundation of the world! And still there is enough for the *family on earth* yet behind. Christ is still *the fountain* of all his *gardens*, the churches, *a well of living water*, which supplies them all, and *streams from Lebanon*, which sweetly refresh and delight them. His *grace* is still *sufficient for them*; it is *the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*. I go on.

III. To shew in what sense this fulness may be said *to dwell* in Christ, and what that phrase imports. And,

It expresses the *being* of it in him. It is not barely in intention, in design and purpose, but it is really and actually in him; it is given to him, out into his hands, and laid up in him: And hence it comes to be communicated to the saints; because it is in him, *they receive of it, and grace for grace*. He is

the head in whom it dwells, they are members of him, and so derives it from him. He is theirs, and they are his, and so all that he has belongs unto them. His person is theirs, in whom they are accepted with God; his blood is theirs, to cleanse them from all sin; his righteousness theirs, to justify them from it; his sacrifice is theirs to atone for it; and his fullness theirs, to supply all their wants; and out if this they are so filled, as to be said to be *full of the holy Ghost, full of faith, and full of goodness*: (Acts 6:3, 8; Rom. 15:14) not that they are so in such sense as Christ is; for this fulness is in him *without* measure, in them *in* measure; it is in him as an overflowing fountain, but in them as streams from it. This fulness is in Christ, and in no other. The wells of salvation are only in him, there is salvation in no other; it is in vain to expect it from any other quarter; no degree of spiritual light and life, grace and holiness, peace, joy and comfort, is to be had elsewhere. Such therefore who neglect, overlook, or forsake this *fountain of living waters, hew out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water*. (Jer. 2:13) Wherefore it becomes all who have any knowledge of themselves, any sense of their wants, and views of the fulness of Christ, to apply to him; for *whither should any go, but to him who has the words of eternal life?*

It imports the continuance of it with him. It is an abiding fulness, and yields a continual, daily supply; believers may go every day to it, and receive out of it; the grace that is in it will be always sufficient for them, even to the end of their days. And to this abiding nature of it, the perpetual dwelling of it in Christ, is owing the saints final perseverance; for, because he lives as full of grace and truth, they do and shall live also. Great reason have believers to be *string in the grace which is in Christ Jesus*. (2 Tim. 2:1) This fulness will abide in Christ unto the end of time, until all the elect are gathered in, and they are filled with grace, and made meet for glory. There will be as much grace, and as large a sufficiency of it for the last believer that is born into the world, as for the first. Besides, there is a fulness of glory on Christ, which will abide in him to all eternity; out of which the saints will be continually receiving glory for glory, as here grace for grace; they will have all their glory from and through Christ then, as they now have all their grace from him and through him.

It denotes the safety and security of it. Every thing that is in Christ is safe and secure. The person's of God's elect being in him, are in the utmost safety, none can pluck them out of his hands. Their grace being there, it can never be lost; their glory being there, they can never be deprived of it. Their *life*, both of grace and glory, *is hid with Christ in God*, and so out of the reach of men and devils. Christ is the storehouse and magazine of all grace and glory, and a well fortified one; he is a rock, a strong tower, a place of defense, such an one as the gates of hell cannot prevail against. I hasten,

IV. To make it appear, that the being and dwelling of this fulness in Christ is owing to the goodwill and pleasure of the Father.

The phrase, *The Father*, is not indeed in the original text, but is rightly supplied by our translators; since he is expressly mentioned in the context, and is spoken of as he who make the saints meet to be partakers of the heavenly glory, who delivers from the power and dominion of sin and Satan, and translates into the kingdom of his dear Son, *verses 12, 13*, and as he who by Christ, reconciles all things to himself, whether in heaven or in earth, even such who were alienated and enemies in their minds unto him, *verses 20, 21*. Now,

It is owing to the good-will of the Father to his Son, that this fulness dwells in him. Christ was ever as mediator, *as one brought up with him, daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;* (Prov. 8:30) and so he always continued to be; and as an evidence and demonstration of it, he treasured up all fulness in him. This seems to be the import of our Lord's words, when he says, *the Father loveth the Son, and hath put all things into his hands;* (John 3:35) that is, he hath shewed his love to him, and given a full proof of it, by committing all things to him, to be at his will and disposal. This sense of the words well agrees with the context, which represents Christ in his mediatorial capacity, as exalted by the Father, with this view, *that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

It is owing to the good-will of the Father to the elect, that this fulness dwells in Christ; for it is for their sakes, and upon their account, that it is put into the hands of Christ. God has loved them with an everlasting love; and therefore takes everlasting care of them, and makes everlasting provision for them. They were the objects of his love and delight from everlasting; and therefore he set up Christ as mediator from everlasting, and possessed him with this fulness for them. There was good-will in God's heart towards these sons of men; and therefore it pleased him to take such a step as this, and lay up a sufficient supply for them, both for time and eternity.

It pleased the Father that this fulness should *dwell* in Christ; because he considered him as the most proper person to trust with it. It is well for us, that it is not put into our own hands at once, but by degrees, as we stand in need of it; it would not have been safe in our own keeping. It is well for us, it was not put into the hands of *Adam*, our first parent, our natural and federal head, where it might have been lost. It is well for us, it was not put into the hands of angels, who, as they are creatures, and so unfit for such a trust, were also in their creation-state mutable creatures, as the apostasy of many of them abundantly declares. The Father saw that none was fit for this trust but his Son, and therefore it pleased him to commit it to him.

It is the will and pleasure of God that all grace should come to us through Christ. If God will commune with us, it must be from off the mercy-seat, Christ Jesus. If we have any fellowship with the Father, it must be with him through the Mediator. If we have any grace from him, who is the God of all grace, it must come to us in this way; for Christ alone is *the way, the truth, and the life;* (John 14:6) not only the way of access to God, and acceptance with him, but of the conveyance of all grace, of all the blessings of grace unto us. No inasmuch as it is the pleasure of the Father that all fulness of nature, grace, and glory, should dwell in Christ the Mediator, this,

Sets forth the glory of Christ. One considerable branch as Christ's glory, as Mediator, lies in his being *full of grace and truth;* which souls sensible of their own wants, behold with pleasure. It is this which makes him *fairer than the children of men,* because *grace*, the fulness of it, *is poured into his lips.* It is this which makes him appear to be *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand;* and look so lovely, even *altogether lovely,* in the view of all that know him. It is this which makes him so exceeding *precious* to, and so highly valued and esteemed by, all them that *believe.*

This instructs us where to go for a supply. The *Egyptians*, in the seven years of famine, when they cried to *Pharaoh* for bread, he having set *Joseph* over his storehouses, bids them go to him, saying, *Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you do.* (Gen. 41:55) Christ is by his Father made *head over all things to the church.* He is our antitypical *Joseph*, who has our whole stock of grace in his hand:

All the treasures of it are hid in him; he has the entire disposal of it, and therefore to him should we go for whatsoever we stand in need of. And this we may be sure of, that there is nothing we want but what is in him: and nothing in him suitable for us, but he will readily and freely communicate to us.

This directs us to give all the glory of what we have to God, through Christ: For since he is the way of the conveyance of all grace unto us, *by him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips; giving thanks unto his name.* (Heb. 13:15) It is by the grace of God in Christ, through him and from him, we are what we are; it is that which has made us to *differ from another.* We have nothing but what we have in a way of receiving, nothing but what we have received out of the fulness of Christ; and therefore we should not *glory*, as though we had not received it: But if any of us glory, let us glory in this; that *Christ is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* (1 Cor. 1:30)

CHRIST A PRIEST

AFTER THE

ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.

A Sermon

PSALM 110:4.

The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.

I have in a late discourse shown you that *Levi's* Urim and Thummim are to be found with Christ, and I shall now endeavour to make it appear, that notwithstanding that, he is not a priest of *Levi's* order, but of the order of *Melchizedek*; there was a weakness and an imperfection in *Levi's* priesthood, therefore it was necessary that another priest should rise, not after his order, but after the order of another, who is here mentioned in these words. This Psalm was not wrote by *Melchizedek*, as some of the Jewish Rabbis have imagined; for he was a greater person than *Abraham*, he blessed him, and received tithes from him, and therefore could not call him Lord: nor by *Eleazar*, as others of them have thought: for though it is true he might call him his Lord, but then he could not assign unto him session at the right hand of God; nor say of him, that he had an everlasting priesthood after the order of *Melchizedek*: nor is it a composure of *David's* concerning *Abraham*, and that victory which he obtained over the kings, for the same reasons as before: nor was it wrote by *David*, or by any of the singers in his time concerning himself, for *David* had nothing to do with the priesthood, it is true *David* was the penman of it, as is manifest from the inscription, A psalm of *David*; but then he did not write it concerning himself, but concerning one that was greater than he, even one whom he acknowledges to be his Lord; for if God never said to an angel, Sit *thou at my right hand*, &c., certainly he would never say to a mere man.

The person who is the subject of this psalm is the Messiah, as is acknowledged by many of the ancient Jewish Rabbis; though many of the modern ones, observing how manifestly some places in this Psalm are applied to the Lord. Jesus Christ in the New Testament, have endeavored, as much as in them lies, to wrest it to any other person; but we have a more sure word of prophecy, and a better rule to go by, than their glosses and interpretations: for the first verse is evidently referred to the Messiah by Christ himself; in Matthew 22:42, 43, where he puts this question to the Scribes and Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in Spirit call him Lord? Saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, &c.*, now as they were not able to answer this question, so neither do they charge him with a misapplication of the text; which, no doubt, they would have done, had they not been convicted in their own consciences that it was right. It is also applied unto him by the apostle *Peter*, in *Acts* 2:39,

and there the words of my text, in all those (Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17, 21) places where they are cited in the epistle to the *Hebrews*, are manifestly referred unto Christ. The three first verses of this Psalm speak of the glory of Christ's kingdom, in his being placed at the Father's right hand, in the subjection of his enemies to him, and in the mighty conquests of his grace over his own people; and in this fourth verse there is an easy transition from his kingly to his priestly office; both which offices were eminently conjoined in him, of whose order he is here said to be.

Three things are here said of Christ's priesthood;

First, That it is after the order of Melchizedek.

Secondly, That it is an everlasting one.

Thirdly, That its stability and firmness is in the immutable and unrepealable oath of God. Each of which I shall consider in their order.

First, Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek: And in speaking to this, it will be necessary, 1st, To give you some account, who and what Melchizedek was; 2dly, How Christ may be said to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek: In treating of the former, I suppose that; I shall gratify the curiosity of some; and in considering the latter, I hope to bring out something, for the edification of others; but, in the

1st place, Let us consider who and what *Melchizedek* was. The first mention that is made of him, is in *Genesis 14:18. And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. His name, by interpretation, is, King of righteousness;* and it is very probable that he was called so, because that he was a king who reigned in righteousness, and executed justice in his realm; as he does, of whom he was a glorious type. In *Joshua's* time, we find that there was a king in *Jerusalem*, which is supposed to be the same with *Salem*, whose name was *Adonizedek*: which is, by interpretation, *Lord of righteousness*: a name of much the same signification with this, and perhaps it was a common name of the kings of this place; even as *Abimelech* was a common name of the kings of *Gerar*, and *Pharaoh* of the kings of *Egypt*. Now this inquiry of ours consists of two parts, 1st, Who he was. 2ndly, What he was.

1st, Let us consider who he was; there has been a variety of opinions concerning him, which may be reduced to these two heads: 1st, Such who have thought him to be more than a man; 2ndly, Such who have thought him to be but a mere man: of those who have thought him to be more than a man,

Some have imagined that he was an angel, which appeared in a human form to *Abraham*: this was the opinion of *Origen*; which, though not approved of by a learned author, yet is preferred by him to that which *Jerom*, and many others, both of the ancient and modern writers, have embraced; of which hereafter. That angels have appeared to *Abraham* in the plains of *Mamre*, *Genesis 18* and are there called *men*: are in the 19th verse called *angels*; but then we never read of angels being priests, or of this office being ascribed to them; for *every high priest is taken from among men*, and not from among angels.

Others have thought him to be a divine power, superior to Christ: this was the heresy of those who were called Melchisedecians: the first author of this was one *Theodorus*, a silversmith, a disciple and follower of one *Theodorus*, a tanner, who lived under *Zepherinus*, Pope of *Rome*, and *Severus*, Emperor, about the year of Christ 174. This heresy consisted of two parts. 1st, That Christ was a mere man. 2dly, That *Melchizedek* was not a man but the power of God; more powerful, august, and happy, than the Son of God; after whose image Christ was made by God. This heresy arose from a mistaken sense of Christ's being said to be *after the order of Melchizedek*; but rather the contrary follows from hence; for if *Melchizedek*, was a type of Christ, and Christ the truth of that type, then Christ must be greater than *Melchizedek*, because the truth is greater than the type.

Others have fancied, that he was the Holy Ghost; this was the notion of the *Hieraclites*, as appears from *Epiphanius*; though *Augustine*, in treating concerning those heretics, makes no mention of this tenet of theirs: yet *Danaeus*, in his commentary upon him, does; by whom we are informed, that they were so called from *Hieras*, or *Hieracla*, an Egyptian monk, who lived under *Dionysius*, Pope of *Rome*, and *Gallieus*, Emperor, about the year of Christ 234. That the Holy Ghost appeared once in the form of a dove, and descended on Christ at his baptism, is well known; but that he ever appeared in the form of a man, the scripture does not furnish us with one single instance of, nor is he ever called a priest, or that office assigned unto him, in all the word of God.

Others have supposed that he was the son of God himself: which opinion as defended by a learned author who supposes that Christ appeared to Abraham when he returned from the slaughter of the Kings, in the shape and form of that body which he afterwards dwelt in here on earth; and hence he is said to be $\alpha\phi\omega\mu\iota\omega\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma \delta\epsilon \tau\omega \upsilon\iota\omega \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$, "made like unto the Son of God:" and that because *Abraham* saw him in the likeness of that body which when incarnate he really assumed, therefore it is said by Christ, that *Abraham rejoiced to see his day, and he saw it, and was glad* (John 8:56): he argues, that if *Melchizedek*, and the Son of God, is not one and the same person, then it follows, that there are two priests, whose priesthood is everlasting; for the apostle says of *Melchizedek*, that he abides a priest continually (Heb. 7:3): he lays some stress upon his blessing so great a patriarch as *Abraham*, which the apostle observes as an undeniable evidence of his being "greater and more excellent than he:" but his chief argument is founded on Hebrews 7:8 where the apostle, comparing *Melchizedek* with the Levites, says, and here *men that die receive tithes: but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth*; where two things may be observed of the Levites, which are opposed in *Melchizedek's* character; one is, that they were men, the other is that they died; but this priest to whom *Abraham* gave titles, was not a man, nor mortal: for there is a witness of him that he liveth; these priests were made after the law of a carnal commandment; but *Melchizedek*, or the Son of God, after the power of an endless life; he cannot see how *Melchizedek's* priesthood was more perfect than that of the Levites, if he was a mortal man, and a king and priest among the Salemites; those people having not as yet embraced the true Religion; for *Abraham* was but just come amongst them: and if so be they had, yet, says he, every one knows that religious worship, even in the families of the patriarchs, was but rude and without form, until God instituted the Levitical order; he asks what reason we have, why we should not believe this King of righteousness and peace, to be the same Son of God, who appeared to *Abraham* in the plains of *Mamre*? *Genesis 18* accompanied by two angels, who, with him, are called *men*; he thinks there is a greater evidence of divinity in this King of righteousness, who on a sudden came from above, as out of a machine, and met *Abraham* on the road, and blessed him, and refreshed him *with bread and wine*; than there is in that person who appeared to *Abraham* in the plains of *Mamre*, and

was hospitably received by him only, as he observes, there is this difference, that he in Genesis 18 is expressly said to be The Lord, but this is not said of *Melchizedek* in *Genesis*: but he supposes, that *Moses* left this mystery to be explained by *David* and *Paul*, who he thinks have left us no room to doubt of it. He thinks that *Abraham* gave him these names, *Melchizedek* and *Malecsalem*; which he thinks are not proper, but appellative names; that *salem* is no more the name of a place than *zedek*, but both expressive of the characters of this great person, the one, as the apostle observes, signifying *King of righteousness*, the other, *King of peace*: and that the reason of his being called a *priest of the most High*, is, because that he appeared in the habit of a priest when he met *Abraham*. This opinion, I must confess, is more eligible, and carries a greater appearance of truth in it, than those before mentioned; yet there are some things which oblige me not to come into it; that the Son of God did appear to *Abraham*, and to the other patriarchs, in a human form, I do not at all doubt, but that he appeared so to *Abraham*, in the habit of a priest, when he returned from the slaughter of the kings, I see no reason to believe: when *Melchizedek* is said to be like to the Son of God, it rather proves him a distinct person from him, than the same; and when an endless life and an eternal priesthood are ascribed to him, it is to be understood of him, not really and properly, but mystically and typically; he having no predecessor nor successor in his priesthood; and when Christ, the Son of God, is said to be of his order; it is evident to me, that he must be distinguished from him. But let us proceed now to consider the opinions of the latter sort, who have thought him to be but a mere man, and of these,

Some have thought that he was *Shem*, the Son of *Noah*; and this was the constant opinion of the Hebrew Doctors; which opinion might arise partly from that esteem he was in for his piety and knowledge. Hence the Targumists call him *Shem* the Great; and frequently make mention of the school of *Shem* the Great. And *Ben Sira* says, that *Shem* and *Seth* obtained glory among men: and partly from an unwillingness in the Jews to believe that a stranger should be greater than *Abraham*; that one of another nation should be preferable to him who was the author of theirs. This opinion has also been embraced by persons of a considerable figure in the Christian world: what has induced them to it, are these considerations, namely, that he was then living, and that he had lived an hundred years before the flood, and there was none born before that time then living; so that his parentage might well be unknown: that God is called the Lord God of *Shem*, and so he may fitly be called the priest of the most high God; that he was a righteous person, and so justly called *Melchizedek*: that he was the most honorable in the earth, and so greater than *Abraham*; that he was the root of the church, and from whence *Abraham* and his posterity sprang; as also the Messiah according to the flesh; to him the promise was made, Genesis 9:26 and upon all accounts the most proper person then living to bless *Abraham*. This opinion was opposed by *Epiphanius*, on account of his being then dead, as he imagined: but that was a mistake of his, as is manifest from chronology; for he was then living, and lived some years afterwards: nevertheless, there are some things which may dissuade us from embracing this opinion; for it cannot be said of *Shem* that he was *without father, and without mother, and without descent*; no, not in the common sense that is given of the words; for *Shem's* genealogy is well known, and a full account of it we have in scripture: besides if *Melchizedek* was *Shem*, then *Levi* must be in his loins, as well as in the loins of *Abraham*; and so the apostle's argument would be of no force to prove the superexcellency of *Melchizedek's* priesthood to *Levi's*: nay the apostle tells us, that *Melchizedek's* descent is not counted of them, that is, the Levites, their descent is different; nay more, it does not seem credible that *Shem* should come into the land of *Canaan*, and reign in a country that belonged to his brother *Ham* and his posterity: nor does it appear probable that *Abraham* should be a stranger there, if it

were so, and be obliged to buy a piece of ground to bury his dead, when he had so near akin to him a king there: nor is it reasonable to suppose, that *Abraham* should give to him, but rather he to *Abraham*.

Others have thought him to be of the posterity of Canaan, the son of *Ham*: that he was a king in *Salem*, in the land of *Canaan* that he was a man of great piety and knowledge, whom the Lord had remarkably raised up in that corrupt generation, and endued with the knowledge of him and his true worship his name seems to make it manifest that he was a Canaanite, it being usual with those people to interpose God in compounded names, as in *Adonizedek*, *Abimelek*, &c. as also the place of his kingdom, *Salem*, which was a city in the land of *Canaan*: and likewise he is said to have a descent different from the Levites and their ancestors: and this seems well to agree with the design of the author of the epistle to the *Hebrews*, to cut off all boasting from the Jewish nation concerning the law of *Moses*, and priesthood of *Levi*; as also to magnify the grace of Christ among the Gentiles. Many, both ancient and later divines, have been of this opinion.

Others who think him to be a mere man, of whose genealogy the scripture is silent, on purpose that he might be as fit a type of Christ as the state of a mere man would allow of, not only think it in vain, but sinful to inquire who he was; and I must confess, we ought not to be too nice in our disquisitions, nor too positive in our determinations in this affair; but I cannot see that the last opinion which I have mentioned breaks in upon this; which at present, I am most inclined to embrace.

Thus much in answer to the first part of the question, Who he is? Let us now consider,

2dly, What he was: first we are told in *Genesis* 14:18 that *he was king of Salem*; which, according to some, is the same place which afterwards was called *Jerusalem*: so all the three *Targums* upon the place carry it: and we find that *Jerusalem* is called by this name in *David's* time, (*Psalm* 76:2) *in Salem also is his tabernacle*; though others think that it was *Salem*, a city of the *Shechemites*, in the Land of *Canaan*, mentioned in *Genesis* 33:18, which by another name was called *Shechem*, and afterwards *Salim*; near to which *John* was baptizing (*John* 3:23), and here *Jerom* says, in his time, was shown the palace of *Melchizedek*; the magnificence of which was manifest by its ruins: but this could not be true, for this city was beat down and sowed with salt by *Abimelek* (*Judges* 9:45), and I am most inclined to think that it was *Jerusalem* of which *Melchizedek* was king; who herein was a glorious type of Christ, who was constituted king over *Zion*; and in this very city, as our great high priest, offered up himself a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor to God.

2ndly, He is also said to be *a priest of the most high God*, one that was called by God to that office, was employed in the service of God; and by this title distinguished from the priests of idols: what his sacrifices were, we are not told: but no doubt they were such, which other priests offered who were so by divine appointment: and certain it is, that the bread and wine which he brought out to *Abraham*; were not his sacrifice; for he did not do that as a priest, but as a king, out of his royal and princely bounty, to refresh *Abraham* and his weary soldiers; as will be hereafter shown. So that *Melchizedek* was both a King and a Priest; instances of which indeed we have among the heathens, and perhaps they borrowed or rather stole the practice from this instance: yet we find this was not allowed among the Jews; the priesthood belonged to one tribe, and the kingdom to another: neither

David, nor any of his posterity, were allowed the exercise of both offices, till the Messiah came, who was prefigured herein by *Melchizedek*.

Thus have I considered both who and what he was: and I conclude that he was neither an angel, nor a divine power, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the Son of God himself, but that he was a mere man; yet not *Shem* the son of *Noah*, but a Canaanitish prince, who was remarkably raised up and endued by God with piety and knowledge, and was both king of *Salem*, that is, *Jerusalem*, and priest of the most high God, and herein a glorious type of Christ Jesus. I shall now consider,

Secondly, How Christ may be said to be of *the order of Melchizedek*. *Aben Ezra* renders it (κατα την ομοιοτητα), *according to the custom, or manner of Melchizedek*: and the apostle *according to the similitude*; and in all those places where these words are mentioned in the epistle to the *Hebrews*, they are also rendered by the Syriac, *in the similitude, or likeness of Melchizedek*; so that the sense of the words is, that just in the same way and manner that *Melchizedek* was a priest, Christ is, or that there is a similitude and likeness between Christ and *Melchizedek* which we shall consider in a few particulars.

1st, There is a likeness or similitude between them in their names and titles; *Melchizedek's* name by interpretation, is, *King of righteousness*; and well agrees with Christ, who *loves righteousness and hates iniquity*: who is a king *that reigns in righteousness, who sits upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice. The sceptre of his kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness, and his throne is established thereby; he is king of saints, and all his ways are just and true; all his regal administrations are according to justice and truth; for righteousness is the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.* As also he may well be called *King of righteousness*, because he is the author of one, he has wrought out and brought in an everlasting one, which is commensurate to the requirements of the law; and therefore sufficient for all those, for whom he effected it; this is called the *righteousness of God*; not that it is the essential righteousness of God, but it is a righteousness, which Christ, who is God as well as man, has wrought out for all his people; for *he who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*; to this righteousness of his should we submit, on this should we depend, and in it desire to be found living and dying, and then we shall not be found naked. Again;

Melchizedek's title is *King of Salem*, which by interpretation is, *King of peace*; which may well be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose title in *Isaiah* (Isa. 9:5), is *The prince of peace*; his kingdom is a kingdom of peace, his government and his peace are of equal duration; as there will be no end of the one, so neither will there be of the other *in his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth*: which was fulfilled in *Solomon*, who herein was an eminent type of Christ, and to whom those words are principally to be referred, as the Jews themselves acknowledge. Also he may be so called, because that he is both the author and giver of peace; he has made peace between God and sinners, a lasting and an inviolable one; he has been at great pain and charges to obtain it, it has cost him his precious blood; he hath made peace by the blood of his cross; the tidings of which are brought unto us in the gospel; and therefore that is called the gospel of peace; he is also the giver of all the inward, spiritual, conscience-peace, which saints enjoy as he himself said (John 14:27), *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you not as the world giveth, I give unto you*; thus is Christ not only king of righteousness, but king of

peace; as he is the author of the one, so he is of the other; and from him alone must we expect them both.

Secondly, There is a likeness or similitude between Christ and Melchizedek, in the account that is given of him in Hebrews 7:3, *without father, without mother, without descent; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life*; not but that *Melchizedek* had both father and mother, and likewise descent and beginning of days, and end of life; but the scripture gives us no account who were his father and mother, nor of what stock he descended; neither when he was born, nor when he died; and these things are on purpose concealed from us, that he might be a proper type of Christ. The Syriac renders it thus, "neither whose father nor mother are written in the genealogies; neither the beginning of his days, nor the end of his life;" and another learned interpreter thus, "of an unknown father, and of an unknown mother, the original of whose stock cannot be declared;" now this may be referred both to the person and priesthood of Christ.

Ist. To the person of Christ; the several branches of this account given of *Melchizedek*, may very fitly be applied to Christ.

First, he is said to be *without father*; this is true of Christ, as man; for as God he has a Father; God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: and frequent intimations did he give of this to the Jews; for which more than once, they took up stones to stone him: as such he made his application to God in his agonies in the garden, and as such he commended his Spirit to him, when ready to expire on the cross; and also ascended to him as *his God and our God, as his Father and our Father*: but as a man he had no Father; for *Joseph* was only his *supposed*, and not his *real* father; and herein lies the wonderful and astonishing mystery of the incarnation, which was so long prophesied of by *Isaiah*, *Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel* (Isa. 7:14): and therefore when the tidings hereof were brought to the virgin, it is no wonder that she made the reply she did, *how shall this be, seeing I know not a man?* But the answer which the angel returned unto her, was entirely satisfactory, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*. In Christ's incarnation, as there was a surprising display of God's grace, so there was an astonishing instance of his power; it was not after the ordinary way of generation; he was without father.

Secondly, He is said to be *without mother*; this is true of Christ as God; as man, he had a mother, but no father; as God, he has a father, but no mother: he was from all eternity begotten by the father, in a way ineffable and unspeakable to us; the modus of his generation who can tell? We are not to entertain any carnal conceptions of Christ's generation, nor compare it with that of ours, nor any other creatures; for he is without mother; it is true, the virgin *Mary* is sometimes called, by the ancients, the *mother of God*; but this is said by reason of the hypostatical union of the two natures in one person, upon the account of which sometimes what is proper to one nature is ascribed to the other.

Thirdly, He is said to be without descent; that is, there is no account of his pedigree, kindred, and ancestors, in any authentic genealogy: this is true of Christ as God; for his genealogy as man is given us both by *Matthew* and *Luke*; but as God, without genealogy; and hereby is distinguished

from the gods of the heathens, of whom are given long, tedious, and unaccountable genealogies: but he is the first and the last; before him was no God formed, neither shall there be after him.

1st, He is said to have neither beginning of days, nor end of life; this is true of Christ as he is God; for he is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, from everlasting to everlasting: and he is the same yesterday, today, and for ever; he who was born in Bethlehem, his goings forth were of old, even from everlasting; there never was a time when he began to be, and there never will be one when he will cease to be: and also, though as he is man he had a beginning of days, and an end of life, in this world, yet being risen from the dead, he lives, and will live for evermore; death shall no more have dominion over him.

2dly, These things may be referred to the priesthood both of *Melchizedek* and Christ: *Melchizedek* may be said to be *without father and without mother, &c.*, because his father was not a priest, nor did his mother descend from those that were priests; his descent either on father or mother side was not counted from them, nor had he any predecessor or successor in the priesthood; now this was, or at least ought to have been, carefully observed during the Levitical dispensation, that none be admitted to service as a priest, but who appeared from their registers and genealogies, to be of the right line: and therefore we find in *Ezra's* time, when there was a reformation in the Jewish church state, that those who were not found in the registers and genealogies, were looked on as polluted, and put from the priesthood: and herein *Melchizedek* was different from the Levites, and was a proper type of Christ; who did not descend from parents of the priestly line, for neither his supposed father *Joseph*, nor his real mother *Mary*, were of *Levi's* tribe, but of the tribe of *Judah*; of which tribe no man gave attendance at the altar; as also of which *Moses* spake nothing concerning priesthood; and out of this tribe, it is evident, our Lord sprang, who never had one that went before him, nor ever will have any come after him in the priesthood.

Thirdly, There is a likeness or similitude between Christ and *Melchizedek*, in the conjunction of the kingly and priestly offices in him; *Melchizedek* was both king of *Salem*, and priest of the most high God; and there are some particular actions which are recorded of him, which concern him in both characters; in which he prefigured Christ.

1st, As a king, there is one single action of his in which he typified Christ, and that is, his bringing out *bread* and *wine* to refresh *Abraham* and his wearied soldiers: he did not do this as a priest, but as a prince; here is no sacrifice to God, but an instance of his regard to one of his saints: this royal and generous act of his, is expressive of the great regard which Christ has for his people, who are engaged in a warfare, are fighting the Lord's battles, and are enduring hardness as good soldiers of Christ; What royal entertainments? What large and rich provisions of grace has he made for them? He feedeth them with himself, the bread of life: whose *flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed*; and sheds abroad his love in their souls, which is better than wine; he has made a gospel-feast, and it is *a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow; of wines on the lees, well refined*; and to this feast does he invite his people, and brings it forth unto them, and bids them heartily welcome; and says, *Eat O friends; yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved*; and then when the good fight of faith is fought, when the battle is ended, and the victory is obtained, then will he lead them into his banqueting-house above, and bring forth his best wine, which is reserved till last, and cause them to sit down at his table, where they shall feed for ever on those inexpressible joys and everlasting pleasures which are at his right hand.

2dly, There are several actions of his as a priest wherein he was typical of Christ.

1st, He blessed *Abraham*, and said, *Blessed be Abraham of the most high God*; this he did as a priest, it being the priest's work to bless the people: it is probable this might be a ratification or confirmation of the blessing of the promised seed to *Abraham*; for the Apostle says, *he blessed him which had the promises* (Heb. 7:6, 7); which is introduced by him as an argument of his being greater than he: no Christ in this is represented by *Melchizedek*, who blesseth his with all spiritual blessings, such as a justifying righteousness, the pardon of sin, adoption, and eternal life: and these blessings are lasting and durable; for those who are blessed by Christ, are blessed for ever; he never removes them himself, nor is it in the power of men or devils to reverse them: these then are blessings indeed; and happy are those who are possessed of them.

2dly, He gave thanks to God for the victory obtained by *Abraham* over his enemies: for thus we read he said, *and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand* (Gen. 14:20): this may very well be referred to Christ's praising his Father in the great congregation, and his paying vows there before them that fear him; he has obtained a complete victory over all his and our enemies, and has made us more than conquerors; and now he is set down at the right hand of God, and is there blessing his father, and giving thanks unto him for strengthening, assisting, and enabling him to do this work, as man and mediator. He asked of his father, and he gave him *the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost part of the earth for his possession*; and now is praising him for it; he has delivered all our enemies into his hands, and us out of the hands of them all, and now is blessing God for both.

3dly, Another act recorded of him as a priest, is his receiving tithes from *Abraham*. Christ is our great high priest, by whom we should offer up all our sacrifices to God; and in whom alone they are acceptable to him; and also to him should we prefer our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving for those many blessings wherewith we are blessed by him; he should have not only a tenth of what we have, but even all we have; we should give him our hearts, and present our bodies a living, holy and acceptable sacrifice to him.

Thus we have considered those actions of *Melchizedek*, which concern him both as king and priest, wherein he was a peculiar type of Christ the royal priest. *Samuel* was a prophet and a priest, but not a king. *David* was a king and prophet, but not a priest; nor any of his posterity. *Uzziah* once attempted the priestly office, but was severely rebuked by God, and struck with a leprosy, which continued with him to his *death*, *Melchizedek* alone was king and priest; these two met together alone in him, and therefore more especially on this account, Christ is said to be a priest of his order; that is, he is just such a priest as *Melchizedek* was, who was both king and priest; but Christ exceeds all his types, for he is prophet, priest and king; he is said to be *the faithful witness* (Rev. 1:5), which is expressive of his prophetic office; and *the first begotten of the dead*, which denotes his priestly office; and *the prince of the kings of the earth*, which directs us to his kingly office; all those three, which meet in one person, are clustered here in one verse; and perhaps the conjunction of the regal and priestly offices is intended in *Zechariah* 6: 12, *and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both*; he that sits upon the throne is a priest, and there is nothing interferes to hinder the discharge of either office, but an entire harmony between them.

Fourthly, As *Melchizedek* was a greater priest than *Levi*, or any of his sons, so is Christ: *Melchizedek* appears to be greater than *Levi*, by the account that is given both of his person and priesthood; by his blessing *Abraham*, from whom *Levi* sprang, and by his receiving tithes not only from *Abraham*, but also from *Levi*, who was then in *Abraham's* loins. Christ now is greater than *Melchizedek*, and therefore must be greater than *Levi*, or any of his sons,

1st, Christ is greater than any of the Levitical priests in his person; for he is truly and properly God; these were but men; hence Christ is fully qualified for this work, which was too weighty for a mere creature: and all he did was effectual; his blood sufficient to cleanse, his sacrifice to atone, and his righteousness to justify from all sin; he is also the Son of God: *Melchizedek* was made like to the Son of God; but Christ is really the Son of God; in that sense in which none of *Levi's* tribe were; and as he was the ablest, so the fittest for this work. He is God's first and only begotten; who has interest in his Father, and who would, no doubt, be as faithful to him as merciful to us: and his assuming human nature added yet to his fitness, for hereby he was made like unto us, as it behooved him, and had something to offer: and what he offered was in our nature, that so the benefit of it might redound to us he was truly and properly man; and yet herein excelled the Levites; for though he was a man, yet not a mere man: he was united to the Word, the second person in the Trinity, so were not they: he was perfectly holy, so were not they, but had need to offer for their own sins as well as for the people's.

2dly, In his sacrifice he is greater than they: his was perfect; by it a full atonement was made; sin was entirely put away, and his people perfected: but their sacrifices could not take away sin, nor make either them that did the service, or those that came thereunto, perfect: and therefore there was a repetition of them: the priests stood daily ministering, and offering the same sacrifices; but Christ was but once offered, and will never be offered more: there remains no more, neither is there any need of any more or any other sacrifice for sin.

Fifthly and *lastly*, There is a likeness between them in the perpetuity of their priesthood: *Melchizedek* is said to abide *a priest continually* (Heb. 7:3); because we have no account of the end of his priesthood, or that he ever had any successor therein; moreover, his priesthood, as the Syriac renders it, does abide for ever in Christ, who is of his order, and the truth of this type; for what is said mystically and figuratively of *Melchizedek*, is really and properly true of Christ: but this leads me to consider,

Secondly, The everlastingness of Christ's priesthood: *Thou art a priest for ever, &c.* There will never be a change of Christ's priesthood, it will never be antiquated. Offering of sacrifices, which is one main branch of the priestly office, began very early: *Adam*, no doubt, quickly after his fall, was taught by God to offer sacrifice for sin; and he taught his children to do the same: and now every man was his own priest: *Abel* offered sacrifice as well as *Cain*: which practice, perhaps, continued until the Levitical order was instituted. Though the Jews say, that before this was set up, the priesthood belonged to the first-born: but however, be it how it will, here is a change of the priesthood now, it is appropriated to a particular tribe; and none of another tribe might exercise this office: and this continued till Christ came in the flesh: and now, he being come an *high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle*; this priesthood is changed, as also the law thereof, which is disannulled, and abolished, because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: though sacrifices were of God's own appointing, yet now *sacrifice and offering, and burnt*

offering, and offering for sin, he will not; neither does he take any pleasure in those things that are offered by the law; but now the priesthood is in Christ's hands, and there will never more be another change. There were frequent changes in the Levitical priesthood, by reason of age and death; they truly, as the apostle observes, were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue (Heb. 7:23, 24). Some by reason of age; for they were not allowed to be in service after fifty years of age: and others not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this man, because he continueth ever, *hath an unchangeable priesthood; or, as it may be rendered an intransible priesthood. A priesthood that does not pass from one to another. Christ will never have any successors in his priesthood, it will never pass from him to another: there is now no real priesthood among men; ministers of the gospel are no more priests, than the people to whom they minister: for in a metaphorical sense, all the saints are made Kings and Priests to God; there is none a real and proper priest but himself, nor ever will be; for he is a priest for ever.*

But you will say, Has not Christ performed his priestly office? Does he continue to act as a priest? Has he not finished his work as such? I answer; it is true Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; and he will never be sacrificed more: he was once offered to bear the sins of many, and he will be offered no more: he has offered one sacrifice for sin, and he will offer no more: for he is set down for ever, having done his work: but then the virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice will abide for ever; by it he has put away sin for ever; by it he has brought in everlasting righteousness; a righteousness which will last for ever; by it he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified: as the virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice reached the saints from the foundation of the world: and therefore is said to be the Lamb slain from thence: so it will reach the saints in all ages of the world, to the curl of time, and throughout the endless ages of eternity. Nay further, though he has done sacrificing, yet he has not done interceding for us: now we have an advocate with the Father; now he is pleading the virtue of his sacrifice for us, and this is one branch of his priestly office.

But you will say, when all the elect are called by grace and brought to glory, and all the blessing purchased by his blood bestowed on them, will he then continue to intercede? I answer; The apostle tells us, that he *ever liveth to make intercession for us* (Heb. 7:25); and one way by which Christ intercedes, is by *appearing in the presence of God for us*; and this he will do for ever: and as our being brought to glory, will be owing to his intercession, so our continuance will be owing to the same; and though he may not continue to intercede formally for us, yet the virtue of his intercession will continue for ever. Moreover also, the glory of his priestly office will be continually given him, both by his father, who after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, set him down at his own right hand, which is a branch of his mediatorial glory, in which he will be continued for ever: and then also this glory will be given to him for ever by all the saints in heaven; who will be continually saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing* (Rev. 5:12) all the blessings of grace and glory they enjoy, they will for ever ascribe to his sacrifice and intercession. But now let us proceed to consider,

Thirdly, That the stability and firmness of Christ's priesthood lies in the immutable and irrepealable oath of God; *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest, &c.* The priesthood is not only assigned to Christ by the word of God, but by the oath of God; which is no other than an unalterable decree of his, which was revealed to *David* by inspiration: of which oath or decree he will never repent. God sometimes indeed changes his work, his way of acting; but he never changes

his will: for *he is not a man, that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent*; and whenever repentance is ascribed to God, it is to be understood in the former, and not in the latter sense: thus when it repented him that he had made man upon earth, he did not change his will, but he changed his way of acting; he changed the dispensation and therefore brought a flood and destroyed man from off the earth: and even this was according to an unalterable counsel of his own will. So when he repented that he had made *Saul* king, he did not change his will, but his way of acting, and therefore he cut him off; and gave his kingdom to another: and yet all according to his unchangeable will. Now he has conferred the priesthood on Christ; and as he will never change his will, so he will never change the dispensation, his way of acting in regard hereunto; he will never transfer the priesthood from one to the another. This may show us,

1st, The validity of Christ's call to the priestly office: he was not called to and invested in the priestly office by men; but God called him to, and fixed him in it by his unalterable decree: neither did he take this honor to himself; he did not thrust himself into this office; *Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he that said unto him; Thou art my Son today have I begotten thee* (Heb. 5:5): and therefore as God has called him to it and confirmed him in it by his oath, he will never be removed from it.

2dly, The singularity thereof: it might seem somewhat strange and incredible that God's own Son, his only begotten Son, should be made an high priest, to offer sacrifice for sin and to make intercession for transgressors: and therefore he confirms it by his oath, that he shall be a priest: as also, Christ was of another tribe, of which *Moses* said nothing concerning priesthood; and therefore this was a singular instance; and, to put an end to all hesitation about it, he swore to it.

3dly, It shews also the dignity of Christ's priesthood; the apostle observes this, and mentions it as an undeniable evidence of the preferableness of Christ's priesthood to the Levitical priesthood; that those priests were made without an oath, but he with an oath, by him that said unto him, *The Lord sware and will not repent, &c.* and he also adds, *by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better Testament* (Heb. 7:20-22): they were made priests by a law which is changed and abrogated, but he by two immutable things, God's word and oath.

4thly, It evidently makes it appear, that Christ's priesthood is a matter of moment; an oath is not to be taken by men in matters that are trivial and of no moment; and we may be sure that when God swears it is not in a trivial affair, but in a matter of great importance, such as the priesthood of Christ is; for on his sacrifice and intercession, the whole hinge of our salvation turns: because that *he hath an unchangeable priesthood, and ever liveth to make intercession for us*; that *he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him*; therefore we should set an high value on Christ's sacrifice and intercession, and be careful that we do not let these things slip, or suffer them to be wrung out of our hands.

5thly, This lets us see the durableness of Christ's priesthood; God has called him unto it and bestowed it on him; and his gifts and callings are without repentance: and therefore *he shall continue a priest for ever*. The law indeed made men high priests which had infirmity, and therefore they did not continue long; *but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore* (Heb. 7:28).

6thly and lastly, God gives his oath in this affair, not so much on his Son's account, who would never have doubted of his call unto, and investiture in the priestly office; but upon ours; therefore *God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel*, concerning this matter, *confirms it by an oath*; that all doubts and hesitations might be removed, and that *we might have strong consolation who have fled unto and laid hold upon Christ our high priest* (Heb. 7:17, 18). Thus have I considered the several parts of the text, and shall close with some brief improvement.

First, From hence we learn the excellency and greatness of Christ's person. The Jews vainly asked him this question, *Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? and the prophets are dead; Whom makest thou thyself* (John 7:53)? Yes, he was greater than *Abraham*; for he was greater than *Melchizedek*, who was greater than *Abraham*; to whom *Abraham* paid tithes, and by whom he was blessed. Christ is great both in his person and office; he is *God over all, blessed for evermore*; therefore should we entertain high thoughts of him, and have a great value and esteem for him.

Secondly, Hence we learn the preferableness of Christ's priesthood to all others; they are changed and abolished, but Christ's is an everlasting and unchangeable one; and therefore *seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession, and come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*.

Thirdly, Hence we learn how suitable Christ is for us; all offices meet in him; he is a king, to rule and govern us and to subdue all our enemies, both inward and outward; he is a priest, to atone for our sins, and make intercession to the Father for us; and he is a prophet, to teach and instruct us: whither should we go, but unto him? Such an high priest becomes us, who is after the order of *Melchizedek*, both king and priest.

Fourthly and lastly, Hence we learn, that all our blessings and privileges are secured, and will be continued to us for ever: Christ is a priest for ever; and the virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice and intercession continues for ever: and therefore all the blessings which depend thereon, will be continued to us for ever; we shall for ever be reaping the fruits and benefits of Christ's priestly-office; it affords abundant matter of consolation now, and will be the subject of our wonder to all eternity.

**THE APPEARANCE OF
CHRIST IN HUMAN NATURE,
AND THE DISCOVERIES OF HIMSELF TO HIS PEOPLE,
COMPARABLE TO THE
LIGHT OF THE MORNING**

2 SAMUEL 23:4

And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds.

In a former discourse we considered the preceding verse, *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God*. Now of this same Ruler, it is here said, *He shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds*. "He shall be;" that is, He that ruleth over men, just and righteous, ruling in the fear of God; "He shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds."

As the favor of an earthly prince is like a *cloud of latter rain*, and *dew upon the grass*, as the wise man says (Prov.16:15; 19:12): so his government, being mild and gentle, he is like the light of the morning when the sun riseth, pleasant and acceptable like the rising sun, bright and glorious; like a morning without clouds, that forebodes no ill, distress, affliction or adversity to his subjects, but all the reverse. This is still more true as it is applied to the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Saints, the *King of Kings and Lord of Lords, whose Kingdom ruleth all*; the administration of whose government is just and righteous. He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. He is, and shall be, like the light of the morning when the sun riseth, as a morning without clouds.

There are various metaphors applied to Christ similar to this; as, when he is said to be the *bright and morning Star* (Rev. 22:16): the phosphorus, the forerunner or introducer of the morning light. *The day spring from on high that hath visited us* (Luke 1:78); that brings on that bright and glorious day of the gospel dispensation. He is the day Star that arises in the hearts of his people; and that Sun of righteousness that arises upon them with healing in his wings (Mal. 4:2). So that the expressions of his grace, and the nature of his government may be fitly signified by the beautiful metaphor and figure here made use of. And

- I. This may be applied unto him as coming into the world by the assumption of human nature.
- II. To the discoveries he makes of himself to his people, in and after conversion.

III. To his government as a Ruler over men, just and righteous, ruling in the fear of God: especially with regard unto his rule and government as it will be more visibly and gloriously exercised in his spiritual and personal reign.

Note: *Roman Numerals II and III (see above) are part of Sermon V.*

I. This may have respect to his coming into the world; his appearance in human nature, where he was as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, a morning without clouds. It was foretold of him, that *his goings forth should be prepared as the morning* (Hosea 6:3): which is to be understood, not of his going forth of old, from everlasting, in the counsel and covenant of grace and peace; but his coming forth in time, his appearance in human nature, to work out the redemption and salvation of his people. The first hint of the Messiah, as a Saviour for lost sinful men, was as the dawn of morning light.

The sin of Adam brought a darkness upon him and the whole world. The first man was created with a great deal of light and knowledge. He was made after the image, and in the likeness of God, and which greatly consisted in knowledge, not merely of things natural, civil, and moral, but things divine. in the knowledge of God, his nature and divine perfections, will, and worship; of which Adam had a large share. But not content therewith, and being ambitious to know good and evil, he lost, in a great measure, the light and knowledge he had. Darkness overspread him; his understanding immediately became darkened; and so is the understanding of all men that descend from him by ordinary generation. *Their understandings are darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them.* This darkness, this blindness, is universal: there are none free from it. God's elect, while in a state of nature, are so. Dark with respect to their knowledge of spiritual things: yea, they are darkness itself till they are made light in the Lord. This is the case of all men universally. Jews and Gentiles are all under the power of sin, and liable to the consequences of it, and the elect among the rest; for *there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeks after God.* The way of peace, righteousness, life and salvation by Jesus Christ, they know not: and in such circumstances as these Adam found himself. As soon as he had sinned against God, he was immediately deprived of his gracious presence: enjoyed no more communion and fellowship with him in the way he did before: an emblem of which was, his being driven out of the garden. *So he drove out the man* (Gen. 3:24); signifying that sin had separated between God and him. There was an eclipse, as it were, between God and him: in consequence of which, it was a night of black darkness. He found himself in a most wretched state and condition: a most uncomfortable frame of soul: in the greatest anguish and distress: trembling at the thoughts of coming before that God, against whom he had sinned; and therefore attempted to hide himself from his presence amongst the trees of the garden (Gen. 3:8). He knew not what would be the issue and consequence of things. He could see no way of escaping the wrath of God. He had no hint of a Savior. He was as much without the knowledge of one, or any hope of salvation by one, as the blindest heathen that ever lived upon the face of the earth. This was the case of the first man.

Now all at once, behold, an hint was given of the Messiah: a discovery of a Savior for lost, sinful man, in that threatening to Satan, *the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head* (Gen.3:15). This was the first dawn of morning light to lost sinful man: and there was, at this time, a ray of light darted into Adam's mind, which he never was sensible or knew any thing at all of, in a state of innocence, amidst all the light and knowledge he then had. It was indeed a glorious ray of light

which darted into his mind, upon this single hint of the seed of the woman, who should bruise the serpent's head. From hence, he might and did conclude, that he and Eve should not die, since there was a seed, a son to spring from them, and one that should bruise the serpent's head, and destroy the works of him who had been the ruin of them. O! how it must gladden his heart! what cheerfulness must be in his countenance, which it is not possible for us to describe.

And this, like the light of the morning, was of an *increasing* nature. As the morning light spreads upon the tops of the mountains as soon as it appears, and gradually diffuses itself throughout the horizon; so this light, this morning light, which sprung up in this first promise of grace, diffused itself greatly: partly by means of *sacrifices*, which God appointed to be offered up from that time, and partly by *prophecies*, which were delivered out at certain times, respecting the glorious person that should appear in our world as the Savior of lost men.

This light., this morning light of divine grace spread itself or was spread by means of *sacrifices*, which were immediately ordered to be offered up. Adam was soon taught the way and method of offering sacrifices as an atonement for sin; as typical of the sacrifice of the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head. By these means he was more and more enlightened into the way, and nature of the method of his salvation and redemption: and still more when the Lord God was pleased to make, of the skins of slain beasts, coats for him and Eve, and clothed them which were emblems of the robe of righteousness, and the garment of salvation, to be wrought out by the woman's seed, the Savior of men. And Adam taught his posterity the way and method of offering sacrifices; for we may observe that his son Abel, *by faith* in the promised Savior, by faith in his atoning sacrifice for sin, *offered up a more excellent sacrifice than Cain* (Heb. 11:4). Hence it is, with reference to these early sacrifices, and the institution and practice of them, that Christ is said to be the *Lamb slain from the foundation of the world* (Rev.13:8). By these, and succeeding sacrifices, under the Levitical dispensation, which were numerous, this morning light, respecting a Savior, salvation by him, and acceptance through his sacrifice, was spread more and more.

This morning light of divine grace, shining through a Mediator and Savior, was likewise spread more and more by means of *prophecy*. Various and numerous were the prophecies concerning Christ the woman's seed; for he was spoken of from this time forward, by the mouth of all God's holy prophets, from the beginning of the world: they all had respect to him. He was the sum and substance of their prophecies; for so the disciples and followers of our Lord said, *we have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write* (John 1:45). Moses wrote of him, and all the prophets did so; the Spirit of Christ in them signified what he should be, and what he should do; testified of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Every prophecy relating to him, spread more and more light concerning him. The light that came therewith was like the morning light, a spreading and increasing one. By and through these prophecies it was known from whom he should particularly descend. The first hint is only that he should be the seed of the woman; and it would have been enough to have been born of any woman, to have completed that prophecy. But by degrees this was opened more and more; that he was to be born, not in a common or ordinary way, that he was to be born of a *virgin, and his name called Immanuel, God with us* (Matthew 1:23); and that he was to spring from Abraham the father of the faithful, *in whose seed all the nations of the earth were to be blessed* (Gen. 28:14). Another prophecy gives us farther light into this matter, and informs us, he was to spring from Judah; *from whom the sceptre was not to depart, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh, our Lord Jesus Christ, should come*

(Gen. 49:10). Other prophecies inform us more particularly that he was to spring from David's family, and to be a branch or stem out of the root of Jesse: others give us an account where he should be born, and when he should appear in the world. One prophecy fixes the very place of his birth; *Thou Bethlehem, Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel* (Micah 5:2): and others point out the exact time of his coming; that he should come before the rule, sceptre or government was to depart from the Jews, before the second temple was destroyed—for that he should come into, and give it a greater glory. Daniel fixes the exact time from the going forth of such a commandment; that there should be so many weeks, that is, so many years till the coming of the Messiah.

The first promise of the Messiah, only gives a hint of the work he should do, which was to bruise the serpent's head: but other prophecies more clearly declare, that he was to do the whole will and work of God; obtain salvation for his people; finish transgression; make an end of sin; and bring in an everlasting righteousness. That he was to be a Prophet like unto Moses; and a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec—that he was to be King over God's holy hill of Sion, and the sceptre of his kingdom a righteousness. Other prophecies also shew what he was to do in obedience to the will of God; and what he was to suffer in the room and stead of his people. That he was to be brought to the dust, and numbered amongst the transgressors: that he was to die and be buried, and lay in the grave, though not so long as to see corruption: that he should rise again, ascend up on high, sit down at the right hand of God, and there reign till all enemies were put under his feet. These, with many others, brought on such light and knowledge concerning a Saviour and Redeemer, as plainly made it appear that this light, like the morning-light, was a growing, spreading, and increasing one.

This, like that also, was attended with *joy and cheerfulness*, as the morning light is. The first hint of a Messiah, a Savior and Redeemer of lost man, was attended with joy and cheerfulness to Adam, as we have seen already; so every fresh prophecy, and after revelation of the will of God, concerning this matter, gave joy and pleasure to those to whom the discovery was made; as it did unto Abraham, of whom it is said, that *Abraham saw the day of Christ and was glad*. So every fresh discovery made by any of the prophets unto the church of God, in the several periods of time, were all attended with joy and cheerfulness. Zechariah, one of the last of the prophets, speaking concerning Christ, says, *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass* (Zech. 9:9). As the morning light is a *pledge* of the rising sun, a sure pledge of it, whenever we see day break, or the morning light appear, we are sure that the sun will rise, and that it will not be long ere it is risen; so that light which broke forth and spread gradually under the former dispensation, was an earnest and pledge of Christ the Sun of righteousness arising in due time, with healing in his wings. As yet, indeed, he was not risen; there was only the morning light spreading, but the Sun was not risen. There were still the shadows of the ceremonial law remaining. That law is by the apostle described, as a *shadow of good things to come, which had not the very image of the things* (Heb. 10:1). All those representations, under the legal dispensation, were shadowy ones. Christ is represented as the body and substance of them: the apostle, speaking of some of them in particular, adds, *which were a shadow of good things to come, but the body is of Christ* (Col. 2:17). Those continued under the legal dispensation, notwithstanding the morning light had broke forth; *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether* (Sol. Song 2:17).

That law which is comparable to the moon, was indeed the lesser light, and the light which rules by night. This seems to be intended in Revelation 12:1, where the church is represented as having the moon under her feet; the moon of the ceremonial law: and it may very fitly be signified by the moon, since that consisted among other things, in the observance of new moons. Its festivals, and ordinances were regulated by the moon, and like that, were changeable; and because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, vanished away. There was in this season stars of light. As Gospel ministers are sometimes called (Rev. 1:20); so the prophets, teachers, and instructors under the Old Testament dispensation, may very properly be signified thereby, who held forth the word of God, which was a light unto their feet, and a lamp unto their paths. But all this plainly intimated that the Sun was not risen: there was the moon of the ceremonial law, and stars which gave light; yet there was a comparative darkness under that dispensation, though the morning light did appear: a comparative darkness in the Jewish world and state. The children of Israel were not able to look to the end of that which was to be abolished. The way into the holiest of all was not so manifest as now, until the vail was rent asunder; and as to the Gentile world, that was full of darkness and ignorance. A time of ignorance that God winked at, took no notice of, but left them to walk in the vanity of their minds: and these are said to walk in darkness, and sit in the shadow of death.

When our Lord actually appeared in our flesh, came into the world, and appeared in our nature; then he was as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, a morning without clouds. He came in like the light of the morning, which dispelled darkness, and introduced light: dispelled darkness in the Jewish state, and scattered the shadows of the ceremonial law. Dispelled darkness from the Gentile world when his gospel came amongst them; for he came to be a light unto the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of his people Israel. So to remove and banish that night, of which the apostle speaks, when he says, *the night is far spent; the day is at hand* (Rom. 13:12).

By his coming into our world, the glorious light of the everlasting gospel was introduced. He came a *Light*. John his forerunner was not that light; but Christ was that light, and is called *the light of the world* (John 8:12); both of the Jewish and Gentile world. The light of the everlasting gospel which came by him, appeared very bright even unto all men; which teaches to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world. This made that day, that glorious and illustrious day, which the prophets so much spoke of, *the gospel day*, concerning which, the apostle thus expresses himself, *now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation*.

The coming of our Lord was like the light of the morning, *sudden and swift*: according to what was foretold of him that he should *suddenly come into his temple* (Mal. 3:1); or unawares, as he did. There were some indeed who were waiting for the consolation of Israel; as good old Simeon, and Anna the prophetess: but there were but few of this kind. Christ came suddenly into the world and into his temple; at unawares to the greatest part of mankind. Like the light of the morning he came *swiftly*: he was, as the church desired he would be, *like a roe or a young hart on the mountains of Bether* (Sol. Song 2:17). As soon as the time was up, which was fixed between him and his divine Father, God sent him; and he came readily. He was *made of a woman; made under the law* (Gal. 6:4). As the morning light is attended with *pleasure, joy and cheerfulness* to all kind of creatures; so the coming of our Lord was attended with *joy, spiritual joy*, to those who knew any thing of him, and that salvation which he came to effect. The Angels who brought the first news of it say, that they brought *good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people* (Luke 2:10): and the first

disciples and followers of our Lord, who had the first intimation of his being come, with what joy did they express themselves! In raptures, they said, *we have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write*, Christ the anointed one, the Son of God. So, wherever the gospel came with power, there was joy attended it; witness Samaria. We are told, *there was joy in that City* (Acts 8:8). Thus it was wherever Christ was preached, or any notice was given of his being come, and of salvation being wrought out by him.

The light which came by him was, like the morning light, *spreading and increasing*. He and his disciples went over all the land of Judea; and the gospel was published throughout the several parts thereof. It indeed was at one time limited and confined thereunto. The disciples were ordered to preach only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and not go into the way of the Gentiles: but after the resurrection of Christ from the dead, they were commanded to go into all nations, teaching and baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They did so; *their words went out through all the earth, and their sound unto the end of the world*. Before the destruction of Jerusalem, which was about forty years after the death of Christ, the gospel was preached to all nations: *to every creature under heaven* (Col. 1:23), as the apostle expresses it. He himself was a great instrument in this affair; for he went about, from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, preaching the gospel of Christ.

Once more; like the light of the morning he came *irresistibly*. As there is no such thing as preventing the light of the morning, when it once breaks forth, nothing in nature can possibly do it; so there was no preventing that gospel light which came by Christ. The word of the Lord had a free course; it ran and was glorified. Though there were all the methods taken to prevent its spread that could be devised among the Jews, they could not do it; the word of the Lord grew and multiplied. Nor could it be shut out from the Gentile world: though emperors, and governors of provinces and cities, were almost all, to a Man, against it, (those spiritual wickednesses in high places;) yet the apostles triumphed in Christ, and made manifest the savor of his knowledge in every place; which was a means of reducing thousands of souls to the obedience of Christ.

The coming of Christ is said to be not only like the light of the morning, but like the light of the morning *when the sun riseth*. He is styled the *Sun of righteousness* (Mal. 4:2). He, whom John saw visionally, like the light of the morning when the sun riseth; for he himself is a glorious Sun. A luminous body, the sun: the greater light, made to rule by day. An emblem of Christ, who is the light of the world: from whom all light comes. The light of Nature; for he is that light that lighteth every man that cometh into the World (John 1:9). The light of grace in conversion, is from him; and all after light also. Men are darkness itself until they are made light in the Lord: and the light of glory, that perfect, happy state the saints shall be brought into, and enjoy for evermore, it is all from Him. That glorious city is represented as standing in no need of the light of the sun, or of the moon, because the Lamb is the light thereof (Rev.21:23). *The Sun is a glorious body*. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars" (1 Cor. 15:41); but the glory of the sun is greatest: that is of superior glory. A fit emblem of Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person: in whom shines the glory of all the divine perfections. Any one that has a spiritual sight of things, can behold the *glory of Christ as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth* (John 1:14). He, having a spiritual sight, by means of the light of the everlasting gospel, does behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, the glory of Christ's person, and the glory of his offices; and is changed into the same image

from glory to glory. As the sun is a *lucid body, clear, and to appearance free from spots*; so it is expressive of the spotless purity of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the Saints, being washed in his blood and through his righteousness imputed, are said to be, all fair and without spot; much more may He be said to be so: fairer than the sons of Adam. If They are said to be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: much more is He so.

And if this light, which comes from the sun, in a natural sense, is what is most delightful to behold; much more must that light which comes from Christ, and shines from him. *Truly the light is sweet* (says the wise man) *and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun* (Eccl. 11:7); O! how much sweeter is spiritual light from Christ; and how much sweeter must it be to behold him, the Sun of righteousness, arising upon us with healing under his wings!

He coming, and grace and truth by him, caused a greater and stronger light under the gospel dispensation, than was under the legal one, when it was only as the dawn of the morning. Perhaps to this difference of states, respect may be had in Solomon's Song (7:10), where the church is said to be, *fair as the moon*; so she was under the legal dispensation: but it is added, *clear as the sun*; so she is under the gospel dispensation, having the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

From him, the Sun of righteousness, come the rays of light and love: and, as from the natural sun heat is derived, so likewise, from Christ the Sun of righteousness, heat as well as light proceeds. His coming inspired his people, his followers, with love to him, and zeal for him; and their hearts burned within them while he opened the Scriptures of truth unto them. From hence also springs all their spiritual fruitfulness. We read of *precious fruits brought forth by the sun* (Deut. 33:14); all the fruits of grace and righteousness are owing to Christ the Sun of righteousness.

Now when he appeared, he was as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even *a morning without clouds*; for all clouds disappeared when he arose; all the shadows of the ceremonial law: there was a disannulling of this commandment through the unprofitableness thereof. These shadows disappeared, when he the body and substance came.—*A morning without clouds*. There was not so much as a shadow of the ceremonial law, much less any of the storm or tempest of the moral law: that which is expressed by blackness and darkness and tempest, (Heb. 12:19); no, these were all over; the stormy dispensation is at an end; the rain is over and gone. No more the thunders of mount Sinai; all the curses of that law are fallen upon the surety and Savior; he has borne them; he has been made, himself, a curse for his people, that he might redeem them from the curse of the law. So that now, the gospel dispensation is a morning without clouds; no storm, no tempest, no indication of any. A morning without any clouds of divine wrath and displeasure; here is nothing but peace proclaimed upon earth and good will towards men. The love and kindness of God our Savior towards man appears. Peace is made by the blood of Jesus; reconciliation is made for iniquity; a Sacrifice offered up of a sweet smelling savor to God: a righteousness wrought out that is well pleasing to God; because by it the law is magnified and made honorable. The language of the gospel is, *fury is not in me* (Isa. 27:4); no, Christ appearing in our nature, doing the will and work of his God and ours, is as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds.

I should now have proceeded to have shown you how it is applicable to his manifestation of himself to his people, in and after conversion; which is like the rising of the sun, dispels darkness and ignorance from their minds; and is of a spreading nature, like the light of the morning; and sometimes so clear that it is like the light of the morning when the sun is up; when there is a clear sky, and a serene heaven; a morning without clouds.

And how particularly it may be applied to Christ as a Ruler among men, and his rule and government of his spiritual kingdom, which ere long will be as the light of the morning when the sun is risen, a morning without clouds; and especially in his personal reign.—But I must leave these things, with what follows in this verse, to another opportunity as God shall give it.

**THE APPEARANCE OF
CHRIST IN HUMAN NATURE,
AND THE DISCOVERIES OF HIMSELF TO HIS PEOPLE,
COMPARABLE TO THE
LIGHT OF THE MORNING, AND TO THE TENDER
GRASS SPRINGING OUT OF THE EARTH, BY
CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN.**

2 SAMUEL 23:4

And He shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain.

These Words are in dose connection with the latter part of the third verse, and are spoken of the same person. He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God; and he shall be as the light of the morning, even a morning without clouds. That is, He that rules over men; a righteous ruler over men, ruling in the fear of the Lord, he shall be as the light of the morning. Whether this is to be understood of an earthly ruler, of a ruler in and among men, that rules and reigns in righteousness, governing his people according to the rules of equity and justice, according to the laws of God and his country; executing justice and judgment among his subjects, and ruling in the fear of God, having that before his eyes, and upon his heart; considering himself as God's vicegerent, as standing in his room and stead, acting in his name, and under his authority, and so accountable to him; or whether we understand this of a greater Ruler still, of Christ Jesus in the exercise of his Kingly office, who is King and Ruler of all men; of the greatest of men, of the worst of men, and of the best of men who is King of saints; the righteous branch raised up unto David; a King that reigns in righteousness, rules in the fear of God, has the grace of fear in him, as Mediator, and the spirit of the fear of the Lord upon him, and who rules the fear of God, (as it may be rendered:) that is, governs, orders and directs the whole worship of God, as he does under the gospel dispensation, having all power and authority, in heaven and in earth, given to him as Mediator: Whether, I say, we understand this, of the one or of the other, this must be said of each of them, *He shall be as the light of the morning.*

If we understand the above of an earthly ruler, then the sense is, that he shall be as welcome and grateful to his subjects, as the morning light. He shall be like the rising sun, illustrious and glorious; he shall be like the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain. The favor of an earthly prince, his good will, and goodness to his subjects, in the gentle and mild administration of his government, is (as David's son, the wisest of men says) as a *cloud of the latter rain, and as the dew upon the grass*. But if we understand this of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, as we may most truly do; then these beautiful figures and metaphors may serve to set forth the glory of his person, and the riches of his grace; and particularly the benefits of his rule and government unto his subjects. Here are two sorts of figures or metaphors, made use of: very elegant, beautiful and apt ones. The first is, *That he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun ariseth, even a morning without clouds*. The second is, *that he shall be as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain*.

The first of these we have entered upon, namely that in which the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, is compared to the morning light when the sun arises; a morning without clouds. We proposed to consider this passage,

I. As it might respect the coming of Christ in the flesh and his appearance in our nature in this world.

II. As it might respect the discoveries of himself to his people in and after conversion. And

III. As it may respect his government as a Ruler over men, righteous ruling in the fear of God.

NOTE: *Roman Numerals II and III (see above) continued from Sermon IV.*

The first of these has been considered I shall now proceed,

II. To take notice of the discovery, or manifestation, Christ makes of himself to his people in conversion, in a spiritual manner; to which these figurative phrases are applicable; *He shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth; even a morning without clouds*.

As the morning light dissipates the darkness of the night, and introduces light into the hemisphere; so the first discovery of Christ unto his people, the revelation of him, in them as the hope of glory, dispels the darkness of their understandings: for the understanding of every man is darkened, yea, and darkness itself. This is the case of God's own people, in their natural state, with respect to divine and spiritual things; but when Christ is discovered and made known to them, then this darkness passes away, it goes off it is no more, comparatively; Christ's children are no longer the children of the night and of darkness, but the children of the day and of the light. Light is introduced into them by Christ's appearing, in a spiritual manner, to their souls, by the everlasting gospel: and in this light, they see light. By and through the light of his Spirit shining into their hearts, they not only discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the just demerit of it, their want of righteousness, the insufficiency of their own, the glory and excellency of the righteousness of

Christ, and the necessity of such a righteousness to appear in before the judgment seat of God: but through his divine light shining into them, they see the glory of Christ's person, the riches of his grace, the fulness and suitableness of his righteousness, and the completeness of his salvation. By the light of the divine word, which enters into them and gives light (*for the entrance of thy word*, says the Psalmist, *giveth light*, Ps. 119:130) they are led into the mysteries of divine grace, and into the wonders of divine love, to behold things which their eyes had never, no never seen before. This morning light, this spring of day to them, dispels there darkness and introduces light into their souls.

And this, often times, and generally speaking, is like the morning light, *sudden and surprising*. As that outward light which shone round Saul at his first conversion was, so that inward light which shines into the hearts of God's people at conversion, is sudden, marvelous and surprising to them. And as the morning light brings *joy and cheerfulness* with it, and makes the whole creation glad; so does spiritual light infused into the heart of a poor sinner. When Christ is first revealed to him, he is filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory; and no wonder, considering him as having a deep sense of sin, the guilt of it upon his conscience, and seeing no way of being delivered from it; at such a time to have Christ the Saviour revealed to him, his righteousness revealed from faith to faith to justify him, his blood to cleanse, his atoning sacrifice to expiate all sin; this must needs gladden his heart. And every new discovery and fresh revelation of him, has such an effect upon the hearts of God's people; and especially if he has been absent from them some time: as it is said of the disciples, when he had been a few days withdrawn from them, and came again, *then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord* (John 20:20).

Once more, as the morning light is of an *increasing* nature, when it breaks forth it spreads, and that irresistibly so is the revelation of Christ unto poor sinners. At first, their sight of him is but glimmering and obscure; they see, as the poor man in the gospel did to whom Christ restored sight, *men as trees walking*: they see things in a confused manner: but when Christ had touched that man again, and bid him look up, he saw all things clearly. So it is with those to whom Christ reveals himself: though their first sight of him may be (lark and obscure, they by degrees obtain a clearer sight of his person, offices and grace. The Spirit of God afresh opens their understandings, increaseth their knowledge; and hereby their path is as *the path of the just, which is as a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day*. Thus the light which is communicated in first conversion, as it grows and increases, is like the light of the morning when the sun rises; when the sun is risen in all its brightness; when there is a serene heaven and a clear sky: so it is with the Lord's people when the Sun of righteousness arises upon them, with healing in his wings, with applications of pardoning grace to their souls: when in his light they see light; for as in the light of the sun, we behold the sun, so they, in the light they receive from him, behold him, can claim him as their own, and say, *this is my beloved, and this is my Friend* (Sol. Song 5:16). *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine* (Sol. Song 6:3). *My Lord and my God* (John 20:28). *He loved me and gave himself for me* (Gal.2:20). When this is the case, Christ is as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth: when they are enabled to say, "who shall separate us from Christ? and from the love of Christ? and from the love of God in Christ?" of which they have now no doubt. It is a morning without clouds.

Sometimes it is indeed with the Lord's people a dark and cloudy day; a day of thick darkness and gloominess: they know not where they are, or how things are with them; they are ready to call in

question every thing; and walk in darkness and see no light; but when this darkness is dissipated, through the rising of the Sun of righteousness upon them, then it is a morning without clouds. No darkness upon their minds, no doubts hang upon them, no fears about their eternal state, nothing intervenes between Christ and them, or hinders their sight of him; but they, with open face, behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of our God.

III. I shall proceed to the application of this metaphor and figure, to the government of Christ as a Ruler over men, just and righteous, ruling in the fear of God; especially with regard unto his rule and government, as it will be more visibly and gloriously exercised in his spiritual and personal reign. Let it be observed, that the times of reformation from popery, may, fitly enough, be called the light of the morning, with respect to Christ's kingdom. This is signified in that mysterious book, the Book of the Revelations, chapter 2:28, *and I will give him (that is, him that overcometh) the morning star*. Now that is said after the Thyatirian church state; which is a representation of the Church of God in the times of popish darkness. The Lord promises to give the morning star: that is, the morning star of the reformation, the phosphorus, the forerunner or introducer of the light of his glorious kingdom here upon earth. And a wonderful spread of light there was at that time: which like the light of the morning, increased in every place in the Western parts of the world. This brought on the Sardian church state; in which I apprehend, we now are, and perhaps towards the close of it. The character of that state agrees with ours, that we have a *name to live and are dead* (Rev. 3:1): and yet there are some few names in this our Sardis that have not defiled their garments with bad principles or bad practices. The present state of the church, with respect to light, seems to be well expressed in the prophecy of Zechariah, where it is said, *in that day the light shall not be clear nor dark; but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night: but it shall come to pass that at even time it shall be light* (Zech. 14:7). It is so with us with respect to our light in general; it is neither night nor day, clear nor dark. It is not day, as in the times of the apostles, and it is not so dark as it was in the times of popery; but it is a sort of twilight we are in; and though it might be feared, from the growing darkness upon us, that it will issue in an evening twilight, yet it will turn out otherwise: at even time, or when we shall be reckoning the shadows of evening are coming upon us, it will be light, it will turn out a morning twilight. So stands the kingdom of Christ with respect to us; I apprehend the sun is not risen, with that splendor in which it will appear, in the *spiritual* and *personal* reign of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the *spiritual* reign of Christ, there will be such an illustrious appearance of him, that he shall destroy antichrist with the breath of his mouth and the brightness of his coming: and more especially in his *personal* reign, when *he* himself shall descend in person, and the dead in Christ shall be raised first; when his tabernacle shall be among men, and he will dwell among them, and be the light of the new Jerusalem. Now these states of Christ's kingdom will be attended with *great light* and *great joy*: both of which attend the rising of the *sun*.—*Light*. In the spiritual reign of Christ there will be a great deal of light. Many shall run to and fro; and spiritual knowledge will be increased every where. Then as the waters cover the sea, the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord. Light shall break forth abundantly among all ranks of men in the churches of Christ: the watchmen will see eye to eye, the ministers of the gospel, and private Christians also, will agree in their sentiments about gospel doctrines and gospel ordinances. Yea, the light of that state is said to be *as the light of the moon, and the light of the moon as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold as the light of seven days* (Isa. 30:26). So great will be the light

of that dispensation, that it may truly be said to be as the light of the morning, even a morning without clouds. And especially in the *personal reign* of Christ, when the sun shall no more go down by day, nor the moon by night; when the Lamb shall be the light of the New Jerusalem, and there will no more darkness in any sense: but an everlasting day.

And both these states in which the kingdom of Christ shall appear, will be attended with a great deal of *joy*. When this righteous one, ruling in the fear of God, shall take to himself his great power, and reign in the spiritual state, the four and twenty elders round the Throne will cast their crowns at his feet and say, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come: because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned." And when he will reign *personally*, then those that have gotten the victory over the beast, and stand upon a sea of glass with harps in their hands, will sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, saying, "great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints; who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?" The apostles, prophets, and all the people of God will join in one general thanksgiving, one song of praise, to him who hath avenged their blood upon antichrist. Innumerable voices will be heard in the church, saying, "salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, be unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments. Amen, Hallelujah." And again they will say, "let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

So then, this morning light, when the sun riseth, this morning without clouds, may very aptly represent the state of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ as a Ruler among men, righteous, ruling in the fear of God.

But I proceed now to take some notice of the Second figure here made use of. *He shall be as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain;* which may be applied to Christ himself, and to the influences and benefits his people receive from his government.

The figure may be applied to Christ himself. He shall be as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain: so it may point out unto us the nature of Christ as man: his original and descent, springing out of the earth; and the moving, producing cause thereof, the love and favour of God: and the whole may be expressive of his acceptableness and loveliness to his people; which seems to be greatly the design of this figure.

1. It may be considered as pointing out his nature as man. He sprung out of the earth. He is called the *fruit of the earth* (Isa. 4:2); An *handful of corn upon the top of the mountains*, which is part of the fruit of the earth (Ps. 72:16); *a branch out of root of Jesse* (Isa. 50); *a tender plant growing up before the Lord* (Isa. 53:2), and our text says, *He shall be as the tender grass*. Now though this may convey an idea of weakness and infirmity in Christ as man, and which is just; yet there is something more intended. The tenderness and verdure of the grass, and the flourishing circumstances in which it is in the morning (Ps. 90:6), may lead us to observe, that great grace that appeared upon Christ in his human nature, even in the morning of his infancy, of whom it is said, that *he waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him* (Luke 2:40). Great grace was upon him then: he increased in wisdom, and in favour with God and man. Yea, the Spirit of grace, or the grace of the Spirit was bestowed upon him without measure.

This simile of grass, is sometimes made use of in Scripture to express a multitude. The spires of grass are innumerable. Now, though Christ's person is but one; yet he has two natures, human and divine, united in that one person. He is the head of the body, the church, which consists of a variety of members; and he has a spiritual offspring, which are numerous, even as the sand of the sea; a number which no man can number, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. But I said the metaphor conveyed an idea of weakness and infirmity; and so it leads us to consider the weakness of Christ in human nature. He had all the sinless infirmities of that nature; he was, encompassed with infirmity; and was in the esteem of men, a worm, and no man; treated as the most contemptible creature: yea, the apostle says, *he was crucified through weakness* (2 Cor. 13:4). And, as the tender grass is liable to be trodden under foot, and to be cut down; so he, in human nature, was trodden under foot by those *strong bulls of Bashan, which compassed him about* (Ps. 22:12); by whom are meant the rulers of the Jews, both ecclesiastical and civil, as well as Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, and his soldiers. He was borne down under their calumnies, their cruel scourgings; and at last brought to the dust of death: for this tender plant was not only bruised for our iniquities; but cut down as the grass of the field, and that for our sins and transgressions.

But he arose again as grass after it is cut down; and therefore the resurrection of the dead, and even of Christ himself, is signified thereby; as in Isaiah 26:19, *Thy dead men shalt live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead*, just as it casts out its herbs and plants, under the influence of rain and dew. So Christ, though he was crucified through weakness, lives by the power of God: and though he was put to death in the flesh, was quickened in the Spirit; and though he was dead, is now a live, and lives for evermore.

2. The original of Christ, in his human nature, is here expressed by the tender grass springing out of the earth. It is true, indeed, he is said to be the *Lord from heaven* (1 Cor. 15:47). He is the Lord: he is Jehovah; and he is from heaven, which is the seat of his habitation and glory; from thence he came, (not by change of place, but by assumption of nature) into our world: therefore is said to come down from heaven, to do the will of his Father, which is in heaven: and because of the glory and excellency of his person, he is said to be above all. But as to his original as man, he is of the earth. He did not descend from heaven, bringing his human nature with him, as he will do when he appears a second time, without sin, unto salvation, he took human nature from the earth; that is, he took it of an earthly woman: *He was made of a woman* (Gal. 4:4). The human nature of Christ was made in secret, in the lowest parts of the earth, and from thence it sprang; which probably is the meaning of that expression, Psalm 85:11, *truth shall spring out of the earth*: that is, he who is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). The truth of all promises, prophecies, types, and figures: the true tabernacle which God pitched, and not man, that sprung out of the earth.

And this may also denote, the *meanness of our Lord's descent as man*. He sprung out of the earth; out of Jesse's family, when that was, as it were, cut down to the roots so he is said to be a *root springing up out of a dry ground* (Isa. 53:2). His supposed father a carpenter, his mother a poor virgin in Israel; which was what disgusted the Jews. *Is not* (say they) *this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? Poor Mary in such a place? Are not his brethren and sisters all with us? Do not we know them; what a mean company they are? what poor people they be? and therefore they treated him with the utmost contempt.*

3. The moving, producing cause of this tender grass springing out of the earth, is ascribed to clear shining after rain. As grass springs up apace, and revives much after a shower of rain, and the clear shining of the sun upon it; so our Lord is represented as growing up in like manner.

By this clear shining after rain, we may understand the love and favour of God; whose favour is light: and when it is manifested, the people of God have light and joy in their souls. Nothing is more desirable to them, than to have the light of that morning, and to walk in that light. So the good-will and favour of God may be compared to rain; for if the favour of an earthly prince, may be said to be as the latter rain, and as the dew upon the grass much more the favour of the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Now our Lord's springing up as the tender grass, or his appearance, as man, is owing to the love and favour of God. Zechariah, the father of the forerunner of our Lord, John the Baptist, in his song, says, that it is *through the tender mercy of our God, the day-spring from on high hath visited us* (Luke 1:78). That is, the Messiah, the Sun of Righteousness, which made the glorious day of the gospel: his rising and appearance he ascribes to the free grace and mercy of God. And to this also the angels ascribe the incarnation of our Lord: his coming in the flesh; his springing up as the tender grass out of the earth. They unitedly sing this song, *Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good-will toward men* (Luke 2:14). Yea, our Lord himself ascribes his mission, primarily, to the love of God. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16). And, indeed, there is no one instance in which the favour, good-will, and loving-kindness of God are so displayed, as in the mission and gift of Christ. The apostle says, that God hath shewn forth the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:7): that is, in his kindness in sending and giving Christ to us, and for us. He observes, that not only the kindness and goodness of God are here expressed, but the riches thereof; yea, the exceeding riches of his grace. The Lord, in order to shew his love to Israel, says, *since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable; and I have loved thee: therefore, will I give men for thee, and people for thy life* (Isa. 43:4). This was doing a great deal; but is nothing, no nothing at all, in comparison of his giving his Son to, and for his people. He gave his own Son, his only begotten Son; and when it is considered for what purpose he was given, may we not say with the apostle, *Herein is love!* herein is love amassed together: herein is love, here it centers; herein is love, *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins* (1 John 4:10). For God to send his Son to be the propitiatory sacrifice; that this should be his love, and favour, and good-will towards us, to make the soul of his Son an offering for sin; that he should part with him; give him up for us all: herein has he manifested his love in the highest degree. That while we were yet sinners Christ should die for us: O wonderful love! This is the clear shining after rain, to which is owing the descent of our Lord; and his springing up in the world to save poor, lost sinners.

4. This metaphor leads us to view *the loveliness of Christ*. As the grass looks exceeding gay and cheerful, comely and beautiful, after a shower of rain, when the sun shines upon it; so amiable does our Lord appear to his people. This *fruit of the earth, is said to be comely and excellent* (Isa. 4:2): comely and excellent to his saints; to those who have any spiritual sight of him, he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. This fruit of the earth is also said to be *glorious* (Isa. 4:2); which may denote the glory of his divine person, as the Son of God; who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. His glory, as Mediator, full of grace and

truth: the glorious man, adorned with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God. His glory after his resurrection from the dead. The glory even of his body; according to which the bodies of the saints at the resurrection morn will be fashioned, His glory at the Father's right hand, as sat down with him upon his throne; angels, principalities, and powers, being made subject unto him (1 Pet. 3:22). And especially in his government; both in his spiritual and personal reign. O how lovely wilt he appear then; when he, and he alone shall be exalted, and reign before his ancients gloriously. Thus this figure and metaphor may be applied to our Lord Jesus Christ,

I thought to have said a few things to show how this may be applied to the influences and benefits his people receive from him, under his government: and then the sense is this; "He shall cause his people, who are like grass springing out of the earth, to be like that, as it appears after clear shining after rain." Or, he shall be to them, who are compared to grass springing out of the earth, more than rain; for so the words may be rendered. That is, he is more to them than rain, and the clear shining after it; but I cannot now enlarge on this subject. To conclude,

Let us learn to bless the Lord for what Christ is already unto us, If he is unto us as the light of the morning, a morning without clouds; if his light has shone into our hearts, and we have had a discernment of spiritual things; let us bless God for this light, and say, as the Psalmist did, *Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name: bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits* (Ps. 103:1, &c.) And again, *blessed be the Lord, who hath shewn us light* (Ps. 118:27). Spiritual light, caused light to shine into our dark hearts, and gave us the light of the knowledge of the glory of himself, in the face of Jesus Christ. Let it be our great concern, therefore, to shew forth the praises of him, who has called us out of darkness, into his marvelous light: and to walk as children of the light, and of the day; putting off the works of darkness, and putting on the whole armor of light: putting on Christ Jesus; and making no provision for the flesh, to obey it in the lust thereof.

And this may lead us to look for what will be hereafter, when Christ will come down, like the rain upon the new mown grass, and like showers of rain to water the earth; to those days, when the righteous shall flourish, and there will be abundance of peace, as long as the sun and moon endureth.

THE INFINITE
CONDESCENSION OF JEHOVAH,
MANIFESTED IN
DWELLING ON THE EARTH

1 KINGS 8:27.

But will God indeed dwell on the Earth?

Solomon, having finished the building of the temple, and placed all the vessels thereof in their proper situation, the Lord took up his residence therein; which was signified by the cloud filling the temple, a symbol of the glorious presence of God; and Solomon observes upon it, the Lord hath said, that he *would dwell in the thick darkness.*

Solomon and the people of Israel, being gathered together for the dedication of the house of the Lord, he begins it with blessing the people; congratulating them upon the building of the temple; wishing them all happiness in such an enjoyment; and praying for them, that they might have the presence of God therein. He informs them that David, his father, had it first in his heart to build this house, which was acceptable to the Lord; but for some reasons, he was not suffered to do it. It was the pleasure of God, that he, Solomon, his son, should do it; which was accordingly performed. Then he spread forth his hands in prayer unto God, and addressed him as the One only living God, and said, *Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath; who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart.* He addressed him as the only living and true God; none like him, or besides him. None to be compared with him for his nature, and the perfections of it: for the works of his hands, and the blessings of his goodness. He addresses him as a covenant-keeping God, and as a merciful God; as he had proclaimed himself long before. He takes notice of the promises he had made; of one he had already fulfilled, as to the building of the temple; and he makes mention of another, concerning a succession of the kings of Israel in the house of David; and doubted not of the performance of it, since God was faithful that had promised. Then, in the words I have read, expresses his admiration, that God should dwell upon earth, *Will God indeed dwell on the earth ?* Is it fact? Will he truly and really dwell on the earth? Is there no doubt to be made of it? May it be credited? Is it not a thing almost incredible? at least, how wonderful and amazing is it, that he should dwell upon the earth! for we are not to understand these words as expressive of any diffidence, hesitation, or doubt in Solomon concerning it; but as expressive of admiration; *Will God indeed dwell on the earth!* Will he, who dwells on high, and who humbles himself to look upon things in heaven and upon the earth; will he deign to dwell with men upon earth! It is amazing that he should; considering his immensity, for he adds, *Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee!* He is

that God, who fills heaven and earth with his presence; and is not circumscribed in place, or by space: no; he is the immense and infinite Being. As he is not bounded by time, so neither by space; and how much less, says Solomon, in this house that I have built. This, magnificent as it was; this, though very spacious and probably more grand than any building in the known world, before or since; yet even this could not contain the Most High, who dwells not in temples made with hands; that is, in such sense as to be circumscribed by them.

God is an immense Being: he is every where: in heaven, earth, and hell. There is no fleeing from his presence: let a person be where he will, in any part of the universe, he is not out of the reach of God, or at a distance from him. *If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.* (Ps. 139:8-10) God is every where, by his power; upholding and maintaining the works of his hands. He is every where, by his providence; taking care of; and governing all his creatures. He is every where, by his Omniscience; for it reaches to all places and things. *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good and more especially, his eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth;* the various parts of the globe, where his people are, *to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose hearts are perfect towards him.* He is every where; yet heaven is more especially the place of his residence; or where he displays his glory, and makes it the most manifest; hence it is called his habitation, *Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness* (Isa. 63:15). The Lord dwelleth in his temple, and his throne is in the heavens: yea, heaven itself is his throne, on which he sits. There is his palace, there he keeps his court; there are his attendants, his ministering servants wait upon him: his angels are all around him; they behold the face of our Father, which is in heaven, and therefore are styled the angels of heaven. It is therefore amazing, that this God, who is immense, and whose glorious presence is more especially in heaven should dwell upon earth. *Will God indeed dwell upon the earth?* He hath formed the earth to be inhabited (Isa. 45:18); but by whom? not only by the beasts of the field, but more especially by man, the chief of the lower creation; yet, surely, not for himself. He hath made both the heavens and the earth; but the former he hath retained for his own dwelling place, and the latter he hath allotted to the sons of men. *The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men* (Ps. 115:16). It is, therefore, wonderful that he should dwell upon the earth, which he hath given to the children of men, to be inhabited by them; and the rather, since the earth is his footstool. The heaven is his throne, on which he sits: and the earth is his footstool. It is not usual for kings and great princes of the earth, to sit upon their footstool; well, therefore, may the question be put in the manner it is, *Will God indeed dwell upon the earth?* and especially, upon earth, in its present situation; and as it has been ever since the fall of Adam? By sin the earth is defiled and corrupted, is nigh unto cursing, and its end is to be burned. Will God indeed dwell on such an earth as this? It was defiled by the sin of man; it was cursed for his sake; *Cursed is the ground for thy sake* (says the Lord to Adam); *thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth* (Gen. 3:17, 18). It was more and more defiled and corrupted by the sins of men in after times; as by those of the men of the old world. The whole earth was corrupted, and filled with violence; for all men had corrupted their way in times of Noah; for which reason a flood was brought upon the earth. In after times corruption increased; and indeed in all periods of time, there has been abounding of sin, whereby the land mourns; because of cursing, swearing, lying, shedding of blood, and the like. The earth, therefore, *is reserved to fire, against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men* (2 Pet. 3:7). Will God indeed dwell on such an earth as this? how amazing it is!

Will he dwell with the inhabitants of such an earth as this? It was his pleasure, and has been his condescension at one period of time, and another, to look down upon the earth, to see if there were any that did understand what was good, if there were any that followed it: and the result of such a survey, has been this: *There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.* Now is it not amazing that a God of purity should dwell on earth with such persons as these? It is marvelous condescension in him to *look* upon things in heaven and in earth. It is a wonderful instance of his goodness, that he should regard sinful man in a providential way: *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?* (Ps. 8:4). Visitest him in a providential way. How much more astonishing is it, that God should *dwell* with men, in a spiritual way and manner! that God, *who inhabiteth eternity*, who *dwells in the high and holy place*, and *whose name is holy*; should dwell also with such who are of *a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* These words may be referred either,

I. To the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ; his tabernacling in human nature, upon this our earth; in order to work out the salvation of his people. This is a most amazing instance of his condescension; and with respect to which, such words as these may well be used. Very probable it is, that Solomon had a view unto it; since the temple that he built was a type of the human nature of Jesus Christ.

II. They may be referred also to God's dwelling among his people; or his divine presence in the churches of Christ; which is also an instance of amazing grace; and with regard to which, such words may well be used, *Will God indeed dwell with men upon earth?*

I. This passage may very well be referred to the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ; his dwelling upon earth among men, in order to work out their salvation: "*Will God indeed dwell upon earth?*" God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is truly God: he was to dwell, and he has dwelt upon earth; but it is marvelous, it is astonishing indeed!

1. He is *God*: yet he tabernacled in our nature. He is *the Word, that was with God, and was God.* This may have respect unto that event, when *the Word was made flesh, and dwelt*, or tabernacled, *among us* (John 1:14): in allusion to the tabernacle of Moses, which was a type of Christ's human nature. His human nature is *the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man* (Heb. 8:2). So the temple of Solomon, built in some respects after the model of the tabernacle, was a type of Christ's human nature. *Destroy* (says our Lord) *this temple* (meaning his body), *and in three days I will raise it up.* It was the Word of God that became incarnate and dwelt among men, *in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God* (John 1:1); truly and properly God. The *true God*; for says the apostle John, *We know that the Son of God is come*; that is, come into the world in our nature; and we have understanding of him, that *he is the true God, and, eternal life* (1 John 5:20): the author and giver of eternal life; having obtained it through his obedience and death. He is the *great God*, as he must needs be; since he hath obtained eternal redemption for us. "Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the *great God*, and our Savior Jesus Christ." He has all the *perfections of the Godhead* in him. All the Father hath, he has; so that he that sees the one, sees the other; Christ being the *express image of his Person*,

thought it not robbery to be equal with him; the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in him. All this could not be said with any propriety, had he not been truly and properly God.

He is the *Maker of all things*. By the Word that was made flesh, *all things were made, and without him was not any thing made, that was made* (John 1:1, 2, 3). All things were created by him, whether visible or invisible; thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers. He hath laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his hands. *He is over all, God blessed for evermore* (Rom. 9:5). He is high above all nations, and great above all creatures: he has obtained a more excellent name than they, being of a more excellent nature: for to which of the angels did he ever say, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" All the Angels of God are called upon to worship him (Heb. 1:6); and for very good reason, because they are all his creatures. All men, good and bad men, are subject unto him: he dwells, and ever did, in the highest heavens. In the sixty eighth Psalm, which is a Psalm concerning Christ, it is said of him, that he *rideth upon the heavens by his name Jah*; therefore he is called the Lord from heaven. He is said to come down from heaven, to do the will of his Father; and is said to be in heaven, whilst he was here upon earth (John 3:13).

Now it is amazing, that this great, glorious, and illustrious person should dwell upon earth. *Will God indeed dwell upon earth?* God, the Word, the Maker of all things, who is over all, God blessed for evermore, who dwells in the highest heavens; and will he dwell on the earth? Verily he will: and most certainly he has dwelt upon the earth. It was proposed to him in the ancient council and covenant of peace, that he should assume our nature, and dwell upon earth with mortal men: he agreed to it, and said, *Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God* (Ps. 60:7), I come in human nature: I come into the world, and among men; I delight to do thy will; that is, to obtain redemption for lost sinners. This was proposed; and to this he agreed; thenceforward he is represented as rejoicing in the habitable parts of this earth; in that part of the world, where he himself had agreed to dwell; and upon those spots of ground, where he knew those people would dwell for whom he became a surety and, a Saviour. His delights were with the sons of men: and we have various instances of his appearing on earth, long before he dwelt upon it. He appeared in Eden's garden immediately after the fall of our first parents. "They heard the voice of the Lord, God: or as the ancient Jewish paraphrase has it, "They heard the voice of the Word of the Lord their God:" of that eternal Logos, that Word which was in the beginning with God, was God (John 1:1); and was to dwell with man upon earth.

He appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre, and gave him, not only an assurance that he should have a son born to him at such a time: but predicted the immediate destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. He appeared in the form of a man to Jacob, wrestling with him till the break of day. Under the emblem of flaming fire, he appeared to Moses in the bush, and sent him to be the deliverer of Israel. He appeared to Manoah and his wife, declaring his name to be *secret*, or *wonderful*; and so to many others. Now those appearances of his, were presages that he would dwell upon earth: they were pledges and earnest, assuring the saints, that thus it would be; they seemed to indicate a kind of delight and pleasure the Son of God had in this, as it were desirous of the time when he should tabernacle among men.

Besides these appearances, which gave hints of what would be, there were certain prophecies concerning it. The first prophecy and promise was that *the seed of the woman should bruise the*

serpent's head (Gen. 3:15). Eve, perhaps, had reference to this, when she said, upon the birth of her first born, *I have gotten a man from the Lord* (Gen. 6:1): or, as it may be rendered, *I have gotten the man the Lord*: which many Jewish interpreters understand of the Messiah; imagining (though she was mistaken), that she had got the man, the Lord Messiah. However, it is certain that in the time of Job there were assurances of this. Job expresses his full assurance of it: *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth* (Job 9:1). So various other prophecies indicate the same, and point out even the very land in which the Messiah should dwell. *Salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land* (Ps. 85:9); that is, the glorious person promised to be the Saviour, who would work out the salvation of his people, and who is the brightness of the Father's glory, is coming to dwell in this our land, the land of Canaan. For which reason it is sometimes called *Immanuel's land* (Isa. 8:8); because he was to be born, dwell and suffer in that land. Sometimes particular parts of that land are pointed out; as Galilee and the parts adjacent (Isa. 9:1): yea, the mount of Olives is said to be a place whereon his feet should stand (Zech. 14:4); and it is well known, from the Evangelical history, that he was frequently upon that mount in prayer; and it was from that mount he ascended to heaven.

In the fulness of time, according to all these hints and predictions, he came into this world; was made flesh, and dwelt among us. He came, not by any change of place, for that is impossible: but by taking to his divine person, the human nature. For we are not to entertain such gross sentiments of him, as though, when he became incarnate, he moved from place to place, from heaven to earth; for even when he had assumed our nature and dwelt among us, he was in the bosom of the Father: *the only begotten Son, which is* (it is not said, *which was* in the bosom of the Father, and is now come from thence; but which is) *in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him* (John 1:18). Now it was, that he *tabernacled in the flesh*, as before observed. And among sinful men chiefly did he dwell when here upon earth; which gave umbrage to the scribes and pharisees, those self justiciaries, who could not brook that one who set up for a prophet, and appeared to be a holy man, should have conversation with profane sinners. It is said of him, by way of reproach, *this man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them* (Luke 15:2). Hence the objection made by the scribes and pharisees: *Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners?* (Matthew 9:11), which being reported to him, he made this reply; *They that be whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick* (Matthew 9:12). Signifying, that these proud pharisees were whole, in their own esteem; and so stood in no need of him as a physician. But there were others that *were sick*; distressed persons, that were brought to a sense of themselves. To them he was a physician; and thus he vindicates his character. As if he should say, I am a physician, and I act in character. I have nothing to do with those that are whole: my business lies with those that are affected with soul maladies, and are sensible of them. With whom should I be, as a physician, but with them? But after all he could not shelter himself from their opprobrious language, calling him *a friend of publicans and sinners*.

The persons whom he conversed with upon earth were sinful men. Upon earth he was some time. He was not (as in his former appearances, under the Old Testament dispensation) here for a few minutes, or hours at most; but he *dwelt* among men. He was not as a way-faring man, that continues only for a night; but dwelt many years among men upon earth. We read of him at different periods of his life. When he was about two years old, as we may suppose, that shocking massacre was made by Herod, of infants of two years old and under. Supposing him to be about that age, he ordered the infants of that age to be slain. We hear of him at twelve years of age, when he went with his parents to Jerusalem to keep the Passover; and was found among the Doctors in the temple.

We hear of him again when he was about thirty years of age, when he came from Galilee to John, to be baptized of him. How long he lived after cannot be said with any exactness; but at least he must abide upon earth four or five years more, since we read of four Passovers that passed between the time of his baptism and his death. When he had done the work he came about, which was the salvation of his people, then his life was taken away, and he was received up into heaven, by his divine Father, in the sight of his apostles. There Stephen saw him sitting [*standing*] at the right hand of God (Acts 7:56); and every believer, by faith, beholds him crowned with honour and glory, at the right hand of the Majesty on high. There he must be till the time of the restitution of all things; and then he will come again, according to his promise. We expect Jesus our Saviour from heaven, and he will most certainly come. *To them that look for him, he will appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.* When this earth has been refined and purified by fire, he will descend, and the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell among them.

But is it not amazing that the Son of God, the Word of God, he who is truly God, should dwell upon earth, as he did at his first coming? to which this passage chiefly refers; that he should dwell upon earth, who says, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was! When there were no depths, I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled; before the hills, was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest parts of the dust of the world, then I was by him" (Prov.8:23-30). That he who was before the earth existed, should dwell upon this earth, how astonishing! He must have a place of residence before, and where was he? it may be answered, He was with God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God (John 1:1): with his divine Father; in his bosom, as it is elsewhere said (John 1:18). Yet in the fulness of time, he came forth from the Father, and came into this world. Is it not amazing that he should dwell upon earth, by whom the earth was made? *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not* (John 1:10); even the same glorious person that was made flesh and dwelt among us, with whom, and in comparison of whom, the whole earth, and all its inhabitants, are as *nothing, less than nothing, and vanity.* He sits upon the circle of the earth, and all the inhabitants of it are as grasshoppers before him; yet such has been his condescension and goodness as to dwell with men upon earth. He who is the great God has been manifest in the flesh. He who is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace, has been the child born and the Son given (Isa. 9:6). He who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, has been found in fashion as a man, and in the form of a servant, walking up and down upon this earth of ours. How astonishing is this! *Will God indeed dwell on earth?* So it was to be; so it has been. And the wonder is the greater, when we consider what it was he came into this world to do! It was, not merely to instruct men in divine and spiritual things. He was indeed a teacher sent of God, as Nicodemus justly observes (John 3:2). He taught the way of God in truth, plainly and perfectly. Never man spake like him. He spoke as one having authority, and not as the scribes and pharisees. He was sent to preach the Gospel to various cities; for which he was abundantly qualified, being anointed with the Spirit of God, without measure, to preach glad tidings to the meek.

He went about throughout Judea and Galilee, preaching the gospel of God; but this was far from being the principal thing for which he came and dwelt upon our earth: it was to work out the salvation of his people. He *came*, as he himself says, *to seek and save that which was lost* (Luke 19:10): lost men, lost in Adam: so lost that they could never find the way to heaven. He came to save sinners, even the worst and chief of sinners. This is the glory of the gospel, the fulness, the

marrow of it: *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am the chief* (2 Tim. 1:15). He became our *God*, our near kinsman, and dwelt among us, in order to redeem us from sin, from Satan, and from the curse of the law: this was his errand into the world. In order to this, he spent his life, attended with the greatest poverty and meanness, difficulties and sorrows, which issued in death itself. He spent his life upon earth in much poverty and meanness, being born of poor parents, brought up in a mean manner: when arrived at man's estate, and entered on his public ministry, he had *not where to lay his head*; as he himself expresses it (Matthew 8:20). He was, in a sort, beholden to others for his support, though Lord of all. How amazing is this! yet so it was: for he came *not to be ministered unto*, to be served in state, as princes are; but to be a servant to others. He spent his life upon earth, attended not only with meanness, but with great affliction; for he was a man of sorrow, from his cradle to his cross. Many were the troubles he met with from the temptations of Satan, from his own disciples, and still more from the Jews: according to that prediction, *Who shall declare his generation?* (Isa.53:8); or the men of that generation in which he lived; their barbarous and ill usage of the Messiah, which issued in the shameful and painful death of the cross. All this he underwent to work out our salvation. How amazing is this! *Will God indeed*, the God of heaven and earth, God over all, blessed for ever, *dwell upon earth?* and for such a purpose?

II. This may also be referred to God's dwelling among his people, or his divine presence in the churches of Christ.

Our Lord Jesus Christ says, of them that love him, and keep his commandments (by which they shew that they love him), that his *Father will love them*, as well as he, and adds, *We will come unto them, and we will make our abode with them* (John 14:23). More than one divine person must be here intended; for our Lord says, *We will make our abode with them*. The Father comes and makes his abode with his people, in a spiritual sense, as he promises ; "I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (2 Cor. 6:16). Who says this? God: he that says, *He will be their Father, and they shall be his sons and daughters*.

The Spirit of the Lord dwells in the saints on earth, *Ye are the temple of God*, says the apostle (1 Cor. 3:16); *and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*. This distinguishes the regenerate from the unregenerate man; *ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you* (Rom. 8:9).

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, dwells in the saints, in their hearts by faith (Eph. 3:17). Whoever believes in Christ, eats his flesh, and drinks blood; dwells in Christ, and Christ in him (John 6:56). He dwells in all his churches, as in his proper house; according to that saying, *Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end* (Heb. 3:6). He dwells among them as his family, and provides for them food, raiment, and every thing they stand in need of; or that is for their spiritual pleasure and delight. He dwells among them, as in his palace; they being the city of the great king. He dwells among them as in his kingdom: for a gospel church state is called *the kingdom of heaven* (Matthew 25:1); where Christ is acknowledged as king by his saints; and where he reigns as king; and his dominion is, for ever and ever. Here he dwells, and here he will dwell for evermore; for he has promised to be with his churches and ministers to the end of the world.

But particularly, he dwells in the hearts of true believers; dwells with them upon earth: not in such a general way as he may be said to dwell with all men; in as much as all live, move, and have their being in him: nor in so special a sense, as the divine Logos, or Word, dwells hypostatically in the human nature: nor yet in so sublime a sense, as he is in the Father, and the Father in him; but he lives in them, as the author of life; and he dwells in them in order to revive them, *to revive the spirit of the humble*. He dwells in their *hearts*, not merely in their heads, as in some: dwells not upon their tongues, as in them who profess to know him, and do not, experimentally; but he dwells in their hearts, these everlasting doors being thrown open by his grace: there he sets up his throne, and *reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life*. He dwells (and O, how astonishing is it!) where sin dwells; for sin dwells in the saints. Christ dwells where no good thing dwells but himself; *for in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing* (Rom. 7:18). What good thing there is in his people, is put there by himself. He dwells (and how astonishing is it!) where he is often slighted; as he was by the church when he stood at her door and knocked; and desired she would open to him, when she said; *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?* (Sol. Song 5:3). He dwells, I say, where he is often slighted, where he is provoked, where his Holy Spirit is grieved, where he is rebelled against; which sometimes occasion him to withdraw his *comfortable* presence.

This is expressive of union between him and his people, who are members of his body, and one spirit with him. It is also expressive of communion with him; *fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*. And this communion they may expect *to* experience in the use of means; for where the *shepherds pitch their tents*, or where the word is preached, and the ordinances administered, there he is. He is held in these galleries, and here believers behold him in his beauty. Where he records his name he comes and blesses; and where two or three are met together in his name, there he is in the midst of them. He dwells with his people for ever more; for though they may be at a loss for his sensible presence, at times, and inquire where he is; yet he is not really withdrawn from them. He dwells with them still; as with Mary, when she said, *they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him*. Christ was at that time just at her elbow, but she knew him not. Christ never leaves nor forsakes his people: he dwells in them and they in him.

But I shall now come to a close. How astonishing, then, are the grace and condescension of our Lord Jesus Christ, in dwelling among men upon earth! You that know Christ, and have believed in him, know this to be true. *Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich*.

If you enjoy spiritual communion with him, and know the sensible inhabitation of him in your hearts by faith, make use of those means which he has directed unto, an attendance upon his word and ordinances: for our Lord hath assured those that love him and keep his commandments; that is, observe his word and ordinances, from a principle of love to him, that he *will come unto them, and make his abode with them*.

THE CHARACTERS OF A RULER OVER MEN :

JUST, RULING IN THE FEAR OF GOD;

FOUND WITH CHRIST.

2 SAMUEL 23:3

He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

These words may be considered as a declaration of what ought to be in every one that bears the character of a Ruler over men. He ought to consider, that he is a ruler of *men*, and not of *brutes* that he should be just; just to men in protecting their persons and property, and in administering justice and judgment unto them; that he should act as in the sight of God, as having the fear of God before his eyes, and do those things which are agreeable to him. Or they may be considered as a prophecy of what would be: that there should, in after times, arise a Ruler over men, that would be just and righteous, ruling in the fear of God. I say, it may be considered as a declaration, under divine inspiration, of what ought to be found in every one that beareth so high a character among men, as to be a ruler over them. I repeat it again, such an one should consider, that he is appointed a ruler of men, not of brutes; and therefore ought to treat his subjects as rational creatures, and rule over them in a humane, kind and gentle manner; and not as tyrannical princes and governors do.

The Lord, by the prophet Ezekiel, complains of some that go by the name of Shepherds in Israel (which not only intends ecclesiastical, but civil rulers), that they ruled with force and cruelty, though the people they ruled over were the flock of the Lord; concerning whom he says, *Ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God* (Ezek. 34:31). Persons that rule over men in such a tyrannical manner, disgrace human nature, and degrade themselves from the character of men, to that of beasts and therefore such are compared in Scripture to them. The four monarchies, and the heads of them, in Daniel are said to be *four beasts that arose out of the sea* (Dan. 7:3). They are compared to those wild creatures that are the most fierce, cruel and savage: *As a roaring lion and a raging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people* (Prov. 28:15).

One that, rules over men, ought to be just and righteous in the administrations of his civil government. David delivers this as a precept under divine inspiration, commanding and obliging such persons so to be: and he confirmed and established it by his own example, who was a just ruler over men. "He ruled over all Israel, and executed justice and judgment among them:" this is the testimony bore of him in 2 Samuel 8:15. There was nothing more desirable to him than that the same administration should be continued in his successors, particularly in Solomon his immediate successor. Psalm 72, which was a psalm wrote for Solomon, begins thus, *Give the King thy*

judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's son: that is, may he be directed, assisted and enabled to execute justice, judgment and righteousness among his subjects. This is requisite in every ruler of men whatever, wherever he is, or over whomsoever he is a ruler; for the king's throne is established by righteousness: that is the surest basis, the best security and strength of his throne and government.

A ruler of men ought also to rule in the fear of the Lord: and the rather as he is to consider that he is the Lord's vicegerent; that he stands in his room and stead; personates and represents Him; acts in his name; is accountable to him for what he does; and still more, as he, whom he represents, and under whom he acts, is able to set up and put down at his pleasure. Then may a ruler over men be said to rule in the fear of God, when he rules as under the eye of the omniscient God whom he represents and according to the law's of God: and when he is an encourager of every thing good and virtuous, and a discourager of every evil; a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well; when he makes use of his power and authority, to promote and protect the interest, of God and of religion among his subjects; when he not only tolerates, but encourages, those that fear the Lord, to serve and worship Him according to his revealed will: then, may such a ruler, he, or she, be said to be a nursing father or a nursing mother to God's Israel.

But the words may be considered as a Prophecy of some certain person that should arise; to whom these characters altogether agree. A ruler over men *should be* righteous, ruling in the fear of God (the words will bear to be rendered, *There shall be, &c.*) and the rather, this may be supposed to be the sense, because the last words of David, of which these are a part, were spoken under a spirit of prophecy; and David might encourage and comfort himself with a view of this, as he did with a view of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure (2 Sam. 23:5). *Although my house be not so with God:* though his family was not in such a condition and circumstances as he could wish for, yet this was what gave him relief and supported his spirits, that God had made with him an everlasting covenant; ordered in all things and sure. And well it might be a support unto him, and yield him relief and comfort in a view of the discouraging prospect he had of his family; when he was assured that there would be one arise, of his seed, that should be a Ruler over men, that would be righteous, and rule in the fear of the Lord; he could see, by the spirit of prophecy, that there would be a numerous race of kings spring from him, and few of them good: the greater part evil rulers; but yet there would be one, the King Messiah, who should rule over men just and righteous, and ruling in the fear of the Lord. To him I apprehend these words belong: and our business will be, to shew that these characters agree with him; or that there is that to be found in the true Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, which answers to them all.

This prophecy, which is here given forth concerning Christ, may be observed to agree with some others. Thus the prophet Isaiah speaks of the Messiah as the Prince of Peace; of whose government and the peace thereof, *there shall be no end: who sitteth upon the throne of David to order and establish it in righteousness, to execute justice and judgment in the earth* (Isa.9:6, 7). Jeremiah has a like prophecy, where he says, that the Lord would raise up unto David, a *righteous branch*; a branch that should spring from him; a son of his; one of his seed and offspring; one that should be just and righteous in the administering of judgment; and afterwards he adds, a *King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute justice and judgment in the earth: in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the same whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness* (Jer. 23:5, 6), or the righteous Lord. Zechariah speaks as clearly to this point as any;

and says, for the comfort of Zion in her low estate, *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass* (Zech. 9:9).

Now our work will be to shew how these characters agree with Christ, and make it appear that there is that in him which answers to them, as

I. He is a Ruler.

II. A Ruler over men.

III. A just and righteous one.

IV. Ruling in the fear of God.

I. He is a Ruler. This, we find is a character which is given unto our Lord in Scripture prophecies; as in that famous and well known one, Micah 5:2. *But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be a Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.* And by ruler, is not meant an inferior magistrate: but the chief and principal one the supreme Ruler of the tribe of Judah. It is said of Judah that he prevailed above his brethren, and for this reason, *of him came the chief Ruler* (1 Chron.5:2). This is no other than the Messiah the King, that should rule in righteousness; and who is different from all other kings, and his kingdom different from all other kingdoms, as to its nature, quality and extent. His kingdom ruleth over all. As he is a divine person, the Creator of all things; the government of the whole world, of right, belongs to him. The kingdoms of nature and providence are his, and he is the Governor among the nations.

But this title of Ruler, King, or head, which is frequently given to our Lord, respects him in his mediatorial office and is that branch of it which may be properly styled, his kingly office: for let it be observed, that he was set up, as such from everlasting. From everlasting he was King and Head of his church and people. *I was* (says Wisdom) *set up from everlasting* (Prov. 8:23): that is, as Mediator, or with respect to his office-capacity, and particularly in this part and branch of it, his Kingly office: agreeable to what God says, *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion* (Ps. 2:6): that is, "I have anointed him," as in the original text: and that, from everlasting. God has given him to be head over all things to the church (Eph. 1:22): He has appointed him King. These are our Lord's words, *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me* (Luke 22:29). Agreeable to those purposes, counsels, and designs of God, that his Son, the second person in the glorious Trinity, should be King, should be Ruler over men, particularly over his church and people; He was promised and spoken of from the beginning of the world, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation as such.— Thus he was spoken of by the prophet, *A Sceptre shall arise out of Judah*; that is, a sceptre bearer: a sceptre being a token of regal dignity. David in the Book of Psalms speaks of him as a king, again and again. We have a remarkable prophecy of him as king in the forty-fifth Psalm, where it is said his tongue was as the pen of a ready writer to speak of the things he had made touching the King: and by what follows, it plainly appears he means the King Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ; as, that he is fairer than the children of men: riding forth in his majesty and glory: and whose arrows are said to be sharp in the heart of his enemies. Isaiah, and all

the prophets after him, spake of Messiah, as a King; a Ruler of men. Especially does Isaiah, in that glorious vision he had of him, and when he had such an apprehension of himself, as a poor, vile, unclean creature; the reason of which was, because his eyes had seen the King, the Lord of hosts, of armies in heaven and earth: when he saw him upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple, and the seraphim covered their faces with their wings, and cried one unto another and said, *holy holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory* (Isa. 6:1, 2, 3).

So, many other of the prophets spake of him as a King, especially Zechariah, in the place I have before referred to (Zech. 9:9). Daniel calls him, *the Messiah, the Prince* (Dan. 9:25); that is, the King Messiah. He came into the world as such, he was born such. The wise men inquired after him saying, *where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him* (Matthew 2:2). They might, perhaps, have no other notion of him, than as a temporal King; but he was more than that. Indeed he was not a temporal one at all; his kingdom was not of this world, but of another kind and nature. His kingdom came not with observation, so that it gave the Jews a disgust against him; because they expected a temporal prince, and no other. Indeed his *spiritual kingdom* did not appear very conspicuous at that time. Very few that were converted under the ministry of Christ, his forerunner, or the apostles: and few that entered into the kingdom of heaven, (the gospel-dispensation), that embraced the doctrines of the gospel, and submitted to the ordinances thereof, had a clear view of him as a King, in a spiritual sense. But after his sufferings and death, resurrection and ascension to heaven, he was declared to be both Lord and Christ. Then it appeared more plainly, that he was King and Ruler over men. God the father highly exalted him; then he placed him upon the same throne with himself; crowned him with glory and honour; set him at his right hand until he should make his enemies his footstool, or they should become subject to him in one way or another.

In consequence of his being thus exalted as King, He sent forth the rod of his strength out of Zion, the everlasting gospel, the power of God unto salvation: that word that comes out of Sion, and out of Jerusalem. He sent forth this, and sent forth his apostles to preach it: and as King of saints, and Head over all things to the church, gave them gifts in an extraordinary manner, by which they went and preached the Gospel every where; He going along with them, and diffusing the savor of his knowledge in every place to great advantage. He rode forth upon the white horse of the gospel, conquering and to conquer. These were the weapons of their warfare which were not carnal but spiritual, and mighty through God for the reducing of souls to the obedience of Christ; which they were enabled through divine grace to do everywhere; so that wherever they came, there were multitudes ready to say, *the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us*. The hearts of men were opened by the powerful and efficacious grace of God. The everlasting doors were made to stand open at the voice of this King of Kings; and the King of Glory entered in, and took up his residence in their hearts; set up his throne there; dwelt by faith there, as a King in his palace. They became subject unto him, willing to serve him, and willing to be saved by him. This has been more or less the case in the Gentile world: and will be more manifest in the latter day, when Christ will take to himself his great power and reign; and the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; when he will reign before his ancients in Jerusalem gloriously. Thus he appears to have a just title to this character of a Ruler. Let us consider further, more particularly,

II. His being a *Ruler over men*. Christ is indeed a Ruler over angels; and he has a right to rule them, as he is the Creator of them: for all things were made by him, whether visible or invisible. As he created them, he has a right to govern them: and he is, as Mediator, appointed to be head over principalities and powers, angels as well as men; all are subject unto him. *Angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him* (1 Pet. 3:22). The angels wait upon him to receive his orders; ready to obey his commands, whatsoever he enjoins them. They are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who are the heirs of salvation.

But here he is said to be a *Ruler over men*. He is a Ruler over the greatest of men: yea, one of his titles is, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords* (Rev. 19:16), and upon his vestment and his thigh it is written. He is the Prince of the kings of the earth. All are subject to his dominion and government. By him kings reign and princes decree justice: and they are all accountable to him. He can, at his pleasure, set them up, and put them down; and they must all stand before him another day, to give an account of their administration of civil government. He is a Ruler over men, over the greatest of men. He is made higher, by his divine Father, than the kings of the earth.

He is a Ruler over the worst of men: over wicked men, who say, *we will not have this man to reign over us*: yet, whether they will or not, he is a Ruler over them. Though they refuse subjection to him, he will let them know he has power and authority over them, by punishing them for their rebellion. *But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me* (Luke 19:27). Such who are unwilling to yield subjection to his government, he will rule them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel. Whether they will or no, some way or other, they shall be subject unto him; for he has sworn in righteousness, the word is gone out of his mouth, *that to him every knee should bow, and every tongue should confess to God* (Rom. 14:11).

But in a particular sense, he is a Ruler over the best of men; over good men; over holy men; over the children and people of God, which are sometimes in Scripture, signified by Sion. The church is signified thereby in the Old, and in the New Testament. In the New Testament it is represented as the privilege of the people of God, that they are come to Mount Sion; which is explained of the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven (Heb. 12:23). Called by the name of Sion; because Sion was the object of divine love—because it was the object of his choice. He has chosen Sion for his habitation. An high, conspicuous, firm, and stable mountain: the holy hill; a representation of holy and good men. Now God has set his Son over this holy hill of Sion, or over his church and people, whom he has loved, chosen, redeemed, and sanctified. Good men are sometimes called Israel, as in Micah 5:2. *Yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel*. Not Israel in a literal sense for the greater part of them, the Jews, would not have him to reign over them; nor merely the spiritual part of them, the lost sheep of the house of Israel: but the whole Israel of God, Jews and Gentiles. Every one of these will say as Nathaniel did, *Rabbi, thou art the son of God, thou art the King of Israel* (John 1:49). Of good men Christ is the Ruler. They are called saints, and hence his title runs, *King of saints: just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints* (Rev. 15:3). Saints, such who are sanctified and set apart by God the father, separated to holiness and happiness. Such whom Christ has sanctified by his blood, making atonement and expiation for their sins; *wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate* (Heb. 13:12). Such to whom Christ is made sanctification as well as redemption and righteousness; and such who are sanctified by his

Spirit and in his name, have a principle of grace and holiness wrought in them; in virtue of which, they live holy lives and conversations. Christ is King of them.

And these are sometimes represented as a kingdom of priests, or made kings and priests unto God for what is said by the Assyrian in a boasting manner, *Are not my princes altogether kings?* (Isa. 10:8). Christ may say of his subjects, that they are princes, and these princes are altogether kings; and these are not only whom he rules over, but they reign with him. They shall reign with him on earth, and shall reign with him for ever and ever.

Now these persons whom Christ rules over, are not subject to him, naturally; no, they are rebels, as others. They disapprove of him as a king; reject his government; are unwilling to submit to his institutions and ordinances; and enemies in their minds by wicked works; yea, they possess enmity itself against God. Their language is like that of the carnal Jews, *We will not have this man to reign over us* (Luke 19:14). They do not care to be subject to his ordinances and appointments; but say, "let it be cast away these cords from us, and break these bands asunder." In conversion, the Lord strikes his arrows into their hearts, whereby these enemies fall under him, and submit unto him. He cuts them to the heart by his Spirit, in the power of his grace, under the administration of the gospel: then they cry out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* They are willing then, to do, and be any thing. They are made willing in the day of his power to be saved by him in his own way; to submit to his righteousness; to receive him as their King, and be subject to his ordinances. Then their language is, *other Lords beside thee* (Satan and the world), *have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name* (Isa.26:13): that is, thou only shalt be our King, and we will serve and obey thee, and thee only. Thus their hearts being opened by his power and grace, he enters in, takes his throne, and sets up his grace as a governing principle, which reigns in them, through righteousness, to eternal life. He now, as a king, exercises his authority over them by enacting laws, which they yield ready obedience to; and by writing these laws upon their hearts, in which he acts a different part from all other rulers whatsoever. When they make laws and publish them, they are written. fixed in different places, or printed in books, that persons may read them; but this Ruler of men, writes his laws in the *hearts* of his people. *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts* (Jer. 31:33): and more than this, he puts his Spirit into them, in order to enable them to walk in his statutes, and do them. He subdues the enemies of his people over whom he rules. This was the view the Israelites had in desiring a king, that he might go in and out before them, and fight their battles for them. Christ is such a king. He fights the battles of his people. He subdues their enemies. He has finished transgression, and made an end of sin; has overcome the world; destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the Devil; has abolished death itself, the last enemy, and makes his people more than conquerors through him.

He, as a Ruler, protects them from all their enemies. *In his days Israel shall be saved, and Judah shall dwell safely*, for he employs all his power on their behalf. He is able to keep, and save them and none shall pluck them out of his hands.

As a Ruler and King, he provides for them every thing they want. It is very usual to denominate kings, shepherds, who feed their flocks. Christ is such an one, that stands and feeds in the strength of the Lord, and in the majesty of his God. He feeds his people like a shepherd, leads them into green pastures, and beside the still waters. He has all fulness in his hands for the supply of their wants; and therefore they want no good thing. As he is a Ruler of men, and exercises his authority

in the manner he does, it is most happy for them. It is not only an instance of divine love and favour that Christ, as man and mediator, should be head over all things to the church, and have all fulness of grace in him for the supply of their wants; but it is an instance his love and affection to his church and people, to appoint such a Ruler over them, who is every way qualified for such an office, being so wise, so good, so kind and tender, and so powerful. It is a remark of the queen of Sheba, concerning Solomon, that the Lord had a love to his people, and therefore appointed him to be king over them: so God the Father has a love to his church and people, and therefore appointed Christ to be the Ruler over them. It is an act of his free favor and good will towards them.

This rule and government is what is delegated to him, by his divine Father, of a spiritual nature; and, as we before said, is a government for which he is every way qualified.

III. This Ruler over men, is *just or righteous*: which respects not his essential righteousness as God, who is righteous in all his ways and works. Nor does it regard the course of his life as man: as such he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Nor does it respect his being the author of righteousness, working out a righteousness for his people. Nor his mediatorial office at large, which he performed with so much integrity that he justly merited the character of God's righteous servant; but it respects him as *a King*. His sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness. His ways are just and true as King of saints. *Righteousness is the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness is the girdle of his reins*, in all the administrations of his kingly office; thus he answers to his type, Melchisedec, whose name signifies the king of righteousness; as well as also king of Salem, which is king of peace.

IV. He also *rules in the fear of God*. As man, the grace of fear was in him; as mediator, the spirit of fear was upon him. Not only the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, and counsel, but of the fear of the Lord; which respects his administration of the kingly office. He always did what pleased the Father. What he did flowed from affection for him; so that he might be said, in the highest sense, to serve the Lord with reverence and with godly fear.

But there is another sense in which these words may be taken. They may be rendered, *ruling in the fear of God*. Not only ruling such persons that have the fear of God upon their hearts, and before their eyes; but ruling, appointing and ordering the worship of God; having it at his command, and wholly under his direction.

The fear of God, sometimes signifies the whole worship of God, internal and external; because this, when rightly performed, is done in the fear of God: *serve the Lord with fear and rejoice before him with trembling* (Ps. 2:11). Now our Lord Jesus Christ, as king of saints, has this fear, this worship of God, wholly at his command, altogether under his authority; and by his direction every gospel ordinance is administered. Thus in Matthew 28:18 he says, *all power is given to me in heaven and in earth*: all power and authority as Mediator. In consequence of which he appoints and commissions his disciples to preach the gospel; for it follows, *therefore*, (because I have all power given to me in heaven and earth) *go ye, and teach all nations*. Go and preach my gospel every where, *baptizing them* that are taught (for that is the meaning of it) *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*.

Christ, as king of the church, has power and authority over the fear and worship of God, under the gospel dispensation. Indeed the very law itself is in the hands of Christ, as King of saints and of the church; and there it is as a rule of walk and conversation to his people; *so that they are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ* (1 Cor. 9:21).

Now there are various duties incumbent upon us with respect to Christ as a Ruler of men, of the church and people of God. We ought to own him as King of saints: to say of him, the Lord is our King, the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, and he will save us: my Lord and my God. And not only own and acknowledge him to be King, but to be subject to him; for to acknowledge this in words is not enough. "Not every one that says, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom, but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven:" (Matthew 7:21). Which is the rather to be attended unto because his commands are not greivous: *his yoke is easy, and his burden is light* (Matthew 11:30). You regard him as a priest, and expect the pardon of your sins through his blood. He is, indeed, an interceding High Priest (of good things for you at the throne of God): and should you not regard him as your King? What! think to receive all benefit from him as a priest, and not serve him as a King! Your receiving him as a Priest lays you under the highest obligations to serve him as a King. It is your duty also to rejoice in your King; *let the children of Zion rejoice in their King*. They have reason so to do: he is so wise, so good, so just, so able to subdue their enemies, and provide all good things for them. O what matter of joy is this, that Sion's King reigneth! You should do all you can for the enlargement of his kingdom: pray for the prosperity of it, and its coming in greater glory. Say, *thy kingdom come*: and, as he is pleased to say, *behold I come quickly*, you should reverberate, and say, *even so, come, Lord Jesus*.

CHRIST THE RANSOM FOUND

Occasioned by the Death of Mr. John Davenport.

Preached Oct. 13, 1754.

Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going to the pit, I have

found a ransom.— Job 33:24.

The occasion of my reading these words to you at this time, is the decease of Mr. John Davenport, late member and deacon of this church, which by some circumstances were thought to be much upon his mind of late, and of singular use to him; and therefore were judged proper to be the subject of a funeral discourse.

The words are in strict connection with those that immediately go before; *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness, then he is gracious,* etc. that is, if there be a messenger with God; or with the sick man; who is described in the preceding verses, 19-22 by the strong pain he is chastened with on his bed, with which all his bones are affected; by his nausea and abhorrence of food, even the most delicious and dainty; by the consumption of his flesh, being reduced to skin and bone, and so emaciated, that scarce any flesh is to be seen upon him; and his bones, which were covered with it, now stick out, and may easily be told; and by his near approach to the grave, and to the *destroyers*: not the destroying angels; [\[1\]](#) rather, destroying diseases; so *Broughton* renders it, "killing maladies;" or it may be the worms, [\[2\]](#) which in the grave destroy the flesh that remains, see chapter 19:26. or else *deaths*, the first and second, and the horrors and terrors of them. [\[3\]](#) Now in such a case, and at such a season, if there be a proper, useful, affixing person at hand, it is well for the sick man; *if there be a messenger, or an angel*, as the word signifies: and some [\[4\]](#) understand it of an angel by nature; one of those thousands, and ten thousands, that stand before God and minister unto him; one of those *ministering spirits that are sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation*, who, as they perform good offices to them in life and health, so in sickness, and at the hour of death; when it is certain they are present with them, to take care of the separate spirit, and convoy it to heaven and may be of use to suggest things comfortable to the mind of the sick person, and direct him what is right for him in such circumstances. This sense the Popish interpreters greedily catch at; though, should it be admitted, it would not follow, that because that angels may be of some use on sick-beds, and death-beds, that therefore they are to be invoked, prayed unto, and made use of as mediators between God and man; but I think this sense is to be rejected: and rather by the *messenger*, etc. is meant a minister of the word, [\[5\]](#) who is by office an angel; hence we read of *the angels of the seven churches*, [\[6\]](#) which are no other than the pastors of them; who have their mission and commission from God, to preach the gospel: and such an one is an *interpreter* of the scriptures, which he studies rightly to divide and explain; and of the mind and will of God in them, which he is favored with,

and enlightened into: and a spiritual, evangelical and faithful dispenser of the word is *one among a thousand*, scarce and rare; there are but few such, especially in times of declension, and in such places where the word of the Lord is precious or rare; and very probably there were but few in those countries where *Job* and his friends lived, see Ecclesiastes 7:28. Now the business of such a one is *to shew unto man*, to any man, and particularly הארם "the sick man," *his uprightness*, or *rectitude*, or *righteousness*; either the righteousness of God in this dispensation of his providence; to inform him, that as God is righteous in all his ways and works, so in this; that it is in very faithfulness he has afflicted him, and therefore should not think hardly of God, or that he is hardly used by him; should not murmur and repine, but patiently submit to the will of God: or else the righteousness of the God-man and mediator Jesus Christ; that everlasting righteousness he has wrought out, and which is revealed in the gospel, and is a principal article of it; and therefore a proper part of a minister's work to shew it unto men; hence they are said to *turn many to righteousness*, or *to justify many*;[7] that is, by pointing out and directing them to the righteousness of Christ, as the alone justifying one; and which, as it is the solid foundation, of peace, joy, and comfort in life and health, it is more proper to be observed to the sick man drawing nigh to the gates of death; which is a righteousness that will answer for him in a time to come. Moreover, it is the business of a minister at such a time to shew the sick man what is *right* for him to do: if the sick man is stupid and insensible of his flare and condition by nature; then he is to inform him that *God made man upright, but he by sinning lost his uprightness*; and this is not now to be found in men, but must be had in another: he is to labor to convince him of the sin of his nature, and the sinfulness of his life and actions; and to shew him the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the just demerit of it, eternal death and damnation, and the absolute necessity of repentance for it. If the sick man is a sensible man, and is depressed under a sense of sin, and the guilt of it, and under fearful apprehensions of wrath and ruin; the minister is to set before him *Christ, and him crucified*; he is to tell him of his blood, righteousness and sacrifice, and the efficacy of them to take away sin; and to direct and encourage him to believe in Christ; assuring him, that *whoever believes in him shall be saved*. Add to this, if the sick man is a good man, a truly gracious man, and yet has doubts and fears of his uprightness, and the truth of grace in him; then, the minister observing that this is the fruit of unbelief, and of Satan's temptations, is to do all he can to clear up this point to him, that he is truly a regenerated and converted man; that he has truth in the inner part, and that the work of grace is begun, which will be performed in him: and this, as[8] one rightly observes, is the hardest work that the ministers of the gospel have, to make men understand and see their own uprightness: all this being done, *then he is gracious*; the minister is gracious, has pity and compassion on the sick man, and speaks of the grace of God to him, and makes a gracious supplication for him; (to some[9] render the words) and prays in the following manner; "O Lord God, deliver this sick man from going down to the pit, redeem his life from destruction; for I find in the everlasting gospel, there is a ransom or atonement for sin provided for such persons."

But after all, I rather think, with others,[10] that the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, is meant by the *messenger* or *angel*; who is the *angel* that went before the Israelites in the wilderness, in whom the name of the Lord was, who could, though he would not, pardon their iniquities; *the angel of God's presence*, who always appears before him, and introduces men into his pretense, and through whom they enjoy it; and the *angel* or *messenger of the covenant*, who has confirmed it by his blood, and has revealed it more clearly in the gospel, who also is an *interpreter* of his Father's mind and will, with which he is thoroughly acquainted, lying in his bosom; or an *orator*, the essential Word of God that spake for his people in council and covenant; their advocate with the Father, and the

antitypical *Aaron*, that can speak well, having as man and mediator the tongue of the learned given him to speak a word in season: and he is *one among a thousand*; the chiefest among ten thousand, angels or men; he has obtained a more excellent name, and is of a superior nature to angels, being their creator, Lord, and head; and is higher than the kings of the earth; there is none like unto him among all the creatures in heaven or earth; and to a believer he is all in all. And his office as a prophet is to shew unto men the uprightness or righteousness of God; the strictness of his justice, what that requires, even perfect conformity to his law, and which is sufficiently declared by his propitiatory sacrifice; and also his own uprightness, or righteousness he has wrought out and which he, by his spirit, convinces men of their need of, and brings it near to them, and clothes them with it, as well as shews it unto God for them as their advocate; and he also shews to them what is right and good for them to do, even *to love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with God* and then upon all this God is gracious; he manifests his grace and love, and orders deliverance from ruin and destruction, even upon the foot of a ransom found and given; and seeing there is with him such a divine person in office in favor of the sick man: for the particle [111](#) does not denote any thing doubtful and uncertain, but is expressive of something certain, and infers it from it. In the words may be observed,

- I. The great blessing of the text, *a ransom found*.
- II. The happy effect and consequence of it, deliverance from going down to the pit.
- III. III. The grace of God displayed herein, both in finding the ransom, and delivering from the pit upon it; he is gracious, and faith.

I. The great blessing of the text, *a ransom found* Two things I shall consider under this head;

1st, Who or what this ransom is;

2dly, The act of finding it, and to whom it is to be ascribed.

1st, Who or what this ransom is. A ransom is a price paid for the redemption of captives, or some satisfaction given upon which they are released. In such a state and condition by nature are the elect of God, and ransomed of the Lord; they are the prey of Satan, and are led and detained captives by him at his will; they are brought into bondage by their sins and corruptions, and are held under the same; and they are shut up under the law, and liable to its condemnation and curse; now Christ is the ransom of them from all this. This will appear by a passage or two out of the New Testament, which will serve greatly to illustrate the text; for there is the same gospel in one Testament as in the other, only it is in the Old more covertly, and in the New more clear and express; and the one serves to open and explain the other. Our Lord, speaking of the Son of man, by whom he means himself, says, he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister (Matthew 20:28); not to be waited upon, as a nobleman, prince or potentate; but to be a servant to others, and particularly *to give his life a ransom for many*; so that it is the life of Christ that is the ransom-price of men. Again, the apostle *Paul* says of the man Christ Jesus, the mediator, that he *gave himself a ransom for all*; *ἀντελυτρον*, "a ransom-price" in the room and stead of all his people, Jews and Gentiles, *to be test fled in due time* (1 Tim. 2:6); as it has been most clearly through the ministration of the gospel; whence it is manifest that not riches, nor righteousness, nor repentance, nor prayers, nor alms-deeds, are the ransom of men, but Christ himself. Not riches: The Israelites indeed, when they were numbered, gave every one an half shekel for the ransom of their souls, which was called

atonement-money (Ex. 30:12-16); but then this was not a real, but a typical ransom; typical of the ransom of Jesus Christ; which is expressly denied to be by *corruptible things, as silver and gold*, but by his *precious blood* (1 Pet. 1:18, 19). Had a man ever so great riches, the riches of the *Indies*, or of the whole world, he would not be able to redeem himself or his brother, or *give to God a ransom* for either; for if once wrath goes forth from the Lord, and he *takes away with a the stroke* of it, a great ransom, even a king's ransom cannot deliver from it; for will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength (Ps. 49:6,7; Job 36:18, 19): nor is a man's own righteousness, or his good works, a ransom for him; these are what God has a prior right unto before the performance of them, and therefore men cannot expect a recompence for them, or a ransom by them; for: who hath first given to him (the Lord,) and it shall be recompensed to him again? (Rom. 11:35).

These are debts they owe to God, and when performed ever so well, they do but their duty; and therefore can never pay off the old scores of sin by them, or thereby make atonement for them; these are not profitable to God, whatever they may be to men, and cannot merit any thing at his hand; and besides are exceeding imperfect and unacceptable to God of themselves; they are thrown out of man's acceptance with God, justification before him, and eternal salvation; and if there is no acceptance, justification and salvation by them, as we are sure from the word of God there is not, then they cannot be the ransom-price for the souls of men, or atone for their sins: nor is the ransom, repentance, tears and humiliation; for what satisfaction do these give to an offended Being, to injured and inexorable justice, and to the righteous law of God? which those that sin against die without mercy, unless it is fulfilled, magnified, and made honorable: could men bring instead *often thousands of rivers of oil*, such a quantity of brinish tears, they would not wash away sin, or atone for it; still it would remain *marked* before God. Vain, stupid man! to imagine that his own tears will do what a Savior's could not; for though in the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears (Heb. 5:7); yet not these, but his *blood* was the ransom of souls. Nor are prayers and almsdeeds a ransom, though ever so well performed; these may *come up before God for a memorial*, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, but not for a ransom or atonement, when done in faith, and from a principle of love, and to the glory of God; but for many of the prayers of men, they do but *receive the greater damnation*, as the Pharisees of old did; and a man may *bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and yet not have charity*, or the true grace of love, and be loft and perish; and if he had that grace, and did what he did from such a principle, it would not atone for his sins, or be the ransom of his soul; no, this is in Christ, and him only. The word here used comes from a root which signifies to *cover*,^[12] and is much the same in found as our English word, which seems to come from it: the mercy-seat is called by this name, and indeed it was no other than a *lid* or *covering* to the ark, in which the law was, and exactly of the same measure with it; and was typical of Christ who by his blood and righteousness covers all the sins of his people, their transgressions of the law of God; and by his sacrifice expiates them, or makes atonement for them, and so is the ransom of them. For the further illustration of this precious truth, I shall briefly shew you what that is which Christ has given as a ransom, which is sufficient; and for whom it is given.

1. What that is which Christ has given for the ransom of men: and from scripture it appears that it was his precious blood; for as redemption is always ascribed to the blood of Christ, as the procuring cause of it, that must be the redemption or ransom-price; and the apostle *Peter* is express for it; he says, ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold —but with the precious

blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18, 19); a price sufficient to purchase the whole church of God, to expiate all their sins, and ransom their souls from ruin; and therefore may well be called *precious blood*; blood of great price and value: hence under the law so much regard was had to blood; it was to be covered with dust, and was not to be eaten, because it made atonement for the soul, though but in a typical way; for not the blood of bulls and goats, but the blood of Christ is our real atonement and ransom-price. Again, from a text before-mentioned it is clear, that it is the life of Christ that was given for a ransom; he came to give his life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28): life, than which nothing is more dear and valuable, and especially such a life as Christ's was; a life entirely at his own dispose, which another man's is not, and which he laid down, and took up again of himself; it was not forfeited by any act of his own, or forced from him by another; it was what he freely laid down, and voluntarily gave into the hands of men, justice and death, in the room and stead of his people; and as a ransom-price for them; his life for theirs: moreover, it is said to be himself that is this ransom; who gave himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:6); and so it is often expressed, that *he loved us and gave himself for us*, that he might redeem us; and *gave himself* an offering and a sacrifice, and *offered* himself without spot unto God (Titus 2:14; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:14), even his soul and body, his whole human nature; and this as in union with his divine person; which union ceased not when he became the ransom-price. And what is contained in this word *himself* who can tell? this we may be lure of, it was a sufficient ransom, whereby the law was fulfilled, and justice satisfied. This is a full ransom or redemption from sin, from all sins original and actual, from all the demerit of them; and in consequence of this men are freed from the dominion and power of sin, under which they were held captives, and will be from the being of it; for Christ has by his atoning sacrifice finished and made an end of sin, and put it away for ever, and perfected them that are sanctified: it is a complete ransom of them out of the hands of Satan: the Lord hath ransomed Jacob out of the hand of him that was stronger than he (Jer. 31:11); by virtue of this ransom the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered; and even captivity itself, or he that led others captive, is himself led captive by the Savior and Redeemer of sinners. This is a plenary ransom from the law, its curse and condemnation; Christ has redeemed his that were under it from it, being made a curse for them, and suffering its sentence of condemnation to be executed on himself; and therefore there is none to them that are in him; and they may boldly say, who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died (Rom. 8:1, 34); and by dying he gave his life a ransom for them, and so secured them from the curse and condemnation of the law. In a word, it is a ransom from hell, and wrath, and the second death, to which men are liable through sin; Christ has even ransomed his people from the power of the grave, as a punishment for sin, and so as that they shall not be always detained in it; as well as has redeemed them from the second death, by which they shall never be hurt, and which shall never have any power over them; he has delivered them from wrath to come, and from going down to hell, or the pit of corruption. But I proceed to shew,

2. For whom this ransom is given. It is said to be given for many; even for as many as are ordained to eternal life; for as many as the Father has given to Christ; for those many for whom his blood has been shed for the remission of their sins; for those many whom he justifies by his knowledge, or by faith in his righteousness; for those many forts, he, the captain of their salvation, brings to glory; and theft are a great number, which no man can number and on account of which, as well as many other things, this ransom or redemption by Christ is called (Ps. 130:7) a *plenteous* one, and lays a good foundation for hope in him: but then it is not for all men, or for every individual of mankind; for though he is said to give himself a ransom for *all*, it is not expressed for all men, or for every man; but the sense is, that he gave himself for all the *chosen*, or for men of all sorts, ranks and

degrees, high and low, rich and poor; and for all sorts of sinners, for Gentiles as well as Jews, as the context shows (1 Tim. 2:6; 1:2, 5): those that are ransomed and redeemed, are ransomed from among men, and *are redeemed unto God by the blood of Christ, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation* and cannot be all men, every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, or every individual of them (Rev. 14:4; 5:9): the ransomed ones are represented as a peculiar people, and have such characters ascribed to them as do not agree to all men, they are the church of God, *the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven*, which are purchased by the blood of Christ; and they are his sheep, he has laid down his life, and given it as a ransom for: moreover, *the ransomed of the Lord come to Zion with songs of everlasting joy*, sooner or later, either to the church below, or to heaven above; to neither of which do all mankind come (Acts 20:28; John 10:15; Isa. 35:10). Add to all this, that if the ransom-price is paid for all, all would be ransomed, and so eternally saved, which is not true; or else the ransom-price is paid in vain, which surely will not be said; it reflecting so much dishonor on the justice of God, and the blood of Christ. The typical ransom-price under the law, the half-shekel, was paid for the ransom of the souls of Israelites *only*, and so is the real one; though not for all *Israel* in a literal sense, because *all were not Israel who were of Israel, only a remnant according to the election of grace*; it is the spiritual and mystical Israel of God whom he has chosen for his own peculiar people; the whole *Israel* of God, or all his elect, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, that Christ is become a ransom-price for; and who, in consequence of it, through his spirit and grace, are *Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile*. God so loved the world of the Gentiles, *as to see and find forth his own Son to be the propitiation* or expiatory sacrifice for *their sins*; and Christ is become *the propitiation, not for the sins* of the Jews only, or his elect among them, *but for the sins of the whole world*; or for the sins of all *his people* throughout the whole world, even for the sins of all *the children of God that are scattered abroad* (John 3:16; 11:51, 52; 2:2). This ransom price, as the typical one, is given for the ransom of the soul; it is that which has sinned, and is liable to death, the second death, or an eternal one; it is for that most excellent part of man, and therefore to be most regarded; and hence it requires so great a price: *the redemption of the soul is precious* (Ps. 49:8); and nothing can ransom it but the blood of Christ; and therefore it is so great a blessing as it is to be ransomed, because it is no other than the redemption of the life or soul of man from destruction: and this ransom-price, like the typical one, is paid equally for all alike; every Israelite gave an half shekel, the rich did not give more, nor the poor less (Ex. 30:15); the same price of Christ's blood is paid for one as for another; for though some sins be greater than others, and some are greater sinners than others are, and are redeemed from more sins than others be, yet there is but one price paid for all; for every sin being objectively infinite, requires an infinite price to be paid to make satisfaction and atonement for it, and which has been given; hence all obtain the same precious faith, are justified by the same righteousness, and share in the same common salvation. And, to add no more, this price is paid for them into the hands of God; for it is against him that sin is committed, and who only can pardon it, and does upon the foot of satisfaction made: he is the law-giver, whole law is broken by sin, and must be fulfilled; the judge of all the earth, whose justice must be satisfied, or he will not clear the guilty; and the creditor to whom men owe more than ten thousand talents, and have nothing to pay; and therefore the price, by the surety, must be given into his hand to clear off the debt, and ransom from prison; and accordingly Christ has given himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God, and has given to him a ransom for his people, and has redeemed them unto him by his blood (Eph. 5:2; Rev. 5:9); and hence they shall certainly be saved by him, and in him, with an everlasting salvation. But I hasten to consider,

2dly, The act of *finding* this ransom, and to whom it is to be ascribed. If it respects the original scheme of it in eternity, as it seems to do, it was found out: by God the Father; who laid help upon one that is mighty; exalted one chosen out of the people; found David his servant, and anointed him with his holy oil (Ps. 89:19, 20); that is, he found his own Son to be the most proper person to be the Savior and Redeemer of his people; one that was mighty, almighty, and so equal to the work of redemption; and of all the individuals of human nature he designed to bring into being, which came into his vast and infinite mind, he chose out of them all one single individual of human nature, to be united to his own Son in due time; and so he invested him with the office of mediator; and thus a ransom was found for men: and this is not the invention of angels, nor of men, but of God only; not of angels, for they knew nothing of the matter but by revelation; so far were they from having any concern in the finding it out, that when it was found, they were strangers to it until it was made known unto them; and whatever hint might be given them of it immediately from God himself, whose invention this is, previous to the fall of man, as some have thought; which occasioned a great part of them to leave their first estate, and become apostates rather than be subject to Christ in human nature; yet it seems as if great part, at least of their knowledge of this affair, is attained to by them through the church of God, and the ministry of the word in it; since it is said, to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known (that is made known) by the church, the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3:10); that wonderful wisdom of God in finding out a ransom for men: yea, it looks as if their knowledge of it was not yet perfect; or however, that they have not fully satisfied themselves with it, but take fresh pleasure in the contemplation of it; for it is said, which things the angels desire to look into (1 Pet. 2:12), even yet more and more; they bow their heads, as it were, they stoop, they look down, and curiously pry into the mysteries of grace: the allusion is thought to be to the *cherubim* over the mercy-seat, which looked to one another, and both to the mercy-seat, the type of Christ, the propitiation and ransom of his people. Nor is this the invention of men; could all mankind have been summoned together, and had ever so long a time allowed them to have found out a proper ransom for them, it would ever have remained a puzzling question to them, how should man be just with God? (Job 9:2), or who will be a propitiation or ransom for him? for they could never have thought of the Son of God as a ransom; it could never have entered into their hearts to conceive it; for if *the world by wisdom knew not God*, it could never, with all its wisdom, find out a way of reconciling themselves unto God: and we see what fooleries the heathens have gone into, being left to the dim light of nature, and without a revelation, in order to make the Deity propitious to them: and even when this scheme of redemption and salvation by Christ is declared, it is treated by carnal men with contempt and ridicule; we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks' foolishness (1 Cor. 1:23); and therefore this can never be an invention of man's: no, it is the invention of God himself; *all things are of him*, and especially in a way of grace, and particularly our reconciliation, and the scheme of it.

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself (2 Cor. 5:18, 19), drawing the scheme of their reconciliation, ransom, and redemption: this flows from his divine counsels, *who does all things after the counsel of his will*; as there was a consultation held about the formation of man, no doubt there was one about his ransom and recovery; and which, with great propriety, may be called the *council of peace*, that was held between the eternal three on this special affair: this is the fruit and effect of his infinite wisdom, which shines in all his works, but abounds in the ransom and redemption of men, and the contrivance of it; this is *the manifold wisdom of God, the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, ordained before the world for our glory*; this is the

result of an eternal purpose he purposed in Christ, of a resolution and determination he came into to have mercy on his people, and save them by the Lord their God; whom he set forth in his decrees and purposes to be the propitiation for their sins, and fore-ordained before the foundation of the world to ransom them with his precious blood. This is owing to a covenant of grace, which he made with Christ, in which he called and appointed him *to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preferred of Israel*: and in consideration of his making his soul an offering for sin, and giving himself a ransom for his chosen, he promised him a numerous feed, length of days for ever and ever, and the utmost prosperity and glory as man and mediator; to all which he agreed, and said, *Lo I come to do thy will*; (Isa. 49:5, 6; 53:10-12; Ps. 40:7); which was no other than to give his life a ransom for many. And now it was with the utmost pleasure, and to his great satisfaction, that he found such a ransom; and which seems to be expressed in the language of the text, *I have found a ransom*; Christ, as such, was the object of his delight and joy when he was let up as mediator by him from everlasting. But this must be understood of God the Father, not to the exclusion of the Son, [\[13\]](#) since the council of peace was between them both; (Zech. 6:13) ; and Christ is, as the *Septuagint* version of Isaiah 9:6 calls him, *the Angel of the great council*; and he is the *Wisdom* of God, that dwells with prudence, and finds out the knowledge of witty inventions (Prov. 8:12); of which this of the ransom and redemption of men is not the least. And especially if the finding a ransom respects the impetration of redemption": [\[14\]](#) this peculiarly belongs to Christ; of him it is said, *having obtained*, or as it is in the original text, *having found eternal redemption for us* (Heb. 9:12); he is the ransomer, and the ransom-price; he is *the man the peace*, and *who has made peace by the blood of his cross*, and reconciled men to God by his sufferings and death, and is become the author of eternal salvation. But I go on to consider,

II. The happy effect and consequence of the ransom found, which is an order for deliverance from going down to the pit. And here I shall inquire what pit this is, a deliverance from going down to which is here ordered; and then by whom this order is given, and to whom directed.

1. By the pit is commonly understood the grave, and which in this book, and elsewhere, is so called; the word signifies *corruption*, and it has this name from hence, because in it the bodies of men putrefy and corrupt: but the grave is what all men go down into; it is *the house appointed for all living*; it is man's long home, to which he is going, and where he must lodge till the resurrection: all men by divine appointment, die, and are brought to the grave, and there laid; good men as well as bad men, such as are ransomed by Christ, as well as others. It is true indeed that saints are delivered from it as a punishment; death is abolished, and the grave destroyed, as penal evils; but then they are not delivered from death itself; and from going down into the grave; they may have a reprieve for a time, and be spared a while longer; the sick man may *recover strength before he goes hence and is no more*; he may not be given over to death, though sorely chastened; this sickness he labors under may not be unto death; he may be restored and return, when he has been brought to the gates of it: but then such an ordinary event as the recovery of a sick man, seems to be too small a matter be founded upon such an extraordinary and marvelous affair as the ransom of Christ, and does not answer the grand design of it; rather therefore by this pit is meant the bottomless pit, the pit of destruction, which the wicked go into, even *hell*, eternal wrath and ruin; [\[15\]](#) and which, though the elect of God are deferring of as others, yet, being ransomed by thrift, they are delivered from it. I proceed to inquire,

2. By whom, and to whom is this order given, those who think the grave is intended by the pit, suppose there words, *deliver him from going down to it*, are addressed either to the disease itself the sick man is afflicted with; so Mr. *Broughton* renders the words, "Spare him, O killing malady, from descending into the pit;" diseases are the servants of God, they come when he bids them, and they depart when he orders them so to do: he sometimes says to them, as he did to the destroying angel, *It is enough*; the ends are answered for which the malady was sent, and it must be continued no longer; often so it is, that upon the sick man's prayers, or those of his friends, he is railed up from his sick-bed, and delivered from the grave: or else the address is to the minister, as others think, [\[16\]](#) that attends the sick man, assists him, and prays for him; who is sent to tell him that he shall not die but live, *as Nathan* was sent to *David*, and *Isaiah* to *Hezekiah*, which is declaratively, though not authoritatively, delivering from the grave: but the words are rather an address of God the Father to his Son, the angel and interpreter with him, lying in his bosom; upon finding the ransom, upon the contrivance of the scheme of redemption, after the agreement and covenant made; fending him forth in the fullness of time, to give himself a ransom for his people, and redeem and fare them from destruction, since such a way was found out and agreed upon, for the words may be rendered, "redeem him from going clown to the pit," as the word signifies; [\[17\]](#) and to whom can this be so properly said as to Christ the redeemer? *or* else this is the address of the Father to law and justice, upon the ransom being found, or the redemption obtained by Christ; since that is done, justice, let this man go free; law, set open thy prison doors, and no longer detain this captive; hell and death, give up your claim to him, seeing the ransom-price is paid for him. Or there words may be considered as the words of the Son to the Father, the angel, the messenger and interpreter with God, the advocate with him; who appears in the presence of God for his people, and pleads his propitiatory sacrifice for them, urges on their behalf the atonement he has made, and the ransom he has given for them, and insists upon their deliverance from wrath and ruin; and declares it to his heavenly Father as his will, that they be fared from hell, and *be with him* in heaven, *where he is, and behold his glory* (John 17:24). I come now to the last general head,

III. To observe the grace of God displayed in all this; *then be is gracious, and saith*; not the minister that assists the sick person, and has pity on him, and prays for him; but either the angel, the messenger, the interpreter, one among a thousand, the Word that is with God, the advocate with the Father, who is gracious and merciful to his ransomed ones; and has in a *very* wonderful manner shewn his grace and love in becoming surety for them; engaging to be their Savior and Redeemer; promising to pay their debts for them, and to be their ransomer, and give himself a ransom price for them: the grace of Christ is well known, and clearly seen in his assumption of human nature, taking part of the same flesh and blood with his children, appearing in the form of a servant, who was Lord of all; and becoming poor, who was rich, even God over all, blessed for ever: and greater love than this could never be expressed by men, than to lay down his life for a friend; but such is the grace of Christ, that he has laid down his life for his enemies, and died for men while they were sinners, and had no love for him. and his grace is further displayed in his wonderful and prevalent intercession for them; for their conversion; for the application of pardoning grace to them; for the preservation of them from all evil; for their final perseverance; for their deliverance from hell and death; and for their eternal glorification. Or rather, the *He* here is God the Father, [\[18\]](#) who is said to be *gracious*, and is so; he has *proclaimed* his *name* in Christ, a God gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin (Ex. 34:6, 7); he is the God of all grace, and has in , various ways manifested his grace unto the sons of men and especially in the affair of their ransom, redemption and salvation. His grace appears in finding

Christ the ransom; for though this was the invention of wisdom, it was grace set wisdom at work to contrive the amazing scheme; it was because God loved his people with an everlasting love, and as an instance of that love, chose them to be holy and happy, and resolved upon their eternal salvation, that he call: about in his infinite mind to find out and pursue the best ways and means of effecting it; it was wondrous grace in him to send his Son to be the ransomer and ransom-price, when Wisdom could find none so fit and proper for this purpose as he; it was marvelous grace to agree to part with him, and in the fullness of time to send him to redeem lost sinners from sin, Satan, law, death and hell: herein he shewed forth his grace, yea the riches, the fullness of his grace, even the exceeding riches of it in this instance of kindness; sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sacrifice for sin, to make atonement for it, and be the ransom of his people: herein his love was manifested to the highest degree, and he gave the greatest commendation of it that could be; for a greater person could not be lent, or a greater gift bestowed: if it was an instance of the love of God to his people the Jews, that he gave Egypt for their ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for them, men for them, and people for their life (Isa. 43:3, 4); how much greater proof of his love has he given, by *not sparing his own Son, but delivering him up for us all?* Had he given all the angels in heaven, and all the rest of mankind on earth, a ransom for his chosen, it would not have been such an evidence of his love as the gift of his Son. And then, when Christ had given his life a ransom, it was grace to accept of this ransom-price in the room and stead of his people; for though it was a full and sufficient one, which law and justice could not object unto, and with which they must be both pleased and satisfied; yet God was not obliged to accept of it in the room and stead of sinful men, had he not voluntarily agreed in the covenant of grace to accept of it as a vicarious sacrifice and proper atonement for them; otherwise he might have insisted upon satisfaction from the sinner himself; but such was his grace, that he accepts the ransom of his Son in his room. Moreover, the grace of God is greatly displayed in what he has done upon the score of this ransom-price paid, and redemption obtained, in the justification of the persons, and in the pardon of the sins of those for whom it is given: justification proceeds upon, and is through the redemption which is in Christ; and this is an act of God's free grace; so says the apostle, being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24); it is with a view to the righteousness of Christ, and to his life and blood being given as a ransom for his people, and to the redemption thereby procured, that God justifies any, and this is by his grace; and as if to say so was not enough to express the riches of it, it is said to be *freely by his grace*; not only the righteousness of God, his strict justice is declared, in this method of justifying sinners, whereby he appears to be just, strictly just, whilst he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; but the free grace of God is abundantly manifest in it, in accepting the righteousness of Christ, in the imputation of it to his people without works, and in the application of it by his Spirit: hence it is called the free gift, the gift of grace, and an abundance of grace (Rom. 5:15-17): so likewise forgiveness of sin is a branch of redemption obtained by the ransom-price; hence, lays the apostle, is whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (Eph. 1:7); though pardon of sin is through the blood of Christ shed for it, and with respect to that is an act of justice, yet notwithstanding it is according to grace, and the riches of it; though it is upon the foot of satisfaction and atonement, yet it was grace that provided Christ the lamb for the burnt-offering; it was grace that lent him to make reconciliation for sin, and to shed his blood for the remission of it; and it was grace that accepted the expiatory sacrifice, and declares the sinner forgiven on account of it; and which makes application of the blood of Christ to the sinner's conscience for that purpose; and who becomes very sensible of the freeness of the grace of God, and of the multitude of his tender mercies in the forgiveness of his sins. In short, the whole of salvation, which flows

from the ransom given, and is no other than a deliverance from going down to the pit, or from hell, wrath, and ruin, is entirely *of grace*, and not of *works*. God, in saving men, does not proceed according to their works, but according to his own grace; it is *not by works of righteousness which they have done*, even the best, *but by his abundant mercy and rich grace*, that he saves them, through the blood and righteousness of his Son, and the regeneration of the blessed Spirit; and to this it will be ascribed by all the saints throughout an endless eternity, when the constant acclamation will be, *Grace, grace unto it*.

And thus have I endeavored to open and improve this passage of scripture on this solemn occasion, as time would allow me. It may be expected I should now say something concerning our deceased friend and brother. I am very sensible that he himself was very averse to encomiums of the dead at such seasons, and for my own part I have no inclination to them; I shall therefore say nothing of him in his civil and moral character; how he behaved in his family as a parent and master, you that are of it know full well; and how he behaved as a neighbor, you that were his neighbors can bear witness; I shall only say a few things as to his spiritual and eternal concerns. It pleased God to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him, in his younger days; and as he knew it was his duty *with the mouth to make confession unto salvation*, as well as *with the heart to believe unto righteousness*, he very early gave up himself to this church of Christ, of which he was a member upwards of twenty-six years; and, allowing for the common infirmities of life, his conversation, so far as known by us, was agreeable to the profession he made. I doubt not but that he had that true faith which works by love to Christ and his people; a crucified Christ was precious to him; his blood, his righteousness, and all that belong to him; he loved him, his people, his gospel, and his ordinances; he was an humble Christian, tender and compassionate to the poor, to whom he behaved very respectfully both by words and deeds; he had a very mean opinion of himself; being very sensible of the corruption of his nature, and the plague of his heart, and of his deficiencies and imperfections in life: to this was owing the great reluctance with which he accepted the office of a deacon, as many of you well know, and for the same reason chose to officiate in it only when pure necessity obliged him to it. In a visit to him in his late illness, which issued in death, he told me he had had some delightful views of eternal things, and his interest in them; and added, that he should be very ungrateful if he did not believe that Christ shed his blood for him: that passage of scripture being mentioned in conversation, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help; (Hosea 13:9); he observed, that these words had been of wonderful use to him at a certain time, and had yielded him abundance of spiritual consolation and strength; as indeed in a few words are expressed the destruction and salvation, the ruin and recovery of men. And though his disorder increasing rendered him afterwards very little convertible, yet by broken expressions, and various tokens and circumstances, he was judged to die comfortably; and no doubt but he is fallen asleep in Jesus, and will be one of those that he will bring with him. May you, his children that survive him, tread in his steps, and imitate him in every thing praise-worthy, civil, moral and religious; attend the means of grace, and may the Lord call you by it in his due time, that you may fear and serve your father's God, and fill up his place in the world and church. I shall close with a word or two by way of reflection on what has been said.

Since there is a ransom found and given, and God is gracious upon it, and has displayed his grace in such a wonderful manner, this may be an encouragement to sensible sinners, who are depressed with the guilt of sin, to hope in him; Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy (Ps. 130:7), *and with him is plenteous redemption*: this being the case, there is no room nor reason

for despair: behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world (John 5:29); look to a sin-bearing and sin-atonement Savior; his blood cleanses, and his righteousness justifies from all sin, and his sacrifice expiates all iniquity; and God for his sake forgives all trespasses. Hence true believers in Christ have great reason to rejoice and be glad, who know the ransom-price is given for them, and they are delivered upon it from deferred wrath and ruin: there ransomed ones may come to *Zion* with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; and when faith is in exercise, and they have a comfortable view of their interest in the redeemer; may say as the apostle did, we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement (Rom. 5:11): such have reason to adore and admire distinguishing grace, and to call upon their souls, and all within them, to bless the name of the Lord, for the forgiveness of their sins, the ransom of their souls, and the redemption of their lives from destruction; and the grace displayed in all this, should teach and influence them to *live soberly, righteously and godly, in this evil world.*

CHRIST THE SAVIOR

FROM THE TEMPEST.

A Sermon,

In commemoration of the Great Storm, in the Year MDCCIII:

Preached in *Little Wild-street, near Lincoln's-Inn Fields, Nov. 27, 1736.*

MATTHEW 8:25

Lord save us; We perish.

These words are a very importunate petition of the disciples of Christ unto him, when in great danger by a storm at sea. The case of such persons, their great distress, and earnest cries for deliverance, and the manner of it, are very elegantly and beautifully described by the Psalmist; when he says, *They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; for he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof: They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble: they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end: Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses: He Maketh the storm to calm; so that the waves thereof are still: Then they are glad, because they be quite; so he bringeth them to their desired haven.* (Psal. 107:23—30) A late valuable writer^[1] is of opinion, that this passage of the Psalmist is not to be considered as an account of what had happened, and so might happen again to navigators in common, but as a prediction or prophecy of what should befall the disciples of Christ, when on shipboard with him; and had its exact accomplishment in the case before us. He supposes, that the disciples of Christ are the persons here described, that *go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;* their occupation and employment, which they used both before and after they were called by Christ to be his apostles, being that of fishermen. These being in a ship with Christ, the Lord *commanded and raised the stormy wind;* a great tempest arose in the sea, *which lifted up the waves thereof,* so that they seemed *to mount up to the heaven;* and beating into the ship, covered and filled it, insomuch, that they were just ready *to go down to the depths;* then *their soul was melted because of trouble:* And being *at their wits end,* not knowing what to do, apply to their Lord and Master; and as they go to him at the stern of the ship, through the shaking of the vessel, *reeled to and fro, and staggered like drunken men;* and *cry unto him in their trouble,* saying, *Master, Carest thou not that we perish?* Then *he brought them out of their distresses,* by making *the storm a calm;* so that *the waves thereof were still,* when he rebuked the wind, and the raging of the sea. And now did the *see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep;* and said one to another, What manner of person is this whom the winds and sea obey? *Then were they glad, because the wind and sea were*

quiet; so he brought them to their desired haven, when they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. I cannot say I am entirely of this writer's mind; but rather think, that this account refers to a case which had been, and might be again, and may be accommodated to any case of the like kind, and particularly to this of the disciples; for certain it is, that they were in such distress and danger, did cry unto the Lord for help, and had a wonderful deliverance wrought for them. In the words new read may be observed,

I. The danger and distress the disciples were in, and their sense of the same: *We perish*.

II. The application they made to Christ, in which they were certainly right; *Lord save us*.

I. The disciples were at this time in great danger and distress; which appear not only from this expression of theirs, *We perish*, but also from the narrative of their case in the context: For,

1. It is said, *behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea* (Matt. 8:24); a great tempest, *μεγας σεισμος*, a great concussion, or shaking. The same word is frequently used both in scripture (Matt. 24:7 and 28:2), and in other writers,^[2] for the *Terræ motus*, or earthquake. Here it is ascribed to the sea; such a shaking we read of in the prophecy of *Haggai* (Hagg. 2:6), which had now, at least in part, its literal accomplishment; and when the Messiah, *the desire of all nations*, should come, *Jehovah* would *shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land*. The stormy wind agitated and moved the sea, and the waves thereof; and both wind and sea shook the ship, and the men that were in it: which threw them into great surprise and fear. One of the other evangelists (Luke 8:23) calls this tempest, *a storm of wind*; and another (Mark 4:37), *a great storm of wind*; and both of them use the word *λαλαψ*, *lælaps*, which is a particular kind of wind, or is rather a conflict of many winds.^[3] The Philosopher says, that *lælaps*, as also *strobilus*, is a wind that is suddenly whirled, and rolled about, downwards and upwards. It is defined by a learned Grecian, to be "a storm, or tempest of wind, with rain." It seems to be a whirlwind, and hurricane, in which the disciples were. All the views of it, shew them to be in imminent danger.

It is also said, that this tempest arose. Could we give into a vulgar notion, that winds may be, and sometimes are raised by Satan, we should be tempted to think, that this storm was raised by him, with a malicious intent to destroy Christ and his disciples at once; since he was always seeking an opportunity to take away the life of Christ, and put different persons upon different methods of doing it, and at last accomplished his end. But we shall have occasion to observe hereafter, in this discourse, that Satan has no power to raise, continue, restrain, or lay a wind. Nor did this tempest arise by chance; it was no fortuitous event, but was ordered to be, at this very juncture, by the all-wise, and all-governing providence of that God, who *commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind*, for the trial of the faith of the disciples of Christ; and that he might have an opportunity of giving proof of his Deity on the sea, as he had lately done in several instances on the dry land. The evangelist *Luke* says (Luke 8:23), that this storm of wind *came down*: He seems to refer to the course and motion of the winds, which are exhalations from the earth, raised up into the middle region of the air; from whence they are repelled, by a superior force, to the lower region; and from thence move, in an oblique, slanting manner, downwards. So we read of a *dry wind of the high places, even a full wind from those places not to fan, nor to cleanse* (Jer. 4:11, 12). This violent wind came down with great force into the sea, and lifted up its waves, which beat into the ship, and pressed it much, so that it was in great danger of being sunk by them.

The place where this tempest arose, or into which this storm of wind came down, is here said to be *the sea*. The evangelist *Luke* (Luke 8:23), calls it a *lake*; and is the same with the lake of *Genesareth*, he elsewhere makes mention of (Luke 5:1). But both the evangelists, *Matthew* and *Mark*, call it the sea; and is what is sometimes in scripture call the sea of *Tiberius* (John 6:1, 21:1), and the sea of *Galilee*; agreeable to the language of the Jewish writers, when they have occasion to speak of it; and was, as *Pliny* says, about sixteen miles long, and six broad. Now, to be in a storm on land is terrible, but to be in one out at sea is much more so.

To all this, the word *behold* is prefixed; which is sometimes used, when something extraordinary and preternatural is spoke of (See Isai. 7:14). This storm seems to have been more than an ordinary one, at least, it was sudden, and unexpected. When the disciples entered the ship, the air was serene, the sea still and quiet, there was no appearance or likelihood of a tempest; but quickly after they had set sail, at once, on a sudden, at unawares, this storm came down upon them; which must needs throw them into great consternation and distress.

2. *The ship was covered with the waves*, which so *beat into it*, as another Evangelist expresses it (Mark 4:37), that *it was now full of water*; yea, it is said (Luke 8:23), that *they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy*, or in great danger; which, perhaps, respects the *other little ships* (Mark 4:36), that were in company with this, and were so ordered by divine providence, to be witnesses of this wondrous event. In one of the copies, of one of the evangelists, the word βυθιζεθαι is used; which signifies, that not only the ship was covered and filled with water, but that it was immersed, or just sinking into the deep; so that the disciples were brought to the utmost extremity.

3. What greatly added to, and increased their distress, it is observed, that Christ *was asleep*; all the evangelists agree in this, though they do not use the same word. The evangelist *Mark* mentions the place where he was asleep, *in the hinder part of the ship*, επι τη πουμεν, *in the stern*, where he, as Lord and Master, should be; but, to the great concern of the disciples, he was there asleep, and that in a dead, deep, sound sleep, as the word, which the evangelist *Luke* makes use of, signifies; and is confirmed by the loud cries, and repeated calls of the disciples to him, saying, *Master, Master, We perish*. This sleep, doubtless, arose from natural causes, and was more easily brought upon him, through his very great fatigue in preaching his sermon upon the mount, from whence he was just come down; and trough the great resort of people to him, to heal the sick, and cast out devils. He seems to signify, that he was in great uneasiness, and weariness of body, to a certain man, just before he entered into the ship, who said to him, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; who is thus answered by him, *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head* (Matt. 8:19, 20); intimating, as though he wanted an opportunity to lie down, and take some rest: And accordingly, when he was come into the ship, placing himself at the stern, finds a pillow, lays down his head upon it, and falls fast asleep. But, though this sleep of his was natural, yet it was so ordered by the providence of God, that it should in this manner come upon him, at this time, for the further trial of the faith of his disciples.

4. The great distress they were in expressed in these words, *We perish*, απολλυμεθα (So the word is rendered, in Luke 19:10, 2 Cor. 4:3), *we are lost*; a way of speaking still in use among seafaring men, and indeed, in common use with others. Nothing is more frequent that for us to say, such a vessel, or such a ship's crew, or such a person were lost, at such a time, and in such a place. It is

also to be observed, that they do not say, we are in danger of being lost, or we are ready to be lost, or we shall be lost, but we *are* lost; which shews what apprehensions they had of their condition, and that their case was like that of the apostle *Paul*, and the mariners with him, when *all hope, that they should be saved, was taken away* (Acts 27:2). So the disciples saw no probability of escaping by any natural, rational methods; they looked upon themselves as lost. Christ was their last shift, and he was asleep; however, they resolve to betake themselves to him: Which brings me,

II. To the application they make to him, *Lord save us*: which shews,

1. That they believed he was able to save them: And they had a great deal of reason to believe it, since such considerable miracles were so lately wrought in their presence; an account of which is given in this chapter. A leper comes to him, declaring his faith in him, that is he was willing, he was sure he was able to cleanse him of his leprosy; upon which, Christ put forth his hand, and with a single touch, saying to him *I will, Be thou clean*, immediately removed it. A centurion addresses him on the account of his servant, who lay sick of a palsy, signifying, that he verily believed, that if he would *speak the word only*, his servant would be instantly healed; his reply is, *So be it done unto thee*; and his servant was healed the very same hour. Next he enters *Peter's* house, where his wife's mother lay sick of a fever; he does but touch her hand, and the fever leaves her. These instances, together with the multitude of the sick he healed, and of them that were possessed with devils he cast out with his word, were sufficient to persuade the disciples, that he was able to deliver them in their great extremity. Our Lord, indeed, blames them for their incredulity, and want of faith. The question he put to them, as related by one of the evangelists, is, *Where is your faith?* (Luke 8:25) You professed to have, and you had, some faith in me a little while ago; but what is become of it now? Yea, as it stands in another evangelist, it is put thus, *Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?* (Mark 4:40) that is in exercise: Some faith they had, though it was but small; for the question, as it appears in our evangelist, is put thus, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* (Matt. 8:26) They had no faith in him, as sleeping, but had some little faith in him, that he was able to help them, provided he was awakened out of sleep; for this, Christ blames them. For though, as the Son of man, he was asleep; yet he, as the Son of God, and *Israel's* keeper, and theirs, *neither slumbers, nor sleeps*; and was equally able to save them sleeping, as waking.

2. It is not only certain, that he was *able* to save them; but it is a matter of fact, that he *did* save them. Being awakened by his disciples, he raises his head from his pillow, stands up, and with a majestic voice, in an authoritative manner, shewing some kind of resentment at the wind and seas, as if they had exceeded their commission, and the one had blown, and the other raged, too much and too long, he *rebukes* them in such language as this, *Peace, be still*, (Mark 4:39) *σιωπα, περιμωσο*, "be silent, hold thy peace, stop thy mouth, put a bridle upon it, as the last word signifies; and go on no longer, to threaten with shipwreck, and loss of lives," Upon this, the wind ceased, the sea became calm, and the ship moved quietly on, and they all arrived safe at the country of the Gadarenes.

3. This had a very considerable effect, both upon the mariners and the disciples, who rightly concluded from hence, that their Deliverer was more than a man. There was such a shine of majesty, such a lustre of divine power, appeared in this affair, as filled them with astonishment and fear; they marvelled greatly, and feared exceedingly. It had this effect, both upon the men, and the disciples; for though our evangelist seems to relate this, as though the mariners were the persons

only who were thus affected with the providence, and the manner of deliverance; who said one to another, *What manner of person is this? Ποταπός ἐστὶν οὗτος*, "of what qualities, powers and perfections, is this person possessed?" But the other evangelists represent it (Mark 4:41, Luke 8:25), as the question of the disciples to one another; saying, *τις ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν*, "Who is this person?" Surely, he must be more than a mere man; he can be no other than the might God, whom the winds and sea obey. It is to be observed, that the word *man*, which is put into our translation, is not in the question as expressed in any of the evangelists. The disciples were abundantly convinced by this instance, which so nearly concerned themselves, that Christ must be *God over all blessed for ever*.

What I shall do further, will be to improve this wonderful instance of the power of Christ, in favour of his divinity; and to shew, that the disciples were right, in their application to him, in this their distress; as are also all poor perishing sinners, sensible of their lost condition, when they have recourse to him alone for eternal life and salvation. In order to this,

First, I shall endeavour to prove, that the power and government of the wind and sea, are only with God, and not with any mere creature. Men have no power, either to raise, or lay the wind: There is no such thing, as a conjuring wind: There is no such set of men, who by magic art, or by all the assistance the devil can give them, are able to perform anything of this nature. We are told, that some have been so ignorant, or wicked, as to pretend to sell winds; and others, no less stupid and impious, who have bought them; but this is all a dream and delusion. These are deceivers and deceived; for *who*, what man, *has gathered the wind in his fist*, and can hold it there, and let it loose at his pleasure? *What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?* (Prov. 30:4) Name the man, or his son? say when he was born, in what age he lived, of what country was he; who was his immediate son, or what of his posterity now remain: not any of these circumstances, or any thing like them, wilt thou ever be able to produce. As the Lord said to *Job*, (Job 38:34, 35) *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?* So it may be said to any of the sons of man, *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the winds, and send them forth when and where thou pleasest, command and control them, at thy pleasure? say to one, Go thither and it goes; and to another, Come, and it cometh?* No, this is not within the compass of the power of a creature. The devil himself has no such power; He may as soon create a world as create the wind, raise a storm, or lay a tempest. The treasures of the wind are under lock and key: Satan has not the keeping of them; they are locked up from him, they are out of his reach, he cannot bring them forth when he pleases: He is indeed called (Ephes. 2:2), *The prince of the power of the air*; not because he has a power to disturb, or still it, to cover it with clouds and blackness, or raise storms and tempest in it; but, because he has the government of those principalities and powers, that posse of apostate spirits; who, being banished from the realms above, have their abode in the air; where, as vagabonds, they rove about, and wonder up and down in it. Now Satan the angel of the bottomless pit, is prince, or king, over them, whose name in the Hebrew tongue, is *Abaddon*, and in the Greek tongue, *Apollyon*, which both signify *a destroyer* (Rev. 9:11). The only scriptural instance of the power of Satan over the wind, that is produced, is the wind that blew down the house where *Job's* children were, and destroyed them: but this wind is not said to come from Satan, but *from the wilderness*; (Job 1:19) from a certain point in the heavens under the government and direction of *Jehovah*. All the hand the devil can be supposed to have in it, under divine permission, was to take the advantage of the sweep of it, just as it came by the house, to add force unto it; and, by his posse of devils with

him, to whirl it about the house, and push it upon it with the greater violence: Nor is the wind in the power, and under the government of the good angels. *Jehovah* has, indeed, made *his angels spirits*, רִיחַהוֹת, *winds*, (Psalm 104:4) as some translate the word: But then they are so called, not because they are winds, or have the management and direction of them, but because they are like unto them; swift to do the will and work of God, who *walketh*, and *flies upon the wings of the wind* (Psalm 104:3, and 18:10). In the book of the *Revelation*, (Rev. 7:6) *four angels* are represented, as *standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree*: this is not to be understood of the angels in a literal, but in a mystical sense, as holding, or restraining the evil angels, or false teachers, from hurting the saints, or the ministers of the gospel, from their ministrations of it, as a judgment upon those that despise it: God has sole power and government of the winds in his own hands. The Heathens themselves were convinced of this; and therefore set up an idol God, whom they called *Æolus*, to preside over the winds; and who, they supposed had a power of loosing and restraining them at his pleasure: Yea, they thought the wind to be a deity itself, and sometimes built temples, erected altars, and paid homage to it. So *Augustus* made and performed a vow to *Circius*, a wind which greatly infested *France*, and sometimes came with such force, as to un-tille their houses; and so did the *Calabrians* to *Japyx*; the *Apulians* to the wind *Arabulus*; the *Athenians* to *Sciron*; and the *Pamphilians* to *Gagneus*: which are the names of the several winds peculiar to these people; to whom they paid their devoirs, that they might not either infect them with diseases, or destroy their fields: Particularly, the *Thurians* having received a considerable favour from *Boreas*, the North wind, fulfilled their vows to it, as to a god; because by a vehement gust, it utterly destroyed the navy, which *Dionysius* had prepared for their destruction: So when *Xerxes* brought his numerous forces into *Greece*, the *Grecians* applied to the *Delphick* oracle: from whence they received this answer, "That they must pray the assistance of the winds:" upon which, they built an altar, and found them favorable to them, for their enemies whole navy was destroyed and sunk. These were the sentiments and practices of men, who were without the knowledge of the true God. The wind is no Deity, but a creature, made by the power of God, and governed by him; and is not under the precedence, influence, and direction, of *Æolus*, *Pallas*, *Anemotis*, or any other of the *rabble deities* of the Heathens; but is wholly, and only, in the hands, and under the command of him, who is *the Lord, the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King: At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.—He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom; and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion: When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with the rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.* (Jer. 10:10, 12, 13)

The account of the scripture gives of the divine power, and influence over the wind, is very express and particular. God is represented as the creator of it: whatever are the second causes of it, or the matter of which it consists, or that which gives it its form, force and motion; the Lord is certainly the first, and efficient cause of it: Hence he stands described, as he *who formeth the mountains, and createth the wind.* (Amos 4:13) As he has his treasures of the snow, and of the hail, so likewise of the wind, which he brings forth when he pleases; he has them ready and prepared, or can, and does quickly prepare them, when he has occasion for them. It is said (Jonah 4:8), *that God prepared a vehement east wind*, חַרְשִׁית, "a plowing one;" which plowed up the sand, and blew it in the face of *Jonah*, so that he was almost suffocated with it; which, with the sun beating upon him, must be very afflictive to him. The Lord is also said, *to send out a great wind into the sea*, (Jonah 1:4) to

fetch back *Jonah*; who, being sent on an errand, was disobedient and fled from the presence of God: The wind, as boisterous and blustering as it sometimes is, was more obedient to the command of God than the prophet. He says to one wind, Go, and it goes ; and to another, Come, and it cometh. He makes use of them to various ends and purposes: Sometimes in a way of mercy: as when he made a *wind to pass over the earth, and the waters of the flood were assuaged* ;(Gen. 8:1) when *there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp* (Num. 9:31) of the Israelites for their food and refreshment; when the wind brought up a great rain, after the land of *Israel* had been without one for three years and a half; (1 Kings 18:45) when *the Lord caused the sea to go back, by a strong east wind all night and made the sea a dry land, and the waters were divided*, (Exod. 19:21) so that the Israelites could pass through as on dry land. And sometimes he uses them in a way of judgment ; as when he (lid *blow with his wind, the sea covered them, the Egyptians ; they sunk as lead in the mighty waters* : (Exod. 15:10) So he broke *the ships of Tarshish with an east wind* : (Psal. 48:7) But, whether it. he in one way or another he makes use of them, *stormy wind is fulfilling his word*, (Psal. 148:8) either of promise or command ; for it is always at his beck. *he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind* ; (Psal. 107:25) which is a considerable display of his almighty power: he caused an east wind to blow in the heavens; and, by his power, he brought in the south wind. (Psal. 78:26) He is also said, to make the weight for the winds; (Job 28:25) when he poizes them, fitly disposes them, and inclines them to this, or the other point ; to this, or the other coast; or, when he increases their force, makes them more ponderous; and when in the air, which is light of itself, he raises storms and tempests: And, perhaps, the rain may, in some sense, be a weight. for the winds; which, when it fills heavy, lessens the force, depresses the power and stops the progress of them ; wets their wings, bears them down, and causes them to subside However, certain it is, God has the sole power of raising and laying the wind. The sea also, and the roaring waves thereof, are at his command: As he has made the sea, and all that are in it, so he governs it, lifts up its waves, and restrains them by the word of his power. This is very fully and beautifully expressed by himself, in the following manner ; *Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb ? When I made the clouds the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it; and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors; and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, bat no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?* (Job 38:8-11) I go on,

Secondly, To observe, That Jesus Christ has such a power over the wind and seas. Hence it must unavoidably follow, that he is truly and properly God. This is sufficiently evident from the instance before us. It is said, that *he rebuked the wind and the sea*; a phrase that is used only of the divine Being, and cannot be said of any other than the most high God, who *rebuked the red sea, and it was dried up*; (Psalm 106:9) and who stands distinguished from all created beings by this, that *he stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people*. (Psalm 65:7) The Messiah makes use of this as an argument to prove, that he is able to redeem, because he can rebuke the sea, and dry it up, and cover the heavens with clouds and tempests. *Is my hand shortened at all, says he, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?* Will any one say this of me? *Behold, at my rebuke, I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness;—I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering*. (Isaiah 50:2, 3) That this is the Messiah, who here speaks, the following words abundantly declare *'The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, &c. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair,* (Isaiah 50: 4-6) &c. Now, upon our Lord's rebuking the wind and sea, the one ceased, and the other became a calm: This was done by speaking a word only, just in the same manner as he

had, a little before, healed the centurion's servant: And it was done in an authoritative manner; he *commanded the winds and water*, as the Lord and Master of them, *and they obeyed him* Never was any such thing heard of, as performed by a mere creature. It is reported of one of our kings of the Danish race, *Canute*, that "one day, as he was walking by the sea side, his attendants extolled him to the skies, and even proceeded to compare him to God himself. Offended at these extravagant praises, and willing to convince them of their folly and impiety, he ordered a chair to be brought; and seating himself in a place, where the tide was about to flow, turned to the sea, and said: *O sea, thou art under my dominion, and the land I sit on is mine I charge thee not to presume to approach any further, nor to dare to wet the feet of thy sovereign*. Having said this, he sat still for some time, as expecting the sea should obey his command; but, the tide advancing as usual, he took occasion from thence, to let base flatterers know, that the titles of *Lord* and *Master*, belong only to Him, whom the land (the wind) and the sea, obey." There is one thing more observable in this instance of our Lord's power over the wind and sea, that when he rebuked them, not only the wind ceased, but the sea immediately became a calm; which was very unusual, uncommon, and extraordinary: For, after the wind has ceased, and the storm is over, the waters of the sea, being agitated thereby, keep raging, and, in a violent motion, for a considerable time. Whereas here, soon as ever the word was spoke, that very moment, immediately, at once, the wind ceased, and the sea was calmed. That man must be an infidel to Revelation, that can read this account, and deny the Deity of Christ; he must be drove to one or other of these two, either to deny the truth of the fact, and the circumstances of it, or believe that Jesus Christ is truly and properly God. Hence,

Thirdly, The disciples were certainly right, in their application to him for deliverance, when they were in so great danger and distress: Since he appears to be no other than the mighty God, who made the heavens, the earth and sea, and all that are in them; who upholds all things by the word of his power, by whom all things were created, and in whom all things consist; and therefore has a power of ruling, ordering, and disposing all things, according to his will and pleasure: And even as mediator, he has all power in heaven, and in earth, given unto him; which he makes use of in the behalf of his own people, both for their temporal and spiritual good. The disciples, applying to him, found him to be, even in a literal sense, *an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest*. (Isaiah 32:2) And,

Fourthly, Such equally are in the right, who being sensible of their lost perishing condition, have recourse to him alone, for eternal life and salvation. All men are in such a condition, as the descendants of *Adam*, and as considered in him, in whom *all died*. The sentence of *death passed upon all men* in him ; *for that* , "in whom" all have sinned. (1 Cor. 15:22, Rom. 5:12) All men are transgressors of the law of God, stand charged with the breaches of it; *every mouth is stopped* by it, *and all the world become guilty before God*. (Rom. 3:19) Every man and woman are liable to the curses of it, and to the wrath of God, for the violation of it. God's elect themselves are, *by nature, the children of wrath, even as others*; (Ephes. 2:3) equally deserving of it, as being in their nature-head, and in their nature-state. But all men are not sensible of this, some are *whole*, strong, healthful, and robust, in their own apprehensions, and *need not a physician*; (Matt. 9:12) they are *rich* in their own account, and *increased with goods, and have need of nothing*; (Rev. 3:17) they are *dead in sins*, and have no spiritual sense and feeling of their wretched condition. They are like a man, *that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast* ; who says, *they have stricken me, and I was not sick: they have beaten me and I felt it not*: (Prov. 23:34, 35) and so remain indolent, and unconcerned about a future state, or the danger of a present one: *No man*

repents him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done; every one turns to his course, as the horse rusheth into battle. (Jer. 8:6) And this is, and will be the case, until the Spirit of God convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment, And then they see themselves ready to perish, cry out in the bitterness of their souls, *What must we do to be saved?* Look upon themselves as *lost and undone*, and can find *no soundness in their flesh, because of the anger of the Lord*; nor *any rest in their bones, because of their sin*. They feel a tempest rising in their own breasts *the law works wrath in them*, and there is nothing else, but *a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation*. (Heb. 10:27) When they look upwards, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, and ungodliness of men; in their apprehensions, the storm of wrath is gathering thick and black, hangs over their heads, just ready to break and fall upon them. They are like the people of *Israel*, at the foot of mount *Sinai*, (Heb. 7:18-21) who were come to *blackness, darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which they that heard, intreated, that the word should not be spoken to them any more ; for they could not endure that which was commanded: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake*. And what adds to their distress is, that they find they are not able to help themselves, and know not which way to escape. They wish for *wings like a dove, to fly away, and be at rest, to wander far off, and remain in the wilderness*, and so *hasten their escape from the windy storm and tempest*; (Psalm 55:6-8) but alas! they know not where to go from the Spirit, or flee from the presence of God. They are sensible, that *rocks and mountains cannot hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lord God almighty*. Their own righteousness appears no other than *rags*, which cannot cover and screen them from the avenging justice of God ; for they are as much convinced of the insufficiency of their *righteousness* to justify them before God, as of the exceeding sinfulness of *sin*; and therefore tremble at the thoughts of an awful future judgement.

Now, where should such poor, perishing creatures apply but to Christ, as the disciples, in their distress; and say to him, as they did, *Lord, save us; we perish?* Should they not go in an humble manner, as *Benhadad's* servants did to the king of *Israel*, and prostrate themselves at his feet; and say, as the Publican did, *God be merciful to us sinners?* Should they not go to him with the resolution of *Esther* saying, *If we perish, we will perish* at the feet of Jesus? Such souls have a great deal of reason to believe they shall find this *man*, this god—man, and mediator the Lord Jesus Christ, *an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest*. Whither should they go, whither can they go, but unto him, who has *the words of eternal life?* God has appointed him to be his salvation unto the ends of the earth ; he sent him, and he came to be the Saviour of the world. It is a faithful saying, deserves credit, and is worthy of all acceptance, that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners*: he is become the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him his name is called *Jesus*, because he saves his people from all their sins, and from all the dreadful effects of them; he saves them from the law, from curse, and condemnation by it ; from Satan and the world, from hell, the second death and wrath to come : He is mighty to save, *able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him* And he is as willing as he is able; for he has said, (Isaiah 45:22) *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, ; for I am God, and there is none else*. And, besides all this, there is salvation in no other person, nor by any other name; in vain it is hoped for from any other quarter, or by any other hand; and there is a full, complete and suitable salvation in him His atoning sacrifice fully expiates sin; his righteousness justifies from all things; his blood, sprinkled upon the conscience, lays the tempest there, saying, *Peace, he still*; and being carried within the veil, and sprinkled upon the mercy seat, before the throne, secures from the storm

of divine wrath to come; and his name is a strong tower, whither the righteous run, and are safe. But to hasten to a conclusion:

The occasion of this discourse is the great storm, commonly called *the high wind*; which arose the twenty-sixth, and continued to the twenty-seventh of *November*, one thousand seven hundred and three, thirty three years ago: On the account of which, a day of humiliation was appointed by public authority, *January* the nineteenth following. It is not easy to say, what disasters and calamities it brought here, and in other parts of *Europe*; how many edifices, of a larger and lesser size, were thrown down, in cities, towns and villages; what devastations were made, in parks, gardens and inclosures; how much shipping, of greater and smaller bulk, were destroyed; and, what is of all most awful, what multitudes of souls, at once, launched into an endless eternity. To give a detail of the several particulars of these things would be long and tedious, and in a great measure needless, after so many narratives have been printed, and so many discourses published ; among the most valuable of which number, must be allowed to stand a discourse, preached in this place, and on this occasion, since made public by my predecessor, Mr. *Benjamin Stinton*.[\[4\]](#)

It is remarkable, that on this very day, *seven* years ago, a considerable storm of wind arose ; which blew much about the same time this did, in its greatest fury, we now commemorate. I have reason to believe, that there is one[\[5\]](#) here present, who was cast away in it, and remarkably delivered, after having been exposed to the most imminent danger. I doubt not, but such an one retains a sense of the mercy, and thankfully acknowledges the goodness of God, and the kind interposure of divine providence, in his favour. I shall close all with a word of exhortation.

Let us adore the perfections, and observe the operations of Father, Son, and Spirit, in the government and management of the winds and seas. The concern, that the Father of Christ has herein, is not contested ; nor need there be any hesitation about the Son, when the instance, now attended to, is carefully considered; nor should there be any about the holy Ghost, when it is observed, that the heavens were, at first, garnished by him, and he moved upon the face of the waters, and brought the present earth into the form and order, in which it has since appeared. Besides, his extraordinary gifts bestowed upon the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, came down upon them with *a rushing, mighty wind*: (Acts 2:1) And the common, or ordinary operations of his grace, in the souls of men, are compared to the wind: *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit*. (John 3:8) Let us also take notice of the providences of God, and not let them be neglected by us, or buried in oblivion; we should make every proper use of them ourselves, and transmit them to posterity: *Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord*. (Psalm 107:43) Doubtless, with such a view, Mr. *Taylor*, who, whilst he lived, was a member of the church which meets in this place, laid a foundation for the annual observation of this day. Again in the view of the awful dispensations of providence, let us humble ourselves before God, since these shew the mighty hand of the Lord; let us stand in awe of his righteous judgments. How soon, and how easy, can he make this large and populous city, and the whole kingdom, an heap of rubbish? Sanctify the Lord of hosts, make him your fear, and your dread. To conclude, in a view of all our sins and transgressions, and of all that wrath and ruin they expose us to, let us take sanctuary in Christ; *who is a strength to the poor; a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast from the terrible ones, sin, law, and justice, is as a storm against the wall*. (Isaiah 25:4)

DAVID A TYPE OF CHRIST.

2 SAMUEL 23:1

Now these be the last words of David; David the Son of Jesse said, and the Man who was raised up on high, the Anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel, said.

THESE be tile last words of David. This refers not to what goes before, in the preceding chapter, which contains a psalm or song of David, and which is no other than the 18th Psalm with some little variation. That Psalm was penned upon a solemn and joyful occasion, as we are told in the title. *David spake unto tile Lord the words of this song, in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and the hand of Saul* (Ps. 18, Title). Now this can only respect his conquest over the Moabites, Edomites and Syrians, which we read of in the eighth chapter of this book, and which was some time before the death of David, therefore cannot be his last words.

These be the last words of David, must therefore refer to what follow in verse 2 to verse 7.

Now, when they are said to be the *last* words of David, we are not to suppose they were the last he ever spake in this world; no, it seems pretty plain that he said a great deal after this. It looks as if after this he had conversation with his son Solomon; gave him directions about building the Temple; informed him of the preparation lie had made for it, and encouraged him to begin and go on with that work. But these are the last words of David, after he had finished his book of psalms; the last words of David which he spake by divine inspiration; the last words of David delivered by way of prophecy, for a prophet he was: so the Apostle Peter calls him in the second of *Acts*. He foretold things to come, things concerning the Messiah. The ancient Chaldee Paraphrase calls these his last words, expressly, "A prophecy that he prophesied concerning the times of consolation, the days of the Messiah;" and it is most clear and manifest, the Messiah is spoken of by him in these, who should be *as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain* (verse 4). As we shall see hereafter.

Well then, these were the last words of David, which he spake by way of prophecy; and they were, no doubt, spoken at the close of his days, that is certain and it may be observed, that great men, under the former dispensation, towards the close of their days, in some of their last speeches, said things prophetic. So Jacob, when his time drew near to die, called for his sons, and told them what should befall them in the latter days: not so much what should befall their persons, as their tribes in after times. So Moses the man of God, just before his death, blessed all the tribes of Israel in a prophetic way. And David's last words were of this kind.

The words of persons of note and esteem among men, persons of rank, in an elevated state of life, of large capacity and great knowledge, especially those of piety and religion, are generally taken

notice of, and had in great esteem: and such was the person whose last words these are. He was a man of high rank, in an elevated station, a King of Israel. He was a man of great capacity and knowledge in things natural, civil and divine. That he was a religious man, the book of psalms is a full proof.—Now the last words of such a man must deserve public notice; are worthy of our consideration. The last words of our friends and acquaintance are generally regarded, and often talked of; surely then the words of so great a man as David deserve our highest regard for which reason I purpose to consider and go through them.

Let me, however, just observe here, that if these last words of David are worthy of our notice, how much more the last words of our blessed Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ? of whom he was an eminent type. Some of his last words, as recorded by the Evangelist Matthew, were his *expostulatory* ones before his divine Father. When he was under natural darkness, the sun having withdrawn himself; when under spiritual darkness, God having hid his face from him; and when he bore the wrath of God, and all the vengeance due to his people for their sins and transgressions, it caused him under all to say, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me* (Matthew 27:46)? These, I say, were some of his last words, according to Matthew. The Evangelist Luke gives us a larger account than this. He mentions some other words, which were his last, or near his last. One is a petition put up on the behalf of those who crucified him. *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do* (Luke 23:34). This shows what an excellent spirit he was of, and worthy to be regarded and followed by all that call themselves the disciples and followers of the blessed Jesus. Another expression recorded by the same Evangelist, and which seems to be later, is, *Into thy hands I commit my Spirit* (Luke 23:46); that is, his reasonable soul, which was just about to be separated from his body by death. He committed this into the hands of his divine Father. This deserves our imitation also. But; the Apostle John is still more particular: he tells us the *very last* words which were spoken by Christ, that he said, *It is finished* (John 19:30), and then gave up the ghost. Then the work he came into this world to do was all finished, and particularly the great work of our redemption and salvation: that was finished, *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do* (John 17:4). O, what words are these! they ought always to be remembered, and never forgotten by believers in Christ. These last words of Christ are the foundation of all our faith, hope, joy, and comfort. *Salvation is finished*. These were the last words of our antitypical David.

I proceed now to the text, in which we have a description of David,

I. By his name—David.

II. By his descent—the son of Jesse—which was comparatively low and mean.

III. By his exaltation from a low estate to a higher one—The man who was raised up on high.

IV. By his unction—the anointed of the God of Jacob.

V. By his usefulness to the Church of God, particularly in psalmody, which in his time was raised to the highest pitch with regard to the outward administration of it: therefore he is called, *the sweet psalmist of Israel*.

And in all these things I shall consider David as a type of the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. We shall find all the characters agree with him.

I. He is described here by his name, *David*: which signifies beloved, as no doubt he was by his parents, he being their youngest son. He was also beloved of God, even when he was disesteemed of men. The stone which the builders refused, was made by Jehovah the head of the corner. He was preferred before all his elder brethren, by the Lord. He was the man after God's own heart, whom he had pitched upon, and therefore raised him to the throne of Israel. He was beloved of man; not only by Jonathan the son of Saul, who loved him as his own soul; but also of the whole nation. It is said by the Historian, that *all Israel and Judah loved David* (1 Sam. 18:16). They all loved him, to a man, for his courteous, affable disposition and behavior, and because he went out with their armies, fought their battles for them, and came in a victorious conqueror. Therefore with great propriety is his name called *David*.

This name is given to the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ; given unto him, and spoken of him, when David was no more; when he had been dead many hundreds of years. Spoken of Christ in reference to times then to come, and yet to come; for it is said, *They shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King* (Jer. 30:9). This respects times that are yet to come: the like is said in Hosea 3:4, 5, *The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king*. The former part has been fulfilled, but the latter remains yet to be accomplished: the time is yet to come that they shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king. So in other prophecies, where it is foretold that the Lord would raise up one shepherd and one prince over them, even David his servant (Ezek. 34:23, 24): —This could never be meant literally of David: it means the antitype of David, our Lord Jesus Christ, who in the latter day will be a prince and a king over the Jewish nation, converted and called by grace.

And this name well agrees with him, because he is the beloved one. The beloved of the Father, his dear son, the son of his love, of whom he has said once and again, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased* (Matthew 3:17). Beloved he was by him from all eternity: our Lord testifies this when he says, *for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world* (John 17:24). He was from all eternity as one brought up with him, rejoicing always before him. He lay in his bosom; a phrase expressive of the most tender affection to him. Beloved he was by him in time, throughout all his meanness, sufferings, and death. He loved him in his infancy: as it is said, *When Israel was a child I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt* (Hosea 11:1). This respects the Messiah, one of whose names is Israel; whom the Lord loved when he was a child in his infant state in our nature, and who shewed his affection to him by warning Joseph in a dream to take his wife, and the young child, and flee into Egypt. He went and continued there; and when it was a proper time, he was warned again to return into his own land, because they that sought the young child were dead: so the prophecy was fulfilled.

And as he loved him, and manifested it in his infancy, so throughout his whole life. When he was obeying the divine commands, when he was suffering death, still he loved him. Yea, Christ says, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life* (John 10:17). Many declarations there are, of his love to him. He loved him, and therefore put all things into his hands; all persons,

angels, and saints; particularly the latter, who are put into his hands as the effect of Jehovah's love to him. *The Father loveth, the Son, and hath given all things into his hand* (John 3:35). Again : *The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth—The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father* (John 5:20, 22, 23).

Christ, the antitypical David, is not only beloved of God, but also by his people. He is beloved of all those that see the loveliness of his person, and have tasted of his love: these cannot but say of him, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." They know not how better to describe him, than as *him whom their souls love. Saw ye him* (says the Church) *whom my soul loveth* (Cant. 3:3)? They love him in his whole person as God-Man: they love him as held forth in all his offices, in all his relations. They love him as he appears in all his truths and ordinances. They love the truths relating to him, that set forth the glory of his person and the riches of his grace. They love him in all his ordinances: they *esteem his precepts concerning all things to be right, and hate every false way* (Ps.119:128). They love all his people, rich or poor, high or low, and of whatsoever denomination among men. And they love Christ superlatively above all others, angels, or men; they say, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee* (Ps.73:25). They love him above all natural relations, friends, and acquaintance, be they ever so near and dear to them. *He that loveth father or mother* (saith the Lord) *more than me, is not worthy of me* (Matthew 10:37). They love him with all their hearts and with all their souls, with sincerity and uprightness of heart, and can appeal to him as the searcher of hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men, that as he knows all things, he knows they do love him. These shew their love to him by a regard to his commandments and ordinances. *If ye love me* (says Christ), *keep my commandments* (John 14:15). Also by parting with all, and bearing all for his sake by expressing an uneasiness at his absence from them: not being contented till they find him again seeking here and there, and every where for him, and when they have found him they will not let him go—Thus our Lord Jesus Christ answers to the name David, which signifies beloved; he is beloved of his Father, and beloved of his people.

II. He is further described by his lineage and descent, the *son of Jesse*. He is not described here as the son of Abraham (of whose seed the Jews generally boasted they were), in whom all the nations of the earth were blessed; nor is he described as being of the tribe of Judah, the honourable tribe of Judah, from whom the Messiah was to spring; but he is called the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite. Bethlehem was but a small town, or city, and the family of Jesse, in that city or town, seems of no great note: hence Saul asks his servants, whom he suspected to carry on a private conference with David, "Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds"? (1 Sam.22:7). So Nabal, when applied to at sheep-shearing by David's servants, *Who is David?* (says he) *And who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master* (1 Sam. 25:10). I suppose this must be some runaway man or other. Of so little note were David and his family. Yea, David suggests as much himself, when he says, *Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* (2 Sam. 7:18).

Now the Messiah is represented as one that should spring from Jesse: There shall come forth a rod out of the stern of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots (Isa. 11:1). And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people (Isa. 11:14); which is to be

understood of the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, and describes his low and mean estate by lineal descent.

The family of Jesse was raised to great grandeur in David and Solomon: and in after-times a numerous race of kings sprang from them, which ennobled that family, and made it very illustrious, to the times of the Babylonish captivity; but after that, they decreased quite to the times of the Messiah; and it was very low indeed then. The family of Jesse was like a tree cut down to the roots, scarcely any thing of it appeared above ground. Joseph, a poor carpenter, and Mary, a poor virgin, these were the remains of that once famous family from which the Messiah sprang; and they are both represented as very poor. They came to Bethlehem, to which they both belonged, to be taxed there. Mary's time drew near, and there she was delivered of her son: but there was no room for them in the inn, and we may be sure the reason was, because of their meanness; and at the time of her purification, she brought an offering of the meaner sort.

Christ was so mean, that he gave offence to the Jewish nation. They could not think that this person who sprang from them should be king of Israel. *Is not this the carpenter's son? (say they) Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? and his sisters, are they not all with us?* (Matthew 13:55, 56). Don't we know them all, what poor, mean persons they are? and they were offended. Such a low condition this family was in, when the Messiah was born: and he sprang from it, as a root out of a dry ground. His education was agreeable to his birth, He was brought up in an obscure place, Galilee; concerning which, Nathaniel says, *Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?* (John 1:46). He had not been sent so much as to a private school, much less to a University; therefore he was upbraided with it afterwards. *How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?* (John 7:15). Never been at school. He was not only represented as the carpenter's son; but they say, *Is not this the carpenter?* (Mark 6:3). It seems he was brought up to trade. O, how low was our Lord brought in our room and stead! He was found in fashion as a man, and in the form of a servant. He who was Lord of all; he to whom the world belonged, and all the fulness of it; yet was obliged to some few persons for his support. —Thus we see the wonderful, amazing grace of our Lord Jesus, "who, though he was rich, and Lord of all, yet for our sakes became poor; that we, through his poverty, might be made rich."

III. David is here described as *the man raised up on high*; raised from a low estate, to a very exalted one. A low estate David was in when he was anointed King of Israel. When Samuel inquired, if there were any other sons of Jesse, they said, there was another, but he was keeping his father's sheep. Well, he must be sent for; so God took him, as we are told, *from the sheep-folds; from following the ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance* (Ps. 78:70, 71).

He was raised from a low estate, to a very exalted one. He was first king over the tribe of Judah, then over Benjamin, and then over all the tribes of Israel: yea, he was exalted to be the head of the heathen round about him. In a spiritual sense, like other saints, he was raised as a beggar from the dunghill, set among princes, and made to inherit the throne of glory (1 Sam. 2:8).

In this, he was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ: to Him this character well agrees; *the man who was raised up on high*. Th man. It is a very emphatic article in the original text, which is, in a good measure, preserved in our translation. Not a mere man, or a common man, but, *the* man. The man

that God has chosen; the man of his right hand, as he is called. *Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself* (Ps. 80:17). *The mart of thy right hand*; dear to God as his right hand. The man of his right hand; whom he made use of as his right hand in the great work of our salvation. The man of his right hand; whom he supported with the right hand of his righteousness. The man of his right hand; whom God has exalted with his right hand, and at his right hand. The man, his fellow. *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow* (Zec.13:7). —Not that Christ, as man, is Jehovah's fellow: but that divine person, to which the human nature is united, is Jehovah's fellow. As man, he was not; as a divine person, he was. *He thought it not robbery to be equal with God* (Phil.2:6). He has the same nature and divine perfections; the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him. The man, *the second man, the Lord from heaven* (1 Cor. 15:47); not that he, as man, came down from heaven, as some have thought; no, for as man he was a son of earth, agreeable to a prophecy concerning him. *Truth shall spring out of the earth and righteousness shall look down from heaven* (Ps. 85:11). —Christ, as man, came from earth; but as God, he came down from heaven: not by local motion, but by assumption of the human nature. "Came down," not to do his own will; but the will of him that sent him.

"The man," that was chosen above all the individuals of human nature, for the purposes for which he was sent: hence he is said to be chosen out of the people (Ps. 89:19). He pitched upon this one single individual human nature. The human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ he selected from all the rest, and therefore he is said to be his elect: *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth* (Isa.42:1). Chosen out from among the people, the choicest, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, and was particularly chosen to the grace of union to the divine person of the Son of God, which none other of the human race was. The wonderful extraordinary man, chosen of God to be united to the second person in the blessed Trinity, and therefore bears the same name with him. *He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the highest* (Luke 1:32); on which account he is truly said to have a more excellent name than the angels, *for to which of the angels said he at any time, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?* (Heb. 1:5). O what a great and wonderful mystery is this, that the Word should be made flesh and dwell among us!—God manifest in the flesh

The man Christ Jesus was raised up on high, exalted to be a prince and a Saviour: exalted, raised up in union with the divine person of the Son of God, to be a prince, a king and a head over all things to the church. To be the head of principalities and powers, even of angels. It is thought by some that this gave offence to the apostate spirits. Understanding that the Son of God in human nature must be head over them, and principalities and powers become subject to him: they rebelled, left their first habitation, would have nothing to do with this Son of God, if he must be exalted as head over them in human nature. Let this be as it may, he is exalted to be a prince, a head over all things to the church, and to be the Saviour of the body thereof: *he was made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law* (Gal. 4:4, 5). He was fore-ordained to be the redeemer and savior of men, by the shedding of his precious blood in human nature: this was the man raised up on high.

When he had gone through his state of humiliation here on earth, God *highly exalted him, and gave him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that*

Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:9, 10, 11). He ascended up on high, even far above all, and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, in the highest place he possibly could have, the right hand of God, which was never allowed to any creature whatever, for "to which of the angels said he at anytime, Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" (Heb. 1:13). But Christ in our nature is there. The man united to the divine person of the Son of God. The man raised up on high, and who when he ascended received gifts for men: or, received gifts in Adam; as it is in the original text. Received gifts in the human nature in which he ascended. Received gifts, for what? for qualifying men for public work and service in the ministration of the gospel: and has given them unto men, more or less, in all succeeding generations. And he is not only exalted to give these gifts unto men, but common grace also (if I may so call it), or such grace as is common to all the people of God; for as he is exalted to be a prince and a savior, so *to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins* (Acts 5:31): to give every grace, and every blessing of grace unto his people. Now what an honor is the human nature raised up unto into union with the divine person of the Son of God, in that it is raised up to bestow all *extraordinary* and *ordinary* gifts! All *extraordinary*, bestowed on Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers: all *ordinary*, bestowed upon Ministers in every age, and all grace bestowed upon the people of God in common.

Once more: He is exalted to be the Judge of the whole world. *God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has ordained* (Acts 17:31); or, by Christ in human nature. He is the man, that is raised up on high for that service: to be the Judge of the whole earth; to be the judge of quick and dead: he will appear in human nature, and every eye shall see him: he will appear most glorious and magnificent: he will come in his own glory, in his Father's glory, and in the glory of all the holy angels.—Thus he is the man raised up on high.

IV. David is here described as *the anointed of the God of Jacob*: that is, anointed by the order of the God of Jacob. Samuel was ordered to anoint him, and he did: and he was afterwards anointed king over Judah; and after that he was anointed to be king over all Israel. *The anointed of the God of Jacob*. He shewed himself to be the God of Jacob and Israel, by appointing such a king to rule over them.

In this also David was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is anointed with the Holy Ghost. *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost* (Acts 10:38), called the oil of gladness with which he is said to be anointed above his fellows (Heb. 1:9), for he received the Spirit without measure. Anointed he is said to be by the Lord, *therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee* (Ps. 45:7). Jehovah hath done it, who also anointeth all that believe. And do you ask when he was anointed? I answer, he was anointed from all eternity. In Proverbs the eighth it is said, *I was set up from everlasting*: it is in the original text, *I was anointed*. The phrase expresses his being appointed unto, or invested with, the office of Mediator. He might be said to be anointed from everlasting as such. All the grace of his people, all that was designed to be bestowed upon them, were put into his hands. He was possessed in the beginning of God's way with a fulness of grace for all his people: hence we are said to have grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). He was anointed with the Holy Ghost from his birth; for if John the Baptist is said to be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15), our Lord Jesus Christ may well be thought to be so. At his baptism it was more apparent when the Spirit of God rested upon him, whereby John knew he was the Messiah. This was the sign given him whereby he should know that he was the

Messiah. He was declared to be Lord and Christ, or more manifestly anointed when he received the gifts and grace to be bestowed upon his people in future ages and generations.

He was anointed with the Holy Spirit, his gifts and grace as man and mediator, as prophet, priest, and king. The *Prophets* used to be anointed: hence Elijah had orders to anoint Elisha (1 Kings 19:16). Christ is anointed as a prophet. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me*, for what? why *to preach glad tidings to the meek* (Isa. 61:1): and his people, who have their anointing from him, are taught all things. Christ as a priest, consecrated for evermore, was anointed with gifts and graces of the Spirit above measure. The oil or ointment poured upon Aaron's head, which ran down to the skirts of his garments, was an emblem or type of the abundance of the gifts and graces of the Spirit bestowed on Christ as our great high priest. Kings also were anointed to their office, as David, Solomon, and others; so Christ was anointed as king, *I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion* (Ps. 2:6): it is in the original, *I have anointed my king*. Hence it is that Christ has the name of the Messiah, or anointed one; and his followers have the same, receiving from him that anointing which teacheth all things.

V. David is described as the *sweet Psalmist of Israel*. And this title and epithet is given him, because he composed most part of the book of Psalms under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. He also invented the tunes to which they were set, and the instruments of music with which they were sung; hence you read of some that invented instruments of music like David (Amos 6:5). He also appointed persons to preside in this service, and to give instruction therein, of which you have a large account in the 1 Chronicles 15 and 25. And psalmody, as I have already observed, was never raised to so great a pitch, respecting the outward administration of it, as in David's time; so that he might with great propriety be called *the sweet psalmist of Israel*: though the words will bear another reading, and perhaps a better: *And the sweet or pleasant one, in the psalms or songs of Israel*; that is, David was the sweet and delightful subject of the songs of Israel. He was the person that the people in their songs with great pleasure dwelt upon, of which you have an instance in his youthful time: when they came forth in their songs, and dances, and said, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (1 Sam. 18:7).

In this also he was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sweet and delightful psalms of David were composed under the influence of the Messiah, as iii verse the third, The God of Israel said, the rock of Israel spake to me: the Lord Jesus, the Rock of Israel spake by him, and by his Spirit indited the psalms he was the penman of. The Spirit of Christ in him, spake of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow. Our Lord Jesus Christ might be particularly stilled the sweet psalmist of Israel, when he sung the praises of God in the great congregation; when he with his disciples, at the institution of the supper, sung an hymn: he began, he led on the disciples, and sung within them; O what a delightful sound was that, could it have been heard by us! the Messiah, the sweet psalmist of Israel singing the psalms of David!—The hallel or hymn which the Jews sung at their Passover, was none other than the psalms of David, the 113th to the 118th. These psalms he sung with his disciples, and then he was the sweet psalmist of Israel. Moreover, he has ordered that psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs should be sung by his people. Christ speaking in me, says the apostle (2 Cor. 13:3); so that what is written by him may be said to be spoken by Christ; and in his epistles there are orders given to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs—*Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord* (Eph. 5:19). *And in another epistle it is said, Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom,*

teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord (Col. 3:16): this is the order of the great psalmist of Israel, our Lord Jesus Christ.

But particularly as David was the sweet, the delightful subject of the songs of Israel; so our Lord Jesus Christ is the sweet, the delightful subject of the book of Psalms: we have his own authority for it; for we are told that he expounded unto his disciples in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself, and said unto them, *These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me* (Luke 24:44). O how do they speak of Jesus! He is the subject of these songs, in most, if not in all of them; in great abundance, there you hear of him, and there he is set forth in the most delightful and glorious strains. There you read of the covenant of grace made with this our David, before the world was, and which can never be broken (Ps. 89). There you read of his sufferings, and of his death, in the most lively descriptions of it especially in the 22nd Psalm, where he is represented in the greatest agonies, all his bones being dislocated or out of joint, as at his crucifixion; and the most minute circumstances are mentioned, as parting his garments among them, and casting lots upon his vesture. There you read of his resurrection from the dead; how that God would not suffer his Holy One, when in the grave, to lay so long as to see corruption, but shewed him the path of life (Ps. 16:10, 11). There you read of his ascension, and session at the right hand of God, and of his second coming to judgment, to judge the world in righteousness, and the people with his truth (Ps. 96:13). There you read of him as the priest of God. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek* (Ps. 110:4). There you read of him as being a sacrifice, and offering up his body (Ps. 40:6, &c.). There you read of him as the great prophet of Israel, not concealing truth and righteousness, and loving kindness from the great congregation (Ps. 40:9, 10). There you read of him as the anointed king, made higher than the kings of the earth—in short, there you read of him in all his offices. But I close all with a remark or two.

All that has been said may serve to endear our Lord Jesus Christ unto us. He is the true David, the beloved one. He is the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel, or the sweet subject of the songs of Israel. All this, I say, may serve to endear him to us; for however he may be disallowed of men, yet he is the chosen of God and precious; and he is so, and ought to be so, to all them that believe.

This may also serve to recommend unto us the *reading* of David's psalms, for Christ is the sum and substance of them. There is not only a rich fund of experience in these psalms, but a rich display of Christ in all his offices, in all his sufferings, and in all his grace. It may also serve to recommend unto us the *singing* of these psalms, which, no doubt, were designed to be sung by the churches of Christ under the gospel dispensation, since they are so full of him. And this may serve also to excite our attention to what follows: which the words I have now been upon are only a preface to. Now since here is so grand a description given us of David, and so of his Antitype, let it induce us to pay a regard to what really are the last words of so great a personage. These we shall consider in some subsequent discourses, as the Lord shall give opportunity.

LEVI'S URIM AND THUMMIM

FOUND WITH CHRIST,

A Sermon

DEUTERONOMY 33:8

And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim, and thy Urim be with thy holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah.

These words are part of the blessing wherewith *Moses* blessed the tribe of *Levi*, when he blessed that and the other tribes a little before his death. He was a man eminently raised up by God for much good to the people of *Israel*; he was a glorious instrument in God's hand, to deliver them out of Egyptian bondage; and was a guide, a governor, a legislator, nay, a father to them in the wilderness; but having *unadvisedly spoke with his lips* concerning them, *it went ill* with him for *their sakes*; so that he was not allowed to enter into the land of *Canaan*; but, as in the latter part of the preceding chapter, he is bid to go up to mount *Nebo*, and take a prospect of the promised land and die.

Moses, thus having notice of the time of his departure being at hand, and having a real affection and concern for this people, by a prophetic spirit, blesses the several tribes, *verse 1. This is the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death*, And prefaces his benediction with observing the wonderful love of God to that people, in giving them a law by his hands, which was delivered in so august and magnificent a manner, *verses 2-5. And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shinned forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. Moses commanded us a law even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.* And then he proceeds particularly to bless the tribes, beginning with *Reuben*, *verse 6*, who was *Jacob's* firstborn; but had forfeited his birth-right by his sin. *Judah*, in *verse 7* is blessed next, who, though the fourth son, is blessed in the second place, because to his tribe belonged the kingdom, and from thence was the *Messiah* to arise, one of whose characters is, *the lion of the tribe of Judah*; and, perhaps, all that is said in this blessing may very well be applied to him. In the next place comes *Levi*, in the words I have read, *Simeon* his brother in iniquity, being wholly omitted; *And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah.* Which words I intend, by divine assistance, to open and explain. But I must entreat your patience a little, whilst I remove the difficulties of the text; which I shall endeavor to do.

First, By giving some account of the Urim and Thummim.

Secondly, By shewing who the person is whom *Moses* intends, and points at, in these words, to whom the *Urim* and *Thummim* belong.

First, I shall endeavour to give some account of the Urim and Thummim. The first mention that is made of them, is in *Exodus* 28:30. *And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord; and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.* The words Urim and Thummim are by the *Septuagint* rendered a *manifestation and truth*; though they may be much better translated *lights and perfections*; as they are by *Aquila*, in *Leviticus* 8:8 and are frequently applied, by divines, to that light of knowledge and integrity of life, which are requisite characters in every minister of Christ; but what these Urim and Thummim were, is not so easy a thing to determine: Some of the Jewish Rabbi have ingenuously confessed, that they knew not what they were, and some of our Christian interpreters have thought it safest to leave them as things unknown, and not conclude anything certainly about them; though the scripture seems to speak of them as things well known; and an inquiry into them is nowhere forbidden; therefore we shall attempt it at this time.

There has been a variety of opinions concerning them, which particularly to enumerate, and enter into the consideration of, would be both tedious, and to little purpose, one thinks that these two words, Urim and Thummim were engraven on a stone, or a plate of gold, and put into the breast-plate, even as those words, Holiness to the Lord, were engraven on a plate of gold, and fastened, by a blue lace, to the front of Aaron's mitre. Another is of opinion (Calvin in *Ex.* 28:4), that they were two famous and remarkable characters in the breast-plate, which suited with those names: Others have supposed, that this was the writing of Shemhamphorash, that is, the name Jehovah (which the Jews say is unlawful to be pronounced but by the high-priest when he entered into the holy of Holies) which name, either by itself, or with other divine names, explanative of it, were put into, or engraven on the breast-plate; and this way go most of the Jewish doctors. Others have imagined, that they were little images, which the high priest carried about with him in the folds of the breast-plate, and as often as he inquired concerning anything, God, or an angel in the name of God, did by these, answer very clearly and distinctly, what was to be done, or not to be done; and that, because of the perspicuity and certain completion of the answers, the one was called Urim, and the other Thummim; and that, whilst the priest was inquiring, the images glistened and appeared very bright, to fix the people's attention, and raise their admiration: they also imagine, that these images are the same with the Teraphim made mention of in many places of scripture with the ephod, but never in a good sense; for they were idols which the Jews, who were a people prone to idolatry, had learned to worship of the nations; and they seem to be household gods, such as the Lares or Penates among the Romans; wherefore it cannot be supposed that these were the Urim and Thummim which were put into the breast-plate, because it would have been directly contrary to the second commandment. Others have been of opinion, that these were a work purely divine, not made by Bezaleel or any other artificer, but by God himself, as the two tables of stone were, on which the law was engraven: and that God gave these to Moses, and he put them into the breast-plate; though of what form and matter they were they will no more pretend to tell, that they would of what stone the two tables were made.

But the opinion, which at present I am most inclined to come into, is, that the Urim and Thummim were no other than the twelve stones in the breast-plate, on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of *Israel*, and that these were called Urim, because they were *clear, lucid, and transparent*; and Thummim, because they were *perfect and complete*, had no blemish or defect in them: what induces me to embrace and prefer this opinion to all others, is, because in Exodus 34, where there is a particular account given of all the priest's vestments, and more especially of the breast-plate and the things appertaining thereunto, there is mention made of the twelve stones, but no notice taken of the Urim and Thummim: now if the Urim and Thummim had been anything different from the stones, *Moses* would not have omitted the mention of them, seeing he takes notice of things more minute than these: and as also, in Leviticus 8:8 where is given the like account, mention is made of the Urim and Thummim, and no notice taken of the stones, which is a further confirmation of this opinion. Likewise, I find some of the most learned of the Jewish writers are of the same opinion, particularly *Josephus*, whose testimony must go a great way in this matter, seeing he lived while the second temple stood, was by sect a Pharisee, by profession a priest, and of the blood royal; and therefore no doubt, had all the opportunities and advantages of informing himself in these affairs.

Having thus considered what they were, let us now observe what was the use of them, which I apprehend to be twofold.

I. The names of the twelve tribes of *Israel* being engraven on them, they were borne on *Aaron's* heart, when he went into the holy place on the day of atonement, for a memorial before the Lord, so that what *Aaron* then did, more especially, he did, not in his own name, but in the name of the whole congregation of *Israel*; he acted as their representative, when he slew the sacrifice, and carried the blood within the veil, for it was not only for himself, but for all the people.

II. By these, the high priest consulted God for the people in matters of moment; thus we read in Numbers 27:21, *And he (that is, Joshua) shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord; at his word shall they go out, and at his word shall they come in, both he and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.* Consultation by Urim and Thummim was made by the priest only, but not without having on the Ephod, and generally before the ark of the covenant; not for private persons and for private affairs or for things trivial, but for public persons, and in matters of moment. And so we read, in the *Misnah*, *They inquire by Urim and Thummim, but they do not inquire by these for a private person, but for a king, and for the house of judgment, and for him whom the congregation needeth.*

This was certainly a very great favor, which God indulged this people with, that they could thus have recourse unto him on emergent occasions; and it was an evidence of God's displeasure to *Saul*, when he would not answer him, *either by dreams, or by Urim, or by Prophets*: How long those things continued in use, is not so well known. The Talmudists say, That king *Josiah* hid the Urim and Thummim under ground in a cave, before prepared by *Solomon*, together with the anointing oil, the ark of the covenant, *Aaron's* rod, and the pot of Manna, and that these things could not be found when they returned from *Babylon*; therefore tell us that these five things were wanting in the second temple, namely, 1. The ark with the mercy-seat, and cherubims. 2. The fire from heaven which burnt up the sacrifice. 3. The Shechinah, or the divine presence. 4. The holy

Ghost, or Spirit of prophecy. 5. The Urim and Thummim. And in the *Misnah* they say, "After the death of the former prophets the Urim and Thummim ceased." *Maimonides* indeed says, that the Urim and Thummim were made in the second temple, though not used; his words are these, "They made in the second temple Urim and Thummim, to the end, they might make up all the eight ornaments, although they did not inquire by them: and wherefore did they not inquire by them? because the holy Ghost was not there." *Josephus* says, that the shining of these stones had ceased two hundred years before he wrote his *Antiquities*; and it is manifest from scripture, that the Jews were without them when they returned from *Babylon*, as appears from *Ezra*,(2:63) *And the Tirshatha, that is, Nehemiah, said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim.* This shews the deficiency and imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and what need there was of another priest to arise with the true Urim and Thummim, not after *Aaron's* order, but after the order of *Melehizedek*.

But now let us consider a little, in what way and manner God was pleased to return answers by Urim and Thummim.

The Jews generally say, it was by the extraordinary *brightness* and *protuberance* of some of the letters upon the stones, which swelling, and appearing higher and brighter than others, either altogether, or one after another, the priest could read the answer which should be returned: but there not being a complete alphabet in the names of the twelve tribes, they added the names of the patriarchs *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; and this not being sufficient, they added these words, *Col Elle Shibte Israel*, "All these are the tribes of Israel." Here being now a complete alphabet, they suppose an answer might be returned this way upon any affair that was consulted about.

Others, that the priests knew the mind and will of God, by the *brightness* or *dullness* of the stones; that if the stones were bright, the answer was in the affirmative; if dull, in the negative; and so they returned the answer to the people.

Others have been of opinion, that the priest, when he went and asked counsel of God, having on the breast-plate and the Urim and Thummim it, God was pleased to enlighten his understanding, and fix in his mind a firm persuasion of the truth of the answer intended, and accordingly he returned it.

But I am most inclined to think, that God gave the answer by a distinct and articulate voice; my reasons for it are, because in *Numbers*, when the priest asked counsel of God, it is said, *at his word*, or at his mouth, that is, of the Lord, *Shall they go out, and at his word*, or mouth, *Shall they come in* (Num. 27:21); and in all the instances we have of inquiry, being made by Urim and Thummim, the answers, as they appear to me, were given this way: Thus, after *Joshua's* death, when the people of *Israel* inquired of the Lord, saying, *Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites? The Lord said Judah shall go up* (Judges 27:21); And when *David* ordered, *Abiathar* the priest to bring the Ephod to him, and he inquired of the Lord, saying, *Will Saul come down? And the Lord said he will come down: Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said they will deliver thee up* (1 Sam. 23:11, 12).

Thus I have endeavored to give you some account of the Urim and Thummim, which I suppose to be the twelve stones in the breast-plate, on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of *Israel*; one whereof use whereof, was, by them to ask counsel of God' in matters of moment; and.

the answer was given to the priest, by a distinct and articulate voice, he having on the breast-plate at that time, with these stones in it.

Secondly, I shall now proceed to show, who the person is, whom Moses intends, and points at, in these words, to whom the Urim and Thummim belong. And here are two things spoken of him, which maybe a direction to us in finding out the person intended. *1st*, He was God's *holy One*. *2dly*, He was *proved at Massah, and strove with? at the waters of Meribah*.

1st, Both these are true of *Aaron*; he was an holy man, had the principles of grace and holiness wrought in his soul', and lived an holy life and conversation, and therefore he is called *the saint of the Lord*; *they envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord* (Ps. 106:15). He was also proved at *Massah*, and strove with at the waters of *Meribah*; which may he referred either to God, or to the Israelites proving him: God proved him at *Massah*, or *tempted him* in, or with a *temptation*, as the words may be read. Even as he is said to tempt *Abraham*, so he may be here said to tempt *Aaron*; But how? Why, by suffering the people of *Israel* gather together against him and *Moses*, and to murmur against them for want of water. But how did it go with *Aaron* in this temptation, or trial of his faith and patience? All the three *Targums*, on the place, gave it in his praise, that he stood in the temptation, was perfect, and was found faithful: But this doth not seem so well to agree to the account in *Numbers*, where it is said, *And the Lord spake to Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord: And he was sanctified in them* (Num. 20:12).

It seems from hence, that he did not stand in the temptation; and therefore God strove and contended with him; that is, blamed him, and shewed manifest tokens of his displeasure at his carriage and behavior; or else the words may be referred to the tribe of *Levi*, who, with the rest, of the Israelites, tempted and strove with *Moses* and *Aaron* at these places; though some of the Jewish writers exempt the tribe of *Levi*, and say, that they murmured not with the other murmurers.

2dly, These two characters in the text may very well be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ: the character of an *holy One* well suits with him; he is so both as God and man; he is *the man thy holy One*, as the words may be rendered; he was so in his conception and birth, and therefore called that holy thing; holy he was in his nature, and in all the actions of his life, and therefore a proper person for the Urim and Thummim to be with, and a suitable high priest for us; for *such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens* (Heb. 7:26); of him also it may be truly said, that he was proved at *Massah*, and strove with at the waters of *Meribah*; for the Israelites not only tempted and strove with *Moses* and *Aaron*, but they tempted and strove with the Lord *Jehovah*; Thus in *Exodus* we read, that *Moses* said unto them, *Why chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord* (Ex. 17:2)? And in verse 7 *he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord; saying, Is the Lord among us or not? And in Numbers, This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them* (Num. 20:13). Now, who was this Lord; this *Jehovah*, whom they tempted and strove with after this manner? He was no other than the angel who was sent to conduct them through the wilderness, the Angel of God's presence, the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears from 1 Corinthians 10:9,

Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. So that Christ is the holy One who is more especially intended here, who was tempted and strove with at *Massah* and *Meribah*; therefore to him the true Urim and Thummim belong. And the words may be thus paraphrased, *And of Levi, that is, of the tribe of Levi, he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim* (or thy lights and thy perfections, O God) *be with thy holy One, Christ Jesus, whom thou, O Levi, with the rest of the tribes of Israel, didst tempt at Massah, and strive with at the waters of Meribah.* Thus having opened the words, and endeavored to remove the difficulties of the text, I shall in the following observation, give you what I conceive is intended therein, namely,

That the true Urim and Thummim are with God's holy One, Christ Jesus; or, What was meant and typified by the Urim and Thummim, is to be found fully and complete in Christ.

And in speaking hereunto I shall,

- I. Endeavour to shew, how the Urim and Thummim are with Christ according to the significance of the words.
- II. How they may be applied unto him, with regard to the use of them.

I. I will endeavour to shew, how the Urim and the Thummim may be said to be with Christ, according to the significance of the words. The words, as I have already observed, signify, *lights and perfections*: now, all light and perfection are in Christ; *it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell* (Col. 1:19). Fulness and perfection of all that is great and glorious, valuable and precious, are to be found in him; *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* (Col. 2:3).

1st, The Urim is with Christ; all *light* is in Christ, and from him. As all that light which was created on the first day, and disseminated throughout the whole creation until the fourth day, is in that great luminary the sun; so all that light which is dispersed among the creatures, is, in its full perfection, in Christ, who is the Sun of righteousness and as all bodies, celestial and terrestrial, have their light from the sun, so all creatures have their light from Christ, who is *the light of the world*. There is a threefold light, that is in, and is communicated to us from Christ; the light of nature, grace, and glory.

(1.) The light of nature is from Christ. The light of nature, in fallen man, must needs fall short of what it was in man in a state of innocence, yet it is not wholly lost, but there are some remains of it in him; which, though not sufficient to save him, yet are enough to leave him without excuse; for, by this light of nature, he may arrive to the knowledge of a divine Being; seeing *the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead, so that they are without excuse* (Rom. 1:20). He may hereby know, that this divine Being is possessed of great and glorious perfections, that he is to be worshipped and adored by him; he may hereby in some measure know the difference between good and evil, as the apostle observes in his epistle to the *Romans*; *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law to themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another* (Rom. 2:14, 15).

Also, he may in some measure know how to conduct himself as a rational creature in this world. Now all this light, is from Christ; for, as we are told by the evangelist *John*, *he is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world* (John 1:9); but every man that comes into the world, is not lighted with the light of grace, or the light of glory; and therefore it is the light of nature which is there intended; for *John* is not speaking of Christ, as the author of the new, but as the author of the old creation: for he tells us, *that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men* (John 1:3&4): So that as we have our natural being, and our natural life, from Christ, as a creator, from him also we have our natural light, as such.

(2.) The light of grace is from Christ. The light of grace is that whereby a poor sinner, who was darkness itself, being born, and brought up in darkness, and having lived and, walked in darkness, is now *made light in the Lord*; so that he sees his depraved, miserable, and lost state by nature; as also, the necessity, as well as fulness, glory, and suitableness, of salvation by Christ; and can say, as the poor man did, *One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see* (John 9:25). The work of grace upon the heart of a sinner, consists much in his being *called out of darkness into marvelous light*, marvelous and surprising light indeed. The characters they bear, who are thus called by divine grace, are *children of the light and of the day*; for they are no more *children of the night*, or of *darkness*; for *the darkness is past, and the true light now shines*. Now all this light is from Christ: If any souls have, this light, it is he that gives it to them; *Christ shall give thee light*. If any are called to this marvelous light, it is by him; if any are made light, it is *in or by the Lord Christ*; for he is given by God the Father *to be a light to lighten the Gentiles*, as well as *to be the glory of his people Israel*. For this light of grace includes in it the light of the knowledge of the divine perfections, the light of the knowledge of Christ, and the light of the knowledge of gospel truths; and all these are in and from Christ.

1. The light of the knowledge of the divine perfections, is in and from Christ, *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God*, that is, of the glorious perfections of God, is given to us *in the face, or person, of Christ Jesus*. It is true, God has discovered his perfections in the works of creation and providence; for, *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work* (Ps.19:1). There is a glorious shine of his power, wisdom, goodness, &c. upon them, but there is a far more glorious display of the divine perfections in him, who is the *brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person*. For in the contrivance of salvation by him, the depths of wisdom and knowledge are discovered; in the mission of him, the exceeding riches of his love, grace and mercy, are laid open; in his accomplishment of the work, the arm of almighty power is made bare; and in the sufferings which he underwent, in our room and stead, the glories of divine faithfulness, justice and holiness, are surprisingly displayed; here *mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other* (Ps. 85:10). Here is no clashing among the divine perfections, but a sweet and an entire harmony among each other, all shining forth with equal glory and lustre in man's salvation. Now, *this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent* (John 17:3); that is, to know God in Christ. The Heathens may know him in the *creatures*, but they cannot know him in *Christ* without a divine revelation and that revelation must be attended with a supernatural light; which light must come from Christ himself.

2. The light of the knowledge of Christ is from himself, for it is *in his light we see light*. As we see the sun in its own light, and it is impossible for us to see it any other light than its own; so we see Christ, the Sun of righteousness, in his own light; and it is impossible for us to see him in any other; it is in his own light we see him as the eternal Son of God, as *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person*: It is in his own light we see him as the mediator between God and man, as the Saviour of sinners; that salvation is in him, and in no other; that it is in vain to expect it *from hills and mountains; for truly, and alone, in our God is the salvation of Israel*. It is in his own light we see the glory and efficacy of his atoning sacrifice, whereby he *has put away sin, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified*. It is in his own light we see the efficacy of his precious blood, whereby the remission of our sins is obtained, and our souls are washed and cleansed from all sin, and *our consciences purged from dead works to serve the living God*. It is in his own light we see the completeness of his justifying righteousness, which is revealed in the gospel *from faith to faith*, and by which we *are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses*. It is in his own light we see those immense treasures of grace and glory which lie hid in his person; *we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten*; and one main branch of that glory consists in his *being full of grace and truth* (John 1:14).

3. The light of the knowledge of gospel truths is from Christ; it is he that opens *our understanding that we may understand the scriptures*. It is he that gives us to *know the mysteries of the kingdom*. It is he that sends his spirit as the *spirit of truth, to lead us into all truth*; otherwise the Bible would be a *sealed book* to us, a book full of riddles: the truths and doctrines contained therein would be as parables, and dark sayings. *David* knew this full well, and therefore prays after this manner, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law* (Ps. 119:18).

(3.) As the light of nature and grace is from Christ, so likewise is the light of glory. Heaven is represented to us a lightsome place; it is called, *the inheritance of the saints in light* (Col. 1:12); and all that light that fills it, is from Christ. *That city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof* (Rev. 21:23). When you are safely arrived there, all darkness of infidelity, doubts and fears, will then be' dispelled, and your souls will be irradiated with those beams and rays of light from Christ, which will for ever strike you with wonder and pleasure: then shall you *behold his glory, and see him as he is*: then *shall the sun be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light to thee, but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory; thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended* (Isa.60:19, 20). Thus the Urim is with Christ; all *light* of nature, grace and glory, is in him, and from him.

2dly, The Thummim is with Christ; all *perfections* are in him, he includes and comprehends all.

1. All divine perfections are in him; *in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. Whatever perfection is in the Deity, is to be found in Christ; whatever is a divine perfection, he is possessed of. Is eternity a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he is *the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end; which is, and which was, and which is to come* (Rev. 1:8). Is omnipotence a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he is the *Almighty*. Is omniscience a divine perfection? It is in Christ; *he needeth not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man* (John 2:25); and therefore Peter appealed to him, as the heart-searching, and rein-trying God:

and said, *Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee* (John 21:17). Is omnipresence a divine perfection? It is in Christ; therefore he says, *where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them* (Matt. 18:20). Is immutability a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he is *Jesus, the same yesterday, today and for ever* (Heb. 13:8). In short, is there any other divine perfection? It is in him; he is possessed of all, and therefore *is the true God, and eternal life*.

2. A perfection of the gifts of the Spirit is in him. God has not given *the Spirit by measure to him; with this oil of gladness is he anointed above his fellows*; which like *the precious ointment on Aaron's head, that ran down to the skirts of his garments*, descends from him to all the members of his body, in their measure. All those gifts of the Spirit, which are to be found in men, come from Jesus Christ. There was a very large measure of the gifts of the Spirit bestowed upon the apostles at the day of Pentecost, but from whom did they receive it? From an ascended Lord and King; as is manifest from what the apostle *Peter* says in the *Acts*; *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, that is Christ being exalted by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, he hath shed forth this which you now see and hear* (Acts 2:33). This he did both as a fruit and evidence of his being ascended on high, and of his having received gifts for men.

3. A perfection of all grace is in Christ; he is said to be *full of grace*, of all sorts of grace needful for the believer: and therefore we should *be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*; which is in him to its full perfection, and which the believer will always find sufficient for him. Particularly there is a perfection of justifying and sanctifying grace in Christ.

(1.) There is a perfection of justifying grace in Christ; there is a perfect righteousness in him; he is not only righteous as he is God, and as he is God's servant, but he is also *Jehovah our righteousness*; which righteousness was wrought out by him, and is imputed by the Father, and applied by the Spirit to us; it is every way complete and perfect; it is sufficient for all the elect; it is a *garment down to the foot*, covering the meanest members in Christ's mystical body; and by it *are they justified from all things*, be those all things what they will; they are acquitted and discharged from all sin and condemnation by it, and stand in it complete and irreproveable in the sight of God.

(2.) There is a perfection of sanctifying grace in Christ; perfect holiness is in him; from him must we have our holiness, as well as our righteousness, we stand in need of an holy nature, as well as of a justifying righteousness; and as without the one, so neither without the other can we enter into the kingdom of heaven; *for without holiness no man shall see the Lord* (Heb. 12:14); no, not without a perfect one. From whence now must we have perfect holiness? from ourselves we cannot expect it, but from Christ, who has purchased and procured it for us, and has now all the holiness of his people in his hands, and is giving it forth unto them, that they may be perfectly meet for the eternal enjoyment of himself, *who of God is made unto them sanctification, us well as righteousness*.

4. The perfection of all covenant blessings and promises is in him: The *blessings of the everlasting covenant are upon the head*, and in the hands of our *Joseph, who was separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens*; therefore whatever blessing we are blessed with, whether it be with the pardon of sin, or with a justifying righteousness, or with any other, we have them from Christ; hence we have reason to say with the apostle, *blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus* (Eph. 1:3). And as all blessings, so all promises are in Christ; they *are all in him, yea, and in him amen*,

to the glory of God, by us (2 Cor. 1:20); there is a perfection of them in him; so that the believer cannot come under any case or circumstance of life, but there is a promise in Christ, suitable for him, had he but faith to view it, and lay hold upon it.

5. Perfection of all light and life, strength and wisdom, joy and comfort, is in Christ. That the *perfection* of all *light* is in Christ, I have shown already; and as all *light* so all *life* is in him; for with him *is the fountain of life*, from whence all the streams of life flow. If you ask, how came it to be in Christ? I answer, he did, in the everlasting counsels of peace, ask it of his Father for all his seed, and he granted him his request; as it is said, *he asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever* (Ps. 21:4). Thus he came to have life in himself, as mediator for the elect, and to have a right to dispose of it *to as many as the Father gave to him*: and for this purpose did he come into the world, to remove obstacles out of the way, that the streams of life might run freely; that so we might have it, and *have it more abundantly* than ever *Adam* had in innocence, or the angels now have in heaven. Also perfection of strength is in Christ; we are poor, weak creatures, in ourselves, yet there is strength as well as righteousness for us in him he is *the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong*, not only *for himself*, but for us; so that though we are incapable of doing anything of ourselves, yet we *can do all things through Christ strengthening us*. There is likewise a perfection of wisdom in him, not only for himself, to qualify him for the discharge of every branch of the mediatorial office, but also for us, to direct and guide us in all our ways through this wilderness, he is the *wisdom of God*, and the wisdom of God for us; for *he, of God, is made unto us wisdom*, as well as *sanctification and righteousness*. There is moreover, a perfection of joy and comfort in Christ; there is always matter of rejoicing in him, his person, blood, and righteousness, are a sufficient ground for the same: There is always an abounding of consolation in him; for as our sufferings, our trials, our reproaches, and calumnies, which are cast upon us, for the sake of Christ, abound; *so our consolation abounds by him*; and whatever comfort comes any other way, there is just reason to suspect it is ill-grounded. Thus the Thummim is with Christ, as well as the Urim, all *perfection* is in him. So much for the first thing.

II. I shall now inquire how the Urim and Thummim may be applied to Christ, in respect to the use of them. I have already observed a two fold use thereof: the first was that upon these stones, that is, the Urim and Thummim, were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of *Israel* which the high priest bore upon his heart, when he went into the holy place, or *a memorial before the Lord*; from whence we may observe these two things.

First, That the elect of God lie near the heart of Christ, the great High priest; for as the names of the twelve tribes were engraven on these stones, and borne upon *Aaron's* heart: so are all God's elect engraven On the heart of Christ; not only *upon the palms of his hands*, but upon his heart, as the church in *Solomon's* song desired; saying, *Set me as a seal upon thine heart* (Cant. 8:6): they lay near his heart, and were the objects of his love from eternity; he was not only *rejoicing in and with*, and *before* his Father, but also *in the habitable parts of the earth*, in the views of that part of the earth which he knew would be so, and where his elect should dwell; and *his delights were with the sons of men*, even *before the earth was made, or the highest part of the dust of the world was formed*: They lay near his heart when he died for them, and there they still lie, and ever will do so.

Secondly, That what Christ did, who is our high priest, with Urim and Thummim, he did it as our representative, in our name, and in our room and stead; even as *Aaron*, when he slew the sacrifice

on the day of atonement, and carried the blood within the vail, did it in the name of the whole congregation; so when Christ offered up himself a sacrifice, he did it in our name, and for our sins: *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us* (1 Cor. 5:7); and this was received by the Father, as an *offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor* on our account; and now he is *entered into the holy place by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us*. It is, with the names of all the elect, engraven upon his heart; he is entered into heaven *as a forerunner* for them; he is gone before to take possession of glory in their name, as well as to prepare it for them; and therefore they are said now *to sit together in heavenly places in him* (Eph. 2:6); what he receives there, he receives in their name; what he does he does in their name; and on their account, *he appears in the presence of God for them*. So much for the first use of the Urim and Thummim.

The second was, that with these the priest asked counsel of God for the people in matters of moment. This may represent unto us Christ's acting for us as an Intercessor, Advocate, or Counselor, one of whose titles in *Isaiah* is *the Counselor* (Isa. 9:6); or, *as the Septuagint* translates it, *The Angel of the great council*; he acted as such, in the great council that was held between the eternal Three, concerning man's salvation; and has acted as such ever since; he now pleads our cause, removes all charges, answers all accusations, consults our interest, and acts the whole part of an advocate for us; *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous* (1 John 2:1). But let us consider a little more particularly, how these things may be applied to Christ.

1. None but the high priest might ask counsel of God by Urim and Thummim; *Joshua* must *stand before Eleazar the priest who shall ask counsel for him at the judgment of Urim before the Lord* (Num. 27:22); so none but the Lord Jesus Christ is the believer's counselor, advocate, intercessor and mediator; no angels nor saints departed; *for there is but one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus* (1 Tim. 2:5). As there is but one mediator of redemption, so there is but one mediator of intercession; so that when we want counsel and advice, we must employ him: when we want any favor at God's hand, we must make use of his interest: when we have a cause to plead, he is the only person we must, and the most proper person we can, apply unto.

2. The high priest, when he did this, put on the Ephod, and none but he might do so. The Ephod may represent unto us the garment of the human nature, with which Christ, our great high priest, is clothed; which, though all the three persons had an hand in making, yet it was thought proper that the second person alone should wear it; which garment, as the Ephod was girt about the priest with a curious girdle, is girt about Christ with the girdle of love, and no other girdle but that could have fastened it to him. *Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood* (Heb. 2:14), the children whom he loved, and because he loved them, *therefore he himself also took part of the same*. And as the Ephod was a glorious garment, being adorned with sparkling gems and precious stones, so is the human nature of Christ, now in heaven full of glory; *For we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour* (Heb. 2:10): and in this nature as well as in the divine, does he act the part of a counsellor, advocate, and intercessor for us.

3. Counsel was asked by Urim and Thummim only for public persons; as for a king, or the house of Judgment; the *senate* or *sanhedrin*; or the whole congregation of *Israel*; and that only in matters of moment, as I have already observed. Now our great high priest, with Urim and Thummim, is acting

the part of a counsellor and intercessor, not for the men of the world, but for the whole congregation of the elect; *I pray for them*, says he; *I pray not for the world* (John 17:9). Those that he concerns himself for, are persons of note, they are princes, the sons of a King, nay, Kings themselves; such *whom he has loved and washed from their sins in his own blood, and made them kings and priests to God and his Father* (Rev. 1:5, 6). And the things that he is concerned about for them, are not trivial matters, but things of the greatest importance; such as the conversion of elect sinners, and the consolation of called saints, that they may have the Spirit as a comforter to abide with them; and the manifestations of pardoning grace to their souls; that their faith may not fail in an hour of temptation, but that they may persevere to the end, and *be with him, where he is, to behold his glory*.

4. The person for whom counsel was asked, was to stand before the priest: which shews us, that we must make our application to Christ, our high priest; we must ask in his name, and put our petitions into his hands, and stand before him waiting for an answer; for he has said, *whatsoever ye ask in my name that will I do*.

5. And *lastly*. As those responses which God returned by Urim and Thummim were certainly true, without any falsity or equivocation in them, such as the diabolical oracles of the Gentiles had; so as true are all those things which he says unto us by Christ: *God did at sundry times, and in divers manners, speak in time past to the fathers by the prophets* (Heb. 1:1); sometimes by dreams and visions, and sometimes by Urim and Thummim; *but he hath now in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*. And as all he said by dreams and visions, or by Urim and Thummim, was true so is all that he has said to us by his Son, who is truth itself, *the faithful witness*, who hath fully declared the whole counsel of God unto us.

Thus I have considered how the Urim and Thummim may be applied to Christ, or said to be with him, and *lastly*, Is the true Urim and Thummim alone with Christ? You learn hence, the superiority of Christ's priesthood to that of *Aaron's*; the Levitical law was but a *shadow of good things to come*, which good things are brought to us by Christ, who is the substance of those shadows. And we may also learn the glory of the gospel dispensation, in which the day is broke, and the shadows are fled and gone; and we *all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord* (2 Cor. 3:18).

THE MEAT OFFERING TYPICAL

BOTH OF

CHRIST AND OF HIS PEOPLE.

LEVITICUS 2:1, 2

And when any will offer a meat offering unto the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour: and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon; and he shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests; and He shall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof: and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord.

Sacrifices of old were of divine institution; and they were appointed of God, long before the Levitical dispensation; when a variety of them were in a particular manner enjoined upon the people. They commenced almost as early as the fall of Adam: they immediately took place thereon. Adam's sons, Abel and Cain, offered sacrifices; one of the fruits of the earth, the other of the firstlings of his flock. And the one is said to offer up a more acceptable sacrifice than the other; because he offered it up *by faith* in a view to the great sacrifice of Christ, the antitype of all the sacrifices, whether before, or under the Levitical dispensation. Wherefore he is said, for this, among other reasons, to be the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world. *The patterns of things in the heavens were purified by legal sacrifices; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these:* (Heb. 9:23) which better sacrifices can be no other than that of Christ. His sacrifice is expressed in the plural number; not that there has been a repetition of it: for it is but one sacrifice, and but once offered up, and will never be reiterated; but to shew the excellency of it, it being usual with the Jews to use the plural number in speaking of things the most excellent. So Christ is called Wisdoms, Prov. 1:20. Besides, respect may be had to the many sacrifices under the law, which were types of it, and were answered and fulfilled by it; and to the many persons on whose account it was offered; and to the parts of it, the soul and body of Christ: and this is a *better* sacrifice than the legal ones. The legal sacrifices could not make those who came to them perfect, or remove from their consciences a sense of sin. The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin; but Christ, by his own offering of himself (which has put an end to all other sacrifices) has "put away sin for ever, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14)

Various kinds of sacrifices were offered before and under the Levitical dispensation. Some were peace-offerings, others sin-offerings, and others trespass-offerings; of which we have an account in some of the following chapters. These were all typical of Christ. The peace-offering was typical of him, who is our peace: and who has made peace by the blood of his cross. The sin and trespass-offerings were typical of him, "who knew no sin yet was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21) He is the sum and substance of them all; and has

completed them, by finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness.

Among these sacrifices and offerings, that of the burnt-offering was a very considerable one. Of which we read at large in the preceding chapter, and are told what it consisted of; of the herd, and of the flocks, and of fowls. Those that were of the herd, were the ox; those that were of the flock, were the sheep or the goat; and of the fowls, turtles, or young pigeons: all fit emblems of our Lord Jesus Christ. The ox, or bullock, was an emblem of his strength and laboriousness; the sheep of his harmless and inoffensiveness; the turtle and young pigeons, of his meekness and humility, and of those dove-like graces which are to be found in him. These were to be perfect; to have no spot in them: typical of Christ, who is spotless and perfect, holy and without blemish, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. These offerings were to be voluntarily brought, intimating, that the sacrifice of Christ, the sum and substance of them, would be freely offered up, as it was "He gave himself an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour." (Eph. 5:2)

When these were brought, the offerer laid his hands upon them; which was expressive of a confession of sin, and was an acknowledgment that he deserved to die, as that creature was about to do, in his room and stead. Moreover, this action signified the transferring of his sins from himself to this sacrifice, which was to be offered up to make atonement for them; and it denoted the imputation of our sins to Christ, the great sacrifice. "God made to meet on him the iniquity of us all;" (Isa. 53:6) and who was as they were, a vicarious one, offered up in the room and stead of his people. The Just suffered for the unjust.

But I shall now call your attention to another very particular sort of offering, which is mentioned in the text, the *meat-offering*: which might with as much, if not greater propriety, be called the *bread-offering*; being made of fine flour. *When any will offer a meat-offering to the Lord, it shall be of fine flour, and he shall pour oil upon it.* (Lev. 2:1)

There were several kinds of these meat-offerings. There was one that always attended the daily sacrifices; the lamb that was offered in the morning and in the evening, as you may see in Exodus 29:38. "Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year, day by day, continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even; and with one lamb and a tenth deal of flour, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink-offering, and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat-offering of the morning, and according to the drink-offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the Lord," This was to be done continually, every morning and evening. There was also a meat-offering, at the consecration of the priest, and which the high priest was obliged to offer every morning, at his own expense. (Lev. 4:20, &c.) There was another which accompanied the wave-offering, offered at the time of the harvest yearly. (Lev. 23:10, &c.) These meat-offerings were appointed and fixed at certain times, and were obliged to be offered; but this, mentioned in our text, was a *free-will offering*; wherefore it is said, *when any will offer*.

Now this was as the rest were, typical of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the daily sacrifice was typical of the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world; continually takes away the sins of his people, whether of the night or of the day; so the meat-offering was typical of Christ, who is that

meat which endureth unto everlasting life. Continually endures, and abides to be food for the faith of God's people, whose flesh is meat indeed: and whose blood is drink indeed: and that not merely typical and shadowy, but really solid and substantial; who is that bread of God which came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world. And, moreover, this meat, or bread-offering, may be considered as an emblem or representation of the children and people of God, as well as of Christ; for the same word is used of them, and particularly of the converted Gentiles; as you may see in the prophecy of Isaiah, where it is said, *And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord; as the children of Israel bring an offering in a c/can vessel into the house of the Lord.* (Isa. 66:20) And this had its accomplishment in and under the ministration of the great apostle of the Gentiles; who was made so useful to the Gentile world, being instrumental in converting multitudes among them. In his epistle to the Romans he says, *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* (Rom. 4:15, 16) By the offering up of the Gentiles, he means the Gentile converts wrought upon by his ministry; who were either offered up and presented by him unto the Lord, as a chaste virgin to Christ; or who, under the influence of divine grace, presented themselves, bodies and souls, unto the Lord, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice; which was but their reasonable service.

Now whether we consider this meat offering as having a regard unto Christ, or his people, or both, (for both may be included) we may observe the agreement between the one and the other in the following things.

I. The principal ingredient in this offering, which was indeed the substance of it, *fine flour*. *When any will offer a meat-offering unto the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour.*

II. In the things which were used, or forbidden to be used with it. There were some things ordered to be used with it, such as *oil, frankincense, and salt*: and others that they were forbidden the use of, as *leaven and honey*; as may be seen in some following verses.

IN. In the composition thereof, and the different manner of dressing it. It was either to be fine flour mingled with oil, and to be baked in an oven, or in a pan, or fried in a frying pan, or if of the first-fruits, it was to be corn beaten out of the full ears and dried by the fire.

IV. In the use that was made of this offering part of it was burnt as a memorial unto the Lord, and the other part of it was eaten by the priests. And,

V. In the acceptableness of it to God. It was an *offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord*.

I. I shall consider the principal ingredient of it. There were two things of which it consisted; one of which was fine flour. *If any will offer a meat-offering unto the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour*. This may very well be thought to have respect to our Lord Jesus Christ. This fine flour was of *wheat*, as is clear from various accounts we have of this offering. So when Araunah the Jebusite

gave his threshing floor to king David, to build an altar upon, and his threshing instruments for wood; he gave also, it is said (or proposed to give) wheat for a meat-offering. (1 Chron. 21:23) By which, as well as from other passages, it appears, that this meat-offering of fine flour, was of fine wheat, which is the choicest of all grain; and to which our Lord compares himself when he says, *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it brings forth much fruit*, (John 12:24) signifying hereby, the necessity of his dying, in order that he might bring forth much fruit.

This may denote the excellency of Christ: the superior excellency of him to all others, not only as a divine person, but as God-man and Mediator: he is preferable to angels and to men. He has obtained a more excellent name than the angels, having a more excellent nature than they; being superior to them upon all accounts: for he is represented as the object of their religious worship and adoration. *When he bringeth his first begotten into the world, he saith, let all the angels of God worship him.* (Heb. 1:6) And there is a very good reason why they should, since he is their Creator. *He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.* (Heb. 1:7) And as God-man, and Mediator; having finished the great work of redemption and salvation, for his people, he is set down at the right hand of God, where angels are not; for, *to which of the angels said he at any time, sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.* (Heb 1:13) These are represented as ministering spirits sent forth by him to minister to them who are the heirs of salvation, whilst he sits at the right hand of God far above all principalities, angels, authorities, and powers, they being made subject to him.

He is the chiefest, or chosen out from among ten thousands of men. He is styled God's elect in a special and peculiar sense: *behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.* (Isa. 42:1) He is chosen of God and precious. He is the head of election and grace. He was chosen as head to his members. He is fairer, more excellent, and valuable, than all the children of men. There is none like unto him, He is preferable to them in his offices. He is such a King as there is none like him. His Father has made him his first born, higher than the kings of the earth. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, By him kings reign, and princes decree justice; and all are accountable to him for what they do.

As a prophet, there is none like him. Never man spake like him, such words of truth and consolation. He spake as one having authority, (having a commission from his divine Father) and not as the scribes and pharisees. (Matt. 7:29) He was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure; for God gave not the Spirit by measure unto him.

As a priest there is none like him: no, not Aaron and all his sons, being a priest not after their order, but after the order of Melchizedec, who will remain for ever, and whose priesthood is an unchangeable one. There is a superlative excellency in him; on account of which, he is esteemed of God and good men. For, though disallowed of some, as he was by the Jews, yet he is chosen of God and precious: and he is precious to all that believe, by whom he is esteemed as more excellent than all others, whether angels or men. Of him they say, *whom have I in heavens but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.* (Ps. 73:25)

But this meat-offering, being of fine flour, of wheat the' choicest of grain, may also denote the *purity* of Christ: flour of wheat, being the purest and cleanest of all others. As he is a divine person,

he is a rock and his work is perfect: a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and true is he. The holy one of Israel, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises. He who hates iniquity, and loves righteousness.

As man, his human nature was entirely free from all contagion and corruption of sin: from original taint, as the fine flour of which this meat-offering was, free from all bran, so He was free from the bran of original corruption. Though all men are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, He was not. Though out of an unclean thing, a clean one cannot be brought, naturally; yet in such a wonderful way and manner was the human nature of Christ produced, as to be free from corruption; and therefore it is said, *that the holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* (Luke 1:35) Pure and free was he from any iniquity in life: he did none, neither was guile found in his mouth. His enemies traduced him all they could; and sought for false witnesses to bear a testimony against him, to charge him with some sin, but they could find none. His judge acquitted him, saving, *I find no fault in him.* (John 19:6) Satan, his grand enemy, sought all he could to injure and ruin his character, yet he could find no sin in him; *the Prince of this world cometh,* (says Christ) *and hath nothing in me.* (John 14:30) All his administrations, in the several offices he undertook, were holy. His doctrines which he as a prophet delivered were pure. All the administrations of his kingly office were just and righteous. Righteousness was the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The execution of his priestly office was with the greatest purity and holiness; *such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.* (Heb. 7:26) Particularly the sacrifice which he, as a priest offered up, (of which the meat-offering was a type) was a pure and holy one. He himself being without sin, was a fit and proper person to take away the sins of others by the sacrifice of himself. This he was capable of, and did offer up himself without spot to God being the Lamb of God, without the spot of original, or blemish of actual sin and transgression.

Moreover, as fine flour of wheat is the principal part of human sustenance, and what strengthens the heart of man, and nourishes him, and is the means of maintaining and supporting life, it may fitly shadow and figure out our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the bread of God, which came down from heaven. Bread is put for all the provisions of life, as in that petition our Lord directs his disciples to use, *Give us this day our daily bread.* (Matt. 6:11) So Christ is our life, our joy, our peace, and comfort. He is our raiment, our clothing, our food, our meat, and drink; he is our all in all. It is by faith, feeding upon him, we receive spiritual strength. To those that have no might, he increaseth strength; and in the strength of this spiritual food, may believers be said to walk many days. Though they are so weak and feeble in themselves, that they can do nothing, yet, receiving spiritual strength from him, living by faith upon him, they can do all things. They are nourished up by him with the words of faith and sound doctrine: the words of grace, relating to his person, these are the wholesome words which are strengthening to true believers. By these, spiritual life is maintained and supported. He is the bread of life which came down from heaven, and gives life to the world; on which, if a man feeds by faith, he shall never die, but have eternal life. For, *as the living Father hath sent me* (says Christ) *and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.* (John 6:57)

The sacrifices of the old law, so this in particular is called the bread of God. "They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God; for the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and the bread of their God they do offer." (Lev. 21:6) Again, "Thou shalt sanctify him therefore, for

he offereth the bread of thy God." (Lev. 21:8) Now this is the very name which our Lord Jesus Christ bears: particularly alluding to this of the meat-offering, he is called *the bread of God which came down from heaven*. (John 6:33) The bread of God's preparing, the bread of God's giving, and the bread which God blesses for the nourishment of his people. Thus this meat-offering, as to the substance of it, being of fine flour of wheat, is a very special and particular representation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It may also, with great propriety he applied unto his people, who are represented in Scripture frequently as *wheat*. Hence you read in the New Testament, while the wicked and ungodly are compared to chaff which shall he burnt up with unquenchable fire, they are spoken of as the *wheat* which Christ shall gather into his garner. (Matt. 3:12) When tares are said to be sown among the good seed, they are ordered to be suffered to grow till the time of the harvest, lest the *wheat* should be plucked up with them. And when the time of harvest comes, we are told, that the tares shall he gathered, and bound up in bundles and burned, and the *wheat* shall be gathered into barns: (Matt. 13:30) meaning true believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. These may be signified hereby, because of their peculiar choiceness; being the excellent in the earth, in whom is the delight of the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as of his divine Father, whom he has chosen from all others, to he his peculiar people. They are his Hephzibah in whom he delighteth, and his Beulah to whom he is married.

And they being compared to wheat, may denote also their purity. Not as considered in themselves; for they are no better than others by nature, being all under the power of sin, defiled with it, and liable to the consequences of it. And even when they are called by the grace of God, and have a principle of holiness wrought in them, sin dwells in them. *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*. (1 John 1:8) Much sin is committed by them. *There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not*: (Eccl. 7:20) but their purity is in Christ. That he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, he has wrought out a righteousness for them, and has shed his precious blood to wash them from their sins; and so they are presented to his divine Father without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, I now proceed,

II. To consider the things which were to be made use of along with this meat-offering; and the things which were forbidden to be used in it,

There were some things to he made use of in it, such as oil, frankincense, and salt. Oil was to he poured upon it, frankincense put thereon; and every oblation was to he seasoned with salt. The oil that was poured upon the meat-offering, or to he mingled with it, may denote, either the grace of God in Christ, or the grace of God communicated to, and bestowed upon his people. It may denote the grace of the Spirit of God, poured out upon Christ without measure; that oil of gladness with which he was anointed above His fellows, and from whence he has the name of Messiah, or Christ, or Anointed; and with which he was anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King. In allusion to which, the church says, *Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee*. (Song 1:3) Or this may denote the grace poured out upon his people, which is sometimes signified by oil hence the wise virgins are said to take *oil* in their vessels, They were concerned for the true grace of God; and that as a foundation of their making a profession of religion, which the foolish virgins shewed no concern for. This is the unction from the Holy One, that anointing which teacheth all things; that oil of joy for mourning, spoken of in Isa. 61:3.

Frankincense put upon the meat-offering, may denote either the acceptableness of the Lord Jesus Christ, to God and his people; or the acceptableness of his people unto God, and to Christ. It may denote the acceptableness of the Lord Jesus Christ as an offering and a sacrifice to God, and to divine Justice. He is expressly said to be *an offering and a sacrifice to God, of a sweet smelling savour*. (Eph. 5:2) And it may denote his acceptableness as a meat-offering to his people. Those who know the nature, sweetness, and profitableness of feeding by faith on this bread-offering, will say, as the disciples did, *Lord, evermore give us this bread*: (John 6:34) we would be always living, and feeding by faith on this bread-offering. It may denote also the acceptableness of the people of God, in and through Christ. They were accepted with God in him: they are *like pillars of smoke*, as the church is said to be, *perfumed with frankincense*. (Song 3:6) Their persons are acceptable to God, through Christ; so are their services and sacrifices. Their sacrifices of praise are acceptable to God; so are their prayers, as they ascend up before God, perfumed with the much incense of our Lord's mediation.

Salt was another thing that was used in it; which makes food savoury, and preserves from putrefaction, and may denote the savouriness of the Lord Jesus Christ to believers. *Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?* says Job. (Job 6:6) Now Christ, as a meat-offering, is to his people savoury food, such as their souls love: pleasing, delightful, comfortable, refreshing, nourishing, and strengthening. Salt is an emblem of perpetuity. Hence you read of *a covenant of salt*; (Num. 18:19) which signifies a perpetual covenant, an everlasting covenant; such as the covenant of grace is, ordered in all things and sure. And such the covenant of the priesthood was, which was to endure until the Messiah came. Now this may denote the perpetuity of Christ's sacrifice, which always remains; and the perpetuity of him, as the meat-offering, For he is that meat which endures to everlasting life; and him has God the Father sealed.

And this, as it respects the people of God, may be an emblem of the savour of their life and conversation. *Ye are the salt of the earth*, says our Lord; (Matt. 5:13) and again, he says, *have salt in yourselves*. (Mark 9:50) And it is expected that those who profess Christ, should have their *speech always with grace, seasoned with salt*; (Col. 4:6) and that no corrupt communication proceed out of their mouths.

There were two things which the Jews were forbidden to use in the meat-offering; the one was *leaven*, and the other was *honey*. There was to be no *leaven* in it. This, as it may respect our Lord Jesus Christ, the Antitype of the meat-offering, may denote his freedom from hypocrisy, and all false doctrines; which were the leaven of the scribes and pharisees. He said to his disciples, *Beware of the leaven of the pharisees*: and it immediately follows, *which is hypocrisy*. But Christ was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile; no guile in his lips, in his life and conversation: he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Whatever the pharisees might mean when they sent out their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, *Masters we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth*; (Matt. 22:16) it was no doubt matter of fact. Leaven signifies false doctrine. Hence, when our Lord at another time cautions his disciples to beware of the leaven of the pharisees, he says, "How is it that you do not understand, that I spake it not unto you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the pharisees and the sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread; but of the doctrine of the pharisees and sadducees," (Matt. 16:11, 12) Their doctrines were corrupt and false. But our Lord's doctrine

was quite free and clear from every thing of this kind. He is truth itself, the way, the truth, and the life: and the doctrines preached by him were grace and truth.

To apply this to the people of God, as no meat-offering was to be made with leaven, it may denote, that they should take heed of communing with profane and scandalous persons. *Purge out, therefore*, says the apostle, *the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened*: (1 Cor. 5:7) meaning, they should put away the scandalous person from among them. Such persons who are of scandalous lives and conversations, are to be put away: there is to be no fellowship held with the unfruitful works of darkness. "For what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" And it may denote, that they should be clear of malice and wickedness: they ought to lay aside, as new-born babes, all superfluity and naughtiness. (James 1:21)

Another thing forbidden in the meat-offering is *honey*. *Nor any honey in any offering of the Lord made by fire*, ver. 12. It may, at first sight, seem strange that this should be forbidden, since it was to be brought amongst the first-fruits: and when it was so often taken in a good sense in Scripture. The doctrines of the gospel are compared thereunto: the word of the Lord is said to be *sweeter than honey, and the honey comb*. (Ps. 19:10) Honey and milk are said to be under the church's tongue; that is, the doctrines of the everlasting gospel, comparable to honey and milk, because they are sweet and nourishing. And Christ is said himself *to eat his honey comb with his honey*; (Song 1:5) and yet honey is prohibited in this meat-offering. The reason of this is, because it was made use of among the Heathens in their offerings, and the people of God were not to walk in their ordinances: but in the ordinances appointed of the Lord. Besides, honey, like leaven, is of a fermenting nature, and which, when burned, gives an ill smell: and no ill smell was to be in the offering. It was to be, as our text says, *of a sweet savour unto the Lord*; which it could not have been if the honey had been in it. Besides, it is of a cloying nature, it causes a loathing, when persons eat too freely of it. (Prov. 27:7) Now there is nothing of this to be found in the antitypical meat-offering, our Lord Jesus Christ. No, the true believer that feeds by faith upon him, the language of his soul is, *Lord, evermore give us this bread*; let me always feed upon this provision. Moreover, honey may be considered as an emblem of sin, and sinful pleasures; which are as a sweet morsel rolled under the tongue of a wicked man, though it proves the poison of asps within him at last: and so denotes unto us, that such who would feed by faith on Christ, ought to relinquish sinful lusts and pleasures. As well it may also further denote, that the people of God must not expect their sweets, without their bitters. They that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution of one kind or another. So the passover was to be eaten with bitter herbs, as the representation of the same thing.—For these reasons honey was not to be used.

III. As to the composition thereof, and the different manner of dressing this meat-offering. It was to be made of fine flour, made of wheat, beaten out of the husk, and ground: it was to be mingled with oil, kneaded, baked in an oven, fried in pans, or parched by the fire. Now all this may be an emblem of the dolorous sorrows and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ; who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; who bore the fire of divine wrath, who was the atoning sacrifice for our Sins, and who is the proper food of our faith.

And as it may be applied to the people of God, it may denote, not only their separation from others, but the trials and exercises they meet with, which are sometimes called fiery trials. But I must hasten to consider,

IV. The use that was made of this offering.

Part of it was burnt as a memorial unto the Lord, either to put the Lord in mind of his loving kindness to his people, and of his covenant with them, and promises unto them, to which the allusion is, Psalm 20:3, or to put the offerer in mind of the great sacrifice of Christ, who was to be offered for his sins, and to be a meat offering to him. And the other part of it was to be eaten by the priests; which shews the care taken by the Lord for the maintenance of the priests, and from whence the apostle argues for the support of the ministers of the gospel, 1 Cor. 9:13, 14. And this may denote, that such who are made priests unto God, by Christ, have a right to feed upon Christ, the meat-offering by faith; who is the altar and meat-offering, which none but such have a right to eat of. I shall but Just mention,

V. The acceptableness of it. It is said to be *of a sweet savour unto the Lord*, as Christ's sacrifice is said to be, Ephes. 5:2. And so his people also, their persons are an offering of a sweet smelling savour to God, in Christ; being accepted in him the Beloved, and as are their sacrifices both of prayer and praise.—But to draw to a conclusion.

Let us look to Christ as the meat-offering. We are called upon to bring an offering, and enter into the courts of God, Psalm 94:8. What offering can we bring in the arms of our faith but this? And let us hope, that all our sacrifices will be accepted through him, who is that altar that sanctities every gift.

Is Christ the Antitype of the meat-offering, food for our faith? Let us regard him as such, and feed upon him and the rather, in as much as we are so kindly invited by him. *come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.* (Pro. 9:5) And as in every offering under the legal dispensation, a regard is had to Christ, who was the substance of those types; so in every gospel ordinance we are to look to Jesus. He is to be seen and regarded in them all; particularly in that of Baptism, and that of the Lord's Supper. And it may be easily observed, that there is a similarity between the meat-offering and the Lord's Supper. The meat-offering was made of fine flour. Bread is one part of this ordinance, With the meat-offering went a drink-offering of wine; so in this. And as we are this evening about to attend to this ordinance, may our faith feed on Christ, the sum and substance thereof. It is his flesh that is meat indeed; and his blood that is drink indeed. May we be helped to feed upon it by faith, looking to Jesus: to eat of his flesh, and drink of his blood, in a spiritual sense. So shall we be greatly refreshed in our souls and go on our ways rejoicing; rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh.

**THE TABLE AND SHEW-BREAD,
TYPICAL OF
CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.**

LEVITICUS 24:8 and 9.

Every sabbath, he shall set it in order before the Lord, continually; being taken from the children of Israel, by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons', and they shall eat it in the holy place for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the Lord made by fire, for a perpetual statute.

EVERY sabbath he shall set it. This refers to the shew-bread, which was to be always, continually before the Lord, according to Exodus 25:30. *And thou shalt set upon the table shew-bread before me always.* This was made of fine flour, as in the context, verse 5. And this fine flour was made into unleavened cakes; and these cakes were in number twelve. *And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof; two tenth deals shall be in one cake.* (Lev. 24:5) These twelve cakes answer to the twelve tribes of Israel. And being set upon the table continually was in commemoration of the bread the twelve tribes of Israel were fed with in the wilderness. These were set upon a table called, in verse the 6th, a *pure table*: called so, because it was overlaid with pure gold; because upon it was set the pure shew-bread; bread made of fine flour, and used in the pure service of God. Of the form, matter, and decorations of this table, you read at large in the 25th chapter of the book of Exodus.

This table was set in the holy place, on the North side of it, over against the veil that divided between that and the holy of holies; and so was before the ark, the symbol of the Divine presence. And these twelve cakes were set in two rows, six in a row; and frankincense was put upon these rows, denoting the acceptableness of them to the Lord. *And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row; that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord.* (Lev. 24:7) This was done, as our text says, every sabbath, *Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord.* These cakes were first placed there on the sabbath day; and there they continued the whole week following. The next sabbath day they were removed from off the table, and twelve more new ones put in their room. As fast as the priests took off the old loaves, there was another course of priests that placed upon it new hot loaves; so that the table was never empty; therefore it is said, they were *before the Lord continually*. Hence this bread is called *continual bread*: (Num. 4:7) and this shew-bread was the portion of the priests. The twelve cakes of the old bread, when taken off the shew-bread table, were divided between the courses of the priests, that carried in, and brought out; and they were not to be carried to their own houses, or families; only Aaron and his sons were to eat of it, and that only in the holy place, the court of the tabernacle: *for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the Lord, made by fire, by a perpetual statute.* (Lev. 24:9) Hence our

Lord observes, in answer to the rebuke the Jews gave his disciples for plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread; which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?" (Matt. 7:3, 4)

Now the mystery, and the gospel of all this, I shall endeavour to point out; or to shew, what was meant and typified by

I. The Table, and

II. The bread set upon the Table.

I. The mystery or the gospel of the Table, upon which this bread was set every sabbath, and there continued all the week, until a fresh set of loaves were placed in their room. This *table* was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of communion with him, in the administration of the word and ordinances. It was typical of the person of Christ, in both his natures: for there are two natures in him, human and divine. This is the *great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh*. (1 Tim. 3:16) He is Immanuel, God with Us: God in our nature. he is the Word that was made flesh, and dwelt among us. (1 John 1:14) Yet, though two natures are in him, he is but one person; one Son of God: *One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him*; (1 Cor. 8:6) one Mediator between God and man, the God-man Christ Jesus.

The human nature of Christ, may be signified by the wood, of which this table was made; and his divine nature, by the gold it was overlaid with: for this shew-bread table was made of shittim-wood, and that overlaid with fine gold. The wood may denote the human nature of Christ; that wood being excellent and incorruptible. *Excellent*. It has its rank among the most excellent trees in those parts; with the cedar, the myrtle, the fir, and the pine trees. (Isa. 41:19) Christ is *excellent as the cedars*; (Song 5:15) and more excellent than they. He is the chiefest among ten thousands, the choicest of them; chosen out from among the people. As to his human nature, he was separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, superior to angels and men. Higher than they, than any creature whatsoever, even as to his human nature; being set at the right hand of God, *angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him*. (1 Pet. 3:22)

This wood is said to be *incorruptible*; and a fit emblem therefore of the human nature of Christ. In which, as there was no moral corruption, for he knew no sin, neither was guile found in him, in his nature, lips, or life; so there was no physical, or natural corruption in him, not in his body. No, not when dead. For though he was brought to the dust of death, and laid in the grave, yet he laid not there so long as to see corruption. He was raised from thence before any thing of that kind could appear in him. And now, though he was dead, he is alive, and lives for evermore, and has the keys of hell and of death.

His divine nature may he signified by the gold, with which this table was overlaid. For that may not only denote (as some have thought) the excellency of his human nature, as being ornamented with the gifts and graces of the Spirit; but rather his divine nature, which is elsewhere called his *head*; and which is said to be, *as the most fine gold*. He, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with him; being possessed of all divine perfections. The whole fulness of the Godhead

dwells bodily in him; and therefore, he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

And this shew-bread table was not only typical of Christ, as to the matter of it; being made of such excellent, incorruptible wood, and that overlaid with pure gold; but also with respect to the decorations of it. It had a crown of gold round about, and it had a border of gold also about it, as we read in Exod. 25:23 and the following verses. It had a crown of gold upon it; which may be expressive of that honour and glory which is due to Christ, and is given unto him as the King of kings, and Lord of lords. It is said, prophetically, of him, *Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.* (Ps. 21:3) That is, God his Father, has set a crown of pure gold upon his head: which is not to be understood in a literal sense, but figuratively, of that honour and glory conferred upon him as Mediator; being now crowned with glory and honour, and having a name given unto him, above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. And not only has us Divine Father bestowed upon him this honour and glory, as Mediator, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, but the church and people of God (sometimes in a figurative sense called his mother) set a crown upon his head, cast their crowns at his feet, and give him all the honour and glory of their redemption and salvation. Hence it is said, *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart:* (Song 3:11) which refers to what I am now speaking of.

The border of gold, with the crown upon it, about this table of shew-bread, is also significant of what may be observed in Christ. For as this phrase, when applied to the church of Christ, as it is in the same mystical song I have referred to, where it is said, *We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver,* may denote the graces of the Spirit of God, bestowed upon his people, which is as ornamental to them, as borders of gold and studs of silver; so this, being applied to Christ; may denote that fulness of grace that there is in him. He is full of grace and truth. He hath received the Spirit, and the gifts and graces thereof, without measure. Grace is poured into his lips: and he is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. And now, upon all accounts, view him in what light you will, whether in his divine nature, as a divine person, God over all, blessed for ever; or in his mediatorial capacity, as head of the church, and whose head is as fine gold; and, in the fulness of the graces of the Spirit of God, he is possessed of, he will appear exceeding excellent and precious, the chiefest among ten thousand. To them that believe he is precious, and altogether lovely, there is none in heaven or on earth like unto him, or to be desired with him. Thus this table was typical of the person of Christ.

It may also be considered, as typical of communion with him. A table among men is an emblem of communion and fellowship. Here men sit, eat, drink, and converse together and this shew-bread table is an emblem of the saints' communion with Christ, in the present state more especially. There is the table of the Lord; to which his people are now admitted; where he sits down with them, and they with him, to have fellowship with him in the ministration of the word and ordinances, of which he is the sum and substance. He, the King of Saints, sits at his table; and whilst he is sitting there his church's spikenard (or the graces of his Spirit in his people) sends forth the sweet smell thereof. This table Christ himself is the provider of; it is he that hath furnished it. *Wisdom hath furnished her table:* that is, Christ hath done it; and here he sits and encourages his guests to eat of the provisions he has made, saying, "Eat, O friends, drink; yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved."

He comes in to them, sits down with them, and eats with them, and they with him; and herein is fellowship; such fellowship, as gives the greatest joy, pleasure and satisfaction to the believer, that he can possibly have in this world. On which he may, and does exultingly say, *Truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* What more honourable than this, to sit with Christ, the King of kings, at his table? Haman made his boast; it gave him a sensual carnal pleasure, elated his mind, and filled him with pride and vanity, that he was invited by Queen Esther to a banquet, where only he and the king were to be. It was an act of kindness in David, and an honour done to Mephibosheth, that he was to eat at his table all the days of his life. O! what an honour is it to the people of God, these poor Mephibosheths, to be admitted to sit with Christ at his table! This is an instance of amazing condescension in Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, whose throne is the heavens, and the earth is his footstool: that he should look upon those that are of an humble and contrite spirit; dwell with them, and admit them to enjoy the most intimate communion and fellowship with him. Nothing in the world more desirable than this, to a truly gracious soul. No wonder the church should express her fervent desire, in such language as this, that she sought him with her whole heart; and that the desire of her soul was to his name, and to the remembrance of him. (Isa. 26:8) No wonder that saints, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and know what communion with the blessed Redeemer means, should pant after him, as the hart pants after the water brooks: that this should be the one thing uppermost in their souls, to see the beauty of the Lord, while they are enquiring in his temple. Nothing is so delightful as this, to sit under the shadow of the blessed Redeemer, where his fruit drops on every side; they take it up by faith, feed upon it, and it is sweet unto their taste. This is what makes the tabernacles of the Lord amiable to them; and a day in his courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. Yea, it is this that makes every child of God say, I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Now it is to this communion that the Lord's people are called by grace, in effectual vocation. They are called by him to come from Lebanon, from all their carnal and sinful pleasures and companions, to go along with him. They are exhorted to forsake their own people, and their father's house, and all the sensual enjoyments thereof; to be with Christ, their Lord, their Head, and King; and to partake of spiritual enjoyments, which are abundantly preferable to any thing they leave behind. *Ye were called* (says the apostle) *unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* (1 Cor. 1:5) And a greater privilege cannot be enjoyed on this side heaven. And this greatly lies in feeding upon Christ by faith; in eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood; which is the provision set before us in his word and ordinances. Thus this table may be an emblem of that communion and fellowship which the saints have with Christ in the present state.

It is true, indeed, that the same figure of a table is sometimes made use of to represent that communion and fellowship which the saints will have with Christ in heaven. Hence he says, *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom.* (Luke 22:29, 30) Here you see the figure is used to express that fellowship and communion that the saints will have with Christ in another world; when in any shall come from the East, and from the West, from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as at a table, regaling themselves with the fruits set before them in the kingdom of heaven: where, *the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them* with the rich discoveries of himself and his love, and *shall lead them unto living fountains of water,* by which they shall be sweetly and fully refreshed, and that for ever; *and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

But the shew-bread table being placed not in the holy of holies, the figure of the heavenly state; but in the holy place, the figure of the church here on earth; it may rather point out that communion and fellowship the saints are admitted to in the present state; and the enjoyments they have in the ministration of the word and administration of the ordinances. These are sometimes in Scripture signified by a feast. The ministration of the everlasting gospel, our Lord represents in this light; he says, a certain king made a marriage-feast for his son, and sent his servants to invite persons thereunto, saying, *all things are ready*: (Matt. 22:4) which has regard, I conceive, to the gospel dispensation, the ministration of the word, and the invitation of souls to attend thereto; inasmuch as the gospel proclaims, that all is done, and all is ready, *my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come to the marriage*. Christ is offered up, peace and reconciliation made, pardon obtained, and righteousness wrought out; so that it may well be said, *come, for all things are ready*. The ordinances of the gospel are signified also by a feast, particularly that of the supper; which may with great propriety be called a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined. And this is represented by a table; it is called *the Lord's table*. *Ye cannot be* (says the apostle) *partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils*; (1 Cor. 10:21) that is, there is the greatest inconsistency in the world, that ye should partake of the Lord's table, and at the same time be partakers with the worshippers of idols, or join in fellowship with them in any of their idolatrous practices.

Now Christ is the sum and substance of the word and ordinances. *We preach not ourselves* (saith the apostle), *but Christ Jesus the Lord*. (2 Cor. 4:5) From which it appears, Christ, in his person, offices, and grace, is the sum and substance of a gospel ministry: so he is likewise of gospel ordinances. In the ordinance of Baptism, his sufferings, his burial, and his resurrection from the dead, are in a lively manner represented. (Rom. 6:4) And, in the ordinance of the supper, Christ is evidently set forth before us, as crucified and slain. Now in these, the ministration of the word, and administration of gospel ordinances, Christ is pleased to afford his gracious presence, and grant his people fellowship with himself. Where two or three are gathered together in his name, he has promised to be in the midst of them, to bless them. And where his ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are administered, he has promised to be with his people to the end of the world. It is through these windows of gospel ordinances, that Christ grants his people looks of love. It is through these lattices that Christ shews himself in the glory of his person, and in the riches of his grace. When his church enquires where he causes his flocks to rest at noon? His answer is, *Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherd's tents*; (Song 1:8) that is, go where my pastures, my shepherds are; where my ministers are employed in feeding my flock; in ministering my word, and administering my ordinances. It is here Christ grants his presence, and holds fellowship with his people. And thus this table may be an emblem of Christ, and of communion with him in the word and ordinances.

Before I dismiss this head, give me leave to observe unto you, that there were rings upon the shew-bread table, and staves to be put in these rings, which were for the removing and carrying it from place to place, and which was done by the Levites, when it was necessary; as while they were in the wilderness, and before the tabernacle had a fixed place for it. For wherever the tabernacle was carried, the ark and the table were also. Now let it be observed, that where a church of Christ is, there Christ himself is, there his Spirit is, and there are the word and ordinances; which are to remain until his second coming. For they are not like the ordinances of the former dispensation, which were shaken and removed; these remain, and continue, and will do so. Hence that promise, Isaiah 59:21, "My Spirit, that is upon thee; and my words, which I have put in thy mouth (speaking

of the church, and with regard to her spiritual seed) shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." But sometimes a church state is removed: the candlestick is removed out of its place. When this is done, the word and ordinances are taken away, and indeed it is by the taking away of these, that a church state is removed. The kingdom of God is taken from one people, and carried to another; as from the land of Judea into the Gentile world; and from the eastern part of the world to the more northern. As for the seven Asiatic churches, where are they now? The word, the ordinances, and gospel are all gone from them; and of this the removal of the shew-bread table was a figure. As that was done by the priests and Levites; so this, by the ministers of the gospel, who bear the name (that is, the gospel) of Christ, and carry it from place to place, as he in his providence directs them.—But I proceed in the

II. Place, to give you some account of the gospel, and the mystery of the *shew-bread* set upon his table.

This may be considered as typical of the church of God, who are called bread: *We being many, are one bread, and one body.* (1 Cor. 10:17) They are all one bread; and they may be fitly signified by the shew-bread: by these twelve cakes of unleavened bread, set continually upon the table every sabbath day. As they were made of fine flour, and into unleavened cakes, so they may denote those that are upright in heart and conversation. Israelites indeed, who have the truth of grace in them; who are such as keep the feast, not with the leaven of malice and wickedness: but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. These twelve cakes, had reference to the twelve tribes of Israel: so these may signify the whole of the spiritual Israel of God, whether consisting of Jews or Gentiles; even that General Assembly and Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven. In the original text it is *the bread of faces*; because this bread was always before the face or faces of God, before all the Three Divine Persons in the Trinity; before God the Father, Son, and Spirit: before Jehovah, before the divine Shechinah, which dwelt between the Cherubims, over the mercy-seat of the ark, a symbol of the divine presence. It was continually before the Lord, as our text expresses it: and this may denote, the people of God's constant and continual presentation of themselves before the Lord in acts of public and religious worship. This was the practice of the saints before the law was given: as in the times of Job there were seasons when the sons of God, true professors of religion, met and presented themselves before the Lord. (Job 1:6) Under the legal dispensation it was enjoined that all the males of Israel, three times in the year, should appear before the Lord: namely, at the feast of the passover, at the feast of pentecost, and at the feast of tabernacles. And under the gospel dispensation, we that profess the name of Christ, are under the greatest obligation so to do: therefore the apostle beseeches the Romans, to whom he wrote, by the mercies, by the blessings of the everlasting covenant, by those all-spiritual blessings with which they are blessed in Christ Jesus: if they had any regard to them, any sense of them upon their souls; if these could have any weight with them, he begs that they would present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; which was but their reasonable service.

But it may still have a higher sense than this; it may have respect unto these persons, being always under the eye and care of God. Not only are the eyes of his providence upon them, which run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of those whose hearts are upright towards him, to see that no hurt comes to them, that they stand in need of nothing, and to protect, preserve, and defend them; but his eyes of love, grace and mercy, are always upon them,

He never withdraws his eyes from them. They are set continually upon the righteous: they are engraven upon the palms of his bands; and their walls are continually before him. He watches over them night and day, lest any hurt them.

Again, This shew-bread, and the twelve loaves thereof, were placed upon the table, where they stood firm and safe. This may denote, the standing and security of the saints and people of God, upon our Lord Jesus Christ, that sure foundation God has laid in Sion: that foundation of the apostles and prophets. Here they have a sure and safe standing, as on a rock, the Rock of ages against which the powers of hell and earth can never prevail. And as about this shew-bread table (as before observed) there was a border of gold, to keep every thing put upon it from falling off, this may still further point out unto us, the safety of the people of God; who are set upon the shew-bread table, our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no danger of their falling off from thence: here is a border of gold all round them: the power of Christ around them, to keep them from falling. Yea, God himself is round about them, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem. They are in the hands of Christ, who is able to keep them from falling; and out of whose hands none can pluck them. They are safe, then, being placed upon this shew-bread table.

And then you may further observe, this shew-bread was placed upon the table every sabbath-day: there was a constant succession; the table was never empty. There were two sets of priests always employed; one took off the old loaves, the other put on the new ones, as fast as the old ones were taken off. This may denote the constancy of true believers that have the interest of Christ at heart, in assembling continually before the Lord. Not forsaking the assembling of themselves together; but, like the primitive Christians continuing steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Or rather, it may denote, the constant succession of the children and people of God in the world. As in the natural world, and the inhabitants thereof, there is a constant succession; one generation goes, and another comes, as the wise man says; so it is in the spiritual world, and the churches of Christ. Here is one set of believers going out of the world, and another coming in their room; so that Christ has always a seed; and that promise is made good: *His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.* (Ps. 89:36) But to proceed,

This shew-bread, set upon the table, may also be emblematical of Christ himself; and that as he is the spiritual food of his people, He is the true bread; so he says, *My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.* (John 6:32) He is speaking there of the manna in the wilderness; which was not the true, but only typical bread. Christ is the true bread, in distinction from that. So the meat-offering, which, on a similar occasion, I gave you some account of, was only typical bread. Christ is the true bread; the truth of those types. His flesh is meat indeed; these were only the shadows. This shew-bread, made of fine flour, may fitly signify Christ the finest of wheat, the corn of heaven, the bread that comes from thence; by which his people are fed while in the wilderness. And there being twelve of these loaves upon the table, may denote the fulness and sufficiency of Christ. Here is bread enough, and to spare. Here is enough for the people of God in all ages. This bread is exceeding strengthening; those that have once tasted of it, say, *Lord, evermore give us this bread.* And as this bread was continual bread, was always upon the table; so it may denote, the permanency of Christ. He is always the same: the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And as this was set upon the table by the priests, and only by them; and none eat of this bread but the priests only, Aaron and his sons, (who may be significant of the ministers of the word, or of Christians in common under the gospel dispensation;) if we understand it of the ministers of the word, it points

out, that they set before the people the shew-bread; even the wholesome and salutary words of our Lord Jesus Christ; and feed the people with knowledge and understanding. But if we understand it, (as I rather do) as expressive of the people of God in common, who under the gospel dispensation are all made kings and priests to God, it denotes, that these, and these only, eat of this spiritual food. None but they do it; none but they can do it.

Or, this shew-bread, set upon the table may be an emblem of the intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ: who is the Angel of God's presence, or face, (as it may be rendered), who continually appears in the presence of God for his people; and so may he fitly signified by the twelve cakes, representing the twelve tribes of Israel; or the whole election of grace, the spiritual Israel of God. As the high priest bore, upon his breast-plate, the names of all the people of Israel; so our High Priest bears, upon his breast-plate, or represents all the spiritual Israel of God, in the heaven of heavens; where he ever lives to make intercession for them. He is there as their representative; and they are set down in heavenly places in him. And these loaves being *always* upon the table, may denote, the *continual* intercession of Christ: he ever lives to make intercession for us. And these being set in rows upon the table, and frankincense put on each row, may denote, the, acceptableness of his intercession; for he was, and is always acceptable to his Father. His sacrifice is of a sweet smelling savour to him, upon which is founded his intercession. And the prayers of the saints, which he presents to his divine Father, are acceptable through him; as perfumed with his much incense, and therefore called odours. (Rev. 5:8)—Thus we have seen the mystery of these shadows, the shew-bread table, and the loaves set thereon; as they may be expressive of Christ and of his Church.

I close with a word or two, Let it be our great concern to enjoy communion with Christ. Seek that in every ordinance and opportunity, in hearing the word, and in attending upon ordinances. Let this be the main, the principal thing you do. Do not content yourselves with a bare hearing the word, and attendance upon ordinances, without communion with your Lord. Let that be the great concern of your souls; and if you are blessed with that, you are blessed with the highest favour that can be enjoyed on earth. For, as has been observed, what more honourable than to sit at his table who is the King of kings? What more desirable, what more delightful than this? And it is worth your while to attend time after time, one sabbath after another, one ordinance after another; that you may enjoy this blessing, fellowship with your Lord. Then in the next place, we see the antitype of the shew-bread is food for faith. Feed upon him as he is set before you in the word and ordinances: don't content yourselves with the bare external attendance thereon; but let it be your concern by faith to feed upon Christ, to lay hold on him, embrace him, and that for yourselves, as he is here represented. And bless his holy name for his word, and for his ordinances. Bless his name that you have a place and a name in his house, better than that of sons and daughters. And let not your place be empty at the Lord's table: remember the case of Thomas, who was absent when Christ met his disciples. I say, remember his case, and what he lost; and into what a sad frame of soul he was cast, by reason thereof; out of which nothing could have recovered him, but the powerful and efficacious grace of God.

THE WAVE-SHEAF

TYPICAL OF CHRIST.

LEVITICUS 23:10, 11

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof; then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow, after the sabbath, and the priest shall wave it.

IN this chapter we have an account of the several festivals to be offered by the Jews in their generations until the coming of the Messiah. And these are called the Feasts of the Lord, verse 2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shalt proclaim to be holy convocations; even these are my feasts.* Which were of his appointment, by his direction, and for his honour and glory; and which were typical of Christ, and his person, offices, and grace.

The first of these mentioned in verse 3, is the *seventh day sabbath*. *Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation, ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.* Of this, Christ is the sum and substance. Wherefore, says the apostle, let no man judge you in this and the other thing; and among the rest, in respect of the sabbath-days, *which are a shadow of good things to come; but the body is of Christ.* (Col. 2:16, 17)

The sabbath was a *rest* (as the name signifies) from toil and labour: and this was typical of rest by Christ, whose rest was glorious; and that in every sense of it, both spiritual and eternal. There is a spiritual rest by Christ; which lies in a freedom from the burden of sin, and from the bondage of the law; and which lies in peace, joy, and comfort, arising from a comfortable perception of an interest in the righteousness, blood, and sacrifice of the Son of God. This is that rest which our Lord promises to all such who come, spiritually, and by faith unto him. (Matt. 11:28) And besides this, there is that eternal rest, which remains for the people of God, in the other world. There will be a rest of their bodies in the grave, till the resurrection: a rest of their souls in the arms of Jesus, till that time: and then a rest of both with God and Christ, angels and glorified saints, to all eternity. Now of all these, this first feast was a figure.

The next that follows, is that of the *passover*, verses 5, 6. *In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord's passover: and on the fifteenth day of the same month, is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord.* This also was typical of Christ. Hence the apostle saith, *Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us.* (1 Cor. 5:7) And not only we Christians are now able, with great clearness and exactness, to observe the agreement between the passover and our Lord Jesus Christ; but even Moses, at the first institution of this ordinance, kept it by faith. So the author of the epistle to the

Hebrews asserts, that *through faith he kept the passover*: (Heb. 11:8) believing that the blood of the passover Lamb, sprinkled upon the door posts of the Israelites, would be a means of their preservation: believing there would be a speedy deliverance of the people of Israel from Egypt: and he kept it in faith of the future spiritual deliverance and redemption by Christ, the antitype of it.

The next of the feasts mentioned, is that which is in our text; the sheaf of the first-fruits. *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath, the priest shall wave it.* This also was typical of Christ. We cannot have any doubt about it, as the apostle expressly says, *Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept*: and he further adds, *every man in his own order*: that is, shall rise in his own order; *Christ the first-fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ's, at his coming.* (1 Cor. 15:32) What I shall endeavour to do at this time is, to shew you the agreement between the type and the antitype.

I. In the matter of it: both in respect to its quality and quantity. *A sheaf of the first-fruits.*

II. With respect to what is done to it, and with it. It was reaped, it was brought to the court, and beaten out. It was dried and parched by the fire, ground in a mill; and an omer of it was taken and waved by the priest, before the Lord.

III. With respect to the concomitants of it: or, what attended it: and that is, a Lamb was offered for a burnt-offering; and likewise a meat-offering and a drink-offering were to accompany it.

I. We shall endeavour to shew, that this sheaf of the first-fruits was a type of Christ, as to the matter of it, both respect to quality and quantity. With respect to quality, it was a sheaf of barley; as to its quantity, it was a single sheaf; or, however, such a quantity as only one omer of barley was taken from it, and waved before the Lord by the priest.

It was of barley. The Jews had a two-fold harvest, one of barley, the other of wheat. That of barley, which was at this time, was the first; which was at the time of the feast of the passover. We read that Ruth and Naomi came out of the land of Moab *to Bethlehem, in the beginning of barley harvest.* (Ruth 1:22) From that unto the wheat harvest were fifty days, or about seven weeks; which is what in the New Testament is called Pentecost. It was the feast of Weeks, of wheat harvest, and of in-gathering of the fruits of the earth. (Exod. 34:22) Now it was at the former, and not at the latter of these, that this sheaf of the first-fruits was taken. Therefore it must be of barley, and not of wheat; as the time most clearly shews: it being at the time of the passover, or of the Israelites coming out of the land of Egypt. A little before that, when the plague of hail was upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, we are told, that barley was in the ear. (Exod. 9:31) Now at this time it was ripe; but it must not be reaped, till a sheaf of the first-fruits was waved before the Lord.

Now this being of barley, which is a mean sort of grain, may denote, the mean estate of our Lord Jesus Christ in his humiliation. The barley cake which tumbled into the host of Midian, and overturned the tent in it, as in the dream of the Midianitish soldier, was an emblem of Gideon, a mean and unpromising instrument of the destruction of the Midianitish army. So here the sheaf of barley may be an emblem of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his state of humiliation; who, when he was

found in fashion as a man, appeared in the form of a servant, He grew up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; there being no form nor comeliness in him, no outward form and splendour which might make him desirable to carnal men. He was reckoned a worm, and no man: such was his great humility, wonderful condescension, and amazing grace. It is well known, it is notorious: *Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor; that ye, through his poverty might be rich.* (2 Cor. 8:9)

But this sort of grain, though mean, was used for food; in early times, in later ones, and even with us, in some countries; it was so in Judea. We read that one of the miracles of our Lord was, the feeding of five thousand, with five barley loaves and two small fishes: (John 6:9) so Christ, in his mean estate of humiliation, is suitable and proper food for faith. He is held forth in the everlasting gospel, as food for the faith of his people, under the character of Christ crucified: *We preach Christ crucified* (says the apostle), *to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness.* Yea (he further adds), *I determine not to know any thing among you; to set before you none other, as the proper object of your faith to feed upon, and receive comfort and nourishment from, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.* It was upon him he himself lived: *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God; who loved me, and gave himself for me.*—So much for the *quality* of this sheaf of the first-fruits; it was of barley.

Next its *quantity*. It was but one; one sheaf that was waved ; one omer, which was the tenth part of an ephah. (Exod. 16:36) It was as much as a man could eat in one day. Christ, in many respects, is but one. One with his divine Father in nature and essence. *I and my Father are one.* (John 10:30) He means particularly in power. He is speaking of his power in keeping his sheep committed to him, so that none shall perish, or any pluck them out of his hands: and he adds, *and my Father, who gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands.* And then, for the further confirmation of their security, being in his and his Father's hands, he adds, *I and my Father are one:* possessed of the same divine power. He, the Father, and the blessed Spirit, are one God. There is but one God: *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.* (Deut. 6:4) Now the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, are this one Jehovah.

Christ is one in his person, though he has two natures, human and divine. This is the great mystery of godliness, *God manifest in the flesh. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* The Word was God, as to his divine nature; was made flesh, as to his human nature: and these two, though different and distinct, yet they are united in one person, the one person of the Son of God. The human nature is not a person of itself; it had its subsistence in the person of the Son of God: and there is much of the wisdom and grace of God in this matter. Had the human nature of Christ been a person subsisting of itself, all the actions done thereby, and the sufferings underwent therein, would have been found of no use to any, unless it was to that person; but this being taken into union with the divine person of the Son of God, all those actions and sufferings received an infinite efficacy and virtue, to answer the purposes of grace in our salvation. Christ is but one in his office as Mediator: *the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus;* who has interposed between God and man, and made up the breach between them: who is our peace, and by whom the way is opened for us to God. Through him we (both Jews and Gentiles) have access: he is the new and living way to the Father, and he is the only way. There is but one way: no man can come to the Father, but by him. It is in his name, and by making mention of his righteousness, and of his only,

that we can draw nigh unto God, with any degree of freedom; or to any good purpose. He is the one and only Saviour and Redeemer; his arm, and that alone, without the help of any other, has brought salvation. He is the only one to whom we must apply for salvation; to whom we are directed, from whom we are encouraged to hope for it, and that by himself. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.* (Isa. 45:22) There is no other Saviour besides him; nor is there any other from whom salvation can be expected: and therefore to him must be given all the glory. He is the one Lord, as the apostle says, *One Lord, one faith, one baptism.* (Eph. 4:5) One Lord, to whom we are to yield obedience; even to all his commands and ordinances. Though there are many that are called Lords; (there were among the Heathens) yet to us, as Christians, there is but one Lord Jesus Christ, and we by him. Though other Lords, as sin and Satan, and the world, in unregeneracy, had dominion over us; yet now, through grace, it is our resolution, that by him, and him alone, will we make mention of his name; (Isa. 26:13) that is, we will only serve him. He is the only head of the church, whom the Father has given to he head over all things unto it: a head of eminence to rule over, and guide, and protect it. A head of influence; as the natural head is to the body, from which it receives its nourishment, and increases. And he is the only husband of the church: *thy maker is thine husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name.* (Isa. 54:5) And though good men may, through the prevalence of temptation and corruption, go after other lovers, yet they are recovered again; and their resolution, in the strength of divine grace, is, to go and return to their first husband; for then it was better with them than now. (Hosea 2:7) Thus, in many respects, Christ is but one, as this sheaf was.

But then, though this sheaf was but one, it had many stalks, many cars of corn, and many grains in it. And so Christ, though he is but one in various respects, as we have seen; yet in him there is a complication. There is a complication of blessings of grace. Jehovah has presented him, from all eternity, in the council and covenant of grace and peace, with all the blessings of grace and goodness for his people; he has put them all into his hands, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in him, and *he is of God* (as saith the apostle) *made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.* (1 Cor. 1:20) So that they have all blessings of grace in him, and from him; and are enabled to say, in the strength of faith, at times, as Jacob did, "I have enough, I have all things." For, saith the apostle, *all things are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* (1 Cor. 3:21, 23)

Moreover, he has not only a complication of all blessings in him; but as this sheaf of the first-fruits represented the whole harvest, and was a pledge and earnest of it, so Christ, the sheaf of the first-fruits, represents all his people. They are all gathered together under one head in him; and when he was crucified, they were with him; when he was buried, they were with him; when he rose again from the dead, they rose again with him; and are now sat down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And besides, as the sheaf of the first-fruits, had a connection with all the rest, so he with all the people of God. It was for their sakes he suffered, died, and rose from the dead. He suffered, to gather together the children of God, that were scattered abroad. He was delivered into the hands of justice and death, for their transgressions; and he arose again for the justification of them all.—So much for the first thing: that the sheaf of the first-fruits was typical of Christ, as to the matter of it, both as to quality and quantity.

II. It was so, with respect to what was done unto it, and done with it. This was, as has already been observed, first reaped, then brought to the court, and then, after a variety of ceremonies, it was

waved before the Lord. First it was reaped. And this was done in a very solemn and pompous manner, according to the account the Jews give of it, which is this; the messengers of the Sanhedrim went out (from Jerusalem, over the brook Kidron, to the fields near it), on the evening of the feast, and bound the standing corn in bundles, that so it might be more easily reaped; and the inhabitants of all the neighbouring villages gathered together there, that it might be reaped in great pomp; and when it was dark, one said to them, Is the sun set? They said, Yes. With this sickle shall I reap it? They said, Yes. In this basket shall I put it? They said, Yes. If on a sabbath-day, he said to them, On this sabbath-day shall I do it? They said, Yes. These questions were put and answered three times: then they reaped it, and put it into the basket, and brought it to the court.

Now this reaping of the sheaf of first-fruits was an emblem of the apprehending of our Lord Jesus Christ by the Jews, or by officers which they sent to take him. They attempted this once and again, before they accomplished it. We are told in the seventh chapter of John, that at the feast of tabernacles they sought to lay hold of him; but his time was not yet come. The very officers were dispirited; and when they were called to an account by the chief priests and pharisees, for not bringing him, they said, *Never man spake like this man*. They could not take him. But when the set time was come, he was easily apprehended by them. And as we are told they bound the ears of corn, that they might be the more easily reaped; so they bound Christ, and brought him to the high Priest. (John 18:12) This was done at night, when it was dark. One of the questions asked at the reaping of the sheaf of the first-fruits, was, Is the sun set? It was answered, Yes: then the sickle was put in. So it was after sun was set, the Lord Jesus Christ was apprehended. After he had eaten the passover with his disciples, he entered into discourse with them, and said, *All ye shall be offended, because of me, this night*. Simon Peter, very bold in the cause of his master, says, *Though, all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended*. To whom our Lord answers, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice*. (Mark 14:30) And that it was night when he was apprehended, is clear from the account given of Judas, who, with his band of soldiers went into the garden with lanthorns and torches to take him. And the account of the Lord's Supper, given by the apostle, confirms it, who says, "That our Lord Jesus Christ, the *same night* in which he was betrayed, took bread." (1 Cor. 11:23)

And as the sheaf was reaped by a deputation of men, sent by the grand Sanhedrim at Jerusalem; so our Lord was apprehended by officers, sent by chief priests and pharisees, who were assembled together in council, as the great Sanhedrin of the nation. They met together just before the time of our Lord's apprehension and sufferings, as they had done in vain many times before, but now with success. They met together to contrive ways and means to put him to death. An opportunity presented. Judas came and offered to betray him for such a sum of money; and he, with a band of men, went into the garden, where he knew our Lord used to resort; and there they apprehended him. And this was done in the sight and presence of a multitude of persons, just as the sheaf of the first-fruits was reaped in the presence of multitudes from all towns round about.

That this was true of Christ is certain from what is recorded by the evangelists; for we are told, that Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude, went in order to apprehend him. (Mark 14:43) Besides the hand of soldiers, he had of the scribes and pharisees, the chief priests and elders, there were a multitude of the common people that attended to see the issue of things: to whom our Lord said, *Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves for to take me*. (Mark 14:48)

Likewise, the circumstance of the sheaf of first-fruits being reaped near the brook Kidron, exactly agrees with the apprehending of Christ near that brook. It was over this same brook our Lord went, and entered into the garden where he was taken. (And in this he appeared to be the antitype of David, who when he fled from Absalom went over the brook Kidron. Cedron, or Kidron, signifies *black*: so that brook had its name from the blackness of the water, through the soil that run into it; being a kind of common sewer, into which the Jews cast every thing that was unclean and defiling. And perhaps it is in allusion to this that the Psalmist prophetically said, *He shall drink, of the brook in the way*). (Ps. 110:7) Now it is remarkable, that in these minute circumstances, as some of them seem to be, there should be such an agreement.

When this sheaf was reaped, then it was brought to the court; so Christ, when he was first apprehended was brought to Annas, then to Caiaphas, then to the court where, after his arraignment and trial, he was condemned to death. This sheaf being brought to court, was threshed, winnowed, dried, and parched by the fire, and ground in a mill; all which set forth, in a lively manner, the dolorous sufferings of our Lord. The sheaf being threshed, was expressive of his being smitten by men; of his being buffeted and scourged, by the order of the Roman Governor, by the soldiers; all in perfect agreement with the prophecy, that *they should smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek*. (Micah 5:1) *That he should give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them which plucked off the hair*. (Isa. 50:6)

This sheaf of the first-fruits, as it was beaten out, so it was dried and parched by the fire; which may be considered as expressive of the wrath of God which Christ endured; which is compared to fire, and by which (as it is expressed in the Psalms concerning him) *his strength was dried up like a potsherd*. It was ground also in a mill (as was the manna, another type of Christ): (Num. 11:8) which was another circumstance that pointed out the sufferings of the Redeemer, who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.

Upon the omer of flour that was taken, oil and frankincense were poured: which may denote, the acceptableness of Christ in his sufferings, death, and sacrifice to his divine Father. He gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling savour. And then the waving of this by the priest before the Lord, seems to denote his resurrection from the dead. This action, indeed, literally understood, was expressive of an acknowledgment to the Lord of heaven and earth; that the fruits of the earth, and the plentiful harvest were of him, and to give him the praise and the glory of it. But typically considered, it represented the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. (And remarkable it is, he rose from the dead on the very day the sheaf of the first-fruits was waved). That which confirms this, is what I have already observed from the great apostle of the Gentiles, who tells us, Christ is risen from the dead, and become the *first-fruits* of them that slept: this makes me conclude, that this waving the sheaf, denotes, the resurrection of Christ. He is the first-fruits of them that slept; the earnest of the resurrection from the dead to his people: he insures that to them, being the representative of them. He is the first that rose from the dead to an immortal life: for though there were others that were raised before him, as the son of the widow of Sarepta, the Shunamite's son, and the man that was let down into the grave of the prophet Elisha: all which took place before the coming of Christ. And after his coming, before his resurrection, there were many raised from the dead and raised by himself, which was one proof he gave of being the Messiah. *The dead are raised*; (Luke 7:22) how many we cannot say; but instances we have upon record, as Jairus's daughter, Lazarus, the favorite of our Lord, and others. But then he was the first

that rose by his own power into an immortal life. He arose by his own power. *Destroy this temple* (said he, meaning his body) *and in three days I will raise it up;* (John 2:19) and accordingly he being put to death, raised himself the third day; for he had power (which no mere man had) to lay down his life, and takes it up again, And by doing this, especially the latter, he declared himself to be the Son of God with power. (Rom. 1:4)

He was the first that arose to an immortal life. All the rest rose from the dead, but died again; but he, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. He was dead, but is alive, and lives for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and of death. Jehovah the Father shewed him the path of life; and he was the first that trod therein. There were some indeed raised at the time of his resurrection, as it is written, *and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves, after his resurrection.* (Matt. 27:52, 53) And in all probability these rose to immortal life, and went triumphantly to heaven with our risen Lord; but then this was after his resurrection; so that he was the *first* that arose to an immortal life.

And as Christ rose first in order of time, so he rose the first in *dignity*. He rose as the head of the body, as the first born, the beginning, that in all things he might appear to have, as he ought to have, the pre-eminence. He did not rise again as a mere individual, as a single person, but as a public head and representative of all his people. He also is the first in *causality*. He is the procuring cause of the resurrection from the dead. He not only by the gospel brought life and immortality to light; but, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, has opened the way of life. He came to this end; that we might have life, spiritual and eternal; so true is that saying of the apostle, that as *by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead.* And he is the pattern and exemplar, according to which the saints will be raised; *as my dead body shall they arise.* (Isa. 26:19) Just as his dead body arose, so shall the dead bodies of all the saints arise in the resurrection morn: they shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body. Was he raised incorruptible? so shall they. So saith the apostle, *the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.* (1 Cor. 15:52, 53) As his body was raised a powerful body, so shall theirs. He was crucified through weakness; but being raised by the power of God, it became a powerful body. So saints shall be raised in power, no more subject to weaknesses and infirmities, as now; no more liable to disorders and diseases, or to death itself: neither of them shall have any power over them. As his body was raised a glorious one so shall theirs also. *It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory;* fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ: (Phil. 3:21) shining not only as stars, but as the sun in the firmament of heaven. As his was raised a spiritual body, so shall theirs too. Not a new aerial and celestial body, as some have dreamed; no, but a spiritual one. Not as to substance, but as to quality; that shall be supported without eating and drinking. The organs thereof will he fitted for spiritual exercises, and he wholly under the influence of the Spirit of God; and be no more an incumbrance to the spirit or soul of man.

And, as Christ's risen body was the same body that was crucified and slain; (which appears from the marks upon it. *Except, says Thomas, I shall see the prints of the nails in his hands, I will not believe:* and these were shewn him. And our Lord, to convince his disciples that it was the same body, said, *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I, myself. Handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have;* (Luke 24:39)) so the same body of the saints that dies, shall he raised from the dead. Job himself firmly believed this, *In my flesh shall I see God; whom mine*

eyes shall behold, and not another. (Job 19:25, 27) So the apostle, *this corruptible* (pointing to his body) *must put on incorruption.* (1 Cor. 15:53)

Christ is the efficient cause of the resurrection. The procuring cause as Mediator; the exemplar, as man; the efficient cause, as God; for as the Father quickens whom he will, so the Son. It will be by his voice the dead will arise; some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt. And herein will he a display both of his Omnipotence and Omniscience. Of his Omnipotence, that he has the keys of hell and death; and can open the graves, and set the prisoners free. The raising the dead is a work of Omnipotence; as the raising of Christ's body was, so the raising of the bodies of the saints will be. Our Lord will by this shew himself to be the mighty God. There will also be a display of his Omniscience. He must needs be omniscient, that knows where the dust of his saints lies. Though dispersed here and there; yet has he undertaken (and it was an obligation laid upon him) to raise *it* up at the last day; and so he will. Thus we have seen the waving of the sheaf pointed out the resurrection of Christ from the dead: but this is not all.

It is also expressive of his connection with his people, whom he represented: and whose resurrection is the pledge, earnest, and security of theirs. For, as the first-fruits sanctified the rest of their harvest, represented the whole, gave a right to the in-gathering of it, and insured it; so our Lord's resurrection from the dead, sanctified and secured the resurrection of his people. Because he lives, they shall live also: or as sure as his dead body arose, so sure shall theirs rise also. But then he is only the first-fruits of *his own*. *Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming*. Who are the fruits of his sufferings and death; who have the first-fruits of his Spirit and grace in them: the fruits of righteousness upon them; who are his, by virtue of the Father's gift unto him, as also by the purchase of his blood, the efficacy of his grace upon them, and through a voluntary dedication of themselves unto him, under the influence of his Spirit and grace. The first-fruits of these and these only. Not but that there will be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust; the sea and the grave will give up all the dead, and among these will be some whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. These will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in the body; but the saints, whom Christ is the representative of, will arise by virtue of the union to their living Lord and head. Not so the wicked; only by virtue of his power exerted upon them they will arise, and that to everlasting shame and confusion.—Thus we have seen, this sheaf was a type of Christ, with respect to what was done to it. Now it remains only to observe,

III. What were the concomitants or it. What accompanied the waving the first-fruits, were a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering. (Lev. 23:12-14) The first of these was an eminent type of Christ, as all the burnt-offerings were. It was a lamb: a figure of Christ the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. A Lamb without blemish: a type of the immaculate Lamb of God. This was a burnt-offering; so a fit emblem of the dolorous sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then there was a meat-offering, which always went along with this; which was typical of Christ, as we have seen in a former discourse (Sermon 20). I shall close all with a word or two.

From hence we see the great advantages we receive from Christ, He is the first-fruits, and all our fruit is from him. This remarkable type in a particular manner points out the many benefits we receive from the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ, who was apprehended, beaten and scourged: who endured the wrath of the Almighty, and that in our room and stead. The fruits of

which are, our redemption from the curse of the law, the remission of sins, peace and reconciliation with God, pardon of sin, and justification. Many are the advantages also accruing to us from the resurrection of Christ. Our justification is owing there-unto; *he rose again for our justification*. Our regeneration is in virtue of it; we are begotten to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The resurrection of our bodies in the last day are insured hereby; because he lives we shall live also. And therefore many are the obligations we lay under to give thanks unto his name and not forget his benefits. We ought, through the constraints of his love, to live to him who died for us.

And how much ought this night to be observed in which we are about to commemorate the sufferings and death of a dear Redeemer! As it is said of the night of the passover, when the Israelites were in such a remarkable manner delivered and saved. It is a night to be much observed in all generations; so the night in which the antitypical sheaf of the first-fruits was reaped, in which our Lord was apprehended; in which he was betrayed; in which he was brought before the great Sanhedrin and there condemned. The consequence of which was, his sufferings and death; which laid a foundation for the everlasting salvation of all that believe in him, it is a night to be much observed in all the churches of Christ until the second coming of our Lord.

PAUL'S FAREWELL DISCOURSE

AT EPHESUS.

ACTS 20:32

And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

This passage is part of the last words of the apostle Paul, to the elders of the church at Ephesus, whom he had called together to deliver his mind unto. He was an eminent instance of divine grace, and an excellent preacher of that grace, which he was made a partaker of. His work lay chiefly in the Gentile world; great part of which he traveled over; and, wherever he came, spread the gospel of the grace of God. Thousands of souls were converted under his ministry; and it is hard to say, how many Churches were planted by his hands. The conquests which he, through mighty grace, was enabled to make, were far superior to those of *Alexander*, or of *Caesar*; and now he is returning to Jerusalem like a triumphant conqueror, as having with success fought the Lord's battles in those parts. And, in his way thither, calls at Miletus, convenes the elders of the church of Ephesus, and declares his manner of entrance and his behaviour among them; how he had kept back nothing which was profitable to them, had used no artful methods to conceal his principles, but had made it his study, to declare all the council of God, and that in a way intelligible to the meanest capacities. This he did openly and publicly; testifying, both to Jews and Greeks *repentance towards God, and faith toward, our Lord Jesus Christ*. Though, in so doing, he ran the greatest risk of his life, yet none of these things moved him; neither did he count his life dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And knowing that they to whom he had preached, and to whose souls he had been useful, should see his face no more; he takes them, as witnesses of his faithfulness, and to shew his regard and care for them to the last, advises them to take heed both to themselves and to the flock of God; and assures them, that after his departure, grievous wolves would enter, and not spare the flock; and that even some among themselves should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciple after them. And now, having discharged a good conscience, and acted the part of a faithful minister, he takes his leave; and having no longer the care of them, as a faithful shepherd, commits them again into the hands of him who had made them his care and charge, in the words which I have read. *And now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, &c.* In which may be observed the three things:

I. An Endearing appellation, which he gives them, *Brethren*.

II. An instance of his regard unto them, and affection for them; and that is, *commending them to God, and to the word of his grace*. And,

III. The motives which induced the apostle to commend them to God, and to the word of his grace.

I. Here is an endearing appellation which he gives them, *Brethren*. This was a usual and familiar way of speaking among the Jews. Nothing more frequent with them, than to call any who were of their own country and nation, *Brethren*; though no otherwise allied unto them, in the bonds of consanguinity, Thus the apostle Paul calls all the Jews, being his countrymen, *Brethren* and *Kinsmen according to the flesh*, for whose salvation he had a great concern; which we must not suppose to be confined to those of his own tribe and family only. And so Stephen begins his oration thus; *men, brethren, and fathers*. And perhaps, from this usual way of speaking among the Jews, the primitive saints took up this appellation, and gave it to each other. Sometimes we find it given to the multitude of believers, or such who were in private capacity in the churches, as distinct from apostles and elders. Thus it is said; *The apostles, and elders, and brethren send greeting, unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch*. In our text it is given to the elders, particularly, whom Paul calls so; either because they were partakers of the same grace, and so had this title in common with the rest of believers, or else, on account of their office, being labourers together in the Lord's vineyard. And here may be observed the humility of the apostle; who was far superior to them in gifts, office, and usefulness. His gifts were, no doubt, far greater than theirs; and so was his office, being an extraordinary minister, an apostle of the Gentiles; and his usefulness abundantly exceeded theirs. Yet he does not treat them with an haughty and assuming air, but puts himself upon a level with them, and calls them *brethren*. Thus imitating his Lord and master; who, being of the same nature with us, *is not ashamed to call us brethren*, though he himself is Lord of all.

II. Here is an instance of his regard unto them; and affection for them; which appears in *commending them to God, and to the word of his grace*.

We are not to suppose that, in this commendation, the apostle intends the elders only, but the church also. These were addressed, as being officers and representatives of the church, and as men capable of delivering to it, what the apostle should say to them. There are three things to be considered in this commendation.

1. The persons to whom the brethren are here commended.
2. The act itself, and what is intended by it.
3. What induced the apostle to commend the saints as he does.

First, The persons to whom the brethren are commended; that is, God, and the *word of his grace*.

1. They are commended to *God*; by whom is meant God the Father. The apostle, in commending them to him, commends them to his grace, wisdom, and power. To his *Grace*; to supply their need; to fit them for every duty he shall call them to, and for every trial he shall exercise them with. Such a commendation suits both ministers, and private believers. The former, who, notwithstanding all their learning, parts, and gifts, are insufficient for their work, without fresh supplies of divine grace. And private believers, under all their trials and afflictions, should make their application to God, who sits upon a throne of grace, and has promised that his grace shall be sufficient for them; which they always find, more or less, made good unto them. Such a commendation as this you find in Acts 14:23, 26. They are also commended to his *wisdom*, to counsel and direct them in all their ways. Such a commendation is proper and useful, both to elders and others. Elders have need of

wisdom from above, to behave themselves aright among the churches of the living God. Believers in common also, in their several states and conditions, should not lean to their own understandings, but acknowledge God in all their ways, who has promised to direct their paths. They should commit themselves to him, to be guided with his counsel, and directed by his wisdom; because the *way of man is not in himself*. It is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps. Likewise, the saints are commended to the *power* of God, to keep and preserve them. For it is by that alone they are kept; being weak and liable to daily back-slidings. They therefore should commit themselves to him, *who is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless, before the throne of his glory, with exceeding joy*. This they should do, to keep them from the sins and corruptions of the times; and from the errors and heresies which are now broached. They should with Jabez pray, that God would *keep them from evil, that it may not grieve them*: not only from the evil of punishment, but from the evil of sin, which brings it; which, as it dishonours God, so it wounds their own souls. We should not imagine, that we are able to keep ourselves, from being carried away therewith. The greatest believer, who has the largest measure of grace, if God should withdraw, leave him to himself, and not grant him fresh supplies of his grace, would not be able, with all the grace he has received, to withstand the snares of the world, the temptations of Satan, and the corruptions of his own heart. We should always suspect our own hearts, and put no confidence in them. For, *who can understand his errors?* Therefore we should, with David pray, That God would *cleanse us from secret faults, and keep us back from presumptuous sins*.

Saints should commend themselves to God, to be kept from error and heresies; and so the saints are here commended to God, for this purpose. It is manifest that the apostle had a regard to this; for he had observed, in the preceding verses, that *grievous wolves should enter* among them and that persons from *among themselves should arise speaking perverse things*, and should *draw away disciples after them*; and therefore he commends them to God, to be kept from falling in therewith. He commends them to one, who is able to preserve them safe unto an inheritance when false teachers, and those who *followed their pernicious ways*, should *bring upon themselves swift destruction*. Though the elect of God cannot totally and finally be seduced by men, who *lie in wait to deceive*; yet they may fall from their steadfastness in the doctrine of faith; and therefore such a commendation of them to God, is very proper; that they may not be *like children tossed to and fro, with every wind of doctrine*. For that is both unbecoming and uncomfortable to them. Let not, therefore, the most established saint in the doctrine of faith presume in his own strength, and think himself immovable; but being conscious of his own weakness, let him commend himself to God, who is able to keep him from the evil of the world, and the errors of the times.

2. The apostle commendeth them to the *word of divine grace*. By which I understand, not the gospel, or the written word, but *the Lord Jesus Christ*; who is frequently in Scripture called, λόγος, or *the Word*. John makes mention of Christ under this name or title, in all his writings; in his gospel, in his epistles, and in his Revelation. He makes use of it in his gospel, chapter 1:1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*. Which manifestly declares his Deity, Eternity and Co-existence with the Father: and that he is a person distinct from him: and that we may not be at a loss which Person in the Trinity he intends, by *the Word*, he tells us, (in verse 14) that this *Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us*. Also mention is made of Christ, under this name, by John in his epistles. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled of the word of Life*. (John 1:1) Christ was from eternity with the Father, but has been manifested in the flesh; and the apostle

informs us, that it was not *imaginary*, but *real* flesh, which he assumed. This he proves against some heretics of that day, by three of the natural senses, *hearing, seeing, and feeling*. They *heard* him speak; they *saw* him walk, eat, drink, &c, and they *handled* him, and thereby knew that it was a real body which he assumed, and not a phantom. He calls him the Word of *Life*, because he is life itself, and the author and donor of it. In chapter 5:7, where he takes notice of *three who bear record in heaven*, he tells us, that they are *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and, that these three are one*. So likewise in his Revelation, he speaks of him more than once, as *the Word*. In chapter 1:2. he tells us, that he bore *record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ*. And in chapter 19:13, he represents Christ as a triumphant conqueror, and says, that *his name is called, The Word of God*.

Now the reason why John makes use of this name, seems to be, because it was well known to the Jews, being frequently used in their *Targums*; some of which were then wrote. It is also thought by some, that *λόγος*, being a term used by *Plato*, and his followers, as expressive of something divine; and *Ebion* and *Cerenthus*, with whom John had to do, understanding the platonic philosophy, he makes use of this term on purpose, it not being ungrateful to them, that he might the more easily gain upon them. It is reported of *Amelius*, a platonic philosopher, that when he read the beginning of John's gospel, he thus broke out and said, "By Jove, this Barbarian, (meaning John) is of the same mind with our *Plato*, when he says, *In the beginning was the Word*." But I rather think, the former is the true reason why John uses it. Nor is it peculiar to him; but used by other inspired writers of the New Testament. So Luke, (chap. 1:2.), is thought to intend Christ, the Word, when he speaks of the disciples as *eye witnesses and ministers of the Word*; who with much greater propriety of speech, may be said to be the *eye witnesses of Christ*, (according to 2 Peter 1:16), than of *the gospel*, or the *written word*. And it seems very agreeable, that Luke, intending to write a history of Christ's life and actions, should, in his preface to *Theophilus*, make mention of him, under some name, title, or character; which he does not, if he is not intended by *the Word*. The apostle Paul is also thought to use it in this sense, in Hebrews 4:12. *For the Word of God, is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword; piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*. This, I think, is not so applicable to the written word, as to Christ. He is ζων ὁ λόγος τῆς Θεοῦ, *the living word of God; or the Word of God which liveth*, as it may be rendered. It is true, this Word was made flesh, and was put to death therein. He was dead, but, as himself says, is *now alive, and lives for evermore*. He is the living Word, or Word of Life. Also he may truly be said to be ενεργης, *powerful, efficacious*; for so he is in his death and sufferings, being *mighty to save*; and now he is in his intercession at the Father's right hand. He will also, ere long, appear to be *sharper than any two-edged sword*, when he comes to judge the world at the last day. He will then pierce, *to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow*; and will shew himself to be *a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*. Then he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness; and will let the world know, that he it is, *who searcheth the reins and hearts*; which, I think, cannot be said of, and applied unto, the written word. The following verse makes it still more plainly to appear, which is closely connected with this by the copulative *καὶ, and*. *Neither is there any creature which is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*. Where the apostle manifestly speaks of a *person*, and not of a *thing*; and of one who is *omniscient*, and to whom *we must give an account* at the day of judgment; for so these words in the last clause may be rendered, ὧρος οὐ ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος, *to whom we must give an account*. But to whom must we give an account? Not to the written word, but to a divine person, to

God. Thus the apostle says, (Rom. 14:12) *So then every one of us shall give an account to God.* We ministers are accountable for our preaching the word, and you for hearing it; but the account must be given, not to the written word, but to Christ, the living Word. Nay, in verse 14, this Word is said to be an *high priest*. Christ, the Word, assumed our nature, and in it offered himself a sacrifice for us, as our High Priest; and as such, is passed into the heavens, and ever lives to make intercession for us. The apostle uses this as an argument. with believers, to *hold fast their profession*, and to *come with boldness to the throne of grace*, for what they want. And, as the apostle uses it in this sense here, so he does, I apprehend, in the words of my text. My reasons for it are these,

1. Because the saints never commend themselves, or others, either in life or in death, to any but a Divine Person. The word signifies the committing a person or thing, to the care, charge, and protection of another. Now, none but a Divine Person is capable of taking the care and charge of the saints, neither will the saints trust any other. They commit their souls to God, as unto a faithful Creator; and rest entirely satisfied herein, as the apostle Paul was, who could say, *I know in whom I have believed;* (whom I have trusted with my immortal all, and with my eternal salvation) *and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* (2 Tim. 1:12) Now, certainly to whom he committed himself, he committed others. Having had experience of Christ's care, faithfulness, and ability, he could here, as undoubtedly he did, commend the saints unto him, with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction. And, as in life, so in death, they commend themselves to none but a Divine Person; and that in imitation of Christ, who in his last moments said, *Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.*

2. Because to put the written word upon a level with the Divine Being, does not appear agreeable. A commendation of the saints, equally to the written word, as to God himself seems to be a lessening of his glory, and ascribing too much to the written word; but suits well with Christ, the essential Word, *who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* To commend the saints equally to Christ, as to God the Father, is no diminution of the Father's glory; nor does it give Christ more than his due, or than he is able to perform but a commendation of them to the gospel, seems to do so.

3. Because, never in the whole book of Scripture, as far as I have observed, are the saints commended to the gospel; but rather that to them. The written word is committed to the care and keeping of the saints; not the saints to the care and keeping of that. They are in the hands, and are the care and charge of Christ Jesus. We frequently read of God committing the written word unto the saints more especially, to the ministers of it; and of their committing it to others: (See 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Tim. 1:11-18, and 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14, and 2:2.) but never of the saints being committed to the written word.

4. Because what is here ascribed unto it, suits better with Christ, than with the gospel, viz. *which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance, &c.* It may indeed be replied, That saints are here commended to God, as the efficient, and to the gospel, as the instrumental cause of their building up, and having an inheritance: *the engrafted word* being said to be *able to save us*, and the inspired writings *able to make us wise unto salvation.* It must be acknowledged, that the gospel, in the Spirit's hands, is an instrument of building saints up. But then Christ is the greatest master-builder; he builds the temple, and he must bear the glory. The gospel is, indeed, the map which shews us where our inheritance lies, and points out to us the right way unto it but it is Christ who

gives it, and puts us into the possession of it. It is in, by, and through him, that we obtain the inheritance. Therefore, if we understand it of the gospel, it must be in a much lower sense, than if we understood it of Christ: for which reason, together with others before mentioned, I prefer the latter. Not but that the words may be profitably insisted on, agreeable to the analogy of faith, in the other sense; but then a *Hendiadis* must be supposed in the text, as *Grotius* and others think. According to which, the words, as to their sense, must be read thus: *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, who, by the word of his grace, is able to build you up, &c.* But I see no reason, or necessity, to suppose such a figure in the text, when there occurs a good sense of the words without it; and one far more noble than that which must be affixed to them with it, and every way as agreeable to the analogy of faith. The sense which I have given of this text, and of some others already mentioned, is not singular; but what has been observed, and approved by some valuable divines. Taking this to be the sense of the words, it will be proper to enquire these two things. Why Christ is called *the Word*: and why the Word of *God's grace*.

1. Why he is called *the Word*. Some think he is so called, because as the mental word, or the conception of the mind, which is called $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ ενδιὰ Θεοῦ, is the birth of the mind, begotten of it, intellectually and immaterially, without passion or motion, and is the very image and representation of the mind; of the same nature with it, and yet something distinct from it. So Christ is the begotten of the Father, *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person*; and is of the same nature with him, though a distinct person from him. But this may be thought too curious, and as falling short (as all things else in nature do) of expressing that adorable mystery of godliness. And, indeed, oftentimes, when we indulge our own curiosity, and give a loose to our thoughts this way, we run into confusion, and every evil work. For though Christ is certainly and really God, as well as man; yet I am afraid that our abstracted ideas of him, as God, of his Generation and Sonship, distinct from him, as Mediator, often lead us into labyrinths, and draw off our minds from the principal things we have in view. God having set bounds around his inscrutable and incomprehensible Deity, as he ordered to be set about mount Sinai, when he descended on it; that we may not too curiously gaze upon it, and perish. It seems to be his will, that our saving knowledge of him, and converse with him, should be all in and through Christ the glorious Mediator. With this we should be contented. It is enough for us, that this Divine Person, who is called $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, *the Word*, is God; for John expresses it in so many words. As for those who deny it, they are not worth regarding; but ought to be treated as the enemies of Christ's Person and Glory. I rather think that he is called *the Word*, from some action or actions, which he has done, or still continues to do. That the Jews, in their Targums, understood by the word *Memra*, which they so frequently make use of, a Divine Person, seems plain and undeniable; and that this was the promised Messiah, is as manifest.

I will only name one place, in the room of many, which makes it appear, and that is, Hosea 1:7, which we thus read; *But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God.* The Targum thus: *But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will redeem them by the Word of the Lord their God.*—Now I apprehend, that Christ is called *the Word*.

1. Because he spake for his people in the council of peace; and covenanted with his Father on their account. He then presented himself, and in effect, said, "I will be surety for these persons; of my hand shalt thou require them. And though it is certain, that they will fall into the depths of sin and misery; and bring themselves into the most ruinous circumstances; and become altogether

undeserving of thy regard: yet, if I bring them not unto thee, and set them before thee, in all that glory which I viewed them in, in the glass of thine eternal decrees, then let me bear the blame for ever." When, in this ancient council, the method of man's salvation was agreed upon; he addressed his Father, and signified his ready compliance with his will, after this manner: *Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldst not; in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin, thou hast had no pleasure.* As if he said, It appears to be thy will, that man should not be saved by any sacrifice of his own, whatever. *Then said I, Lo, I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.* (Heb. 10:5-7) The whole covenant of grace, which is an everlasting one, *ordered in all things, and sure,* was made with him, as *the Word.* He spoke for every blessing, and every promise of grace, in that covenant, for his people; and entered into articles with his Father, for the security of them. You have a text (Haggai 2:4, 5), which speaks of Christ, as the Word, with whom God covenanted; where the Lord, by the prophet Haggai exhorts Zerubbabel, and Josedech the high Priest, and all the people of the land to be strong, and work, in rebuilding the temple; and for their encouragement says, *For I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts; according to the Word, that I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt; so my Spirit remaineth among you.* Here all the Three Persons are mentioned. Here is Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, the first Person, who promises to be with them; together with the Word, the second Person. The words, *according to,* are not in the Hebrew text; which *Janius* renders, *Cum verbo, quo pepigerum vobiscum.* That is, *with the Word, in, or with whom I covenanted with you:* and in his notes on the text, applies it to Christ, as it should be. So *my Spirit,* the third Person, *stands and abides among you,* to make application of it, and see all made good; which I, and my Word, have covenanted about and agreed upon.

2. He is called *the Word,* because he spake all things out of nothing, in the first creation. Moses and John entirely agree in their account of the creation; and it remaineth no longer a mystery, why Moses so often, in the history of the creation, takes notice that God said, *Let it be so,* and it was so. For it was God *the Word* that said so; as appears from what the evangelist says, (John 1:2, 3) when he tells us, that *the Word was in the beginning with God; that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* All the three Persons had a hand in the creation of the universe; as may be observed from the three first verses of the first chapter of Genesis. It was God the first Person, who created the rude unformed mass. It was the Spirit of God, the third Person, who moved upon the face of the waters. And it was God the Word, the second Person, who said, *Let there be light and there was light.* All which three Persons, as being concerned in creation, are mentioned by the Psalmist in one verse: *By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them, by the breath of his mouth.* (Ps. 33:6, 9) Where are Jehovah the Father, the first Person; and Christ the Word, the Second; and the Breath, or Spirit of his mouth, the Third. And because of Christ's particular concern herein, in *speaking, and it was done; in commanding, and it stood fast:* he is called *the Word.*

3. Because he is to us the interpreter of the Father's mind; like as our words, or speech, which is called *λογος προφορικός, verbum prolatum, or the word expressed,* is the interpreter of our minds. *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* Christ is *the Word,* who hath discovered the secrets of the Father's grace, the hidden purposes of his heart; and hath declared his mind and will to his people in all generations. It was he, the Word of the Lord God, whose voice Adam heard in the garden. It was he the Word, who said unto Adam, *Where art thou?* And it was the same Word of the Lord, who continued his discourse with him, his wife, and the serpent: and made the first discovery of grace to fallen man. It

was he, the Word, who appeared to the patriarchs and prophets in after ages; and made still greater discoveries of God's mind and will: but never so full and clearly as when he was made flesh, and dwelt among us. For then *God, who at sundry times and divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers, by the prophets, did in these last days speak unto us by his Son.* He, the Word, has spoken all his mind, and has made the clearest discoveries of his grace that ever was.

4. He the Word, who now speaks for us in the court of heaven. He there appears in the presence of God for us; acts the part of an advocate; demands the blessings of grace for us, as the fruit of his death; pleads our cause, and answers all charges and accusations. His blood speaks better things for us, than that of Abel. Now for such reasons as these I am inclined to think that Christ is called *the Word*. But,

2. Why is he called the word of God's grace? I answer,

1. Because in him is highly displayed and revealed, his Father's grace to poor sinners. God in pitching upon him to be a Saviour, and in sending him, his only begotten Son; and not sparing him, but giving him up into the hands of justice, commends his love to sinners, and shews forth the exceeding riches of his grace.

2. Because in him, it hath pleased the Father, that all fulness of grace should dwell. Saints behold him, as *full of grace and truth*; rejoice in him, and receive from his fulness *grace for grace*. I shall now consider,

Secondly, The act itself of commending them, which signifies *to commit to the care, keeping and protection of another*; depending upon his ability and fidelity. Thus the apostle must be supposed to commit the saints to the care, keeping, and protection, of God the Father and of God the Son; being well assured of the ability and fidelity of them both. And his commending them to both, not only shews the equal esteem and regard he had for them; but also the greatness of his concern for the brethren here. This act of his must be considered *prayer wise*, as expressing the desires of his soul, that God, and the Word of his grace, would take them under their care, and preserve them safe to glory. Or else as an *advice*, or direction, to whom they should make application, and whence they might expect comfort, support, and safety. And so it is much like the advice which Paul gave to Timothy, when he said, *My son be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus*. I proceed now to consider,

Thirdly, The motives which induced the apostle to commend the saints into the hands of those divine persons. This is expressed in the following part of the text. *Which, or who, is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance, among all them that are sanctified*. This may have reference, either to *God* or to *the Word of his grace*. I rather choose to consider the apostle as referring to the latter. I have already hinted what might induce the apostle to commend them unto God; namely, his grace, wisdom, and power; nor need we wonder, that he also commends them to Christ, seeing he is *the Word of God's grace*. All fulness of grace is treasured up in him. Here are two things particularly mentioned, which seem to be the motives that induced the apostle to commend them to Christ, *the Word of God's grace*.

1. Because he *is able to build them up*. Ministers are instruments in building up of saints. They ministerially lay the foundation, Christ. All the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which are bestowed upon them, are for the edifying Christ's body, the church: and though they have not dominion over people's faith; yet they are oftentimes blessed and made useful, to be helpers of their joy. Saints also may be useful one to another, to *build up one another on their most holy faith*; by praying together, by conversing with each other, and declaring what God has done for their souls. But Christ is the great master builder. He is the chief architect; and, except he, *the Lord, build the house, they labour in vain that build it*. The work is his. He is the builder; and he is the, foundation on which saints are built, and the corner stone that knits them altogether, though they have lived in the world at different times, and in different parts, and are of different denominations. It is he that raises, and finishes, the noble superstructure of grace in the soul. He only having begun the work, is able to finish it and he will do it. We may be confident of it; for he is both *the author and finisher of faith*.

2. Another reason why the apostle commends the saints, not only to God, but also to the Word of his grace is; because he *is able to give them an inheritance among them that are sanctified*. And here are two things to be considered. *The inheritance which he gives; and the persons among whom it lies*.

1. *The inheritance which Christ gives*. This is the heavenly glory. That inheritance which Peter (1 Peter 1:4) speaks of, and says, that it is *incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven*. This is not procured by the works of the law; for the inheritance is not of the law; neither are they, who are of the law, heirs. It is true, we read of *the reward of the inheritance*: but then it must be understood of a reward of *grace*, not of debt. For Christ gives the inheritance freely. He took possession of it in the name of his people, and is, as I may say, a feoffee in trust for them. He is made heir of all things, and the saints are co-heirs with him. He gives them a title to it, which is his own justifying righteousness; and the evidence and earnest of it, which is his own Spirit. It is he that makes them meet for it, by his own grace, and will ere long put them into the possession of it, saying, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world*.

2. *The persons among whom it lies*. These are, *all them that are sanctified*: which at once points out the persons to whom it belongs, and discovers the excellency of it. The persons to whom it belongs are, *all those that are sanctified*. That is, who are set apart by divine grace, and distinguished from others, by a sovereign act of love, for the enjoyment of this blessing. So the word is used, Jude verse 1, where Jude inscribes his epistle, and wishes an increase of mercy, peace and love, *to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called*. That is, who are set apart and distinguished from others, by the electing love of the Father; preserved in the hands of Christ, the head of the everlasting covenant, notwithstanding their fall in Adam, and their numerous transgressions; and called by the grace of the Spirit, to be partakers of all that which is prepared and designed for them. Or else, by sanctified ones, are meant, such as are sanctified by the Spirit of God; have a principle of grace and holiness wrought in them: and are enabled by faith to deal with Christ, for sanctification as well as righteousness. For much of a believer's holiness lies in faith's acting and living upon, dealing with, and receiving from Christ, *grace for grace*; and, therefore, in another text, this inheritance is said to be, among *them which are sanctified by faith, that is in me*.

Thus I have endeavoured to explain the text, and shall conclude with a few words, by way of reflection upon the whole.

1. Hence it appears, to whom souls should make application in their time of need; that is, to *God*, and to *the Word of his grace*. Here only may they expect relief; from hence their wants may be supplied. Here they may rest in safety, depending upon divine ability and fidelity. Souls, here, have the greatest encouragement they can wish for to come and make application under all their trials. For one of these divine persons is *the God of all grace*; and the other has an inexhaustible fulness of all grace dwelling in him. The apostle knew what he did when he commended the brethren to these sublime Persons; and those souls may rest entirely satisfied, who have committed themselves into their hands; for, from thence, none can pluck them.

2. This evidently shews, that those ministers have the greatest concern for souls, who commend them to God, and to the Word of his grace; who direct them to Christ, and his fulness; and not to their own works or frames, but to the grace that is in him.

3. It is also manifest, that such commendations and directions as these, are likely to meet with most success. It is the most likely way to build up souls, by sending them to Christ and his grace; and not to pore upon their own frames and duties. When the minister has given them a long bead roll of marks and signs, what is the consequence of it? Plucking down, and not building up. Says one, "I am none of Christ's for I have not done so and so." "Nor am I in such and such frames of soul;" says another, "therefore the work of grace was never begun in me," So that here is tearing, rending, plucking down, and denying the very work of the Spirit, instead of building up; and what else can be expected from it? If souls would be edified and built up, they must go to Christ, and his grace; and if ministers would be useful that way, they must direct them to that great fountain of supplies.

4. Let us adore boundless grace, that we have the God of all grace, and the Word of grace to apply to; and that we have any reason to believe that these divine Persons have took the care and charge of us; we having been enabled, by an act of faith, to commit ourselves to them; believing that they are *able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified*.

T H E L A W
ESTABLISHED BY THE GOSPEL,

A Sermon,

Preached March 22, 1739, at the Monthly Exercise of
Prayer, at the Reverend Mr. Wilson's Meeting-House

in Goodman's-Field

ROMANS 3:31

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

That vice and immorality, disobedience to the laws of God and men, prevail among us; and that practical religion and powerful godliness greatly decline, will be acknowledged by every serious, thoughtful, and considering Christian; but what are the springs and sources of this sad scene of things, or to what all this is to be ascribed, is not so generally agreed; in this men differ.

The opposers of the doctrines of grace attribute it, at least, in part, to that scheme of truths which we justly esteem the gospel of Christ; nor can they think there is any reason to expect, that moral virtue and practical religion will rise and gain ground among us, so long as this is the subject of our ministrations. "They spare not to charge the whole with a tendency to licentiousness, to open the door to libertinism, and give men a loose to live at pleasure, in all manner of impiety. Particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, imputed by God the Father, and received by faith, is branded with this infamous character. It is suggested, that if this doctrine is true, the law is made void, obedience to it becomes unnecessary, and good works are insignificant things; and that it can be of no other use than to discourage good men in the performance of duty, and to encourage bad men in a course of wickedness." To remove this charge and imputation is my view in reading these words unto you.

The design of the apostle, in this epistle, is to set in a full and clear light, the doctrine of justification; in which he first proves that all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, are sinners, are *under sin*, (Romans 3:9) the pollution, guilt and power of it; and so are arraigned, accused and convicted by the law, as transgressors; which law pronounces the whole world guilty before God, stops the mouth of every man, and puts all to silence; so that they have nothing to say in vindication of themselves, or why judgment should not be given against them, and be executed on them: whence it must most clearly follow, That no man can be justified in the sight of God by the law, by the deeds of it, or by any obedience of sinful man unto it. The apostle goes on to shew, that the matter

of justification, or that by which a sinner is justified, is *the righteousness of God*; (Romans 3: 21, 22) a righteousness in which Jehovah, Father, Son and Spirit, are concerned. God the Father sent his Son to work it out, and bring it in; he has approved and accepted of it, and graciously imputes it to all the elect. The Son of God is the author of it; who is our *Immanuel*, God with us, God in our nature, God and man in one Person, *God over all, blessed for ever*. Hence it has that fulness, sufficiency, and virtue to justify all to whose account it is placed; which the righteousness of a mere creature could never do. The holy Spirit of God discovers this righteousness to a poor, sensible sinner, brings it near to him; sets it before him; works faith in him to lay hold upon it, and receive it, and pronounces him justified by it in the court of conscience. This righteousness, the apostle says, (Romans 3:21) is *manifested without the law*, that is, in the gospel; in which it is *revealed from faith to faith*; though it is *witnessed*, a testimony is bore to it, both *by the law and the prophets*; and that it is *unto all*, applied unto all, and *upon all*, put upon all as a robe of righteousness, even upon all *that believe*; *for there is no difference*; (Romans 3:22) that is among men, among Jews or Gentiles; no distinction made between righteous men and sinners, or between some, being greater, others lesser sinners; *for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*; (Romans 3:23) are through sin depraved, and are destitute of the glorious image of God, that rectitude and uprightness of nature, in which man was created; and therefore stand in need of the justifying righteousness of Christ, by which they must be justified, if at all. The same inspired writer proceeds to observe, that the impulsive and moving cause of justification, is the free grace of God, *being justified freely by his grace*. (Romans 3:24) Grace moved Jehovah, the Father, to resolve upon the justification of his elect. Grace set his thoughts at work; employed his infinite wisdom to find out a way whereby these, though they should fall into sin, might be just with God. Grace put him upon ordaining, calling, engaging, and sending his Son to fulfill all righteousness in their room and stead; and it was grace in him to accept of it, for and on the behalf of them; and to impute it to them, who, in themselves, were sinners and ungodly. The grace and love of the Son greatly appear in his voluntary engagement to be the surety and substitute of his people, in his readiness to do the will of God, in his cheerful coming down from heaven about this work, and in the gracious manner in which he wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness. The grace of the Spirit is abundantly manifest in the revelation and application of the justifying righteousness of Christ, to a poor, sinful, unworthy creature, and in bestowing faith as a free gift upon him, to apprehend and embrace it as his own. The meritorious or procuring cause of justification, is placed in *the redemption which is in Christ Jesus*; *whom God*, in his infinite wisdom, and of his free rich grace, *hath set forth* or fore-ordained, *to be a propitiation*, to satisfy divine justice, by being an expiatory sacrifice for sin, *through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God*; *to declare, I say*, adds the apostle, *at this time his righteousness, that he might be just*; that is, appear to be just, *and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*. (Romans 3:25, 26) So that by this wise and happy scheme, both the grace and justice of God wonderfully agree in the justification of a poor sinner, and are thereby greatly glorified. From the whole, the apostle deduces several inferences and conclusions; as that upon this scheme, there is no room nor reason for boasting in the creature; and asks, (Romans 3:27) "*Where is boasting then? it is excluded; by what law? of works? nay, but by the law of faith*"; that is, the doctrine of faith, and particularly the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness; also that a man is justified, or whoever is justified, is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law; that God is the God both of Jews and Gentiles; and that there is but one way and method he makes use of in justifying of either, and that is, *by faith and through faith*; phrases which are synonymous, and expressive of one and the same thing; and then, in the words of

our text, removes an objection which he easily saw would be raised against the doctrine he had advanced, *Do we then make void the law through faith?*

There were some who thought they did make void the law by the doctrine of faith: This was an objection common in the mouths of the Jews, and had been often leveled against the ministry of Christ and his apostles; and therefore the apostle *Paul* could be no stranger to it. Our Lord himself was traduced by the ignorant and ill-natured men of that generation in which he lived, as an Antinomian, both in doctrine and practice: as one in doctrine, which is evident, from those words of his in his own defence; *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.* (Matthew 5:17) Whence it is clear, that some had entertained such thoughts of him, that he came to destroy the law, and imagined that he did make it *null* and *void* by his doctrine and ministry: and that they charged him with being one in practice, is certain from the account he gives of their calumny and detraction when he says, *The Son of man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; but wisdom is justified of her children.* (Matthew 11:19) Now if they called the Master of the household so, it is no wonder that they of his household, his disciples and followers, should be treated in the same opprobrious manner. Accordingly, when *Stephen*, being filled with the holy Ghost, disputed with the Jews concerning the Messiah and the gospel-state, and they were *not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake*; they suborned, and set up false witnesses, who said and swore, that he ceased not to *speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law.* (Acts 6:13) When the apostle *Paul* returned unto *Jerusalem*, after he had travelled over a large part of the Gentile world, preaching the gospel of the grace of God with great success; *James*, a fellow-apostle, observed to him how many thousands of the Jews there were which believed in Jesus, and yet were all zealous of the law, and strenuous advocates for it; who had been informed that he had said many things among the Gentiles, contrary to *Moses* and his law, which were highly displeasing to them; and therefore he put him upon a method to conciliate himself to their affections; which method did not succeed according to desire and expectation: for the Jews having observed one *Trophimus*, an Ephesian, with him, whom they supposed he brought into the temple; they cried out, *Men of Israel, help, this is the man that teacheth all men every where, against the people, and the law, and this place.* (Acts 21:8) From all which it is most manifest, that the apostle must be fully acquainted with, and he aware of this popular objection to his doctrine; and which he here makes answer to; partly by way of detestation and abhorrence, *God forbid*; a way of speaking he often makes use of, when vile objections were made to his doctrine, or such wicked consequences drawn from it, as were abominable to him; as when he observes, *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid: How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?* (Romans 6:1, 2) Again *What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid Nay, I had not known sin but by the law.* (Romans 7:7) Once more; *If while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, Is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid :* (Galatians 2:17) and partly he replies to this objection, by asserting the contrary, *yea, we establish the law*; in like manner as Christ had done before in a passage already referred to, *I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill*; and indeed, he is not destroying, but the fulfilling *end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.* (Romans 10:4)

By *faith* here we are to understand either the grace or the doctrine of faith, or both. Faith may be considered as a grace; which by an inspired writer is defined to be *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen:* (Hebrews 11:1) It is a grace peculiar to the chosen of God, and

precious; it is a fruit and effect of electing love, and so an evidence of it; and is therefore styled *The faith of God's elect*. (Titus 1:1) It is *a gift of God*, (Ephesians 2:8) an instance of his grace; and a special blessing of the everlasting covenant; it is not obtained by the industry, power and will of man; it is implanted in the heart by the Spirit of God, and the power of his grace; whence it is said to be *the faith of the operation of God*. (Colossians 2:12) This grace has a considerable place and concern in the justification of a poor sinner before God, in the court of conscience. This is the eye of the soul, by which it sees and looks unto the righteousness of Christ for justification; for that in the gospel is *revealed from faith to faith*; (Romans 1:17) it is the hand of the soul, by which it *receives the blessing from the Lord, even righteousness from the God of its salvation*; (Psalm 24:5) or in other words, by which it receives *abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness*. (Romans 5:17) Hence such as are possessed of it, are said to be *justified* by it; not by it as an habit implanted in them by the Spirit of God; for, as such, it is a branch of sanctification; nor as an act performed by them; for as such, it is their act and deed, under the influence of the Spirit of God; but relatively, organically, or objectively considered; that is, as it relates to, and is concerned with, or has for its object Christ's righteousness; or as it is a means of apprehending and receiving that as its justifying one; for faith itself doth not make us righteous; it is not our righteousness, nor does it give us one; no, nor an interest in Christ's; but it is that grace by which we claim our interest in Christ's righteousness; by which we have the knowledge and perception of it, and possess that spiritual peace, joy and pleasure which arise from it: it is that grace by which we live on Christ as the Lord our righteousness; who was *delivered* into the hands of justice and death *for our offences; and was raised again for our justification*. (Romans 4:25) Now faith considered as having such an hand in this affair, is no way contrary to the law of God; that is not made void by it; nor is obedience to it, on the account of faiths rendered unnecessary and insignificant, as will be shewn hereafter.

Again; By faith may be meant the doctrine of faith; and that either as it may intend in general the whole gospel, or in particular, the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness. The whole gospel sometimes goes by the name of *faith*, and is called, *The faith once delivered to the saints; our most holy faith; and the faith of the gospel*; (Jude 3) because it contains things to be believed at once, upon the credit of the revealer, and not to be disputed by carnal reason: it proposes, and points out the great object of faith, Jesus Christ; its language is, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*: (Acts 14:31) it is the means, in the Spirit's hands, of begetting and implanting the grace of faith in the hearts of God's elect: *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*. (Romans 10:7) *Yea, the word preached is unprofitable, unless it be mixed with faith by them that hear it*. (Hebrews 4:2) Now there is an entire harmony and consistency between this doctrine of faith and the law of God. The law is so far from being made void by it, that whatsoever is against that, is also *contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, committed to the trust of his servants*. (1 Timothy 1:9-11) Moreover, since the apostle is manifestly insisting, in the context, upon the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God, it is reasonable to suppose, that this is what he principally designs by faith; and it is not to be wondered at, that this should be so called; since the grace of faith is of so much use in it, to the apprehension, knowledge and comfort of it and since it is so fundamental an article of faith, that he that goes off from it, is said to be *removed unto another gospel; Christ is become of no effect unto him: and whosoever seeks to be justified by the law, is fallen from grace*; (Galatians 1:4, 6) that is, from the doctrine of it. Now by this particular doctrine also, the law is not made null and void; nor are good works, done in obedience to it, useless and unprofitable.

By *the law*, I apprehend, we are to understand not the ceremonial law, that law *which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances* imposed on them, the Jews, *until the time of reformation*; (Hebrews 9:1) that is, the gospel dispensation, or times of the Messiah; which law only had *a shadow of good things to come, but not the very image of the things*; and could never, by its daily or yearly sacrifices, *make the comers thereunto perfect*; (Hebrew 10:1) and therefore there was *a disannulling of the commandment, for the weakness and unprofitableness of it*. (Hebrews 7:18) This law is indeed made void and useless; Christ has *broken down the middle wall of partition* which stood between, separated and distinguished between Jew and Gentile; he has *abolished in his flesh the enmity*, that which was the cause of so much enmity between the people of *Israel* and the nations of the world, *even the law of commandments contained in ordinances*; (Ephesians 2:14, 15) wherefore no man should now *judge* or condemn Christians in *respect of meat or drink, or of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ*; (Colossians 2:16, 17) he is the sum and substance of all these ceremonies: nor was this law abolished and made void until it was fulfilled in and by Christ; for every type and figure, every shadow and sacrifice, every office and ordinance pertaining to that dispensation, had their entire accomplishment in him. But by the law in this our text, I judge, the moral law is intended; that law which was written in *Adam's* heart in innocence; some remains of which are to be observed in fallen man, and even among the Gentiles, destitute of a divine revelation; and because of the depravity of human nature, and the treachery of human memory, and because this law was so much obliterated, and almost erased out of the hearts of men; a new edition of it was delivered to *Moses* in writing, calculated particularly for the people of the Jews; and which is opposed unto, and contradistinguished from the gospel of Christ; *the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*. (John 1:17) The sum of this law is love to God and to our neighbour; and is established by sanctions of rewards and punishments, promising life in case of obedience, and threatening with death in case of disobedience.

Now to *make void* the law, according to the import of the word here used, is to destroy and abolish it, to render it idle, inactive, weak, useless, and insignificant; and to *establish* it, according to the notation of the word in the text, is to make it stand, to place it upon a sure basis and firm foundation, or to make it effectual to answer the ends and purposes for which it is designed.

Upon the whole, the observation on the text, or the doctrine of it, is this; that the moral law is not made null and void, but is established both by the grace and doctrine of faith. The proposition consists of two parts, a negative and an affirmative, I shall first consider the one, and then the other.

First, The negative part of the proposition is, That the law of God is not made void either by the grace or doctrine of faith.

1. Not by the grace of faith. It is certain, indeed, that believing and working, or faith and works, are continually opposed to, and contradistinguished from each other in the business of justification; every one that has read his Bible, with any care, will be able to observe this. How often does the apostle say, that *a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law*; (Romans 3:28) and that *a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ? Even we, says he, have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified*. (Galatians 2:16) And a gain; *To him that worketh not, but believeth, on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*.

(Romans 4:5) But then it should be known, that faith is not opposed to the doing of good works, in obedience to the law of God, from right principles, and with right views; but to trusting to, and depending upon them, and glorying in them, as the matter of justification before God, and acceptance with him; for that there is an entire agreement and consistency between faith in Christ, and works done in obedience to the law upon gospel principles, will clearly appear from the following hints. Let be observed then,

That that faith, only is right, which looks to and lays hold upon Christ's righteousness for justification, that is attended with good works, as fruits of righteousness; for as the apostle *James* says, *What doth it profit, my brethren. though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? Faith if it hath not works, is dead being alone:* (James 2:14, 17) and such a faith can never be true and genuine, nor of any use and advantage; though good works do not, and cannot justify a man's person before God; yet they justify a man's faith or evidence the truth of it before men; they are fruits of faith, and so testimonies of the reality of it. *A man may say, adds the same apostle, thou hast faith and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works* (James 2:18) Yea, he further observes, that *by works faith is made perfect;* and that, *as the body without the spirit is dead; so faith without works is dead also.* Not that the essence, perfection, and life of faith lie in, or flow from works; but because, as one rightly judges, works are second acts, necessarily flowing from the life of faith; and faith is said to be perfected by them, not with an essential perfection, as the effect is perfected by the cause; but with a complementary one, as the cause is made perfect, or rendered actually complete in the production of the effect. Faith is not an idle, inactive, inoperative grace but a very industrious, active, and working one; it *works by love* to God and Christ, to fellow-Christians and fellow-creatures; and love, by which faith works, takes a large compass of operation; it is very extensive, both as to its objects and its acts. Hence that which is perfect, as it is in Christ, is the fulfilling of the law; and though love is imperfect in the saints, yet so far as it acts aright, it acts in agreement with the law; and therefore the law can never be made void by that faith which operates by it. *Owe no man any thing, saith the apostle, but to love one another; for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Thou shalt not Covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying; namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* (Romans 8:8-10)

Again; As *faith without works is dead;* so, on the other hand, works without faith, are dead works also; yea, *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin:* (Romans 14:23) and *without faith it is impossible to please God,* (Hebrews 11:6) or to perform any duty acceptable unto him. Hence the law, and obedience to it, can never be made void by this grace, and the exercise of it, or its concern in justification: since *the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned?* (1 Timothy 1:5)

Besides, believers, or such as have true faith in Christ and his righteousness, are the only persons that are capable of yielding spiritual obedience to the law, or of performing good works in a spiritual manner. Men may as soon expect to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, as to imagine that good works, such as are in all their circumstances so, can be performed by any evil man. Men must become *the workmanship of God,* and be *created in Christ Jesus,* in order to perform good works; which. *God hath before ordained that we should walk in them;* (Ephesians

2:10) they must be made *new creatures*, and *put on the new man; which after God is created in, unto righteousness and true holiness;* (Ephesians 4:24) and such as are born again, who have the Spirit of Christ within, them, the grace of Christ bestowed on them, and particularly, have the grace of faith, and that in exercise, are best qualified for doing works of real righteousness, and acts of true holiness: of all men in the world, such as have believed in Christ, as the Lord their righteousness and strength, *ought to be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses;* and these, indeed, are zealous of them, and are heartily desirous of performing more than they do, to testify their love to Christ, and to adorn his doctrine: which doctrine of grace teaches *them, that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.* (Titus 3:8 and 2: 11, 12)

Add to these things, that that faith which is concerned in a sinner's justification, looks to Christ as *the end*, the fulfilling end *of the law for righteousness;* it lays hold upon a righteousness which is every way commensurate to the Law of God; which answers all its demands, and gives it all it requires; a righteousness with which God is well pleased, justice is satisfied, and by which *the law is magnified and made honourable;* (Isaiah 42:21) a righteousness that is complete and perfect, pure and spotless; by which *all the seed of Israel shall be justified*, and in which they *shall glory;* wherefore that faith which spies this in Christ, looks to him for it, and says, *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength;* (Isaiah 45:24, 25) can never be contrary to the law of God, or do any thing by which that is made void and useless.

2. Nor is the law made void by the doctrine of faith, particularly by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ. Indeed, according to this doctrine, the law does not justify, nor can any man be justified by the deeds of it; the law neither has, nor can it have, any such use, since the fall of man; this makes the righteousness of another necessary, and justification to proceed on another foot; *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.* (Romans 8:34) Man, through sin is dead; and he must be made alive before he is capable of working righteousness, or of yielding obedience to the law: there must be life before there can be righteousness. Now *if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law:* (Galatians 3:21) but inasmuch as there never was any such law which could give life to a dead sinner, there can be no justification by it. The argument used by the apostle, is sufficient to give satisfaction to any one that has any regard to Christ or true Christianity; *if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain;* (Galatians 2:21) but though this use of the law is set aside by the doctrine of faith, yet all its real and proper uses continue untouched by it, and remain in full force; *we know that the law is good if a man use it lawfully.* (1 Timothy 1:8) There is a lawful and there is an unlawful use of the law; the unlawful use of the law is to seek for life, righteousness and salvation by it; the lawful uses of it, and which are not made void by the doctrine of faith, are such as these:

One use of the law is, to inform us of the mind and will of God; it is a transcript of his holy nature and unchangeable will; and therefore is itself *holy just and good,*(Romans 7:12) as it must needs be, since it comes from him; it teaches us *what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God;* it points out to us our duty both to God and man; what should be done or not done by us; it directs us *to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and strength; and to love our neighbour as ourselves;* which, in a few words, contain the sum and substance of it.

Another use of the law is, to convince of sin: *for by the law is the knowledge of sin;* (Romans 3:20) of sin original and actual, of the sin of our hearts and nature, as well as of the sin of our lips, lives and actions: *I had not known sin,* says the apostle *but by the law: for I had not known lust,* that is, known it to, be a sin, and sinful, except *the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.* (Romans 7:7) Not that the law can or does of itself, really and thoroughly, spiritually and savingly, convince of sin; for this is the work of the Spirit of God: but then the Spirit of God makes use of the law to work in men thorough convictions of their sinful, lost, and miserable condition by nature.

Again; Another use of the law, not made void by the doctrine of faith, is, to be as a glass to believers themselves; to behold therein by the light of the divine Spirit, the deformity of their souls by sin, and the imperfection of their obedience; whereby they grow out of love with themselves, and quit all dependence on their own righteousness for justification. So the apostle *Paul,* comparing himself, his heart and services, with the pure and holy law of God, thus expresses himself; *We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.* (Romans 7:14) In this view of things the psalmist *David* was able to make such an observation as this; *I have seen an end of all perfection: thy commandment is exceeding broad;* (Psalm 119:96) that is " I see that the law of God is so large and broad, and my obedience to it so short of it, and so imperfect, that I despair of ever attaining perfection by the deeds of it." It was, no doubt by the light of the Spirit, and as beholding herself in the glass of the law, that the church saw, and so said, that her *righteousness was as filthy rags,* and herself *as an unclean thing.* (Isaiah 64:6) Hence,

There is a farther use of the law to believers, and that is, to make the righteousness of Christ more dear and valuable to them for when they see how imperfect their own righteousness is, and how far short of the demands of the righteous law of God their obedience comes; and when they behold what an everlasting righteousness Christ has brought in; how perfect it is in itself, and how agreeable to the law; insomuch that it is not only fulfilled by it, but magnified and made honourable; they are at once delighted with it, fix upon it, and desire *to be found in Christ not having their own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ; the righteousness which is of God by faith.* (Philippians 3:9)

Once more; Another use and office of the law is, that. it is a rule of life, that is, of action, walk and conversation to the saints; who are *not without law to God, but under the law to Christ:* (1 Corinthians 9:21) and as it in the hands of Christ, and held forth by him, as King of saints, and lawgiver in his church, it is to be observed and attended to by them; and as persons born again, being under the influences of the blessed Spirit, and having his gracious assistance, they *delight in the law of God, after the inward man;* and though *with the flesh,* they sometimes, to their great regret and sorrow, *serve the law of sin;* yet, at other times they are enabled cheerfully, and *with the mind, to serve the law of God.* (Romans 7: 22, 25)

To say no more; though God's justified ones, are as such, delivered from the wrath and condemnation of the law; Christ having redeemed them from thence by being *made a curse* for them; (Galatians 3:13) and having the sentence of condemnation executed upon him, which their *sin* deserved, so that *there is now no condemnation to them that are in him;* (Romans 8:1) they are passed from death to life, and shall never enter into condemnation: yet the law remains a cursing and damning law to others; it lies against Christless sinners; it pronounces them guilty, and accurses them; it says to them that are of the works of it, and are under it, *Cursed is every one that*

continues not in all things which are written in the booc of the law to do them; (Galatians 3:10) yea, it is the killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death unto them. Thus the law, as to these uses of it, both to saints and sinners, is not made void by the doctrine of faith.

Perhaps it will be asked, Is not the law, in some sense, destroyed and abolished? Does not the apostle say to believers, *Ye are not under the law, but under grace?* (Romans 6:14) Yea, he affirms that they *are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; and that they are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein they were held.* (Romans 7:4, 6) And elsewhere, (2 Corinthians 3:11) he argues from the former glory of the law, to the more excelling glory of the gospel, thus; *If that which is done away, that is, the law, was glorious, much more that which remaineth, that is, the everlasting gospel, is glorious.* To which I answer,

That the law, as a *covenant of works*, is abolished, and done away; in this sense, it is made void to believers. *Adam* was a covenant head and representative of all his posterity, in which he was a figure of him that was to come; the law was given to him and to all mankind in him, promising life on condition of obedience, and threatening with death in case of transgression. *Adam* soon broke this covenant, whereby *sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men! for in him all have sinned,* (Romans 5:12, 14) God's elect themselves not excepted. These were considered in *Adam*, their natural and federal head; they sinned in him, and fell with him; the sentence of death passed on them as on others; the reason why it was not, and never will be executed upon them is, because Christ, in the everlasting covenant, became their surety and substitute: engaged to bear the punishment of their sins, and make satisfaction to the law and justice of God for them; which he has done by his sufferings and death; and so has delivered them from the law, as a covenant of works; and from all that misery, destruction and death, it entailed upon them wherefore they are *not under the law*, as a covenant of works, but *under grace*, the covenant of grace.

Again: The law is abolished and done away, as to the form of administration of it by *Moses*. The whole frame of the *Mosaic* economy is broke to pieces; which was signified by the two tables of stone being cast out of his hands and broken, when he came down from the mount; which were afterwards renewed, and put into the ark, a type of Christ; in whose hands, and not in the hands of *Moses*, is the law to be considered. The Jews said to the poor blind man, that was cured by Christ, *Thou art his*, that is, Christ's *disciple; but we are Moses's disciples.* (John 9:28) They valued themselves upon the latter; we Christians upon the former. *Moses*, indeed, *was a faithful servant;* but he was only a servant: Christ is *a Son over his own house;* and it is he that we are to hearken to. When *Moses* and *Elias* were with Christ on the mount, at the time of his transfiguration, a voice was heard, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him;* (Matthew 17:5) not *Moses* and *Elias*, but hear the well-beloved Son.

Moreover, the law is destroyed as a yoke of bondage. As it was a covenant of works, and as administered under the former dispensation, it *tended to bondage*, and induced a servile spirit on those that were under it, It was not only a rigid schoolmaster, but a severe taskmaster; not only setting hard lessons, but requiring strict and perfect obedience, without giving any strength to perform, or directing where it is to be had; but now, in Christ's hands, it is *a perfect law of liberty;* (James 1:25) and such as are called by grace, are made *a willing people in the day of Christ's power* upon them; not only to be saved alone by him, but to yield a cheerful obedience to the law, as given

forth by him. In this view of it, its commandments are not grievous; this *yoke is easy*, and this *burden is light*; the saints serve it with pleasure, *not in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit!* (Romans 7:6)

Likewise, As has been already observed, the people of God are freed from the malediction of it, and condemnation by it, and so from the terror of it; it is a terrifying law, as it is a cursing and damning one; wherefore, to such, who desire to be under it, it may be said, what the apostle did, *Do ye not hear the law?* (Galatians 4:21) it speaks wrath and vengeance, cursing and bitterness: it is *a voice of words*, of terrible Words; *which they that heard at mount Sinai in treated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded.* But now the case is different with us under the gospel-dispensation; the scene is altered; the face of things is changed; we hear a different voice; love, grace and mercy, instead of wrath and vengeance: blessing and salvation, in the room of cursing and condemnation: *we are not come unto the mount that might he touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest; but we are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly, and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven; and to God the judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.* (Hebrews 12:18-20, 22-24)

Once more; The law is abrogated and made void, with respect to justification. We are not to seek for, and expect life and righteousness by obedience to it; and should we, our seeking would be in vain, and our expectation would be disappointed. *Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith but as it were by the works of the law.* (Romans 9:31, 32) The same success attends all those who pursue the same scheme; by which they discover their ignorance, vanity and pride; their ignorance of the strictness of the justice of God; their vain opinion and conceit of their own righteousness; and their haughty and contemptuous rejection of the righteousness of Christ; all which is expressed in these few words; *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish a righteousness of their own, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.* (Romans 10:3) This is to act contrary to God's declared way and method of justifying sinners. There can be no justification by the deeds of the law; this use of the law is entirely abolished; we are not to obey it with any such view, or for such a purpose; no, we are to yield obedience to it, as in the hands of Christ from a principle of love to him; and to express our gratitude for the numerous mercies we receive from him, and through him; and to testify our professed subjection, and our sense of obligation to him.

But now, though the law is made void as a covenant of works, it still continues a rule of action, walk and conversation; though it is done away as to the form of the administration of it by *Moses*, the matter, the sum and substance of it remains firm, unalterable, and unchangeable in the hands of Christ; though it is destroyed as a *yoke of bondage*, it is in being as a perfect *law of liberty*; and though believers are delivered from the curse and condemnation of it, they are not exempted from obedience to it; and though they are not to seek for justification by it, they are under the greatest obligations, by the strongest ties of love, to have a regard to all its commands. So much for the *negative* part of the proposition. I proceed,

Secondly, To consider the *affirmative*, and to shew that the law is established by the grace and doctrine of faith.

The *perpetuity* of the law is maintained hereby. The race of faith always views the law in the hands of Christ, looks to him as the fulfilling end of it, and is attended with works done in obedience to it. According to the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, all the precepts of the law are fulfilled, its penalty endured, and itself continued as a rule of righteousness. The Law, upon the gospel-scheme, is as unchangeable, and more so than the laws of the Medes and Persians; not *one jot or tittle of it has passed away*, nor shall ever pass away; for *all is fulfilled*, and will be preserved.

The *spirituality* of the law is asserted and secured upon the foot of faith, and the doctrine of it. The Pharisees of old, as much as in them lay, made void the law, as to the spirituality of it, at the same time they pretended to be advocates for it; by insinuating as though the law only regarded the external actions of life, and was not concerned about the secret motions, inward thoughts and lusts of the heart: whereas, such as have believed in Christ, and understand his gospel, have other notions of the law; and know *that it is spiritual*. (Romans 7:14) A true believer, in the exercise of the grace of faith, beholds the inward corruption of his heart and nature; and mourns over it, as contrary to the pure and holy law of God; and at the same time, according to the doctrine of faith, with pleasure views, that he is *justified by the blood* of Christ, even by that *blood which cleanseth from all sin*, (Romans 5:9; 1 John 1:7) of heart, lip, and life.

The *perfect righteousness of the law* is established by faith, and the doctrine of it. Whatever the law requires, according to this doctrine is given it. Does it require pure and spotless holiness of nature? There is in Christ an entire conformity to it in this respect; who is *holy, harmless, and undefiled*; and as such, *is an high priest that becomes us*, is suitable to us, as being our sanctification and our righteousness. Does the law require sinless and perfect obedience to all its commands? Christ has always done the things that pleased his Father, and done all things that are pleasing to him; he has perfectly obeyed the whole preceptive part of the law. Does the law require of, and threaten transgressors with the penalty of death? Christ being made sin, was made a curse for his people, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. So that the law, in all respects, is magnified, and made honourable by him, according to the doctrine of faith. We bring to the law in Christ our head, or rather he in our room and stead, a righteousness which answers all the demands of it, and casts a lustre and glory upon it and indeed, all the obedience of angels and men put together, does not, and cannot give the law such glory and honour as the obedience and righteousness of Christ does. Whence it is clear, that the law is so far from being made void, that it is thoroughly established by it.

Obedience to the law by believers, is enforced upon them by the best of motives, and yielded to it by them, under the best of influences; it is enforced on gospel motives and principles. Read over the epistles of the apostle *Paul*, particularly those to the *Ephesians* and *Colossians*, and you will easily see how the saints are exhorted to all the duties of life, incumbent on them in their families, the churches, and the world; and are encouraged to a performance of them upon the principles of grace, and by the doctrines of it; and according to the covenant of grace, they have the best assistance promised, provided and afforded to them. *I will put my law in their inward parts*, says

the Lord, (Jeremiah 31:33) *and I will write it in their hearts. And again; I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

Once more; By the doctrine of faith we establish the law, or make it stand; because we place it in the best of hands, and upon the surest foundation. The law was put into the hands of *Adam*; but it did not long continue there; it was quickly transgressed and broken. The two tables of stone, with the law written on them, were put into *Moses's* hands; but he, as he came down from the mount, cast them out of his hands, and broke them to pieces beneath it: but now the law, according to the doctrine of faith, is put into the hands of Christ; and there it stands, and will stand firm and sure to all generations; yea, it will stand unchangeable and unalterable to all eternity. We say, *The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, and he will save us.* (Isaiah 38:22)

In this view of the law, how amiable and lovely must it look in the eyes of saints; they cannot but delight in it, as satisfied by Christ, and take pleasure in obeying it, as it is in his hands; the language of their souls is that of *David's O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* (Psalm 119:97) And as there is a pleasure attends an observance of it, there is peace in it; though it doth not arise from it, nor is founded on it: *Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.* (Psalm 119:165) Such as are believers in Christ, ought not only to be careful to maintain, but even to excel, to go before others in good works. Let us therefore, by divine assistance, shew by our lives and conversations, the truth of this doctrine, that "the law is not made void, but established by the gospel." Let us, as it is the will of God we should, *with well-doing pat to silence the ignorance of foolish men;* and shame them *who falsely accuse our good conversation in Christ.* Let us make it appear, throughout the whole of our conduct, under the gracious influences of the Spirit of God, that we have a proper regard to the unchangeable law of God, as to the everlasting gospel of Christ Jesus.

THE LAW
IN THE
HAND OF CHRIST.

A Sermon,

Preached May 24, 1761, at Broad-Mead, in Bristol.

DEUTERONOMY 10:5

And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.

MOSES being called up to mount *Sinai*, the Lord delivered to him two tables of stone, with the writing of the law upon them; when he descended from thence, perceiving that the children of *Israel* had sinned, by making and worshipping the golden calf, in great indignation at it, he cast them out of his hands, and broke them at the bottom of the mount: for this sin wrath came upon the people, and many of them fell by the sword of the sons of *Levi*; upon which *Moses* had compassion on them, and entreated the Lord for them; who promised to make his goodness before him, and proclaim his name gracious and merciful; and ordered him to hew two tables of stone like the first, and come up into the mount, and bring them with him, and he would write upon them the same words which were on the first; and also directed him to make an ark of shittim wood to put them in; all which he did: for having hewed two tables of stone, he carried them up to God in the mount, who wrote on them the ten commandments, according to the first writing, and gave them to *Moses*; who having received them, *turned himself*, as our text says, from the place where the divine Majesty was; *and came down from the mount*, from mount *Sinai*, with the two tables in his hands, and the writing of God on them, one table in one hand, and the other in the other hand; *and put the tables in the ark which he had made*, or ordered to be made by *Bezaleel*; for it was the same with that he made, and not a temporary one made for the present purpose till that was finished: *and there they be as the Lord commanded we*; there the two tables were when *Moses* rehearsed what is contained in this book on the plains of *Moab*, which was about eight and thirty years after the delivery and renewal of the tables on mount *Sinai*; and here they were in *Solomon's* time, when the ark was brought into the temple built by him; and when, as it is said, *there was nothing in it, save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb*; (1 Kings 8) and here they continued as long as the ark was in being. In discoursing on these words, and in order to improve them to some spiritual purposes, I shall consider,

I. The ark *Moses* made, into which the tables were put, as a type of Christ.

II. What was put into the ark, the two tables of stone on which the law was written.

III. What the putting of the tables into the ark signified; and,

IV. The continuance of them there; *there they be as the Lord commanded me.*

I. The ark may be considered as a type of Christ, both with respect to the names and epithets given unto it, and with respect to the matter of which it was made.

First, There is an agreement between that and Christ, in the names and titles by which it is called; its general name is an *ark* or chest, such an one in which men put their wealth and riches, their gold and silver, their jewels and precious stones, and whatsoever is of worth and value: in *Christ* are put and *hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, all the riches of grace and glory* besides the fullness of the Godhead which dwells bodily in him, it has pleased the Father that all fullness of grace should dwell in him, for the supply of the wants of his people in all ages of time; he *is full of grace* and *full of truth*; there is a fullness of justifying grace and righteousness in him, a fullness of pardoning grace, a fullness of sanctifying and persevering grace; and from him and by him does the Lord supply the need of his people, according to his riches in glory, or glorious riches which are in him.

The ark is sometimes called *the ark of God*, (1 Sam. 4, 11, 13, 17, 19, 21, 22) being made by his order and direction, and for his service and worship, and was his property: Christ, as a divine person, is the Son of God, his own Son, his proper Son; as mediator, he was set up, constituted, and invested with this office, by him; as man, he prepared a body for him in council and covenant, and in time actually formed the human nature, and filled and adorned it with the gifts and graces of his Spirit. Sometimes it goes by the name of the ark of his strength, *Arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place; thou, and the ark of thy strength.* (2 Chron. 6:41) Christ is both the mighty God and the mighty man, the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong for himself and for his people; in whom there is not only righteousness, but strength for them, to enable them to exercise every grace, to bear up under every affliction, to withstand every temptation, to oppose every sin, and to perform every duty of religion; for though they can do nothing of themselves, yet they can do all things through the strength of Christ communicated to them. The ark is also called *the ark of the covenant*, (Heb. 9:4) because the law or testimony, which sometimes has the name of a *covenant*, was put into it: and not only the law has been fulfilled in Christ, but the covenant of grace was made with him, as the head and representative of his people, and is kept and stands fast with him; he is the surety, mediator, and messenger of it, yea, the covenant itself; he is the sum and substance of it; all the blessings of it are in his hands, and all the promises of it are yea and amen in him. The ark has the epithet of *holy* given to it; *Josiah* ordered the Levites to put the *holy ark* into the temple built by *Solomon*: (2 Chron. 35:3) Christ is the holy one of God, holy in his divine nature, glorious in the perfection of his holiness, and is such as is not to be found in creatures, angels, or men there is none holy as he is; the *seraphim* cover their faces when they celebrate this perfection of his; he is holy in his human nature, that is the holy thing born of the virgin, without the spot and blemish of original sin; he was holy and harmless in his life and conversation here on earth, did no sin, nor was conscious of any; and he is the fountain and source of all holiness to his people; and *is of God made unto them sanctification, as well as wisdom, righteousness, and redemption*; to all which may be added, that the ark is called the glory of God, the face of God, and

Jehovah himself; (Ps. 78:61 and 105:4; Num. 10:35, 36) being a symbol of his presence: Christ is the brightness his Father's glory, the angel of his presence, and Jehovah our righteousness.

Secondly, The ark may be considered as a type of Christ, with respect to the matter of which it was made; it was made of wood, even of shittim wood, and that covered with gold: it being of wood, may denote the meanness of Christ in the human nature; *when he was found in fashion as a man*; in his state of humiliation, he appeared *in the form of a servant*, and was of no reputation among men, emptied himself, as it were, and seemed as if he was stripped of the glories of Deity, which were hid under the coarse veil of humanity; he took upon him all our sinless infirmities, *was in all things made like unto us, excepting sin*; hence he was disesteemed of by men, despised and rejected by them, yea rejected from being a man; was scarcely allowed the name of a man; and was reckoned a worm, and no man. It being Shittim wood of which the ark was made, and which was incorruptible and durable, may signify the incorruption of Christ, even in the human nature; for though he was crucified through weakness, died the death of the cross, and was laid in the grave, yet he was not left there so long as to see corruption; though he was dead, he was soon raised from the dead, and now lives for evermore. *Melchizedek* was an eminent type of Christ, *he having neither beginning of days, as God, nor end of life now as man*; and having *an unchangeable priesthood*, (Heb. 7:2, 24, 25) which does not pass from one to another, and in which there is no succession. Christ is durable, even everlasting in his person, offices, grace, and fullness, and in the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. The wood of which the ark was made, being covered with gold, and having a crown of gold on it, may point at Christ, whose head, the principal nature in him, is as the most fine gold; and who as mediator has a crown of pure gold set on his head by his divine Father, and whom we now see by faith crowned with glory and honour in the human nature in heaven. It may be expressive of the richness of Christ as man and mediator, whose riches of grace and glory are unsearchable; and of the worth and value believers in him put upon him, and of the high esteem he is had in by them, and how exceeding precious he is to them.

There are one or two things more, which though not reducible to either of the above heads, yet are worthy of notice; as that the ark was portable, and might be carried on occasion from place to place, as it sometimes was; for which purpose it had rings at the four corners of it, two on each side of it, and staves provided to put into those rings: and which also were made of Shittim wood covered with gold, and were emblems of the ministry of the word, and of the ministers of it who, though mean in themselves, are adorned and enriched with the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and have the rich treasure of the gospel put into their earthen vessels; and are chosen vessels, as the apostle *Paul* was, to hear the name and gospel of Christ in the world, and carry it about from place to place; so the disciples of Christ carried it through all the cities of *Israel*, and from *Judea* into the Gentile world, and through the several parts of it; and it was brought from the eastern into the western parts of the world, and at length to these northern isles of our. Moreover, let it be observed, that there was but one ark. Some Jewish writers think there were two arks; one that *Bezaleel* made, and this made by *Moses*; the one had the tables in it, and the other went out to battle on occasion: but for this there is no foundation. There was but one ark, and so there is but one Son of God, the only begotten of the Father; *one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*; one Saviour and Redeemer; *the same today, yesterday, and for ever*; there is none besides him; there is *no other name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved*. In this ark is salvation, and no where else.

II. I shall next consider what were put into the ark, two tables of stone, with the Law written upon them by the Lord himself; and may inquire into the matter, number, writing, and form of them.

1st, The matter of them; they were of stone; of what stone is not said, nor is it of any great avail to know what it was. Some Jewish writers will have them, at least the first tables, to be of the sapphire stone, which is not probable; and what they ground it upon is not sufficient to support it, namely, *Exod. 24:10* where the elders of *Israel* are said to see the God of *Israel*; and *there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone*: it is more probable these tables were marble slabs, since there was a great quantity of marble in those parts; and the rock at *Sinai* was a marble rock; granite marble of a reddish color, as appears at this day; and one of the paraphrasest expressly calls them two marble tables however, it is certain they were tables of stone, to which the apostle opposes the *fleshly tables of the heart*. (2 Cor. 3:3) Now their being of stone may denote either,

1. The hardness of the heart of man, which is called a stony *heart*, (Ezek. 36:26) and is as hard as a piece of the nether millstone; as hard as the adamant stone, which is the hardest of all stones: it is obdurate and obstinate, inflexible, and not subject to the law of God; nor can it be, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God is exerted on it, and makes it pliable, and bends it to it: without this men live and die in the hardness of their hearts, and *after their hard and impenitent heart treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and righteous judgment of God*. Or rather these tables being of stone denote

2. The firmness, stability, and duration of the law, which is invariable, unalterable, unchangeable, and eternal: *Concerning thy testimonies, says David, I have known of old, that thou hast founded them for ever*; (Ps. 119:152) they were made to continue for ever; and they do, and will continue for ever, even as long as there is any use for them in the world; they are more unalterable and unchangeable than the laws of the Medes and Persians. The law is not destroyed by Christ, but fulfilled by him; not a jot or tilde of it has failed, but all has been fulfilled: and whoever breaks, or teaches men to break, the least of the commandments of it, *shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven*, be reprov'd and chastised, if not punished for it. This must be understood, not with respect to the ministry of the law by *Moses*; as such as it has ceased, and the cessation of it as a ministry of his, was signified by the casting the tables out of his hands, and the breaking of them. *The law was given by Moses*, and as it was a ministration of his, it concerned the Jews only; it was given to him for them, and it was given by him to them, and to them only; and ceased as such when their church and civil state were at an end, and the gospel-dispensation took place; when *grace and truth*, the doctrine of grace and truth, *came by Jesus Christ*: (John 1:17) *the law and the prophets*, as ministered by *Moses*, and them, *were until John*, the forerunner of Christ, and Christ himself came, and ministered, and held forth both law and gospel in a different manner; wherefore, when *Moses* the giver of the law, and *Elias* the chief of the prophets, were with Christ when transfigured on the mount, a voice came from the excellent glory, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye HIM*; (Matt. 17:5) not *Moses* nor *Elias*, but *HIM*, and *HIM* only. *Moses* was the lawgiver to the Jews, but Christ is the lawgiver to us Christians. The Jews boasted that they were the disciples of *Moses*, but our greatest glory is, that we are the disciples of Jesus: when we say, therefore, that the law is immutable and unalterable, it must be understood not of the ministry of it, but of the matter of it, and that as moral; for whatsoever of a ceremonial kind may be thought to be in it, there is a disannulling of that, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of it; but whatever is of a moral nature in both tables, is unchangeable and eternal; whatever was *holy, just,*

and good, under the former dispensation, or in ages past, is so now. The first table of the law concerns the worship of the one true and living God, and the reverence that is due to his name; and though the time and place of worship, and the outward forms and rites of it are alterable things, yet worship itself, as it is of a moral and spiritual nature, and consists of acts of devotion to God, of prayer to him and praises of him, and lies in acts of faith in him, fear of him, and a reverential affection for him, and obedience to him, is the same in all ages, unchangeable and unalterable. The second table of the law respects our neighbors, and our conduct towards them; and whatever was injurious to their characters, persons and properties in former times, is so still, and ever will be, and to be carefully avoided; and particularly the firmness, the constancy, stability, and durableness of the law, are to be understood of it, as it is in the hands of Christ, the king and lawgiver in his house, where it abides firm and sure, unalterably fixed, and is held forth by him as a rule of walk to his people under the gospel-dispensation; so that they are *not without law to God, but under the law to Christ*. (1 Cor. 9:21)

2dly, The number of these tables deserves some notice, which are *two*, as containing the distinct duties which are owing both to *God* and *man*. Our Lord accordingly has reduced the several commandments on them to *two* general comprehensive ones, in answer to the question put by the scribe, *Which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind: This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* (Matt. 22:36-40) Moreover to these two tables answer the tables of the *heart* and *mind*, on which the law is re-inscribed in regeneration and conversion: according to the promise in the covenant of grace, *I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts;* (Heb. 8:10) and though the mind and heart are in effect the same, yet they are distinctly mentioned, and as it should seem with reference to the two tables of the law; and the apostle, when he puts in contrast the tables of stone on which the law was written, and the fleshly tables of the heart on which the epistle of Christ is written, uses the plural number. (2 Cor. 3:3)

3dly, The writing on them, what it was, and whose it was; what was written on the tables, were the Decalogue or the ten words; the same which the Lord spoke with an audible voice on mount *Sinai*, in the hearing of the children of *Israel*; the same he wrote on two tables of stone, plainly and legibly, that they might be easily read, and that even *he that ran might read them*, and that they might remain and be read in after ages; for *litera scripta manet*; and that they might remain unalterable, as *Pilate* said, concerning the inscription he put on the cross of Christ, *What I have written, I have written;* (John 19:22) signifying that it should continue as it was, and not be altered; so what God has written, he has written, and it shall remain so without any alteration and this writing, both on the former tables and on these latter tables, were the Lord's own writing, written by the finger of God himself; *Moses* wrote nothing, he only brought the two tables hewed, but quite empty and destitute of any thing on them; what was written was by the Lord himself: so the re-inscription of them on the hearts of men in regeneration is the Lord's own work, according to his promise; they *are the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God;* (2 Cor. 3:3) it is not men nor ministers that inscribe these things on the fleshly tables of the heart, but the Lord himself; it is not by might or power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts: and what was written on these renewed tables of stone, was exactly the same that was written on the former; the same laws in the same words and in the same letters. The law of God is the same, let it

be where and when it will: the same law as moral was written on the heart of *Adam* in innocence: and the remains of the same law are to be observed by the Gentiles, since *then do by nature the things contained in the law, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts:* (Rom. 2:14, 15) and the same is written again by the Spirit of God in the hearts of his people in conversion; and it is the same law which was in the heart of Christ, and he became subject to, and is the fulfilling end of, for righteousness to those that believe in him.

4thly, The form of them; they were slabs of marble, hewed and formed into tables by *Moses*; but the matter of them was still the same they were tables of stone, denoting the same things as before, and which have been observed; and the hewing of them by *Moses* may denote the greater polishing of the law, or the brighter edition of it by him; it is but a rough draught of it, which is found written on the hearts of the Gentiles; but the law as delivered to *Moses* and given forth by him, was such as no nation under the sun had, besides the Israelites; What *nation is there so great, says Moses, that bath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day?* (Deut. 4:8) The Psalmist *David* likewise takes notice of the distinguishing kindness of God to *Israel*, in giving them his word, statutes, and judgments, which he did not to others and for which therefore they had reason to praise the Lord, and which he thus expresses: *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He bath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.* (Ps. 147:19, 20) And the apostle *Paul* enumerating the peculiar privileges of the children of *Israel*, reckons among them *the giving of the law, and the service of God;* (Rom. 9:4) in the enjoyment of which they had the advantage and the preference to the nations of the world.

III. I proceed to shew what the putting the tables into the ark signified. And this denotes,

1st, The being of the law in the heart of Christ, of which he himself says to his God and father, *Thy law is within my heart;* (Ps. 40:8) where it was in a much higher sense than it was in the hearts of the Gentiles, who by nature do the things in it; or than it was in heart of *Adam* in his innocent state or than it is in the heart of a regenerate man. And its being in his heart, is expressive of the perfect knowledge he has of it: as a divine person, he is omniscient and knows all things, as mediator; the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him; and the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and knowledge rest upon him; as man, he was filled with wisdom, and increased in it; and as he spoke such words of wisdom and grace as never man did, being full of doctrines of grace and truth, so he had such knowledge of the law as never man had. This appears from his ready answer to the scribe, which he delivered in so full and concise a manner, when he questioned him about which was the greatest commandment in the law, before observed. It denotes also his strong and cordial affection for it. *David* describes a good man, and some think the Messiah, as one *whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night:* (Ps. 1:2) and of himself, and from his own experience, he could say, *O how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day;* (Ps. 109:97) in which, as in other things, he was a type of Christ: and if every man that is born again delights in the law of God after the inward man, and takes pleasure in obedience to it, much more must Christ, whose *meat and drink it was to do the will of him that sent him;* (John 4:34) one part of which was to obey and fulfill the law of God. Yea this includes and supposes complete conformity of heart and nature, of life and conversation in Christ unto it. There is a most perfect agreement between him and that. Is that holy? so was he in heart and life, Is that just? he is Jesus Christ the righteous. Is that good? he is good, and did good, and went about constantly doing

good. Does the law require a holy nature perfectly free from sin? It is to be found in Christ, who is *holy, harmless, and undefiled, and separate from sinners*; free from the spot of original sin, and from any blemish of actual transgression. Does it demand and insist on sinless obedience? This is to be met with in none of *Adam's* race, only in Christ, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.

2dly, The putting the two tables of the law into the ark, signifies Christ's subjection to the law, which was not only in him, but he was under that. As a Jew, he was under the civil law: a Jew he was by birth; the *Shiloh* that was to come, and did come from the tribe of *Judah*; from which tribe the whole body of the nation were denominated Jews. He was of the family of *David*, which was of that tribe. He was born at *Bethlehem Ephratah*, or *Bethlehem of Judah*: so that as the apostle says, *it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah*; (Heb. 7:14) and was a native of that land, and strictly and properly a Jew; and as such was subject to the laws of his country; and even when it was reduced to a Roman province, and obliged to pay tribute to the Roman governors, and which he did not refuse to do; for as he taught men to give to *Cæsar* the things which were *Cæsar's*, he did the same himself, and even wrought a miracle to perform it: for when the receivers of tribute came to *Peter* for it, he ordered him to cast his hook into the sea, and out of the first fish that came up, to take a piece of money, and pay the tribute for him and himself; so far was he from being chargeable with the imputation laid upon him, that he was an enemy to *Cæsar*, a stirrer up of sedition, a perverter of the nation, and forbade the people to give tribute to *Cæsar*. As he was a son of *Abraham*, he was under the ceremonial law, and subject to that; so he was throughout the whole course of his life: he was circumcised the eighth day, presented by his parents to the Lord in the temple at the proper time, and went up to *Jerusalem* with them to keep the pass-over, when but twelve years of age; we often hear of him at the Jewish festivals in their synagogues and temple, attending the service of them; and one of the last actions of his life was keeping the pass-over with his disciples before he suffered. The ceremonies of the law were shadows of him, of which he was the body and substance, and had their accomplishment in him. As a creature, as a man, he was under the moral law, and subject to that, as every man is and ought to be: being made of a woman, or born of one, he was in course *made under the law*; and *being found in fashion as a man*, he was in the form of a servant, and under obligation to do duty and service, to *fear God and keep his commandments*, which is *the whole duty of man*, (Eccles. 7:13) or the duty of every man: especially he was under this law, and obliged to obey it, as he was the surety of his people. That he became their surety is certain; hence he is called the *surety of a better testament*: (Heb. 7:22) he engaged in the covenant of grace, which is the better testament, to be the bondsman of his people, to pay their debts for them, to satisfy divine justice, to redeem and save them, to bring them back, and restore them, and set them before his divine Father; all which could not be done without fulfilling the law. This was a principal part of the will of God, which he agreed to do, saying, *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire*, such as were of a ceremonial kind, they being insufficient to atone for sin, and take it away; but the sacrifice of himself, body and soul, he did desire, which was typified by the sin-offerings and burnt-offerings under the law; *Then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God*; (Ps. 40:6-8) which was to offer himself a victim to divine justice, and be subject both to the precepts and penalty of the law, which as a surety for sinners he was obliged to be, and was: he was subject to the precepts of the law, and strictly observed them; he did always the things which pleased his Father, and all things that were pleasing to him, even his whole will and pleasure, and omitted nothing which he commanded and required; by which means he was fit to be a sacrifice for sin, since in him was no sin: he was not

guilty of any breach of the law, in thought, word, or deed, and hereby became a proper pattern and example for his people to copy after; for though they are not able perfectly to conform to him as such, yet he is worthy of their imitation in all they can and it becomes them *to walk even as he walked*, (1 John 2:6) though they can only do it in an imperfect manner: and besides the precepts of the law, as the sinner's surety, he was subject to the penalty of it; for though, as a mere creature, and a sinless man, he was only bound to keep the commands of the law; yet as a surety for sinners he was obliged to bear the penalty of it in their room and stead, which they through disobedience to the law were liable to, which penalty is death, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*; (Gen. 2:17) which is not only true of the first sin of man, but of every other, for *the wages of sin is death*; (Rom. 7:23) not death corporal only, but death eternal, or the wrath of God, which comes upon the children of disobedience, even on every one that has no share in the suretiship of Christ; but for whomsoever he became a surety, for them he became obedient unto death, and bore the curse of the law and wrath of God, and thereby delivered them from it.

3d/y, The putting the tables into the ark, signified Christ's fulfillment of the law in the room and instead of his people. He not only had it in him, and was made under it, but he perfectly fulfilled it. This it became him to do as a surety; *it became him indeed to fulfill all righteousness*, civil, ceremonial, and moral, but especially the latter; since his work and business was, as a surety, to bring in everlasting righteousness for the justification of his people, and thereby justly and truly merit and claim the character of *the Lord our righteousness*. He came into the world in our nature, to fulfill the moral law and righteousness of it: *Think not, says he, that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill*. (Matt. 5:17) Some of the Jews thought that Christ was an Antinomian, as these words plainly shew; just as some ignorant persons now reckon the faithful ministers of the gospel to be: and if our Lord himself was so ill thought of, it need not seem strange that his faithful followers should have each a brand of infamy fastened upon them: but certain it is, that Christ came not with such an intent, nor did he do anything in doctrine or practice which tended to destroy the law, but every thing which served to fulfill it; being sent *in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*, (Rom. 8:3, 4) as represented by him. And this is done, and effectually done; he is *become the end of the law*, the fulfilling end of the law *for righteousness to every one that believeth*. (Rom. 10:4) This is completely done; it is finished, and was finished when he died the death of the cross: and hereby *the law is magnified, and made honourable*; (Isai. 42:21) more so by the obedience and sufferings of the Son of God, than by the obedience of angels in heaven, or of *Adam* in paradise, or by the sufferings of the damned in hell to all eternity; the obedience and sufferings of these being that of creatures, whereas the righteousness that Christ has brought in and yielded to the law, is the righteousness of God; not only what is approved of by God, and accepted with him, and imputed by him to his people, but is what was wrought by him, who is God as well as man: and though his suffering the penalty of the law was in the human nature, yet in that nature as in union with the Son of God: whence the law has had such a glory put upon it, and an honour done it, it never otherwise could have had; wherefore we should look not to our own righteousness as justifying, which is but filthy rags, but to the righteousness of Christ, which he is the author of, and is in him; and who was *made sin for his people, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him*. (2 Cor. 5:21)

IV. The last thing to be considered is, the continuance of the tables in the ark; which remained there until the time that *Moses* was about to die, even many years after they had been put there; and they

remained there many ages after that; and which may signify the abiding of the law in the hands of Christ, the anti-type of the ark, even under the gospel-dispensation; the typical ark, and the tables in it, being no more, having their full accomplishment in Christ.

1st, Let it be observed that there is a sense in which the law is abolished, and continues not; the law and gospel are set in a contrast by the apostle; the one is said to be *done away*, and the other *that which remaineth*; (2 Cor. 3:11) which is the everlasting gospel, the word of God that abides for ever. When the law is in a sense said to become *dead*, and believers in Christ *dead* to that, and *delivered from* it; (Ro. 7:4, 6) this must be understood of it as a covenant of works; as such it was made with *Adam*, the federal head of all his posterity, in which he was a figure and type of the Messiah that was to come, the covenant-head of his spiritual offspring. This covenant *Adam* broke, and all his posterity in him; and so he conveyed sin and death to them, from which there is no deliverance but by Christ the second *Adam*: and he has redeemed his people that were under the law, and subject to the curse and condemnation of it, from it, as a covenant of works, entailing death and damnation on them so that they are not *under the law* as a covenant of works, but *under grace*, (Rom. 6:14) the covenant of grace; even as they are not under the law of sin as a reigning principle in them, but under grace as a governing one.

Likewise the law remains not as a yoke of bondage: it gendered, indeed unto bondage, and brought a spirit of bondage on them that were under it; but Christ has made his people free from it, and called them to liberty; and they are bid to *stand fast in the liberty with which he has made them free, and not he in tangled again with the yoke of bondage*. And indeed the law itself, as in the hands of Christ, is a law of liberty, and which his people serve cheerfully and voluntarily, being *made willing in the day of Christ's power upon them*; not only to embrace his gospel, and submit to his ordinances, but *to serve the law of God* with their whole mind and spirit. The commandments of it are not grievous and heavy, being assisted by the Spirit and grace of God to obey them from right principles, and from right views; not to obtain life, but from a principle of life and grace implanted in them; so that this burden, if it may be called one, is light and easy, and borne with delight and pleasure.

The law remains not as a terrifying law; it was attended with terror when delivered on mount *Sinai*; it was a fiery law to the Israelites, when they heard it spoken out of the midst of fire, and saw the lightnings, and heard the thunder that accompanied it, it made them tremble, and *even Moses himself exceedingly feared and quaked*; and when it comes into a sinner's conscience, it works wrath, and leaves a *fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation*. It is dreadful to them that are under it; hence, says the apostle, *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?* (Gal. 4:21) its dreadful menaces and curses? But the believer in Christ has nothing to fear from the terrors of the law and its threatenings, for he is delivered from the curse and condemnation of it by Christ; and though it thunders out terrible volleys of curses on such who are of the works of it, and are under it, and *continue not in all things written in it to do them*, yet none of these can reach to or fall on the believer in Christ; for *Christ has redeemed him from the curse of the law, being made a curse for him*: nor is there any *condemnation*, not one condemnation, (Rom. 8:1) were there as many sentences of condemnation pronounced as sins committed, not one of them that can be executed on them that are *in Christ*, who are secured in his person, and redeemed by his blood; since he has been condemned: for them, and sin has been condemned in his flesh, when he suffered and died for them; and therefore *who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died*; (Rom.

8:33) whose death is a security from all condemnation by sin, Satan, the world, or by their own hearts and consciences. They that believe in Christ are passed from death to life, and shall never enter into condemnation; and therefore, however the law may be a cursing and damning law to others, it remains not so to them.

Moreover it remains not, and is not to be sought unto for justification; for *by the deeds of it there shall no flesh, or any man, be justified in the sight of God; but a man, and every man that is justified in a gospel sense, is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;* (Ro. 3:20, 28) and it is a vain and fruitless thing to seek for righteousness by it. The Jews who *followed after the law of righteousness, and pursued it with great vigor and earnestness, did not attain unto it, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law;* (Rom. 9:31, 32) and this is the case of every man that takes the same course: nay, it is not only vain and fruitless to attempt to obtain righteousness that way, but it is sinful and wicked for such who *go about to establish their own righteousness, not only betray their ignorance of God's righteousness, and the pride and vanity of their hearts, and trust in themselves, and despise others, but even submit not to, yea treat with neglect and contempt, the righteousness of the God-man and mediator, Jesus Christ.* (Rom. 10:3) But then,

2dly, In other respects the law continues invariable, unalterable, and unchangeable; nor is it made null and void under the gospel-dispensation, or by it; *Do we make void the law through faith? Do we disannul it, set it aside, and make no use of it, or render it of no effect, either through the grace of faith, or believing in Christ, or through the doctrine of faith in general, the gospel, or through the particular doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, of which doctrine the apostle is treating? God forbid; it is detested by us, yea, we establish the law:* (Rom. 3:31) we set it on its proper basis, on a sure foundation; and bring that righteousness to it wrought out by Christ, which is commensurate to all its demands, and gives it honour: for *we know that the law is good, the author of it is good, who is God; the matter of it is good, being holy, just, and good; and the use of it is good, if a man use it lawfully;* (1 Tim. 1:8) for there is a lawful and an unlawful use of the law. It is used unlawfully when men make the works of it the terms of their acceptance with God, the matter of their justification before him, and the causes or conditions of their salvation. Otherwise it may be law fully used; and it is of use to believers themselves, as,

1. To point out to them *what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God;* (Rom. 7:2) what that is which is holy, just, and good; what ought to be done, or not to be done; what should be carefully performed, and what shunned and avoided; what is a man's duty to God and to his neighbour. For the law of God, as we have seen, includes both, and is a transcript of the holy and unchangeable will of God; what is his pleasure men should do or abstain from.

2. Another use of it, and for which it remains, is, that it is a glass in which believers may behold the deformity of their nature, the impurity of their hearts, and the imperfection of their obedience; and it is only of this use to enlightened minds: for of what service is a glass to a blind man? hold it before him, and he can see nothing in it, or by it: so set the law before an unenlightened sinner, and he will see nothing in it, nor through it; but an enlightened man, a believer in Christ, can see his face in it, and perceive what manner of man he is, in his nature, life, and actions: and when he compares himself with the law that is holy, just, good, and spiritual, he sees that he is in himself unholy unrighteous, evil, and carnal, and sold under sin, as the apostle did: (Rom. 7:12, 14) when

he is led to observe the extent of the law, and the spirituality of it, reaching to the thoughts of the heart, as well as to the outward actions of life; he cries out with *David, I have seen an end of all perfections, thy commandment is exceeding broad:* (Ps. 119:96) he despairs of attaining to perfection by it, and even of attaining to a righteousness through it, adequate to its requirements; he grows out of conceit with himself and his own righteousness, which he now renounces and rejects in the business of his justification before God, and acceptance with him. Wherefore,

3. The law is occasionally of further use to believers, to endear the righteousness of Christ unto them, and to make them value it the more; when they see their own righteousness in the account of the law, being neither as to matter nor manner done as that requires; that it is a covering too narrow to wrap themselves in, and a bed too short to stretch themselves on; that it will not cover their naked souls, nor shelter them from the wrath and justice of God, or render them acceptable in his sight. How precious then is the righteousness of Christ, when set before them as revealed in the gospel, from faith to faith; that being the righteousness of God and not of a creature; a righteousness pure and perfect, well-pleasing in the sight of God, answerable to all the demands of law and justice, which *justifies them that believe, from all things they could not be justified from by the law of Moses;* an everlasting righteousness, and which will answer for them in a time to come! hence they love it, prize it, praise it, lay hold upon it, and desire to be found in it, living and dying, and not in their own.

4. The law is in the hands of Christ as a rule of walk and conversation, directing believers how to conduct and behave themselves under his influence. The whole scripture, given by inspiration of God, is the standard of faith and practice, and the rule of both; the gospel-part of it is profitable for doctrine, and is the test of that; and the law-part of it respects duty, and points to that; wherefore *to the law and to the testimony; if men speak not, and act not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* (Isai. 8:20) Christ is king and lawgiver in his house and kingdom, the church and besides some positive commands which he has delivered out, there is a repetition of the law in the New Testament; a new edition of it, published under the authority and sanction of Christ; so that we are now *under the law to him,* (1 Cor. 9:21) and under new obligations to obey it, as held forth by him. And it is to be obeyed from love, in faith, and to the glory of God, without any sinister, selfish, mercenary ends and views. It is to be obeyed from love to God and Christ; *the end of the commandment is charity, or love; out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned:* (1 Tim. 1:5) not the terrors of the law, but the love of Christ constrains believers in him to yield a cheerful obedience to it: which they do through faith in him, depending on him for grace and strength to serve him in it. Of all men in the world none are under greater obligations to be careful to maintain good works than believers, and none so capable of performing them as they, and none so ready to do them; and in doing which they seek not themselves, but the glory of God; and which, as it should be, they make their chief end, as in civil things, so much more in religious duties; and when they have done all they can, and are assisted to do, they own they are but unprofitable servants; do not and cannot merit any thing at the hands of God, but expect eternal life and salvation as the free gift of God through Christ. And now, true believers, who behold the law in the hand of Christ, and as fulfilled by him, *delight in it, after the inward man;* and though *with the flesh they serve the law of sin,* to the grief and distress of their souls, yet *with the mind the law of God.* (Rom. 7:22, 25)

Upon the whole, let it be an instruction and direction to you to look to the law only as in Christ; viewed otherwise it is a terrible law, a fiery one, working wrath and threatening with it; throwing out its menaces, curses, damnation and death; but view it in Christ, and there it is fulfilled, its curse is removed, its demands answered, and that itself magnified and made honourable: and appears lovely and amiable, to be delighted in and served with pleasure. Look upon both tables of the law as in the ark, look to the ark, and them in that; and forget not to cast an eye to the mercy-seat so near it, which was a cover or lid unto it, and of equal length and breadth with it; the mystery of which you will easily understand, that Christ in his obedience, sufferings, and death, and as the propitiation, is equal to all the demands of law and justice. The ark, with the tables in it, the mercy-seat upon that., the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat, between which the *Shekinah* or divine Majesty dwelt, are such a glorious spiritual hieroglyphic as was never seen in the world besides; such a group of wonders, such an assemblage of the mysteries of grace, such a cluster of glorious truths are in it, which when you behold, say, if ever you saw a sight like this! The ark, and the tables in it, signify, as we have seen, Christ, and the law fulfilled by him, and continued in him; the mercy-seat, Christ the propitiation, and the grace and mercy of God streaming through him as such; the cherubim, the ministers of the word in general; and being two, may respect the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles and ministers of the New, looking at one another, and agreeing together, and both pointing at Christ the mercy-seat; among whom Jehovah dwells, and with whom he is and will be unto the end of the world. Here may be seen at once the law fulfilled and justice satisfied, mercy in its triumphs over justice, and yet both in perfect harmony and concord. Here *mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other*. Most of these truths may be seen together in one passage of the apostle; *whom, speaking of Christ, God hath set forth, in his eternal purposes and decrees, to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* (Rom. 3:25, 26)

THE GLORY OF GOD'S GRACE DISPLAYED, IN ITS ABOUNDING OVER THE ABOUNDING OF SIN

Occasioned by the Death of Mr. John Smith, Preached at the Time of his Interment,

April 15, 1724.

Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord—Romans 5:20, 21.

It is the manifest design of this Epistle to explain and vindicate the great doctrine of a sinner's free justification before God by the imputed righteousness of Christ: And in order to set this doctrine in its proper light, our apostle takes this following method; he first proves that all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, are involved in the guilt, and are under the power of sin; that they are all destitute of a righteousness, and not capable of attaining one by the deeds of the law: and then proceeds to tell us, that that righteousness, by which a sinner is justified before God, *is manifested without the law*, though both the law and the prophets bear testimony to it; that it is the righteousness, of God, wrought out by one who is God, as well as man; that our justification by it springs from pure, free, and rich grace, through the redemption that is in Christ; and that the way by which it is conveyed and applied to us, is by an act of God the Father imputing it to us, and by our faith apprehending it, as our justifying righteousness before God; from whence abundance of peace, joy and comfort arise to our souls: This is now the sum and substance of the first four chapters of this Epistle; and in this fifth chapter, our apostle sets forth the stupendous love of the Father in giving his Son to die, and the inexpressible love of Christ in shedding his precious blood for sinners, whilst such, that they might be justified by it, and saved *from wrath to come*; and also takes an occasion to compare the heads of the two covenants, Adam and Christ, and shew, how sin and death came into the world by the one, and righteousness and life by the other; and how much the glory of superabounding grace appears in our justification to life by Christ.

And in handling this great doctrine of justification, he does, as he goes along, obviate those objections which were then formed against it; "that it made void the law, discouraged the performance of good works, and countenanced licentiousness;" which are the very same objections that are now formed against it; and which, to me, is an evidence of the sameness of doctrine; that is to say, that the doctrine of *justification by Christ's* imputed righteousness, which we preach and assert, is the same which the apostle preached and asserted, because the same objections are leveled against the one as the other; and confirms me in the belief of this, that the doctrine of justification *by works* is not the scripture-doctrine, because it will not admit the same objections to be made

against it, which that doctrine had. Now I apprehend that there is in the words which I have read, an anticipation of an objection, which might be made against the doctrine the apostle had asserted, after this manner; If there is no justification by the deeds of the law, if sin was in the world, and death by sin so universally extended its empire before the law was given, then for what purpose was the law introduced? The apostle answers, *that the offense might abound*; an answer much like to that which he gives to a like objection in Galatians 3:9: Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions.

Though it is thought by others, that the apostle having treated concerning the state of things from Adam to Moses, subjoins those words, lest any should think that the law was given to deliver men from sin, and repair the loss sustained thereby; however, it is evident from the words, that one end or consequence of the law's entrance was, *that sin might abound*; and sin is permitted to abound, that there might be an opportunity, or an occasion for super-abounding grace to manifest itself; and grace does thus abound, that so it might reign.

My time will not allow me to make and improve those doctrinal observations, which these fruitful words would furnish us with; therefore the method which I shall take in speaking to them, will be to discourse,

- I. Concerning the law's entrance, and the end or consequence thereof.
- II. The aboundings of grace over abounding sin.
- III. The reign of grace in opposition to the reign of sin.

I. I shall discourse concerning the law's entrance, and the end or consequence of it; it will therefore be proper to explain these three things in discoursing on this head.

1. What we are to understand by the law.
2. What by the entrance of it.
3. In what sense the offense abounded by it.

1. What we are to understand by the law: By the law is meant either the ceremonial or the moral law; the ceremonial *law was a shadow of good things to come*; it prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ, and was the Jews schoolmaster, which led them to him; it consisted in the observation of *meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances* imposed on the Jewish church, *until the time of reformation* (Heb. 9:10). It may not be amiss if we consider a little, how far the words will bear this sense.

The ceremonial law entered but for a time, it was not to continue always; and this is thought by some to be the import of the Greek word *παρεισηλθεν*; and it is the observation of one of the ancients, that the apostle does not say the law was given, but *it entered*, and that on purpose to shew that the use of the law was but temporary. The moral law abides for ever, as a rule of life, but the ceremonial law was to continue but for a time, even *until faith came* (Gal. 3:23, 25), that is, Christ, who is both the object and author of faith; for Christ the substance being come, those shadows vanished and disappeared: His blood being shed, *which cleanseth from all sin*, no more need of the

blood of bulls and goats, nor of those divers washings and purifications; this great sacrifice being offered up, the daily sacrifice ceased; and spiritual ordinances being instituted, no more need of carnal ones.

Again; The ceremonial law was superadded to the moral law; it was an appendage to it, it entered in over and above that. The moral law was given to discover the evil of sin; the ceremonial law was superadded to it to lead the faith of God's children, under that dispensation, to a proper atoning sacrifice for it.

Again; The ceremonial law was an indication of that great evil which is in sin; God's requiring sacrifices to be offered for the typical expiation of sin, does manifestly shew how highly he relented it, and of what an evil nature it is; and if you will but consider the frequent reiteration of those sacrifices, and how there was, notwithstanding them, a remembrance of sin made every year (Heb. 10:1-4); also how far short of perfection these sacrifices left the comers thereunto, and how impossible it was that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin; you will then easily observe the vile nature of sin, and how it abounded and became *exceeding sinful* by this law.

Lastly, As the design of this law was to lead the faith of God's children to the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; so it was not only to shew us what sin is, and how highly displeasing to the great God; but also how much his superabounding grace appears in the remission of it, through the blood and sacrifice of Christ prefigured thereby; *so that where sin abounded grace did much more abound*. But then,

By the law may be meant the moral law, which was given by Moses, and is mentioned in apparition to that grace and truth which came by Christ. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). The sum of which law is love to God, and love to our neighbor; as appears from the answer which Christ gave the lawyer who put this question to him; saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment: And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:35-37). Hence it is that the apostle Paul says, that love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10). And this is the law which I apprehend is meant in the words of my text. I shall now therefore consider,

2. What is meant by *the entrance* of this law. We may consider the law as it entered into the world by Moses, as it was *ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator* on mount Sinai, and also as it enters into the conscience of a poor sinner.

The entrance of the law by Moses, does not suppose that there was no law previous to that which was given by him; for there was a law of nature which was inscribed on Adam's heart, and continued there during his innocent state; some broken remains of which are yet to be found, even in the very Heathens, as is manifest from Romans 2:14, 15.

Besides this, there was also a positive law given to Adam as a covenant-head, recorded in Genesis. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Through the transgression of which law he ruined himself and

all his posterity, and that for ever, had it not been for the kind interposition and efficacious mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus then there was a law antecedent to the law being given on mount Sinai.

Nor does it suppose that this law, which entered into the world by Moses, is of a different nature from that which was inscribed on Adam's heart, in his state of innocence; but only that it was delivered in another manner, the one was written upon the fleshly *table of the heart*, the other upon tables of stone; the one was given to Adam to be kept by him, the other was put into the ark, which ark was a type of Christ; the one was delivered as a covenant of works, the other only as a rule of life, to shew what is to be done, and what to be avoided, to discover the nature of sin, and the creature's inability to keep that law; in order that souls under a sense of these things, might make application to Christ, who was made under this law, and is become the fulfilling end of it for righteousness to every one that believes (Rom. 10:4): so that the law of nature, and the law of Moses, for substance, are the same. Again:

The word here used may denote the time of its entrance, it *intervened*, it came, as it were, between Adam's sin, and Christ's sacrifice for it; the offense was committed long before the law entered; and the law entered long before Christ's sacrifice was offered; it entered into the world between them both. The offense is permitted, and after some considerable time the law is given, that the offense might abound; and after as long a time, Christ comes to atone for this offense, that *grace might superabound*. Quickly after the offense was committed, a promise of grace was made; now between that promise, and the fulfilling of it, the law entered. But we may consider the law, as it enters into the conscience of a poor sinner, and thus it enters privately, secretly, and as it were by stealth; and in this sense is the word used, where we read of false brethren *unawares* brought in, who came in *privily*, *παρεισηλθον*, crept in, as it were by stealth, to *spy out our liberty*; now the law as given by Moses, did not enter in such a manner; there were present ten thousands of saints, that is, Angels. And so also when the Lord spake the ten words, all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; (Ex. 20:18); so that the law was not given in a private manner, but in the presence of angels and men. But when the law comes and enters into the conscience of a man, it is suddenly, at unawares, and it immediately causes sin to abound. An instance of this, we have in the apostle Paul; for I was alive, says he, without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died (Rom. 7:9).

He thought himself, before the commandment came, as good, holy and righteous as any man, and in as fair a way for heaven; but when the commandment came nearer to his conscience, and he law the perfection; and spirituality of it, and was thereby powerfully convinced of the filthiness of his nature, and the imperfection of his obedience, immediately sin revives, abounds, and appears exceeding sinful, and he becomes a dead man in his own apprehension; thus the words may be referred to the use of the law; though I am rather inclined to think they are to be understood of the law's entrance by Moses. Thus much for the law's entrance; we shall now consider,

3. The end or consequence thereof; that was, *that the offense might abound*: By the offense, we may understand either the sin of Adam, or any, or all other sins, and transgressions; there is some reason to believe that by the *offense*, the apostle primarily intends the sin of Adam; because it is that sin which he particularly treats of in the preceding verses, as also the word *παραπτωμα*, which the apostle makes use of here, signifies a fall, and so may intend what we commonly call the fall of

Adam; though, I confess, the word is sometimes used for actual sins and transgressions. But however, it may not be amiss to consider how this offense of Adam's abounded by the entrance of the law of Moses.

1st, The guilt of Adam's sin has abounded to all his posterity, being imputed to them; for in the preceding verses we are told, that *by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; and that by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners*. Now the apostle asserts, in Romans 4:15 that where there is no law, there is no transgression; and in Romans 5:13. that sin is not imputed where there is no law; so that the objection then is, how could sin exist, and be imputed, and death by it reign over the sons of men, when there was no law given? I answer, There was, as I have before observed, a law of nature written upon Adam's heart, the same in substance with the law on mount Sinai; which last was broke, through the violation of a positive command, and *thereby sin did exist*, and was justly imputed by God; Adam then standing as a common person, and representative of all mankind; but by the fall, this law and light of nature became weak and dim, so that the existence and imputation of sin did not appear so manifest; wherefore the great God thought fit to renew the law on Sinai, that the offense might be more conspicuous, and the imputation of it appear more just; thus *the law entered, that the offense might abound*.

2dly, Not only the guilt of this sin is imputed, but a corrupt nature is propagated to all his posterity; for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one (Job 14:4): This corruption of nature, which is sometimes called by the apostle, sin, and sin that dwells in us, abounds in every man, and by the law abounds more and more, according to what the apostle says in Romans 7:8, But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; that is, "This inherent corruption of my nature took the opportunity, through the law's prohibition of sin, to stir up in me the lusts of the flesh, and carnal desires of the mind, and pushed me on to a performance of sinful actions." *Thus the law entered, that the offense might abound*. But,

3dly, By the entrance of the law of Moses, Adam's sin appears *exceeding sinful*, attended with aggravating circumstances. For though the eating of the forbidden fruit, may seem to be a small offense, yet if you consider what an indignity was offered to the great God thereby, how his divine authority in his holy command was trampled upon, the glorious perfections of his justice, truth and power were despised, his pure and perfect image in man, which consisted in righteousness, and true holiness, defaced, and also that glory which the creature by its service should have brought to him, lost: thereby, it was great.

"He at one slap (as it is well expressed by a learned divine) breaks both the tables, and all the commandments,

1. He chose him another God when he followed the devil.
2. He idolized and deified his own belly.
3. He took the name of God in vain, when he believed him not.
4. He kept not the rest and estate wherein God had let him.
5. He dishonored his father which was in heaven; and therefore his days were not long in that land, which the Lord his God had given him.
6. He massacred himself, and all his posterity.

7. He committed spiritual fornication in eyes and mind.
8. He stole that which God had set aside not to be meddled with.
9. He bare witness against God, when he believed the witness of the devil above him.
10. He coveted an evil covetousness, which cost him his life, and all his progeny."

Thus he broke all the commandments. Now it is the law, which thus discovers the heinousness of this sin, in those particular instances. And in this sense *the law entered, that the offense might abound*.

By the offense we may also understand any, or all actual sins and transgressions; now let us see in what sense they abound by the law.

First, The law makes a plain and open discovery of them, and lets them forth in their own proper colors; *for by the law is the knowledge of sin* (Rom. 3:20; 7:7), yea, the apostle tells us, that he had not known sin but by the law; it is a glass wherein we may behold in the light of the Spirit, our inward deformities, as well as the grosser sins of life; though it is neither a magnifying, nor a multiplying glass, it does not make sins to appear greater than they are, nor more than they really be; but it discovers those sins to be great ones, which before were looked upon to be but small; and those to be sins, which before were not esteemed so; and thus sin abounds by the law's entrance.

Secondly, It makes sin to abound by a prohibition of it; not that any fault is to be charged upon the law; but upon the corrupt heart of man, which, the more it is restrained and prohibited from doing any thing, the more eager it is to effect it. It is just like a person in a violent fever, who the more he is restrained from drinking, the more he thirsts after it; or like a torrent of water, which when attempts are made to stop it, it rises, swells, rages, and overflows the more; such is the untoward, perverse and corrupt heart of man: thus when the Lord would have the Israelites go into the land of Canaan, then they refuse; but when the Lord had forbid them to enter, then they must needs go in all haste; so also when circumcision was God's ordinance, then the nations round about loathed it, and the Jews for it; but when it was abolished by Christ's death, then it needs must be taken up, as necessary to salvation. Oh, the abominable corruption of man's heart!

Thirdly, The law being given, sin committed against it, is attended with more aggravating circumstances; it is committed against light and knowledge; here can be no plea of ignorance, *no cloke for sin*; for he that *knows his Lord's will*, and does not according to it, shall be *beaten with many stripes* (Luke 12:47); it is bidding an open defiance to heaven, and a despising and trampling under foot the majesty and authority of God, instamped on his law; for according to the majesty and greatness of the lawgiver, does the offense in proportion arise: This law, which sin is the transgression of, being given forth by that great lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy (Jam. 4:12); makes the offense to be the more heinous. And thus *by the entrance of the law sin abounds*. This may suffice for the first head of discourse. I shall now,

II. Discourse concerning the abounding of grace over the aboundings of sin. First, I shall endeavor to shew where it does so. Secondly, Give some instances of God's superabounding grace.

First, I shall endeavor to shew where it does so; that is, where grace does so much abound, more than sin.

1. In the human nature; sin did and does abound therein. No sooner did sin enter into the world, but, like a fretting leprosy, it overspread and infected it; all human nature being then in Adam, the blood of all being then in his veins, was tainted by sin; and he then representing all his posterity, they sinned in him, according to Romans 5:12, Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that $\phi\epsilon\omicron\nu\ \omega\phi$, in whom all have sinned.

Sin so abounded in, and by Adam to all his posterity, that there is not one, who descends from him by ordinary generation, who is free from it. Jews and Gentiles are all under it; there is none righteous, *no not one* (Rom. 3:9), the disease is universal and epidemically. Now our Lord Jesus Christ, in the fullness of time assumed the same human nature; because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same (Heb. 2:14), and the nature which Christ assumed, was attended with all sinless, though not sinful infirmities; therefore he is said to be sent in the likeness of *sinful flesh*, and not in sinful flesh itself; now in this nature Christ appeared *full of grace and truth*; there is an infinite, inexhaustible, overflowing, and superabounding fullness of grace dwells in him, that we from thence might receive grace for grace. Thus in the same kind of nature, *where sin abounded, grace does much more abound*.

2. In the several powers and faculties of the soul, where sin abounded, grace does much more abound. Sin has abounded, and does abound, in every power and faculty of the soul of a natural man; as the disease is universal, with regard to persons, the descendents of Adam, so it is with regard to the several parts and faculties of the souls of those persons. What is said of the Jews, in their political state; is true of every man in his natural state; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there, is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores (Isa. 1:5, 6); they are not only destitute of all righteousness, but filled with all unrighteousness; empty of all that is good, and full of all that is evil; sin abounds and overflows in their corrupt hearts, which are continually casting up the mire and dirt of sin; from thence proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies (Matthew 15:19).

O, what an abounding, what an overflowing of sin is here? The heart is hardened, and dead in trespasses and sins, the will obstinate and perverse, the judgment depraved, the understanding darkened, the mind and conscience defiled, and the affections become inordinate. What wretched work has the abounding of sin made in the soul of man!

Now where sin has thus abounded, grace in effectual vocation superabounds; for by powerful efficacious grace, in conversion, the stony heart is taken out of the flesh, and an heart of flesh is given; new principles of life and love infused, and all sorts of grace implanted; the will is subdued and brought into subjection to Christ, the judgment is informed, and the understanding enlightened; nay, an understanding given to know him, whom to know is life eternal; the mind and conscience *are purged from dead works to serve the living God*, and the affections set upon things which are above. What an amazing, surprising change is this! O, abounding, superabounding grace!

3. This is true of the poor Gentiles, among whom sin has abounded, and grace also *has much more abounded*; and this the Syriac scholiast particularly takes notice of in this place; sin exceedingly spread itself, and overflowed in the Gentile world; there being nothing but the dim light of nature to guide, and no positive laws and commands of God to direct them, no wonder that sin should so

much abound among them; it having no other bounds nor limits, but the weak law of nature to restrain it; but the greatest wonder is, that grace should here superabound. This was the great mystery, which in other ages, preceding the gospel-dispensation, was not so made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel (Eph. 3:5, 6).

How was the grace of God magnified in their vocation! the abounding of sin among them made the superabounding grace of God appear the more glorious: what beauty and glory does the apostle cast upon the free, and rich grace of God, manifested in the conversion of Gentile sinners? Who, when he had drawn up a large list and catalogue of the vilest sinners, adds, And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:9-11). *Thus where sin to much abounded, grace did much more abound.*

4. This is eminently true of some particular persons, such as a Manasseh, a Mary Magdalene, a Paul before conversion, who looked upon himself as the chiefest of sinners, and could not but admire superabounding grace in his conversion; saying, I, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, I obtained mercy (1 Tim. 1:13); and so must every one, more or lest, admire boundless grace, who have been plucked as brands out of the burning, and translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. But I will now proceed,

Secondly, To give some instances of God's superabounding grace in the actings of it, to us-ward who believe.

1st, Superabounding grace manifests and discovers itself in conversion and regeneration; the state out of which sinners are brought, and the blessings, which are then bestowed, as also the mighty grace, which is then wrought, and the surprising change, which is then effected in them, are so many evidences of the overflowings of God's love and grace towards them, and in them. Well may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be said to beget us again unto a lively hope, according to his abundant mercy (1 Pet. 1:3), abundant mercy indeed! Abounding, superabounding grace! That he should, without any regard to our will or works, of his own will beget us with the word of truth (Jam. 1:18), and *quicken us when dead in trespasses and sins*; is an instance of his free, rich, sovereign, inconceivable and eternal love; here is the first display and discovery of grace and mercy to a poor sinner; it is true, there was grace and mercy in God's heart before, grace and mercy in the covenant before, and grace and mercy shewn in giving Christ, but until now the poor soul knew nothing of it. This river of God's love and grace ran under-ground from all eternity, and is now broke up in effectual vocation, and comes with its full flows into the sinners heart; which is now plentifully filled therewith, having as much as its narrow vessel can receive; so that where sin abounded, grace does much more abound; an instance of this we have in the apostle Paul, who tells us in 1 Timothy 1:14, And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; was exceeding abundant, ὑπερεπλεονασε, there was an over-plus of it; he had as much, nay more, than he could contain; it overflowed, it ran over and over; O abounding, superabounding grace!

Nay further, as there is a display of grace in the conveyance of it into the sinner's heart at conversion, even to a redundancy, so there is a sight and view given to the soul of exceedingly much more in the heart of God; it beholds God as *the God of all grace*, and views a boundless ocean of love and grace in him; O glorious sight! O happy discovery! this is what the apostle prayed for, for the Ephesians, that they might be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge (Eph. 3:18, 19).

Again, Superabounding grace manifests itself in our justification; how often does the apostle in the preceding verses, when he takes notice of the grace of God, displayed in Christ's justifying righteousness, use those words, much more, in order to set forth the great abundance thereof? The grace of God is manifest in sending Christ to bring in this righteousness, by which we are justified; and the grace of Christ is as evident in working it out; and when it was wrought out, the grace of the Father appears in accepting it in our room and stead, as also in imputing it to us, without works, and giving us faith to lay hold upon it: In short, there is so much of the grace of God conspicuous herein, that we are said to be justified freely by it (Rom.3:24). And a learned interpreter, upon this place, is of opinion, that by this *superabounding grace* we are to understand, by a metonymy of the adjunct, the obedience of Christ, which is of grace imputed to us for righteousness; it is certain, that there is more virtue in Christ's righteousness to justify, than there is in sin to condemn; for those who are once justified should never be condemned, there being no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? (Rom. 8:1, 34), who dare do it? who can do it? and if they do, to what purpose will it be! seeing *it is God that justifies; who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died*, Those who are justified by Christ, are completely *justified from all things from which they could not be by the law of Moses*; they are perfectly justified from all sin, and eternally secured from all wrath and condemnation. O glorious grace!

Again, Superabounding grace appears in the forgiveness of our sins: what rich grace is this, that our sins, which are many, should be forgiven us! Sins which are attended, with aggravating circumstances, sins against light and knowledge, against grace and mercy, secret and open sins; sins before and after conversion; sins of thought, word, and deed, of omission and commission; all sins, past, present, and to come; all are fully and freely pardoned through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of God's grace; grace! rich grace indeed! What reason had a David, a Manasseh, a Mary Magdalene, a Peter, to admire this abounding grace in the pardon of their sins? Nay, has not every pardoned soul reason so to do? What grace is it, that God should lay our iniquities on Christ, and that he should bear them, and take them away? that God should remove them as far from us *as the east is from the west*, and blot them out, and remember them no more; that when they are sought for, *they shall not be found*, because he hath pardoned those, whom he hath reserved for himself! (Jer. 1:20).

So also it does appear in our adoption; that we, who are by nature children of wrath, even as others, whose carnal minds have been at enmity against God, should be adopted into his family, is grace indeed; had he made us his servants, it had been an act of grace; but to make us his sons, is an act of superabounding grace; so that we have reason to say as the apostle John: Behold what manner of love hath the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God (1 John 3:1).

If we consider what we were by nature, how unlovely and undesirable, and that God stood in no need of us, we need not wonder to hear him thus saying, how shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? though we have a great deal of reason to wonder and be amazed to hear him say, thou shalt call me my father, and shalt not turn away from me (Jer.3:19).

Now as the superabounding grace of God does thus appear in our regeneration, justification, remission and adoption, so also it will in our glorification; for our salvation is all of grace, from first to last. If it is an act of abounding grace to beget us again *to a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance*, and to make us heirs of it, then will it be much more so, to put us into the possession of it: if we can observe superabounding grace now, we shall be much more capable of observing it in that state where all imperfection will be done away; then shall we *bring forth the head-stone with shoutings, crying, grace, grace, unto it*. This will be the delightful theme and happy subject, which the saints shall be entertained with throughout the endless ages of eternity.

But before I dismiss this second general head, I would just observe to you, that this clause in the text seems to be added to prevent despondency, and to comfort distressed minds, who, seeing that the law was so far from justifying from sin, or diminishing it in them, that; on the contrary, it abounded by it, might imagine that there was no room to hope for deliverance, and so give way to diffidence and despair; the apostle, I say, seems to add these words, to prevent this, and administer comfort, *but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*; that though sin has overflowed all human nature, and spread itself over all the powers and faculties of the soul of man, yet there is an infinite fullness of grace with God, which grace he plentifully sheds abroad in the hearts of poor sinners: Therefore let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption (Ps. 130:7).

Also these words may be considered as the end of the permission of sin, and the entrance of the law, that it might abound. God voluntarily permitted the sin of Adam, and that with a design to magnify the glory of his grace in the salvation of sinners; he suffered that first sin to enter into the world, which was the foundation of all after ones, that he might have an opportunity of displaying the perfections of his grace and mercy; then he sends the law into the world, that thereby, that sin, and all others, might appear in their proper colors, as they are in themselves, exceeding sinful; that so the sinner himself, in the light of the spirit, might more easily observe the superabounding grace of God in his deliverance from them. This may suffice for the second head of discourse. I now proceed to discourse,

III. Concerning the reign of grace, in opposition to the reign of sin. It may be very proper, in the first place, to say something concerning the reign of sin, which the apostle affirms was unto death.

The dominion of sin is universal; it has extended its empire over the whole race of human creatures: Elect, as well as non-elect, are under the power and dominion of it, until by irresistible, powerful, and efficacious grace, they are translated out of that kingdom into the kingdom of God's dear Son; and then sin shall not have dominion (Rom. 6:14) οὐφκυριετῆσει, "shall not lord it over them," because they are *not under the law, but under grace*; they are then no longer the subjects of sin, because translated into another kingdom, and so become the subjects of Christ; who is the head of the covenant of grace, as Adam was of the covenant of works; by whom sin, and

death by sin, set up their empire in the world. Now it does not become any of those who profess themselves to be Christ's subjects, to yield any obedience to the laws or lusts of sin; let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof (Rom. 6:12).

And as sin's empire is universal over every man, in a natural state, so its seat and throne are in every heart which is in the same condition; from thence it issues forth its laws, which have a mighty power in them to enforce obedience thereunto, from the several parts, both of soul and body: Hence you read of the law of sin, in opposition to the law of the mind, which law of sin has sometimes very great strength in a regenerate man, and is a ruling governing principle in an unregenerate one; even as the law of the mind, or the law of grace, is a ruling governing principle in a believer, also mention is made of it, in opposition to the law of God, the one requiring obedience thereunto, equally as the other; as also you will find that and the law of death coupled together, because the kingdoms of both are of the same beginning, extent and duration when sin entered into the world, death did so too; when sin let up its empire, death did likewise: over whom sin reigns, death does also; and when the one ceases, then will the other; their laws, interests, and kingdoms stand and fall together (Rom. 5:12, 14).

And as it has erected a government in the world, and issues forth its laws, so it has its voluntary subjects, who observe there laws, not out of fear, but love; though while they promise themselves liberty, they become the servants of corruption; and are mere slaves and vassals to sin, while they are so greedily fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind: And for all this hearty and cheerful service, they will have no other stipend paid them, than death; *for the wages of sin is death* (Rom. 6:23); which is what our apostle intends, when he here says, that *sin hath reigned unto death*: and how it has done so, will deserve our consideration. Sin hath reigned unto death,

1. By subjecting all to a corporal death; this is what is intended in the threatening annexed to that positive law given to Adam, as a public person, mentioned in Genesis 2:17 though not to be understood exclusive, either of a spiritual or eternal death. Now Adam breaking that law, he himself immediately entered into a state of mortality; from that time his body became mortal, and a sentence of death passed upon him, and all his posterity; so that from that time this kind of death, or what is equivalent to it, has reigned, and will continue to the end of the world to reign over all the sons and daughters of Adam. But here a question arises, which deserves consideration, and that is this, namely, How comes it to pass that believers are not exempted from this kind of death, seeing Christ has undergone it in their room and stead, and made satisfaction for that sin, and all other sins of theirs, which first introduced it? I answer, It is true, Christ has done all this for them, and yet they are not exempted from death; nevertheless, through Christ's death and satisfaction, it ceases to be a penal evil, it is *disarmed of its sting*, and becomes one of the believers' privileges, death is yours (1 Cor. 3:22). So that now, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; the saints may, as often they do, in their last moments, when God puts it in their mouths, sing that song, O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory! (1 Cor. 15:55).

For death to them is the end of all sorrow, a total abolition of sin, and a happy transitus or passage to the heavenly glory; and therefore it is they are not exempted from it.

2. Sin hath reigned unto death, by bringing upon all a spiritual death, whereby they are destitute of all spiritual life and motion, and incapacitated to perform any spiritual action; and in this condition

are all the elect of God, as well as others, till the Spirit of life from God enters and speaks life into them; and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1); where the apostle does not only observe, to the believing Ephesians, the blessing of grace which was then bestowed on them, and that deplorable condition which they were formerly in; but also what it was which brought them into it, namely, their sins and trespasses; for, if it had not been for grace, they had never been quickened, so if it had not been for sin, they had never been dead. But,

3. Sin hath reigned unto death, inasmuch as it hath rendered all deferring of eternal death; for the wages of sin is death, that is, eternal death, as is manifest from the antithesis or opposition, in the following words, but the gift of God is eternal life; and this bids fair to be the sense of the words in my text; for if the reign of grace be according to the reign of sin, and the reign of grace be unto eternal life, then the reign of sin must be unto eternal death. Now, I say, all, by sin, are deserving of this death, though it is not inflicted upon some, because of Christ's satisfaction, only upon those who live and die in a state of impenitence and unbelief; for the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Rev. 21:8); what in another place of scripture is called eternal damnation, is here called the second death; a phrase peculiar to John in his Revelation, though frequently made use of by the ancient Jews in the same sense; thus you see in what sense sin hath reigned unto death.

I shall now consider the reign of grace, in opposition to this reign of sin. And we may, by grace here, understand either grace in the heart of God, which is gloriously displayed in our salvation, or else grace in our hearts, which is wrought there by the Spirit of God.

First, By grace may be meant, grace in the heart of God; and then taking it in this sense, we may observe that God's grand design in the contrivance, accomplishment, and application of man's salvation, is to set forth and magnify the glory of his grace; which end and design of his are effectually answered; for grace reigns, and reigns gloriously in every part thereof; it is gloriously displayed in the election of a certain number in Christ unto eternal life, and therefore called the election of grace (Rom. 11:5); upon the very mention of which, the apostle in the next words thus argues: And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no mere grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work; an argument which the adversaries of grace can never answer; a dilemma they are plunged into, out of which they can never emerge. it is also gloriously displayed in that everlasting covenant made with Christ before the world began, which is so well stored with valuable blessings, and exceeding great and precious promises: It likewise gloriously appears in the mission of Christ into this world, to obtain eternal redemption for us; for God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8): Grace also manifests itself in effectual vocation; for he hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus, before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9); and so also in our justification, adoption, remission, and glorification, as has been more fully evinced under the second general head. And now let us not forget to take notice, that this grace reigns in a way of righteousness, consistent with the glorious perfections of God's holiness and righteousness. God, in drawing the glorious model and platform of man's salvation, so ordered it, that there should be no disagreement between the divine perfections, but that all should shine with an equal glory; and therefore he set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his

righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:26): So that through Christ's fulfilling the law, atoning for sin, and satisfying divine justice, the honor of God's holiness is effectually secured, and the glory of his righteousness displayed, as well as his grace and mercy magnified; thus mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Ps. 85:10).

With this glorious scheme, and the sweet harmony of it, was our dear deceased friend often affected; and I scarce ever heard him mention this place of scripture, which is the subject our present discourse, but I always observed, that he took it in the sense now delivered, which made me the more willing to take notice of it.

But then again, grace reigns unto eternal life, by Christ; it shall never be frustrated; God will never be disappointed of his end, to wit, the glory of his grace. It reigned from all eternity, it reigns in time, and it will reign to all eternity: It reigned in the contrivance; it reigned in the accomplishment, and it reigns in the application of it; for God has so ordered it, that it should be by faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed (Rom. 4:16); and it will reign till it has brought us to the full possession of salvation, even eternal life, by Christ. But secondly, let us now consider the words, as they may refer to grace in us.

This supposes an ejection of the strong man armed, a demolition of sin's empire and throne in the sinner's heart; which are effected by the powerful grace of the Spirit, in making the weapons of our warfare effectually mighty for the pulling down those strong holds. It also supposes a principle of grace implanted by the same hand; which principle exerts itself, reigns, and maintains its ground against all opposition, which it will do, if true, though it be but small; for it is an incorruptible, immortal, never-dying seed, a well of water, which springs up unto eternal life; and a good work, which being begun, *shall be performed until the day of Christ*.

Also this grace reigns by righteousness; it is supported and maintained by it; as Solomon says, the king's throne is established by righteousness; so is this throne of grace by Christ's righteousness imputed, and his grace imparted. All our peace, joy and comfort, in a great measure, result from, and are maintained by faith's living on Christ's righteousness, and by an apprehension of our justification by it; for being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:1, 2).

Also this work of grace is maintained by fresh supplies of grace, from that fullness which is in Christ, out of which every believer does receive, more or less, *even grace for grace*. Now both these together, namely, righteousness imputed, and grace imparted, will bring a soul safe to eternal life. Christ's righteousness is our title to, and the Spirit's grace from Christ, is our meetness for, heaven; and without both there none shall enter there. Now I will only add this one observation more, that is, that all this grace, righteousness, and eternal life, come to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. All the discoveries of grace, which are made to our souls, are through Christ; and all that grace which is implanted in us, is from him, as well as all those fresh supplies by which it is maintained. Also that righteousness, by which we are justified, is in him, and that eternal life, which we are the expectants of, is through him.

Thus have I endeavored to open and explain to you, this glorious and comfortable portion of scripture, according to the desire of our deceased friend, whose character may now be expected from me. I apprehend that the design of funeral discourses is not to praise the dead, but to instruct the living; and sure I am, our dear friend had no such thing in view, when he desired a discourse from this text, on this occasion. How well he filled the relations of an husband and parent, his wife and children are here the mournful witnesses. How well that of a neighbor, many of you here present can attest; and how well he behaved himself as a member and officer of this church, that universal esteem he gained among the members thereof, is a sufficient indication. The inward frame of his soul was generally very warm and lively; and with an uncommon seriousness, warmth and affection, would he speak of the great things of God. His light in the gospel was very considerable, and his conversation agreeable to that gospel which he professed; notwithstanding his employment in the world, daily threw him in the way of a great many snares and temptations. In short, he appeared to be an instance of mighty grace, reigning through righteousness unto eternal life. I shall add no more, but some brief improvement of this discourse, and so conclude.

1st, What encouragement is here for poor sinners from hence to hope for grace and mercy through Christ? What though, poor soul, thou seest the aboundings of sin in thy nature, and in every power and faculty of thy soul; yet look up and view the superabounding grace of God streaming through the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; it is a mercy that thou seest the plague of thine own heart, and art not lest to thy native blindness, to a vain conceit of the goodness of thy estate, when thou wert *poor, wretched, miserable, and blind and naked; take heart*, therefore, and do not be discouraged; *Christ's grace is sufficient for thee*; and where sin abounded, grace hath much more so; there is enough in Christ for thee; there is righteousness to clothe, and bread to nourish, grace to sanctify, strength to support, and every thing needful for thee; go to him as a poor perishing sinner, implore his grace, and venture on him, I dare say he will not reject thee.

2dly, Though here is encouragement for sinners from hence, yet no encouragement to sin. The doctrine of grace is no licentious doctrine; it gives no liberty to sin, nor encourages persons in it; however it may be clamored against, and bespattered by persons who neither understand the doctrine, nor have felt the power of it on their souls: that though there is more grace in Christ to save us, than there is sin in us to damn us, or because the more sin has abounded in us, the more his grace superabounded in our salvation; does it thence follow that we are, by this doctrine encouraged to *continue in sin that grace may abound? No, God forbid; how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* Which the apostle takes notice of in the beginning of the next chapter, foreseeing what objections would be formed against it, and how much it would be aspersed by a spiteful and ill-natured world. And whatever may be advanced against it, this doctrine is the foundation of all real holiness, the saints bulwark against apostasy, and their magazine of solid consolation.

3dly, If the grace of God is so apparent in our salvation, what reason have we to admire it, and to glorify God for it? The grace of the Father abounds towards us, and the grace of the Son abounds towards us, and so does the grace of the Spirit; therefore we should be equally concerned for the glory of the eternal three, whole grace has much more abounded where sin did abound; and this we cannot but do, when we consider what has been bestowed on us, and how much more is yet in reserve for us, though we are altogether undeserving of it.

4thly, Seeing that without Christ's righteousness imputed, and his grace imparted, none can enter into the kingdom of heaven; how much should souls be concerned for both; that this grace might be within them, and Christ's righteousness put upon them, that *being thus cloathed, they may not be found naked?*

And then, lastly, With what comfort can any look death in the face, if sin reigns over them, and not grace in them? over them will the second death reign eternally; for none shall reign with Christ in glory, but those in whose hearts grace has reigned here.

But, on the contrary; how cheerfully do those resign themselves into the arms of Christ when death approaches, who have known the grace of God in truth? these shall for ever reign with Christ, and dwell in his presence; in whose presence is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore: there shall live in the continual view, enjoyment, and admiration of boundless grace; *ascribing blessing and honor, and glory, and power, unto Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

A GOOD HOPE THROUGH GRACE

Occasioned By The Death Of Mr. Edward Ludlow.

Preached Jan. 1, 1749.

...And good hope through grace.— 2 Thessalonians 2:16

Three things the apostle does in the context: he describes the happy state and condition of the persons he writes to; he exhorts them to stand fast in the faith, and hold fast the truth; and he prays for them.

First, He describes their happy state, in opposition to the followers of the man of sin, the son of perdition, who were given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned. First, by their character, as Brethren, of Christ, of the apostle, and of one another, in a spiritual relation; and as beloved of the Lord, or of God, as some versions; of God the Father, who had so loved them as to give his Son for them; of the Lord Jesus Christ; who had given himself for them; and of the Lord the Spirit, who had quickened and sanctified, them: and he further describes them by their election of God, for which he thought himself bound to give thanks to God for them; the date of which is, from the beginning, or eternity; the means, sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth; the end, salvation; the evidence, the effectual call of them by the gospel to the enjoyment. of that glory, which Christ is in the possession of, and is preparing for them.

Secondly, He exhorts them to stand fast in the faith of the gospel, and not be moved away from it; seeing they were so much in the favor of God, were chosen, of him, and called by him: and to hold fast the traditions they had been instructed in, both by word of mouth and by letter: not the traditions of the Jewish elders; nor such like unwritten traditions the Papists plead for; but the truths and ordinances of the gospel; so called, because delivered by Christ to his apostles, and by them to the churches, either by speech, or by writing; and, are the evangelical cabala, which ought to be held fast till Christ's second coming:

Thirdly, He prays for them, as being most affectionately concerned for their welfare; and therefore, he follows his exhortations with petitions; well knowing this was the most effectual way to have them succeed. The objects addressed are, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father; two divine persons in the godhead: and seeing our Lord Jesus Christ is equally prayed unto as God our Father; and the same things are asked of him as of the Father; and the same gifts and blessings of grace are ascribed to the one as to the other; yea, he is mentioned in the address before his Father; we may conclude his perfect equality with him, and so his true and proper deity; or prayer, which is such a considerable branch of worship, would not be made to him, nor would he be placed on an equal foot with his Father, and much less be set before him. The things prayed for are, that these divine persons would comfort their hearts; with fresh discoveries of their love to them; with

renewed applications of pardoning grace and mercy; with the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel; by the word and ordinances of it; and by granting them fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit, in private and in public: and also, that they would stablish them in every good ward and work; in every truth of the gospel, and in the practice of every duty. It is a good thing for a Christian to have his heart established in the doctrines of grace; and it is his honor to be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord: and though the saints are in a firm and stable state, as being interested in everlasting love, secured in the covenant of grace, and safe in the arms of Christ; yet they have need of establishment in the present truths, that so they may not be carried away with the error of the wicked; and in the exercise of grace, that they may not fall from the steadfastness of their faith; and in the discharge of duty, that they be not drawn off from it. Now there is abundant reason to conclude that these petitions would be heard and, answered,

1. From the characters of the persons addressed, our Lord Jesus Christ himself. he who is our Lord, not by creation only, as he is Lord of all; but by redemption, having bought us with his precious blood, and therefore are not our own, but his; and by virtue of a marriage-relation to us, he having espoused us to himself in righteousness, mercy, and loving-kindness; and therefore, is our Lord, and we should worship him: and moreover he is Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, who has saved us from our Sins, and from wrath to come, with an everlasting salvation; and is the Christ of God, anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King, which offices he sustains and executes for us; and therefore may it not reasonably be concluded that whatsoever is asked of him and in his name, will be granted? The other, person is God even our Father; not by creation merely, as he is of all men, who are his offspring, and the care of his providence; — but by adoption, through Jesus Christ: he who is Christ's God is our God, and he who is Christ's Father is our Father; which relation is owing to his free favor and love; and if earthly parents are ready and willing to give good gifts to their children to the utmost of their power; will not our heavenly Father give every good and needful thing to his children, so near and dear to him? And which may be further concluded,

2. From the love each person bore to those for whom the petitions are presented: which hath loved us; which relates both to God our Father, and to our Lord Jesus Christ, who have both loved us; such who were by nature children of wrath, enemies in their minds by wicked works; and were far from having any true love to God or Christ; so far from it, that they were enmity itself unto them, and yet loved by them. Matchless, unparalleled Grace ! The Father loved them, and therefore appointed them not unto the wrath they deserved, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ; loved them, and therefore made a covenant with them in Christ, ordered in all things and sure, full of precious promises and spiritual blessings, suited to their cases and circumstances; loved them, and therefore made them the care and charge of his Son, put them into his hands, and laid up grace and glory for them; loved them, and therefore sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be the Savior and Redeemer of them; loved them, and therefore spared him not, but delivered him up into the hands of justice and death for them; loved them, and therefore begot them again to a lively hope, and quickened them when dead in trespasses and sins; loved them, and therefore justified them, pardoned them, and adopted them into his family, and made them heirs of himself, and joint-heirs with Christ. And our Lord Jesus Christ himself loved them with the same love his Father did, and as early; and therefore in eternity became their surety, and espoused their persons and cause; loved them, and therefore in time assumed their nature, bore their sorrows, took upon him their sins, and suffered for them; loved them, and therefore gave himself an offering unto God for them; loved

them, and therefore shed his precious blood for the remission of their sins, and washed them from them in it; loved them, and therefore is gone to prepare heaven and happiness for them, and will come again and take them to himself, that where he is, they may be also. Now, from persons of so much love, and who have given such strong proofs of it, what may not be expected? And which may be still further concluded,

3. From the gifts of grace, bestowed as the fruits of such love: and hath given us everlasting consolation; God is the God of comfort, and all true comfort springs from him; Christ is the consolation of Israel, and if there is any real, solid comfort, it is in him, and comes by him, through his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and which is applied by the holy Spirit, through the word and ordinances, which are breasts of consolation; and by the ministers of the gospel, who are Barnabases, sons of comfort; and miserable comforters are all others that attempt to comfort in another way.

And whatever comfort is had in this way, is a pure gift of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ; it is what men are undeserving of, and therefore the least measure of it should not be reckoned small; because those that share it are by nature children of wrath, as others: and though this, as to sensible enjoyment, does not always continue, but is interrupted through the prevalence of corruptions, the violence of Satan's temptations, and through divine desertions; yet the foundation of it is always, and is everlasting, as the everlasting love of God; and therefore the elect are not, and cannot be consumed; the everlasting covenant of grace, which yields the heirs of promise strong consolation; the everlasting righteousness of Christ, by which being justified, they have peace with God; and everlasting salvation by him, and therefore shall be saved from wrath to come; and both Christ and the holy Spirit, the other comforter, always abide, and are the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever: and besides, as the spiritual joy of believers is what no man can take away from them, so it eventually issues in everlasting consolation, without any interruption in the future state; when the redeemed shall be come to Zion, they shall have everlasting joy on their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. The other gift is good hope through grace; and since God and Christ have bestowed such high favors upon the saints, it may be reasonably thought, that they will go on to comfort their hearts, and establish them. And this clause in the text being what our deceased friend pointed at, and laid the emphasis upon, I shall a little more largely insist upon it, and do the following things.

First, I shall give some account of the nature of the grace of hope.

Secondly, Shew the original of it, that it is of God, and a gift of his.

Thirdly, Explain in what sense it is through grace.

Fourthly, Make it appear that such an hope is a good one.

First, I shall give some account of the nature of the grace of hope; and which may be learnt in a good measure from the things with which it is conversant. And,

1st, It is of things unseen. An object seen and enjoyed leaves no room for the exercise of hope about it; wherefore the apostle says, hope that is seen is not hope (Rom. 8:24, 25); that is, what is

seen and enjoyed is not the object of hope; and hope can be no longer conversant with it, since it is in actual possession; concerning which the same inspired writer in the same place thus strongly reasons; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Christ is the object of our hope, and he is unseen by us, with our bodily eyes, is only seen by faith; he is gone to heaven, and is at the Father's right hand, out of our sight; but we hope and believe that he will come again and receive us to himself; and therefore we expect him our Savior from heaven, to raise our bodies, and change them, and make them like his own, and to re-unite them to our souls, and give us perfect happiness with him: the glories of the future state we are hoping for, are unseen realities; what eye has not seen, nor ear heard; eternal things we are looking at by Faith, and which are a support under present afflictions, are invisible; they are within the vail, into which faith enters, and gives a glimpse of; and hope follows, and waits for a clear light and full enjoyment of.

2dly, It is of things future, things to come: present things are not the object of hope; for what are present with us, we no more hope about; we and hope ceases, which was exercised concerning them when at a distance: nor have them, are the things of this present life the only objects of hope; for if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable (1 Cor. 15:19).

Our hope indeed has to do with future things in the present life; we hope for more communion with God and Christ in ordinances, and therefore wait patiently in them; we hope for further supplies of grace out of the fullness that is in Christ, and therefore wait upon him and for him; we gird up the loins of our minds, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Christ: our hope reaches beyond the grave, to a future state in another world; to the resurrection of our bodies; to our standing at the right hand of Christ; to our being justified before men and angels; to our receiving the crown of life and glory; to our admission into the everlasting kingdom; and to our being with Christ for evermore, and being *like him, and seeing him as he is*. The things we are hoping for are laid up for us to be enjoyed hereafter; we have here some pledges and foretastes now, but the main is yet to come; and therefore we keep looking for it: faith only gives those things we are hoping for a kind of subsistence, and realizes them to us; and therefore it is said to be the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1).

3dly, It is of things difficult to be obtained, as future salvation is; for though the righteous are certainly fared, yet *scarcely* (1 Pet. 4:18) that is, with difficulty; by reason of the many corruptions, temptations, and snares in the way; and particularly by reason of afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions for Christ's sake: they come to the enjoyment of it through a strait gate and a narrow way, through many tribulations and sorrows; and there try and exercise hope. And yet,

4thly, It is of things possible; or otherwise there would be no room, nor reason for hope; nothing but black despair would ensue, and a resolution to lay aside all thoughts about our happiness in another world, and to take the swing in carnal lusts and pleasures; saying, there is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart (Jer. 18:12). But eternal glory and happiness being what God has prepared and promised, what is to be had through Christ, and that by sinners, even the chief of them, there is hope in Israel concerning this thing (Ezra 10:2); and the least encouragement given to a sensible sinner, hope lays hold upon; and it improves every hint and circumstance to its own advantage; such a soul putteth his mouth in

the dust, if so be there may be hope (Lam. 3:29); and as the possibility and probability of happiness appear to him, so in proportion his hope rises.

5thly, It is of things certain, which have a real being, and which are solid and substantial; and which not only faith is the substance of, but they are really laid up in heaven, are in the hands of Christ, and shall certainly be enjoyed; and of which the hoping Christian has no reason to doubt: and there is not only a certainty in the object of hope, but there is such a firmness and stability in the grace itself, that the soul in the lively exercise of it rejoices in hope of the glory of God; and which is so sure unto him, that he is even said to be *already saved by hope* (Romans 8:24).

6thly, True *hope* is always attended with *faith*: these two graces go together; where the one is the other is; they are wrought by the same hand, and at the same time, in regeneration; and are more or less exercised together; though the one may be at some times more visible in its exercise than the other; and there may be hope when faith is scarcely discernible; yet faith is at the bottom, and is the *substance of things hoped for*; and without which there would be no hope; and some of the acts of these graces are so similar, so much like to one another, that they are scarcely to be discerned and distinguished from each other; and therefore are put for one another: So what is called trusting in Christ, Ephesians 1:12 is in the Greek text *hoping in Christ*; and these two are joined together in Jeremiah 17:7. I proceed,

Secondly, To shew the original of this grace, that it is of God, and a gift of his; for this clause, and good hope through grace, is in connection with the words preceding, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which — hath given both everlasting comfort and good hope. As faith, so hope, is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; and what is said of the one is true of the other, that all men have it not (Eph. 2:8; 2 Thess. 3:2). Hope is not to be found naturally in men; nor is it in any natural man, in a man that is in a state of unregeneracy; such may express it, but not experience it; it is too commonly and too profanely said, "As I hope to be saved;" when such who use the phrase know not what a good hope through grace is; it is the character of God's own people before conversion, that they are without hope, as well as without God and Christ in the world (Eph. 2:12): This is a grace which is wrought in the soul in regeneration by the Spirit of God, and is one of his fruits; it is implanted by him, and grows up under his influence; it is through him believers wait for the hope of righteousness by faith; and it is through his power they abound in the exercise of it: No man has it till he is born again; for he is, of abounding grace, begotten to it: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Pet. 1:3); by which it appears, as well as from our text, that God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ have a concern in the production of a good and lively hope; that it is owing to the abundant mercy of the one, and the resurrection of the other, who was raised and glorified that our faith and hope might be in God (1 Pet. 1:20) and that it is not until a man is regenerated; whatever hope he has before, is not a lively one, and so not a good one: The gospel is the ordinary means by which it is ingenerated, and therefore may be called the *hope of the gospel* (Col. 1:23); and certain it is, that the gospel being good news, and glad tidings of good things, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ, tends greatly to encourage and promote hope; its doctrines being doctrines of grace, and its promises being free, absolute, and unconditional, are calculated for this purport, and greatly serve it; from there the heirs of promise have strong consolation, who flee to Christ and *lay hold on the hope set before them*; the promises they are heirs of, and which yield them comfort, encourage their

hope in Christ, who is set before them, in the gospel, as the object of it; and, generally speaking, it is a word of promise which the holy Spirit brings home and applies to the Soul, which is the ground and foundation of its hope: Hence says David, Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou *hast caused me to hope* (Ps. 119:49). Indeed whatsoever is written in the scriptures is written for our use, profit, and learning, that we through comfort of them *might have hope* (Rom. 15:4); and there are many things which, under a divine blessing, serve to cultivate and increase this grace; as the consideration of the power and faithfulness of God in his promises; the free grace and mercy of God displayed in salvation by Christ; the sufferings, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ; and present experiences and a recollection of past ones; for *experience worketh hope* (Rom. 5:4): But then the cause, means, motives and encouragements of it, all shew it to be of the grace of God, and a gift of his. And which may further appear, by,

Thirdly, Explaining in what sense it is *through grace*. Grace is the spring and source of it; it comes to us from and through the grace of God; it is a part of that grace, which the God of all grace is the donor of; it is a part of the fullness of grace which is in Christ the Mediator, and is had of him; it is a part of that grace which the spirit of grace operates, and is the author of in conversion. Grace also is the object of it. The words may be literally rendered from the original text, and *good hope*, en caipp, "in grace," and so the phrase is the same with *hoping in the mercy of God* (Ps.147:11): the mercy of God in Christ is the ground and foundation of hope; and is not only the motive and encouragement to it, let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy (Ps. 130:7); but is the thing itself, which hope is conversant with: the sensible sinner, or hoping Christian, hopes in the pardoning, justifying, and adopting grace of God, through Christ; he hopes that the good work of grace is begun in him; and he hopes and believes it will be *performed until the day of Christ*; he hopes for larger measures of grace from Christ, to enable him to do his will and work, to oppose his own corruptions, to withstand Satan's temptations, and to discharge his duty to God and man; he hopes the grace of Christ will be sufficient for him, or that a sufficient supply of it will be given him, to carry him through all the trials and difficulties of life; he hopes that his covenant-God and Father will supply all his need out of his riches in glory by Christ, and that God will give him persevering grace to hold on and out unto the end; he hopes for grace to be brought to him at the appearance of Christ; and he hopes for glory, which is the perfection of grace. Moreover, a good hope through grace is an hope that is exercised through the grace of God; that is to say, that a man hopes for such and such things, and that he shall have them; not through any merits of his own, or through works of righteousness done by him, but through the grace and mercy of God. Thus for instance,

1st, Let the thing hoped for be salvation, as David says, *Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation* (Ps.119:166): this the sensible soul knows is not by works, but by grace; and therefore he hopes for it, not through the one, but through the other: he is well assured that God saves and calls men, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace; that it is *not by works of righteousness they have done they are saved, but according to the mercy of God through the blood of Christ*, and washing of regeneration; and that they are saved by grace, and not merit, to prevent boasting in the creature; and therefore he hopes for it in this way, and in this only: and it is its being by grace which encourages him to hope for it; for were it by works, he should for ever despair of obtaining it. He observes, that it is freely wrought out by Christ, who came into the world having salvation, and is become the author of it; that it is already done, Christ on the cross said, it is *finished* (John 19:38), and now he is on the throne, he says, it is done (Rev. 21:6), and so

completely done, that nothing is wanting in it, nor can any thing be added to it; and therefore the man that is acquainted with all this, hopes for it through the grace of Christ, that has wrought it, without any works of his: he further observes, that Christ came to seek, and to save lost sinners; yea, that it is a truth to be depended on, and is worthy of his acceptance and the acceptance of others, that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners; and that the worst and vilest have been washed, cleansed, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God; and therefore he hopes for salvation through the same grace and favor that has been shown to them, though he has been as bad as they, and may think himself worse; he takes notice that Christ is listed up in the ministry of the word, as the brazen serpent was listed up on the pole, that whoever, looks to him and believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life; he is encouraged by the gospel-declaration that whoever believes in him shall be saved (Mark 16:16); and by the gospel instruction given to a sensible, sinner in his case, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved (Acts 16:31); which, he considers as wonderful displays of the grace of God in Christ through which he is enabled to hope in him.

2dly, Let it be the pardon of sin he is hoping for: As sin is the first thing the Spirit of God convinces a man of, it is the pardon of it that he in the first place seeks after; and when he understands the right way in which it is to be had, he hopes for it; not through his tears, humiliations, and repentance, but through the grace of God streaming in the blood of Jesus: He finds that God only can forgive sin, against whom it is committed; that this is his sole prerogative, which he exercises, in a free and sovereign manner; that he has promised, in covenant to his people, that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will he remember, no more (Heb. 8:12); that he has proclaimed his name in his gospel, a God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin (Ex. 34:6, 7); and that there is none like him on that account; and therefore he is greatly encouraged to turn to the Lord, who will abundantly pardon, and to hope in his mercy: He understands by the sacred writings, that God set forth his Son to be the propitiation for sin; and that he sent him forth, in the fullness of time to shed his blood for the remission of it, there being no remission without shedding of blood; and that he has *exalted him at his right hand*, to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins; and therefore he hopes for it through, him, seeing with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption: And though he observes that forgiveness of sin is through the blood of Christ, yet according to the riches of divine grace, and comes through the tender mercy of our God; and therefore he hopes for it, not according to his own merit, but according to the multitude of God's tender mercies. The gospel declaration, that whosoever believes in Christ, *shall receive remission of sins* (Acts 10:43) and the many instances of pardoning grace and mercy, even such that have been great sinners, and whole sins were attended with aggravated circumstances; as David, who was guilty of murder and adultery; Manasseh, of most abominable crimes; Peter, of denying his Lord and Master; Saul, the persecutor, the blasphemer, and the injurious person, and the notorious sinner spoken of, who loved much because much was forgiven her; all these engage to the exercise of hope for pardon, through the free grace and mercy of God.

3dly, Let it be eternal life which is the thing hoped for, as that is; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lye, promised before the world began, says the apostle (Titus 1:2); hence, eternal glory and happiness being the object, of hope, is called the blessed hope, and the hope which is laid up in heaven (Titus 2:13; Col. 1:5). Now, eternal life is the gift of God, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*; it is that kingdom which it is our heavenly Father's good pleasure to give unto his children; it is what

he of his rich grace, has prepared for them, and promised to them, calls them unto, makes them meet for, and bestows upon them: Not only the promise of eternal life, but that itself is put into Christ's hands for them; and he has power to give it to as many as the Father has given him; and to them he does give it, and they shall never perish: And since it is a gift of pure free grace, therefore do sensible sinners, seeking for glory, immortality, and eternal life, hope for it; which they could, never expect upon any other foot: And they are the rather encouraged to hope for it, since God has declared it to be his will, that whoever sees the Son, and believes on him, shall have it; and because they find the holy Spirit of God is at work upon their hearts, has begun the good work, which he will finish, and is working them up for that self-same thing, eternal life and happiness; wherefore they reason as Manoah's wife did, that "if the Lord were pleased to destroy them, he would never have shewed them and told them such things as he has done, or wrought such things in them;" and hence for grace and through grace they hope for glory; *seeing to whom God gives grace, he gives glory*; these are inseparably connected together; *whom he calls and justifies, them he also glorifies*, And,

Fourthly, Such an hope is a good one, There is a bad hope and there is a good one. There is the hope of the worldly man, who makes gold his hope, and says to the fine gold, thou art my confidence (Rom. 15:13); he puts his trust in it; and not only places his dependence on it for present and future good in this life, but hopes for eternal life upon the account of it; imagining there is none the King of kings will delight to honor in the world as himself, who enjoys so large a portion of this; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the man that is only upon principles in which he has been brought up; who hopes upon the faith of others, his natural descent, or being born of such and such parents, and his religious education; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the moralist and legalist; who hopes he shall inherit eternal life because of the good things he has done; because of his moral life and actions, and his works of righteousness in obedience to the law; whereas by there no man can be justified, and so not saved, or ever enter into the kingdom of heaven; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the hypocrite, who hopes for heaven because of his profession of religion and subjection to ordinances, and going through a round of duties in a formal manner, and with a mere outward show; this is a bad hope; it is like the spider's web, and will be as the giving up of the Ghost, and be of no avail; even though such may have gained a name among men to be holy and good, when God takes away their souls. And there is the hope of the profane sinner, for such have their hope; and they hope for salvation through the absolute mercy of God; they fancy if they have but time to say at last, "Lord have mercy on us," all will be well; this is a bad hope; for there is no mercy for sinners, but through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ. But the hope we have been treating of is a good one, and may be so called,

1st, Because it is laid upon a good foundation; not upon the absolute mercy of God; not upon the merit of the creature; not upon any outward acts of righteousness; not upon civility, morality, or an external profession of religion; all which are sandy foundations to build an hope of eternal happiness upon; but upon the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; upon the person of Christ, who is God over all blessed for ever, and is able to save to the uttermost, who is *the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof* in time of trouble, and *Christ our hope*, and *in us the hope of glory*; upon his blood, which cleanses from all sin, and was shed for the remission of it; upon his righteousness, which justifies from all sin, and gives a right and title to eternal life; and upon his sacrifice, by which sin is finished and made an end of, and reconciliation is made for it.

2dly, Because not only the author of it is good, who from it is called *the God of hope* (Rom. 15:13), but because the objects of it are good things; it is of good things to come, and the best things are referred till last; now the saints have their evil things, their sorrows and afflictions, but hereafter they shall have their good things. Christ is come an high priest of good things to come unto his people; and there good things are laid up for them, and shall be enjoyed by them; and hope is waiting for them: And the hoping Christian knows them to be good by the foretastes and pledges he has had of them; such as a sight of God in Christ; communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; fellowship with angels and glorified saints; perfect knowledge, holiness, and pleasure.

3dly, Because it is in its nature and effects good: It is called a *lively hope*, or a *living one* (1 Pet. 1:3); because it has not only for its subject a living man in a spiritual sense; and for its foundation, not dead works, but a living Christ; and for its object, eternal life; but because it is of a quickening, exhilarating, and cheering nature; and because it is attended with living works of righteousness; for as faith without works is dead, so is hope likewise; and because it always continues, and is sometimes in lively exercise, when other graces are not so lively: It is also said to be of a purifying nature; every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure (1 John 3:3); and which it no other ways does than as it deals with the pure and spotless righteousness of Christ, and with his precious blood, which purges the conscience from dead works.

4thly, Because of its great usefulness: It is that to the soul an anchor is to a ship when becalmed, or in danger through rocks and shoals; it preserves and keeps it steady; and is therefore said to be as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast (Heb. 6:19). And it serves the same use and purpose as an helmet does to the head; and therefore the hope of salvation is said to be for an helmet (1 Thess. 5:8); this grace preserves the head and heart of a Christian from bad principles in perilous times; for he can give into none that strike at the foundation of his hope; it is an erector of his head, and keeps it above water in times of trouble, inward and outward; and it covers his head in the day of battle, between him and his spiritual enemies; this he will never give up, This grace is of singular use under afflictive dispensations, of providence; the believer-rejoices, in hope of the glory of God, even in tribulations ; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given unto us (Rom. 5:2-5), And it is of eminent service in the hour of death; for when *the wicked is driven away in his wickedness*, like a beast to hell, the *righteous hath hope in his death* (Prov. 14:32); of tiring again at the last day, and in the mean while of being in the arms of Jesus, and of being happy with him; and therefore can look upon death and eternity with pleasure. Yea, this grace is of so much importance and usefulness, that even salvation is ascribed unto it, *we are saved by hope* (Rom. 8:24); not by it, as the efficient cause of salvation, for there is no other author or efficient cause of salvation but Christ; but by it as a means of coming to, and enjoying the salvation Christ has wrought out: As we are saved by Grace through faith, in like manner we are saved through hope; being begotten unto it, we are kept through it, till we receive the end of it, the salvation of our souls; wherefore upon the whole, it must be good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord (Lam. 3:26).

There is a sort of people risen up among us of late, who sneer at this phrase, *a good hope through grace*, not considering that it is a scriptural one; and represent such who have attained to nothing higher, as in the lower form and class of Christians, if they deserve that name; and suggest, that persons may have this and everlastingly perish: but let us not regard what these flighty people say;

let us attend to what the scriptures say, to what our text says concerning it; which speaks of it as of God, as a gift of his; ascribes it to his grace, represents it as a fruit of the love of God and Christ; joins it with everlasting consolation; and mentions it as a blessing of grace, which the apostles themselves, whom God had set in the first place in the church, in the highest office in it, were possessed of, and were thankful for: Let us attend to what a solid saint on a dying bed says of a good hope through grace; what his sentiments, his notions of it are; and such an one, I mean a solid saint, was our deceased friend, whose death is the occasion of this discourse; as must be allowed by all that knew him, who are capable of judging of a spiritual man.

At my first visit to him after he had took to his bed, upon inquiring into the spiritual estate and frame of his soul, he told me, he had a good hope through grace; and added, if I may but go out of the world with a good hope through grace, it will be more to me than all the exaltations and joys some persons speak of; that is enough, I am content, or words to this purpose; and subjoined, that if any thing should be said of him after his decease, meaning in this public way, he desired it might be from this passage of scripture, we have been considering. It pleased God to favor him with a religious education, to bless him with an early conversion, and to cast him betimes under a gospel ministry; by which means his judgment was formed, fixed, and established in gospel principles, in the doctrines of grace, of which he had a clear discerning: And as he had a retentive memory, he treasured up in it the quintessence and flower of gospel discourses, and the pithy sayings and sententious expressions he had heard or read in them; which, together with that large stock and fund of gracious experience of the love of God to his own soul, abundantly furnished him with rich materials for spiritual discourse; and which made his conversation very pleasant, profitable, and instructive; he being able to speak of divine things in very apt words, with great freedom, propriety, and pertinence. The frame of his soul was generally spiritual and heavenly, and so habituated he was to spiritual things, and so much given to the contemplation of them, and meditation upon them, that in the midst of worldly business, and even upon the Exchange, when he met with a proper person, would at once enter into a Christian conversation about such things, which lay warm upon his heart, he had been lately hearing or meditating upon; which shows the bias and bent of his mind. And as he was indulged with a large measure of grace, so he had great afflictions to try and exercise that grace; which afflictions he bore with uncommon patience seldom making mention of them, especially in a way of complaint; and never murmuring at the dispensations of God; but taking all kindly at his hand, as coming from a loving Father, and designed and overruled for his spiritual good, profit, and advantage. He was remarkable for his humility, he was clothed with it, that ornament *of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price*. His outward conversation in the world was exemplary, and as became the gospel of Christ, and was ornamental to it. He was many years a worshipper with us in this assembly; but became a member of this church but of late: We promised ourselves a great deal of usefulness from him in our church-state; but God has took him away, and he is joined to better company, and is employed in higher service: he was very comfortable in his soul, throughout his last illness; his faith was kept steady, ever looking to Jesus, in whom he knew all his salvation lay. He has left to you, his dear children, a shining example both in civil and religious life; may you tread in his steps; let it be your great concern to know your father's God, to worship, fear, and follow him; so he who has been his God, will shew himself to be yours, and be your God and guide even unto death. May we all learn something from this providence, and from this discourse, occasioned by it; and it becomes us,

1. To inquire whether, we have any hope of good things to come, and what that hope is; whether it be a good one or a bad one. If it is founded on any thing short of Christ, it is a bad one; if it is upon the Creature and creature, any it will be of no avail; if it is through works, and not through grace, we hope for heaven and happiness, it will prove a vain hope: But if it is founded upon what Christ is unto us; what he has done for us; and what he is in us; it is a good one, and will answer some good purposes in life and death: And then if we are satisfied we have such an hope, it becomes us,

2. To bless God for it; since he is the donor and author of it. It is not of ourselves; it is the gift of God; and we should ascribe it not to nature, nor to the reasonings of our minds, the power and freedom of our wills but to the grace of God: We might have been left to black despair, and to sink into hell under the weight of guilt; there might have been nothing but a fearful looking for of wrath and fiery indignation, which our sins deferred; but God has dealt graciously with us, he has given us *a good hope through grace*, Wherefore it becomes us,

3. To continue in the use of this grace; to pray for the holy Spirit of God to cause us to abound in it; and to enable us to hold fast the rejoicing of it firm unto the end; to gird up the loins of our minds, and hope for future grace and eternal glory; and to go on hoping, believing, loving, until hope is exchanged for fruition, faith for vision, and love is in its highest exercise.

THE FREE GRACE OF GOD EXALTED IN THE CHARACTER

OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

*Occasioned by the Death of Mr. John Brine, Baptist Minister.
Preached at St. Albans, Hertfordshire,*

May 26, 1765.

But by the grace of God, I am what I am. —1 Corinthians 15:10

The apostle is treating in the context of the important doctrine of the resurrection of Christ from the dead: he asserts, that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures, which foretold he should rise, and as in fact he did; of this he produces ocular testimonies, as that "he was seen after his resurrection of Cephas, that is, Peter, and then of the twelve apostles; next of above five hundred brethren at once; after that of James, then of all the apostles; and last of all he was seen by himself."

And it seems by his own account, that he was seen by him more than once; as at his conversion, when a light shone around him, and he not only heard the voice of Christ, but he appeared to him, and made him a minister and witness of what he saw and heard, and of what should hereafter be made known unto him; nor was he, as he says, disobedient to the heavenly vision (Acts 26:16, 19); when he was "caught up into the third heaven, and heard and saw things unspeakable, and not lawful to be uttered;" Which might be at the time of his conversion also: he doubtless had a sight of Christ in his human nature, as risen and ascended to heaven; and after all this, when he was come to Jerusalem again, and was praying in the temple, he fell into a trance; and, says he, *I saw him* (Acts 22:17, 18), meaning Christ, as well as heard the commission, instructions, and directions, he gave him; when he was *as one born out of due time*; which is not to be understood of him literally and in a natural sense, as if he was born before his time, of which we have no where any intimation, but figuratively: and the allusion is either, as some think, to a posthumous birth, the birth of one after the death of his father, to which there was something similar in the apostle's case. The rest of the apostles were called unto and invested with the office of an apostle whilst Christ, their everlasting Father, was here on earth; but the apostle was invested with it after his death, and resurrection from the dead: or rather, the allusion is to an abortive or untimely birth, which has never seen the sun, nor known any thing; and is not known, has no name, and is of no account: this figurative phrase is explained by what follows, *for I am the least of the apostles*; and it is no wonder that he should call himself the least of the apostles, when he elsewhere says, that he was less than the least of all saints (Eph. 3:8); for if less than the least of all saints, he must be the least

of the apostles; though, when he was traduced by the false teachers, and his character impeached, and the gospel and interest of Christ were like to suffer by those means, he exerted himself and magnified his office; and asserted, that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles (2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11); though he here adds, that am not meet to be called an apostle; as indeed no one was; none are meet or deserving of themselves to be members of gospel-churches, to have *a place and a name there better than that of sons and daughters*; nor to be ordinary ministers of the word, and still less to be the apostles of Jesus Christ. The reason given why he entertained such low and mean thoughts of himself, is, *because*, says he, *I persecuted the church of God*; of which, much notice is taken by the divine historian, that the grace of God in the conversion of the apostle, might be set off with a greater foil; it is observed that "the clothes of those that stoned Stephen were laid at his feet to be kept by him; that he was consenting to the death of Stephen; that he made havoc of the church, haling men and women to prison; that he breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ, and desired and took letters of the high priest, empowering him to take up any at Damascus he found in the Christian way, and to bring them to Jerusalem;" (Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1, 2) and, according to his own account, he gave his voice against them, when put to death, punished them in every synagogue; compelled them to blaspheme, and persecuted them to strange cities, being *exceeding mad against them* (Acts 26:10, 11).

Now the sense of all this evil dwelt upon his mind, remained with him, and kept him humble all his days, amidst all his grace, gifts, attainments and usefulness. So every saint has something or other to keep him humble, indwelling sin, or Satan's temptations, or afflictions in the world; and then follow the words first read, *but by the grace of God I am what I am*; be I what I am, greater or lesser, as a man, a saint, a minister, and an apostle, I am just such an one as it is the will of God I should be; *by his grace I am what I am*. Two things I observe from hence:

- I. That the apostle was *something*, not a mere non-entity, he had a being, and was in some circumstances; which is supposed and implied in the phrase, *I am what I am*.
- II. That be that something he was, what it may, that he was by the grace of God.

I. That the apostle was *something*; he had an existence and was in circumstances, on many accounts, not mean and despicable. There is a sense indeed in which he was *nothing*, and which he himself observes, *though I be nothing* (2 Cor. 12:11); not absolutely, he was a man, had the integral parts of a man, a body and a soul; a body consisting of flesh, blood and bones; and though of the earth earthly, sprung out of the dust, and would return to dust: again, yet was something, and would be even in that state; for dust is something: and besides he had a rational soul, possessed of intellectual powers and faculties; a spirit immaterial and immortal, and of more worth than a world; for what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:16).

But in a comparative sense he was nothing, that is, when compared with God, the everlasting I AM, the fountain of being, the Being of beings: so some things in comparison of others that are greatly more excellent, are represented as non-entities; thus earthly riches, when compared with the durable, solid and substantial riches of grace and glory, are said to be *that which is not* (Prov. 23:6); in like manner, the duration of a creature, in comparison of the eternity of God, is nothing. *Mine age*, says David, *is as nothing before thee* (Ps. 39:5); not to be mentioned with his days and years, which are throughout all generations and without beginning; men of the greatest name and figure

are not to be spoken of with him; and not only single individuals, but even *all nations before him are as nothing*; and could there be any thing less than nothing, they would be that; they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity (Isa. 40:17).

Moreover the apostle was nothing, of no account and esteem with the men of the world, particularly with the false teachers; with respect to whom he says, what has been before referred to, *though I be nothing*; that is, in the opinion of the false teachers, who vilified him, and endeavored to make him contemptible in the eyes of others; and which is not to be wondered at, since Christ himself was despised and rejected of men, or ceased from being a man, from being reckoned in the class of men, *a worm, and no man*, in their esteem; and so all his followers are accounted as the *filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things*. Add to this, that the apostle was nothing in his own eyes; he reckoned himself *the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints*; and, generally speaking, those that have the most grace and the greatest gifts, and are of the greatest usefulness, are the most humble, and think the most meanly of themselves. So those boughs and branches of trees, that are most richly laden with fruit, bend downwards, and hang lowest.

But notwithstanding all this, the apostle was *something, I am what I am*; not as the false teachers, and vain boasters of their knowledge and gifts, who, thought they were something when they were nothing; and fancied they knew something, when they knew nothing as they ought to know; not like Simon Magus, who gave out that *himself was some great one* (Acts 8:9); had great knowledge of things, had great power, and could do great and wonderful feats, when he was nothing; nothing in grace, for notwithstanding his profession of faith, he was *in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity*; nothing in knowledge of divine things, he knew nothing spiritually and experimentally; nor in gifts, and therefore offered money that he might be possessed of the gifts of the Spirit, and of power to confer them on others: but our apostle was *something* in grace; there was a principle of grace and holiness in him, and an abundance of grace bestowed on him; there was *some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel*; the root of the matter was in him; he was *no sounding brass, nor tinkling cymbal*. He was something in knowledge, divine, spiritual, and evangelical; he knew much of the person, offices and grace of Christ; of the mysteries of grace, and doctrines of the gospel; perhaps more than any mere man besides himself ever did: ye may understand, says he, my knowledge in the mystery of Christ (Eph.3:4); and, which was very great: he was something in gifts, he was endued with extraordinary gifts; in nothing, in no gift was he behind the very chiefest apostles; truly the signs of an apostle were wrought by him every where, in wonders and mighty deeds (2 Cor. 12:11, 12); and was of more extensive usefulness in preaching the Gospel, converting sinners, and planting churches, than any other whatever. I will not dare, says he, to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God (Rom. 15:18, 19).

He was also something, and very high indeed, in the esteem and account of God and Christ; he was a chosen vessel to bear his name before the Gentiles (Acts 9:15): and so all Christ's faithful ministers, on whom he has bestowed gifts and grace, and makes more or less useful, are something in his account; they are held *as stars* in his right hand: and indeed all his people are precious in his sight; his Hephzibah in whom he delights, his Beulah to whom he is married, his jewels, his peculiar treasure, *his portion, and the lot of his inheritance*.

II. Let that something the apostle was be what it may, that he was *by the grace of God*; that is, by the good-will and pleasure of God; in which sense this phrase is often to be understood, both in the Old and in the New Testament: when Noah is said to find grace in the eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8); the meaning is, that he enjoyed the free favor and good-will of God, and was well-pleasing and acceptable in his sight; and whatever distinguishing blessing he had, he had it through the grace and good-will of God, and not through any merits of his own: and so in the New Testament, whenever salvation, and the several parts of it, are ascribed to the grace of God, as, *by grace ye are saved* (Eph. 2:8), and the like, it is always to be understood of the unmerited favor and sovereign will and good pleasure of God; and in this sense are we to understand it here. And for the farther illustration of it, I shall endeavor to shew that what the apostle was, and so what any other man is, as a man, as a minister, and as a saint, that they are by the grace and favor of God.

First, What the apostle was as a man, was owing to the good-will and pleasure of God. And so is what any man is as such. God gives life and breath and being to all his creatures; thou hast granted me life and favor (Job 10:12), says Job; to have life and being in this world, is owing to a grant from God; and that grant is a favor, owing to the good-will and pleasure of God: the spirit of God has made me, says one of Job's friends, and the *breath of the Almighty hath given me life* (Job 33:4); life, in the first spring of it, is a gift of God; and the continuance of it depends on his will and pleasure: his visitation preserves the spirits of men; he upholds their souls in life; *in him they live, move, and have their being*; and whether their continuance in life is longer or shorter, it is just as his sovereign will and pleasure is; it is through his good hand upon them, that they remain in being in this world so long as they do. All the mercies of life are from God; hence he is called, *the father of mercies* (2 Cor. 1:3): and there are many and various, and are continually repeated; they are new every morning, and continue all the day, and are renewed every day; and having food and raiment, we should not only be therewith content, but be thankful for them; since, as good old Jacob says, we are not worthy of the least of all the mercies shewed us; not of the least morsel of bread we eat, nor of the clothes we wear: and how sensible of the divine goodness was that patriarch to the last; and how thankful for it? The God that fed me all my life long until this day — bless the lads (Gen. 32:10).

Some have a greater affluence of the good things of this life than others; more they have than they can make use of themselves, and which are given them for the relief of others; these are wisdom's left-hand-blessings. When David and his princes offered to largely and so willingly towards the building of the temple, he acknowledges it was all of God, both the ability and the willing mind; Riches and honor come of thee—Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort! For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee! (1 Chron. 29:13, 14).

Riches are the property of God, he gives and takes them away at his pleasure, and this he does to shew his sovereignty; he made Job the greatest man in all the east for wealth and worldly substance, and in one day stripped him of it all; The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away (Job 1:3, 21); it is all according to his good pleasure. All the endowments of the mind, the natural parts and abilities of men, their intellectual and reasoning powers and faculties, are of God; There is a spirit in man, a rational spirit, and that is of God, a gift of his to men: The inspiration of the almighty, giveth them understanding (Job 32:8); which distinguishes men from brutes, and gives

them the pre-eminence to them; for God is he, who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven (Job 35:11).

Now whatever the apostle had of this kind, as well as of other things, it was through the favor and good-will of God: as he certainly was a man of great natural abilities, of strong reasoning powers, his enemies themselves being witnesses; his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful (2 Cor. 10:10); written in a masculine style, and full of strong nervous reasonings and arguments, they were not able to answer.

Secondly, What he was as a minister and an apostle, was through the favor and good-will of God; he did not become one of himself, through his own attainments, or by any merits of his; for he before says, he was not meet to be called an Apostle; nor was he made a minister of the gospel, or an apostle, by man; this he disavows: *Paul an apostle, not of man, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father*; the commission and qualifications he had as such, were not of men, but of God; the gospel he preached, the doctrines of it he delivered, and the instructions he had for that purpose, were not after men, neither received he them of men, nor was he taught them but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:1, 11, 12): it was not owing to his education, to his being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed in all the learning of those times, which qualified him for a minister of the word; this served only to make him a keener adversary, and a more bitter enemy to Christ and his gospel. Whenever he speaks of his being put into the ministry, he attributes it to the grace and favor of God; making mention of the gospel, he adds, whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto ME, by the effectual working of his power: unto ME, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given; that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:7, 8): and that he was an extraordinary minister; an apostle of Christ, he ascribes to the grace of God; by whom we have received grace and apostleship (Rom. 1:5); that is, grace to make us apostles, and to qualify for that office, and ordinary ministers of the word become such through gifts, which Christ, their ascended Lord and King, has received for men, and gives to men; and which gifts are of grace and free favor dispensed to whomsoever he pleases; to some more, and others less, but all of grace: having gifts differing according to the grace that is given us; whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith (Rom. 12:6): and again, as every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Pet. 4:10); so that whatever any one is as a minister of the word, he is so by the gift of grace, by the free grace and favor of God, Thirdly, What the apostle was as a saint, he was by the grace of God, as every saint is; what distinguishes a saint from a sinner, or one man from another, is entirely owing to the grace and free favor of God.

1. Was the apostle a chosen vessel, not only to preach the gospel, but chosen to grace here and glory hereafter, as he undoubtedly was; he often puts himself among the chosen ones; thus, speaking of the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, he adds, by way of explanation, even us whom he hath called (Rom. 9:24); and in an another place, according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Eph. 1:4): this he was by the grace of God, as all the chosen ones be; for. they are chosen, not for any good works done by them, or foreseen to be done by them.; for the act of election passed before any were done by them, and without respect to any; for the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand,

not of works, but of him that calleth (Rom. 9:11): besides good works are the fruits and effects of election, and therefore cannot be the cause of it; we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:10): to which add, that they are the evidences of election unto others; hence that exhortation of the apostle, give diligence to make your calling and election sure (2 Pet.1:10); not election by calling, though the latter is an evidence of the former, since both are to be made sure; and therefore must be by some third thing, and that is good works; by which there are made not sure in themselves; nor sure to the saints, but to the world; which give to them a certain evidence that the saints are, what they profess to be, the *chosen* and *called* of God; and is the best evidence they are capable of giving to the world of those things, and of their receiving from them.

Nor is it owing to the holiness of men, either internal or external, that any are chosen to eternal life. Men are chosen, not because they are holy, but that they *should be holy and without blame*; they are chosen not for, but through *sanctification of the spirit* (Eph. 1:4); they are chosen to it as an end, and through it as a mean, and it is insured by election. And so far is this doctrine from being a licentious one, as it is ignorantly traduced by some, that it is the source and spring of all real holiness that has been in the world since the fall of Adam; had not God referred to himself a remnant according to the election of grace, the whole world had been as Sodom and Gomorrah, both for sin and for punishment; there would have been no such thing as holiness among the sons of Adam. Nor is the choice of men owing to their faith; they are chosen not for their belief, but through the belief of the truth, through faith in Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life: faith is the fruit and effect of election, and is secured, and ascertained by it; as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed (Acts 8:48); hence faith, is called the faith of God's elect (Titus 1:1), because it is a consequent of their election, and is peculiar to them. It remains that men are what they are, as chosen ones, not by any thing: of theirs, but by the grace, favor, and good-will of God; hence this act of God is called the election of grace, on which the apostle argues in this strong and nervous manner; *if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace*:—for grace is not grace, unless it is altogether free; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work (Rom. 11:5, 6); to blend and confound them together, is to destroy the nature and use of both.

2. Was the apostle an adopted sort of God? this he was by the grace of God; which is the next spiritual blessing that follows election, in that famous *first* chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians; and where the apostle ranks himself among those that are predestinated to the adoption of children, and which he ascribes to the good will and pleasure of God; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Eph. 1:5).

None are the children of God through any merits of their own, for they are by nature children of wrath, as others (Eph. 2:3); there is no reason or motive in them that should move the Lord to put them among the children; it need not be wondered at to hear him say, how shall I put thee among the children, so unlovely, so unworthy! but it is amazing what follows, thou shalt call me my Father, and not turn away from me (Jer. 3:19). In civil adoption there is commonly something in the adopted, or relative to it, that induces the adopter to take the step he does; there are but two instances of this kind in scripture, I think, and they both suggest something of this nature; the one is the adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter, of whom it is said, that he was a goodly child,

exceeding fair and lovely to look upon, which attracted the affections of the princess, as well as its case and circumstances moved her compassion; the other is the adoption of Ether by Mordecai, of whom it is remarked, that the maid was fair and beautiful, and besides was a relation of Mordecai; but in the case of divine adoption, there is nothing lovely and amiable in the adopted, but all the reverse, like the wretched infant cast out in the open field to the loathing of its person in the day it was born (Ezek. 16:5); wherefore the apostle John breaks forth in this pathetic manner, in the view of this amazing blessing; Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! (1 John 3:4), it is by the unmerited love, free favor and good-will of God, that saints are what they are in this sense; by the grace of God in predestination to this blessing, which, as before observed, is according to the good pleasure of his will; by the grace of God in the covenant, which is a covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, full of all spiritual blessings, called the sure mercies of David, because they flow from the grace, mercy, and favor of God in Christ; in which this blessing of grace, adoption, is provided and secured; and which runs thus, without any condition required; I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (2 Cor. 6:18): it is also by and through the grace of Christ, who has redeemed his that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of children (Gal. 4:5), as a free-grace-gift; and to as many as receive him, that is, believe in him, he gives power, right and privilege, to become the sons of God (John 1:12); and it is by the grace of the Spirit that this blessing is manifested, applied, and bore witness to, who is therefore called the Spirit of adoption. (Rom. 8:15).

3. Was the apostle redeemed by Christ? as without doubt he was, and he had the faith of assurance of interest in this blessing of redemption; which stands next in order to election and adoption, in the above mentioned chapter, and where the apostle puts himself among the redeemed ones, in whom we have redemption through his blood (Eph. 1:7); this he was by the grace of God; for though redemption is by the blood of Christ, it is according to the riches of God's grace; though it cost Christ dear, his blood and life, it is free to the redeemed; it is without money and without price to them; it was the free grace of God that provided Christ to be the Redeemer and Savior, called him to this work, appointed him to do it, and promised him as such; it was owing to the grace of God that he was sent in the fullness of time to redeem men; at his incarnation, the first step to it, the angels sung, peace on earth, good-will to men (Luke 2:14); the love, grace, favor and good-will of God, are in a most wonderful manner displayed in the mission of Christ to obtain redemption for men. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that is, to be the Savior of men; in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him; herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10); it is owing to the grace, favor and good-will of God to men, that Christ was delivered up for them, into the hands of justice and death; it was by the grace of God he tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9); that is, suffered death for every one of the sons he brings to glory, for every one of the brethren he is not ashamed to own, for every one of the children given unto him, as appears from the context. As Abraham showed his love to God in not withholding his son, his only son, his beloved son; so God has shewn his love, favor and good-will to men; in not sparing, but sending and giving his own, his only begotten son, his well-beloved son, to suffer and die for them, in order to redeem them and to be a redeemed, one, is an instance of distinguishing grace; for they that are *redeemed, are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation*; so that by the grace of God they are what they are.

4. Was the apostle a justified person? as he certainly was; he was so by the grace of God; not by any works or merits of his: these he disclaims; for I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified (1 Cor. 4:4); though he was not conscious of any unfaithfulness in his ministry, yet this was not the matter of his justification before God; nay had he been unconscious of any sin then in him, or done by him, he knew he could not be justified thereby from former sins committed by him; and therefore he desired to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:9); the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed of God, and received by faith: if men, Abraham, or any other, were justified by works, they would have whereof to glory; but boasting is excluded in the article of justification, not by the law of works, but by the doctrine of faith. Justification cannot be by works, because they are imperfect; and if a justifying righteousness was by them, the death of Christ would be in vain, and the grace of God frustrated; but it is safest to conclude with the apostle, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law (Rom. 3:28); and who always ascribes justification, so the free grace of God. In one place he says, being justified by his grace; and as if it was not strongly enough expressed, he elsewhere says, being justified freely by his grace (Titus 3:7); grace moved God to send his Son to bring in everlasting righteousness, and Christ to work it out; God of his grace imputes it to his people, without works; and faith by which they receive it, is a free-grace-gift of his; and they that receive the gift of righteousness, receive abundance of grace in it and with it.

5. Was the apostle a pardoned sinner? of which there can be no question; this he was, not through any merit of his, but by the grace of God; *I obtained mercy*, says he, that is, pardoning grace and mercy, even though he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; and he expresses the abundance of grace displayed herein, the grace of our Lord, adds he, was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 1:13, 14): pardon of sin, though through the blood of Christ which was shed for it, yet is according to the riches of grace; all that are pardoned, are pardoned, not through any deservings, of theirs, for all alike have sinned, and all the world is become guilty before God; and *the law pronounces condemnation and death without mercy*; if any are pardoned it is by the grace of God through the blood and sacrifice of Christ: nor even for their repentance and humiliation; truly gracious souls do repent of sin, and are humble for it; but this is not the cause of their pardon; what of this kind is most genuine and evangelical, flows from a sense of pardon applied; first, souls look to Christ by faith for pardon through his blood, and then they mourn for sins pardoned; and never do they mourn better and more kindly, or are more ashamed and confounded because of their sins, than when they are most satisfied that God is pacified towards them for all that they have done: nor is it owing to their confession of sin, and depart me from it, that any are pardoned. Such who have received the grace of God in truth, will confess their sins and depart from them, and such receive mercy, but not as the cause of it; but pardoning mercy with God is used as a motive to forsake sin (Isa. 55:7). And though when men confess their sins, god is just and faithful to forgive them their sins, yet it is not on account of their confession, but on account of the blood of his Son, that his justice and faithfulness appear in the forgiveness of it. Forgiveness of sin is always attributed to the multitude of mercy in God, to the tender mercy of our God, to the riches of his grace, and to the covenant of his grace, in which this blessing is provided (Heb. 8:12; Ps. 51:1; Luke 1:78; Eph. 1:7).

6. Was the apostle regenerated, called, converted, sanctified? it was all by the grace of God; and so the regeneration, vocation, conversion and sanctification of every one. Regeneration is necessary to salvation; it is in this way God saves his people, and without it none can see nor enter into the

kingdom of heaven; and this is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God; of the will, power, and grace of God, who of his own will, of his sovereign good-will and pleasure, begets men with the word of truth (John 1:13; Jam. 1:18): effectual vocation is of grace; the apostle ascribes his calling to grace, when it pleased God—who called me by his grace (Gal. 1:15); and whoever are called, are called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his (God's) purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9).

Conversion is not by might or power of men, but by the Spirit of the Lord, by his mighty and efficacious grace; they are turned when he turns them, and not before. Sanctification is by the Spirit of God, and not by the will of men: if any are partakers of sanctification, and of the several parts of it, it is by the grace of God: have any repentance unto life unto salvation, which needeth not to be repented of, it is a grant from God, a gift of Christ, who is exalted as a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel (Acts 11:18; 5:31). God may give men space to repent, but if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will. No means whatever are sufficient of themselves; not the greatest mercies; if any thing, one would think, the goodness of God would lead men to repentance, but it does not; nor the severest judgments, as famine, pestilence, the sword, etc. For notwithstanding these, men return not to the Lord (Amos 4:6-11). The most awakening ministry, such as that of John the Baptist, who preached the doctrine of repentance, will not be effectual of itself, as facts shew; and indeed, unless God, by his powerful and efficacious grace, takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh, no man will repent of his sins: faith in Christ is the gift of God, and not of a man's self; it is given to men to believe; nor can any come to Christ, that is, believe in him, unless it is given him of the Father; and hope, when it is a good one, firm and sure and well sounded, it is given, and given through grace (Eph. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:16); and the same maybe said of every grace of the Spirit, and of every part and branch of sanctification, which is begun in grace, and is completed by it.

7. Did the apostle conduct his life, conversation, and walk, becoming the character he bore as an apostle, a minister, and a saint? this was by the grace of God, and to it he ascribes it; our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards (2 Cor. 1:12); and it is the grace of God that teaches and enables the saints to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world (Titus 2:11, 12); and if men persevere in faith and holiness unto the end, it is to be ascribed to the grace and power of God, by which they are kept through faith unto salvation. In a word, it is by the grace of God saints are what they are; by the grace of God they have what they have; and by the grace of God they do what they do. Wherefore,

1). Let us give the glory of all we have, are, and do, to the grace of God: the end God has in all he does, in things spiritual, and relative to our salvation, is the glory of his grace (Eph. 1:6); and our concern should be, as much as in us lies, that this end be answered; and therefore not unto ourselves, to any works, merits, and deserts of ours, but to the grace of God, be all the glory.

2). Let us endeavor to hold fast the doctrines of grace, whereby the glory of the grace of God is maintained; for men may fail of the grace of God (Heb. 12:15), that is, of the doctrines of grace; may come short of them, drop and deny them; for whoever seek for justification and salvation by

the works of the law, are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4), that is, from the doctrine of grace; for from the love and favor of God in his heart, and from the grace of God implanted in the hearts of his people, there can be no falling.

3). Let us take care that the grace of God is not received in vain (2 Cor. 6:1); that is, the gospel of the grace of God, which may be received and professed in vain, when the professors of it are not careful to adorn the doctrine of God their Savior, by a becoming life and conversation; and when they turn the grace of God, the doctrines of it into lasciviousness, and abuse it to wicked purposes.

4). Let us, such who are truly partakers of the grace of God, be encouraged to expect glory; for to whomsoever God gives grace he gives glory; these are inseparably connected together: whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified: (Rom. 8:30) what we now are, we are by the grace of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we should be looking, waiting for, and expecting the appearance of Christ, when we shall be like him, and see him as he is (1 John 3:2).

Note:

The reason why this Sermon is placed among the Funeral Discourses, is, that it was first preached on account of the death of the Reverend Mr. John Brine. But as he had left directions not to have any Funeral Sermon preached for him, the character then given of this great and good man was obliged to be but short: The following is the substance of what was then delivered:—I am debarred from saying so much of him, as otherwise I could do, we both having been born in the same place, and myself some years older than him, and from his being among the first-fruits of my Ministry.—I might take notice of his natural and acquired abilities, his great understanding, clear light, and sound judgment in the doctrines of the gospel, and the great and deep things of God:—Of his zeal, skill and courage in vindicating important truths, published by him to the world, by which, he, being dead, yet speaketh. In fine, I might observe to you, that his walk and conversation in the world, was honorable and ornamental to the profession which he made, and suitable to the character he sustained, as a Minister of Jesus Christ, all which endeared him to his friends—But I am forbid to speak any thing more.

WHO SHALL LAY ANYTHING TO THE CHARGE OF GOD'S ELECT

Occasioned By The Death Of Mrs. Ann Brine,

Late Wife Of The Reverend Mr. John Brine. Preached August 11, 1745.

ROMANS 8:33, 34

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

The preceding chapter contains the believer's complaint of indwelling sin, and expresses the nature; prevalence and ill effects of it, and his grief of mind on that account; and this chapter declares his triumph of faith in a view of deliverance from it, and from an condemnation by it, through the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ: which triumph is founded upon things the most solid and substantial, delivered in the text and context; such as relate to the grace of the Father in predestination, in the mission of his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, in not sparing him, but delivering him up for us all; in the effectual vocation, justification, and glorification of his chosen ones; and which relate to the grace of Christ, in his assumption of human nature, in fulfilling the law both in its precept and penalty, in his sufferings and death, in his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession for his people; and which relate to the grace of the blessed Spirit, in quickening, and renewing carnal minds; in leading men out of themselves, to Christ; in *witnessing to their Spirits that they are the children of God*, and in helping their infirmities, and making intercession for them according to the will of God; and particularly this triumph, of faith is expressed in the fullest and strongest manner in the words before us, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* etc.

The words are put by way of interrogation, *who shall lay any thing, to the charge of God's elect?* or accuse them? or call them to an account? Or enter an action against them, in open court? It is a challenge, a bidding defiance to all and every one to do it; since *it is God that justifieth*, that is, his elect: he acquits and clears them from all charges exhibited against them; and therefore whatever are said against them are of no avail, and can never issue in their condemnation; *who is he that condemneth* the elect of God? that will censure or pass sentence upon them? and if any should, what will it signify, seeing *it is Christ that died for their sins, and rose again for their justification, and is at the right hand of God*, as their advocate, and *ever lives to make intercession for them*. Though these things are put by way of question, they may be reduced to absolute propositions: the sense of them is, that "there are none that can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect to any purpose, but what will easily be set aside; nor can any justly bring them under a sentence of

condemnation, and much less execute such a sentence on them." The whole may be comprised in the two following propositions:

I. That no charge shall be brought against, nor any condemnation brought upon the elect of God.

II. That the Father's justification of them, the Son's dying for them; his resurrection from the dead, session at the right hand of God, and intercession on their account, are a sufficient and full security to them from all charges and condemnation whatever.

I. That no charge of any avail shall, or can be laid against, or any sentence of condemnation executed upon the elect of God. These are without spot and fault before the throne of God; they are unblameable and unproveable in his sight, and there is no condemnation to them. For the further explanation, of this doctrine, I shall,

First, Shew who the elect of God are.

Secondly, In what sense no charge and condemnation can be upon them.

First, Who are the elect of God. These are a select number of men, who are the objects of God's love, whom he has chosen in Christ, unto eternal life and salvation before the foundation of the world, of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, by certain ways of his own appointing, so that they are peculiarly his. It will be proper to take this account into several parts, and briefly explain them.

1. The elect of God are *a select number of men*, of Adam's posterity; for elect angels are not here meant: they *are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people*; not whole nations, churches, bodies, and communities of men, but particular persons; they are such who are separated and set apart from the rest of mankind, and are alone, and are *not reckoned among the nations*: as they are redeemed and called, so they *are chosen out of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues*; and though, considered by themselves, they are a great number, which no man can number; yet, comparatively, they are but *few, many be called, but few chosen* (Matthew 20:16).

2. They are the objects of the *love of God*, of his everlasting and unchangeable love; and because they are the beloved of the Lord, therefore they are chosen by him unto salvation: so the people of Israel were chosen as a nation to outward privileges above all nations, not because they were *more* than others, for they *were the fewest of all people*, but because the Lord loved them (Deut. 7:7,8.) *Electio praesupponit dilectionem*, "Election presupposes love." Love is the source and origin of it: *whom God did foreknow, them he did predestinate*, as in the context; hence they are styled elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (1 Pet. 1:2), which is to be understood not of the bare prescience of God, which reaches to all the sons of men, for then, all would be the elect of God; but of such foreknowledge of them as includes in it the strongest love and affection for them; of which his choice of them to everlasting life, is a glaring instance and evidence.

3. They are *chosen in Christ*, as is expressly asserted in Ephesians 1:4. Christ himself, as mediator, is God's elect; he is so by way of eminency; he was first chosen and then the elect in him; he is the first-born of the election of grace; he was first conceived in the womb of election, and brought forth, and then the many brethren among whom he is the first-born; he was chosen as the head, and they as members in him: hence all grace was given to them *in him*, and they *were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him*; yea, hence it is, that they being sanctified, or set apart by God the Father in election, were *preserved in him*, notwithstanding the fall of *Adam*, and their own actual transgressions, in order to be called by grace (Jude 1).

4. The choice of them in Christ is *unto eternal life and salvation*; not unto external blessings and privileges, as the Israelites were, nor to any outward office, though ever so great, as that of apostleship, as *Judas* the son of perdition was; but to special grace here, and eternal glory hereafter: these are persons ordained to eternal life, vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; they are appointed *not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*; which he has been appointed to work out for them, has effected, and will put them into the possession of.

5. This choice of them was made before the foundation of the world, as is affirmed in Ephesians 1:4. The Thessalonians are said to be *chosen from the beginning* (2 Thess. 2:13), not from the beginning of the preaching of the gospel to them, nor from the beginning of their conversion, but from the beginning of time: or, in other words, from eternity; the phrase being the same with *from everlasting*, as appears from Proverbs 8:23. This is an act, that does not commence in time, but bears date from eternity; it paired before the men who are the objects of it, were born, and had done either good or evil (Rom. 9:11).

6. It is owing to the sovereign good-will and pleasure of God, who *does all things after the counsel of his own will*: he predestinates to the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will; he *has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and is gracious to whom he will be gracious*; and his election of persons to everlasting life, is an election of grace, and is strongly denied to be of works (Rom. 11:5, 6). It is irrespective of faith, holiness, or good works, as causes, motives, and conditions of it; there all follow upon it, and are fruits, effects, and evidences of it.

7. This choice of men to happiness is through certain ways and means of God's own appointing; such as *sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth* (2 Thess. 2:13), which, as they are fixed in the decree of the means, have their sure and certain accomplishment. God chooses men, not because they were, or because he knew they would be, but that they might be holy; and this he secures for them; for by virtue, and in consequence of their being chosen, he sends the Spirit down into their hearts to sanctify them; and though the work of sanctification is at present imperfect, in pursuance of the divine purposes it shall be completed. So likewise belief of the truth, or faith in Christ who is the truth, and in every doctrine of the word of truth, relating to, him, is another mean ascertained in the decree of election, and is sure by it: as many as are *ordained unto eternal life*, have *believed*, do believe, and shall believe, in all ages of time; and none truly believe, but such; and therefore true faith is called: *the faith of God's elect* (Titus 1:1). It springs from electing grace; it is the fruit of it, it is the gift of God's grace, and is insured by it; and because of it, the work of faith is begun, it shall be performed with power, Hence,

8. Persons thus chosen, are peculiarly his, the elect of God, yea, they are emphatically cared, *his own elect* (Luke 18:7). They are not only his by creation, as all mankind are, but they are the people of his choice, a peculiar one; they are *elect according to his foreknowledge*, they are set apart for himself, for his own use, service and glory; they are chosen by him for his peculiar treasure. But,

Secondly, I am next to show you in what sense no charge can be laid against, nor condemnation come to these persons.

First, No charge, no accusation of them, no crime to be alleged against them: But,

1. Is there nothing they are chargeable with? Are they in every sense clear of all crimes? Can nothing be objected to them, and laid against them? yes, many things. They are, as the descendents of *Adam*, chargeable with his sin: they were in him seminally, as the root and parent of mankind; they were in him federally, as their covenant-head and representative; in which he was the figure of Christ that was to come; and so they sinned in him, and were made and constituted sinners, through his disobedience; the guilt of which is imputed to them, and they in themselves are liable to condemnation by it: they are chargeable with a corrupt nature they bring into the world with them, being *conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity*; they are justly called *transgressors from the womb*; they are chargeable with the loss of original righteousness, and of the image of God, and with a want of conformity to the law of God; they are chargeable with a multitude of actual transgressions committed before conversion, and some with very grievous and notorious ones; not only as being *foolish, and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures*; but, as *living in malice, hateful, and hating one another*: so Saul, afterwards Paul, was guilty of injury, persecution and blasphemy; and the Corinthians are laid to be *fornicators, idolaters, adulterers*, and every thing that is bad (1 Cor. 6:9-11). And after conversion they are all chargeable, with many sins of thought, word, and deed; with sins of omission and commission; with daily infirmities and frequent backslidings; in many things they all offend; and their errors are so many, they cannot understand; and some of them are suffered to fall into very gross enormities, as Noah, Lot, David, Peter, and others. Wherefore,

2. Are there none that will rise, stand up and charge, these persons? yes, now: their own hearts rise up against them, and charge them; their conscience which is as a thousand witnesses, does often accuse them: there is in every man a conscience, which excuses or accuses for good or bad things done, unless where it is seared as with a red hot iron: but this is not the case of good men, their consciences are tender; and though they are sometimes tempted to extenuate their faults, yet, at ether times, they are ready to aggravate them, and put them in the worst light; and write dismal, desperate, and bitter things against themselves: likewise, they are very apt to charge one another; they are sometimes too forward this way, too inquisitive after each other's weaknesses; bear too hard upon one another for them; and are too severe and censorious, indeed, they are *not to suffer sin upon one another*; charges may be very lawfully brought, whether in a private, or in a public way, as the nature of the care requires, provided the rules of God's word are observed, and they are exhibited in a kind and tender manner, with a view to the glory of God, and the good of the person or persons charged: moreover, the men of the world are full of charges against the people of God, and traduce them oftentimes very wrongfully, as the Jews did our Lord; and as Tertullus the orator, the apostle Paul; and it is the common lot of the saints to go through good report and bad report; but *no weapon formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth up in judgment against them shall be condemned*: they have real faults enough in them; and there is no need of false ones

to be imputed to them; to which may be added, Satan is the adversary of believers, ἀντιδικῶν, "a court adversary;" one that enters a suit at law, and brings in an action in open court against another, as the word signifies; he goes about the world, and observes the failures of the saints, takes all advantages, and every opportunity against them; picks up their faults, and aggravates them, and accuses them before the throne: whence he is called *the accuser of the brethren* (Rev. 12:10). To say no more, the law accuses of the breaches and violations of it; one commandment says, Thou hast sinned against me; and another, Thou hast sinned against me; and the law is able to make good, and support its charges, and give evidence of them; and it proceeds to pronounce the whole world guilty before God, and so the elect of God among the rest. But then,

3. What will these charges signify? Of what avail will they be? and to what purpose are they laid? since God justifies and discharges from them all, who is superior to all, and from whose judgment there can be no appeal. Though the saints bring charges against themselves, and bring heavy ones against each other; and though the world, Satan, and the law, lay charges against them; yet none of the divine persons bring any, nor will they bring any against them. Not Jehovah the Father, as may be learnt from the text and context; he predestinates them to be *conformed to the image of his Son*; he calls, justifies, and glorifies them; he is on their side; he is for them, and it matters not who is against them; he has *not spared his own Son, but has delivered him up for them all, and gives all things freely with him*, verses 29-32. and therefore he will lay nothing to their charge: nor will the Son of God; he is the surety for them; he has died for their sins, and has made an end of them, and brought in everlasting righteousness; and is an advocate for them; wherefore, he will exhibit no charge against them: nor will the holy Spirit; for though he convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; yet he brings near the righteousness of Christ: unto them; works faith in them, to lay hold upon it, and pronounces them righteous on the account of it; he *takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to them*; he is the comforter of them, and the Spirit of adoption to them; and as Christ is an advocate for them, in the court of heaven, he is an intercessor for them in their own hearts.

2dly, No condemnation can befall them; for if no charges can be laid against them with success, no condemnation can follow. *Who is he that condemneth?* that is, the elect of God: there are the persons that are understood, though not expressed. Others may be, and are condemned, even all mankind are in Adam; through his offense judgment came upon all men to condemnation (Rom. 5:18). And some being ungodly men, and such who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, are righteously appointed unto eternal condemnation; yea, every one that believes not, and who lives and dies in impenitence and unbelief, is condemned already; and there is a world that will be condemned at the last day; but the elect of God, who shall condemn? They are indeed, with the rest of mankind under the sentence of condemnation as considered in *Adam*, in whom they sinned; and so the sentence of death passed upon them in him. They *are by nature children of wrath*, and deferring of it, and in their own persons commit things worthy of death; and when they are thoroughly convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, they have the sentence *of death within themselves*, and say, as the Egyptians did, when their first-born were killed, *we be all dead men* (Ex. 12:33). Whatever vain opinion they entertained of themselves before the commandment came with power into their consciences, as it did in the apostle Paul; sin then revives, as it did in him, and they die, as to all hopes of attaining happiness by their works; they see themselves dead in law, dead in sin: and after conversion, their hearts often smite and condemn them for sin, though *God is greater than their hearts, and knows all things*; his own covenant-transactions and agreement with

his Son; what his Son has done, and what satisfaction he has made to his law and justice, and therefore will not condemn them. They are too apt to condemn one another: hence that advice of our Lord's, *condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned* (Luke 6:37). The men of the world are very forward to condemn them as hypocrites, as the worst of men, and not fit to live upon the earth; but the Lord stands at the right hand of the poor to save him from those that condemn his soul (Ps.109:31).

The God of this world, as he accuses them, and stands at their right hand to resist them; so he seeks, and calls for judgment against, and upon them, but in vain. The law is a ministration of condemnation and death to them that are under it: indeed, the elect of God are redeemed from it, and from the curse and condemnation of it; *Christ being made a curse for them*; and be it so; that it should pass as many sentences of condemnation upon them, as there are sins committed by them; for every sin deserves a sentence, yet ουδεν κατακριμα, "there is not *one condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus," and redeemed by him; not one sentence can be executed upon them: and though these may all condemn, yet neither Father, Son, nor Spirit, will condemn them: not the Father, for he justifies them; not the Son, for he died for them; and is the Lord their righteousness: he came not into the world to condemn the world, but that it might be saved by him; nor the blessed Spirit, for these *are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*. To which may be subjoined, that there persons are loved by God with an everlasting love, which God has sworn shall never depart from them: they are predestinated to eternal life, and shall be glorified; they are in Christ, and to such there is no condemnation; they are brought to *believe in Christ*, and such *have passed from death to life, and shall not come into condemnation*; they are justified by the blood of Christ, and shall be saved from wrath through him. I proceed to the other doctrinal proposition.

II. That the Father's justification of the elect, the Son's dying for them, his resurrection from the dead, his session at the right hand of God, and intercession for them, are a sufficient and full security of them from all charges and condemnation.

First, The Father's justification of them: *it is God that justifieth*; that is, his elect: which shews the eternity of this act; for if the elect of God, as such considered, are the objects of justification; and there were chosen in Christ before the world began, they must be justified as early; or otherwise it could not be always said with truth, *God justifieth the elect*: and also the specialty of this act of grace; it belonging only to *the chosen of God, and precious*: and likewise the continuance of it; it can never be made void; it is inseparable with glorification, and so is a security from all charges and condemnation; for,

1. Let it be considered whose act this is: it is God's act; it is he that justifies; he against whom these persons have sinned, whose law they have broken, whose justice they have affronted, whose legislative power and authority they have trampled upon; who is *the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy* it is he that acquits; and if he discharges, who can lay any thing to their charge? Besides, he is just whilst he is the justifier of them: nor would he be just if he did not justify them; for his justice is entirely satisfied with the righteousness of his Son, on their account; and it would be unjust to take satisfaction of their surety for them, and yet bring charges against them: this the judge of all the earth will not do; he always does that which is right.

2. The nature of this act of justification: it is not teaching men the way of righteousness, or how sinners may be just with God, or instructing men in the doctrine of justification, shewing the method God takes in justifying a sinner: this is what the ministers of the gospel do, who are therefore said to justify many (Dan. 12:3), or, as we render it, *turn many to righteousness*: nor is it an infusion of righteousness and holiness into the hearts of men, which is no other than sanctification, and is a quite different thing; a work of grace within, and which is imperfect, and is gradually carried on: but it is a forensic term; by this act a man is made *rectus in curia*: it is a pronouncing him righteous, as if he had never sinned; an acquitting him from all charges; and is opposed to condemnation (Rom. 5:18), and so is a security from all such things.

3. That by which God justifies: which is not the obedience of man; nor any works of righteousness done by him: there are imperfect, and by them no man can be justified in the sight of God; these would not be a sufficient security from charges and condemnation; for they themselves are as filthy rags, and need washing in the blood of Jesus: but it is the obedience and righteousness of Christ, by which God justifies; which is complete and perfect; which is answerable to all the demands of law and justice; by which the law is magnified, and made honorable, and with which God is well pleased; and this he imputes to his people, without any consideration of their works; and this secures them from all the charges of law and justice.

4. This act of justification is universal: it reaches to all things with which God's elect may be chargeable; and the righteousness of Christ justifies from all things, from which there can be no justification by the law of *Moses*: being clothed with this change of raiment, all their iniquities are caused to pass from them; sin is not imputed to them; *their iniquities are forgiven, and their sin is covered*; and when it is sought for, it shall not be found; they will never be charged with it, nor will it ever be brought against them to condemnation.

Secondly, The death of Christ for them: *it is Christ that died*. That Christ died is certain; and that he laid down his life for the sheep, for the elect of God, is as certain; and it is plain, from the scriptures, that he died for their sins, *to make atonement and reconciliation for them*; and this came to pass through his substitution in their room and stead, by having their sins imputed to him and though his death was but once, it is of an eternal efficacy; and so a full security from all condemnation: for,

1. Sin, the cause of condemnation, is removed by it. Sin was the cause of the condemnation of the angels, and of the old world, and of all mankind in Adam, This is that for which the saints condemn themselves, and one another; and for which the world, Satan, and the law condemn: but this is done away by the death of Christ; he has removed the iniquity of his people in one day, even as far as the east is from the west; he has put it away by the sacrifice of himself; he hath abolished it, he has taken away it, damning power from it; yea, he has finished, and made an utter end of it.

2. By dying, Christ bore the condemnation due to sin: not only the sentence of condemnation paged upon him, as he was the surety of his people; but it was executed on him: and he was not only condemned unanimously by the Jewish Sanhedrim, and then by Pontius Pilate the Roman governor, but he was condemned by the justice of God: and God condemned sin in his flesh, finding it upon him, it being imputed to him: for as he was *made sin* by imputation *that the elect might be made the righteousness of God in him*; so he was *made a curse* for them, that he *might redeem them from the*

curse of the law, which he has effectually done; and consequently there can be no condemnation to them,

3. Through the death of Christ, the law and justice of God are fully satisfied. The law requires holiness of nature, this it has in the human nature of Christ, which is without sin; and also perfect obedience, which it finds in Christ, who always did the things that pleased his Father; and in case of disobedience, it requires a penalty, and which Christ, as the surety of his people, has bore by his sufferings and death; and so the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled by him for them; which is a full satisfaction to the justice of God; and therefore there is none that can condemn them.

4. Hereby the pardon of sin is procured: *without shedding of blood there is no remission*; the blood of Christ has been shed for the remission of sins, and it is obtained by it: God, for Christ's sake, forgives all trespasses; and delivers from going down to the pit, having found a sufficient ransom-price in the blood of his Son: nay, since the blood of Christ has been shed for this purpose, it is a point of justice and faithfulness with God to forgive sin, and cleanse from all unrighteousness; and sin being pardoned, there can be no condemnation for it.

5. The complete justification of God's people, is brought about by the death of Christ: justification is sometimes ascribed to the obedience of Christ; by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Rom. 5:19), and sometimes to the blood of Christ, *being now justified by his blood*, verse 9. And both are concerned in justification: the one is what is commonly called his *active* obedience; the other his *passive* obedience; and both together, with the holiness of his nature; are imputed for justification: his righteousness entitles to life; and his blood, his sufferings, and death, secure from wrath to come; and; therefore, it may well be said, with a view to Christ's dying for his people, *who is he that condemneth?*

Thirdly, The resurrection of Christ from the dead, is another part of the security of God's elect, from all charges and condemnation, *yea, rather that is risen again*. That Christ is risen, the angels asserted; the apostles were witnesses of it; and so was the holy Ghost, being plentifully poured forth on the disciples as an evidence of that, and of his ascension to heaven. This is a fundamental article, which he that heartily and experimentally knows the power of, shall be saved (Rom. 10:9), and shall never enter into condemnation. For,

1. Christ rose as a conqueror over all his, and his people's enemies: by rising *he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light*; and shewed that he had *took away the sting of death, which is sin*; and had *destroyed him that has the power of death, which is the devil*; and had overcome the world, and now has in his hands the keys of hell and death; and therefore who shall condemn those for whom he died, and rose again?

2. He rose again as a surety, having satisfied justice: he engaged as a surety for his people from all eternity; God in strict justice, and according to his righteous law, dealt with him as such; he awoke the sword of justice against him; satisfaction was demanded of him, and it was given; and both law and justice being satisfied, Christ was set free: an angel is sent to roll away the stone from the sepulcher; he is discharged by a divine order; it was not possible he should be held by the cords of death, both because of the dignity of his person, and the performance of his suretyship

engagements; and therefore being risen and discharged, as the surety of his people, law and justice, cannot condemn them, nor can any other.

3. He rose again as a common head and representative, and for the justification of God's elect: he stood charged with all their sins; these being laid upon him by his Father, with his own consent, he was condemned, for them; and suffered death on account of them; and when he rose, he was justified in the Spirit; and acquitted from them all; and his people were all justified in him as their public head. Just as they were crucified with him, and buried with him; so they rose with him, and were justified together with him; he was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification (Rom. 4:25).

4. A *rather* is put upon Christ's resurrection from the dead, as though it was a greater security from condemnation than his death; and so indeed in some sense it is: Christ's death expiated sin, finished transgression, and made an end of it; but his resurrection has brought in the everlasting righteousness for his people: his dying shewed that he was arrested and condemned; and that the sentence of condemnation was executed on him; but his resurrection, that he is discharged, and they in him: notwithstanding Christ's death, had he not rose again, they would have been in their sins; under the power and guilt of them, and so liable to condemnation (1 Cor. 15:17). But Christ being risen, re-appears without sin, even sin imputed; and so they are freed from sin, and from condemnation by it in him.

Fourthly, The session of Christ at the right hand of God, adds to the security of the saints from charges and condemnation, who *is even at the right hand God*.

1. This includes his ascension into heaven, and his entrance there, both which serve to strengthen this point: when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, or he triumphed over those who had led his people captive, sin, Satan, the law, and every enemy of theirs; and therefore, since these are led captive, who shall condemn, them? yea, he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious also; so that though they have been rebellious, they are graciously regarded, and shall not be condemned. When he entered into heaven, he entered as their forerunner, in their name, to take possession of it, and prepare it for them, and has promised to come again and take them to himself, that they may enjoy it; wherefore, it is not possible that they should be condemned with the world.

2. Christ being at the right hand of God shews, that he has done his work he came about; that he has made atonement for sin, and obtained eternal redemption; and that he has done this to satisfaction; and therefore is highly exalted by, and at the right hand of, God, where he has all power in heaven and in earth; where he is above all; angels, principalities, and powers, being subject to him; and where he must sit until all enemies are put under his feet; it therefore cannot be in the power of any to condemn those for whom he died: to which may be added, that these are not only raised together with him, but they are made to sit together in heavenly places in him; and must be secure from condemnation (Eph. 2:6).

Fifthly, and *lastly*, The intercession of Christ for those whom the Father has chosen, and he has died for, is another branch of their security from charges and condemnation: if he rebukes those that bring charges against them, as he does, who dare bring them? and if he is an advocate with the Father for them, as he is, who can condemn them? this part of Christ's work which he performs in

heaven, as a priest upon his throne, is done, not by making vocal prayer, as in the days of his flesh, which does not seem necessary; nor by supplicating God, as an angry judge, which is not consistent with his state of exaltation, nor with his having made peace, by the blood of his cross; nor by litigating, or controverting a point, in the court of heaven, though he is a counselor, and an advocate: but by the appearance of his person, for his people; by the presentation of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice for them, which speak for peace, pardon, and atonement; by offering up the prayers and praises of them unto God; by declaring it as his will, that such and such blessings be bestowed upon them; and by applying the benefits of his death unto them; and which abundantly secure them from condemnation. For,

1. It should be considered who he is that intercedes, and what an interest he has in him with whom he intercedes: he is the Son of God who makes intercession, who can engage his heart to approach unto him; and who from the relation he stands in to God, must have an interest in him, and so have the persons for whom he intercedes; for he is his God, and their God, his Father, and their Father; wherefore, his intercession cannot fail: and, whereas the consideration of Christ, the great high priest, that is passed unto the heavens, being the Son of God, is an argument to hold fast a profession of faith, and to come with boldness to the throne of grace (Heb. 4:14, 16). So it may be improved by faith, as a very strong one against all charges and condemnation taking place on those for whom Christ intercedes.

2. The intercession of Christ is constant; it always continues: though he was dead, he is alive, and lives for evermore; and he lives not for himself only but for others; he ever lives to make intercession: and because he is constantly employed in this work, therefore, as fast as charges are brought against his people, he removes them; by pleading for them, and shewing the falsehood or injustice of such charges; or the reason why, though true, they are not to be received; and on any attempt to condemn them, he shews reason why there is, and should be, no condemnation to them.

3. His intercession is always prevalent: he, who is the redeemer of his people, is strong; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and he pleads their cause, and thoroughly pleads it; and always carries his point; for his pleas are founded upon his propitiatory sacrifice, which is of a sweet-smelling savor to God, and gives a full satisfaction to his justice; to that it has nothing to object to those on whole account it was offered up, and the virtue of it is pleaded. Christ was ever heard, when here on earth, and so he is now in heaven: whatever he asks for he has; yea, whatever is asked for in his name, is given.

4. The application of salvation is owing to the intercession of Christ, though the impetration of it is by his death; and the apostle argues from the evidence of the one to the certainty of the other; for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life (Rom. 5:10), that is, by his interceding life: yea, the proof of Christ being able to save, is taken from his perpetual intercession; wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Heb.7:25). The influence therefore which the intercession of Christ must have on the security of the saints from condemnation, is very evident.

Thus have I endeavored to improve this passage of scripture upon the mournful occasion of the death of Mrs ANN BRINE, late member of the church of Christ in this place, (near Cripplegate)

and late wife of the pastor of it; at whose request I have preached from it to you; it having been of singular use to the deceased.

It may now be expected I should say something concerning her, which will be chiefly about the gracious experience she was favored with. She was a daughter of Mr. JOHN MOOR of *Northampton*; an eminent preacher of the gospel, a minister of the Baptist denomination, of considerable abilities and learning, whom I had the honor to have a personal knowledge of, and acquaintance with. But though she had a religious education, her conversion, her knowledge of Christ, and experimental acquaintance with divine things, were not owing to that, but to the efficacy of divine grace: by several papers of her own writing, put into my hands, it appears, how she came by the knowledge of salvation by Christ, and the great doctrines of the gospel; which were the support of her soul, and the foundation of her joy. These express the sight and sense she had of sin; her abhorrence and detestation of it; the view she had of the loveliness of Christ; of the necessity and suitableness of salvation by him; and how she was enabled to cast her soul on him; and truer in him for eternal life and happiness: but, among the rest, I find one paper, written little more than a year ago, when she took a review of her experience; led thereunto upon a supposition, that there were yet some very great troubles to come upon the churches and servants of Christ, she once thought had been over; which put her upon considering, how it would fare with her in such a time of trial; and what evidence she had of her being a child of God: for which purpose she observed how it had been with her of late; what was her present frame of mind and thoughts of things, and how it had been with her heretofore, and whether her former experience was from nature, or from the Spirit of God.

As to the first of these, how it had been of late, and how it was with her

then, her words are these: "I have often thought my spots are not the spots of God's children; I find so much sin bubbling up in my heart; so many sins of omission and commission, daily and hourly; I can say, that *in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing*; and such *an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God*. Sure it is not with the saints as with me! At the same time I have some secret hope, which I would not part with for all the world: at some times I have earnest desires after a full conformity to Christ, and thirstings after him. O! that I could love him more: O! that I could serve him better: O! that! I found more love in me to his ways, his ordinances, and his people: but, O! *wretched creature that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of sin?* At some times I think I can say with the apostle, *thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, who hath given me the victory*. Those *three* scriptures have of late, upon various occasions, been sweet under a sense of sin. If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean (Matthew 8:2), *To whom shall I go, but unto thee?* Thou hast the words of eternal life (John 6:68). The name of the Lord is a strong tower, whither the righteous run and are safe (Prov. 18:10).

Though I am a vile, sinful, polluted creature, and, as I think, the most vile of all thy creatures; yet, (or such, for the very chief of sinners, thou didst suffer and die, and who knows but for me? I know this, that if thou wilt, thou canst make even me clean; and though I am thus sinful, to whom can I go, but to that God against whom I have sinned? there is no help any where else; no other name given, whereby any can be saved, but the name Christ Jesus." She next proceeds to inquire, how it had been with her formerly, when God first begun to work upon her soul, and she set out in the way of religion; concerning which, she thus expresses herself: "Have I not experienced some things

which natural men are strangers to? O! sure I hope I have: upon a recollection of several parts of my former experience, I was warmed, and assured myself this question; Did this or that flow from nature? No; nature is averse to it. Did education produce it? No; for if that could have had such an effect, it might as well have produced it sooner, for it was not any particular care of my parents, at the time of my awakenings, that was a means thereof; for some time before their care had been abated to what was usual; and my heart more averse to God and good than ever. Did sabbaths seem before this time delightful? and was I before convicted, instructed, edified, or comforted, by the word preached? No; I too well remember the quite contrary of this; even when sabbaths were burdensome instead of delightful; when, if I was obliged to be present, I strove to keep from giving any attention to what was delivered. Had I love for the people of God? No; I had an aversion to many of them; nor did I love any for the sake of their being saints. Had I a sight and sense of sin; of its evil nature? No; I thought myself as good as others that talk more: I did not know that I was *poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked* then: Did I taste a sweetness in the scriptures? No; I thought them to be only the inventions of some men, done with a design to keep others in awe. Did I ever see the absolute need of a Savior before? No; I thought my own works were to save me, and reasoned thus sometimes: I have not been guilty of murder, stealing, etc. and so am in as fair a way for a better world, if any such there be, as others."

Having put these questions, and resolved them in the above manner, she rightly draws the following conclusion. "Then sure what I have met with and experienced, must be from the Spirit of God; as conviction of sin, of its heinous, and aggravated nature; of original, as well as actual transgression; the curse demerited by it; the sense of my own inability to perform the thing that is good; the discovery of my need of a Savior; my seeing Christ to be a fair, suitable, all-sufficient, and able Savior; my approving of him, and application to him for my Savior; my pressing desires towards him, as my alone and complete Savior; my admiration of the love of Father, Son and Spirit, manifested in the great concern of man's salvation; my discovering the harmony. and agreement; the sublimity and sweetness of the holy scriptures; and the effects that many sweet and precious promises set home to my soul have had on me; my hungering and thirsting after Christ, his grace, and manifestation of his love and pardoning mercy; my abhorring myself for all that I have done; especially for those sins which I thought were committed against light and love; my love to young converts; my longing for the return of sabbaths, the comfort I have received under the preaching of the gospel, etc. These were things I was once an utter stranger to, and do believe the carnal mind is enmity against. Why then it must be from above; and if so, then *he that hath begun the good work, will carry it on to the day of Christ*. If the Lord had a mind to have destroyed me, he sure would not have shewn me such things as these; and if I am the Lord's, then that promise stands firm, *with the righteous it shall go well* (Isa. 3:10), and what if troubles should arise? what if I should suffer, or even fall in the common calamity? if the Lord is pleased to support under, and give suffering grace, suffering faith, and suffering patience, with suffering trials,

*I can do all things, or can bear
All sufferings, if my Lord be there;
Sweet pleasure mingles with the pains,
Whilst his left hand my head sustains.*

"I leave myself, my all, in his hands, and desire cheerfully to submit to his will in all things; and not be anxious about this, or the other trying dispensation of providence; knowing that he can make

hard things easy, and crooked things straight; hoping that these things he will do for me, and not forsake me." This was the comfortable result of her thoughts, occasioned by a melancholy scene of troubles she had in view: but, she is got safe to her father's house, and is secure from them. How soon they may come to pass, namely, the "giving the outward court to the Gentiles, to be trodden under foot; the slaying of the witnesses; the leaving their dead bodies unburied for three days and a half, or three years and a half; and their enemies rejoicing over them;" things she was meditating upon, God only knows: may we be prepared for them, supported under them, and carried through them should they be in our day, which is very probable.

She was a person attended with frequent disorders of body, and which often came upon her on Lord's days; whereby she was prevented waiting upon the Lord in his word and ordinances, which were delightful to her; and in which she received much spiritual advantage: this gave her a great concern of mind; and she would sometimes say, "she chose, if it was, the will of the Lord, that she might have two days affliction, instead of one, on other days, could she be free on the Lord's day, that she might have the opportunity of hearing the word which was so useful to her."

Her last illness was very short, and it was not expected it would have issued in death. Under it she was very comfortable, resigned to the will of God, and trusting in Christ, and so *died in the Lord*: wherefore, you, my Brother, and the rest of the surviving relations, have no reason to mourn as those without hope, since *them that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him*, and her among the rest, when you will meet, and never part more, and be for ever with the Lord.

Let what has been the subject of discourse on this sorrowful occasion, be regarded by each of us; which may serve as a direction to us, where to go for relief under all charges brought against us, either by ourselves or others; and under a sense of deserved condemnation, and especially when harassed with the accusations of Satan, and the condemnation of our own hearts: let us apply to Christ; let us take the shield of faith, that shield which faith lays hold on, and uses to good purposes when it wields it aright; namely, the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ; his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession: let us hold up, and hold forth these things, as a full answer to every charge, and as a sufficient reason, why no condemnation can come to us.

This may lead us on to observe, how much we are beholden to Christ; and of what use he is to us, as dying, rising again, ascending on high, sitting at the right hand of God, and there interceding for us: how valuable he is, and how precious he should be to us; and, particularly, what a regard we should have for his righteousness, which of itself clears from all charges, and secures from condemnation; and, therefore, it should be our chief desire, and real concern to be found *in him, not having on our own righteousness*, but his. It becomes us, and is best for us, to look to him at all times; to place our confidence in him, and fetch all our comfort from him; for if there be any consolation, it is in him; and seeing we receive so much benefit by him, we are under obligation to glorify him, with our bodies and spirits, which are his.

THE
DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION,
BY THE
RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST,
STATED AND MAINTAINED.

ACTS 13:39

And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

This, and the preceding verse, appear, at first view, to contain those two great doctrines of the gospel, pardon of sin, and justification from it, the former of which I have largely insisted on, from the foregoing words, and shall now consider the latter, which I propose to do in the following method.

I. I shall explain the act of justification, and shew what it is, and what it is not.

II. Enquire into the author of it, or who it is that justifies.

III. Shew the matter of it, or what that is, for the sake of which any are justified.

IV. Say something concerning the form of it, which is by imputation of righteousness.

V. Consider the date of justification.

VI. Point out the objects thereof, or who they are that are justified.

VII. Mention the several effects, which follow upon it, or are closely connected with it.

VIII. And *lastly*, Give some account of the several Properties of it.

I. I shall explain the act of justification, and shew both what it is not, and what it is. And,

1. Strictly, and properly speaking, it is not the pardon of sin. These two acts of divine grace are in strict connection with each other, and are not to be separated; that is to say, where the one is, the other also is; yet, I think, they may be distinguished. Divines generally make justification to consist

in the remission of sins, and in the imputation of Christ's righteousness; which some make different parts; others say, they are not two integrating parts of justification, or acts numerically and really distinct, but only one act respecting two different terms, *à quo & ad quem*; just as by one, and the same act, darkness is expelled from the air, and light is introduced into it; so by one, and the same act of justification, the sinner is absolved from guilt, and pronounced righteous. Hence they conclude, that those divines express the whole nature of justification, who say, that it consists in the remission of sins, and who say, that it consists in the imputation of righteousness; because, say they, when God forgives us our sins, he pronounces us righteous, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness; and when he pronounces us righteous, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, he forgives us our sins. I readily allow that there is a very great agreement between justification and pardon, in their efficient, impulsive, and procuring causes, in their objects, or subjects, in their commencement, and manner of completion: the same God that pardons the sins of his people, justifies them, or accounts them righteous; the same grace, which moved him to the one, moved him to the other; as the blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sins, so by it are we justified; all who are justified are pardoned; and all who are pardoned, are justified, and that, at one and the same time; both these acts are finished at once, *simul & semel*, and are not carried on in a gradual and progressive way, as sanctification. But all this does not prove them to be one and the same, for though they agree in these things, in others they differ; for justification is a pronouncing a person righteous according to law, as though he had never sinned; not so pardon: it is one thing for a man to be tried by law, cast, and condemned, and then receive the king's pardon; and another thing to be tried by the law, and, by it, to be found and declared righteous, as though he had not sinned against it. Moreover, though pardon takes away sin, and therefore is expressed by God's casting of it behind his back, and into the, depths of the sea, and by a removal of it from his people, *as far as the east is from the west*; (Isa. 38:17; Micah 7:20; Ps. 103:13) yet it does not give a righteousness, as justification does; pardon of sin, indeed, takes away our filthy garments, but it is justification that clothes us with change of raiment. Besides, more is required, and was given for our justification, than for our pardon; the blood of Christ was sufficient to procure pardon; but, besides, his suffering of death, the holiness of his nature, and the perfect obedience of his life, must be imputed for justification. Again, though pardon frees from punishment, yet, strictly and properly speaking, it does not give a title to eternal life; that justification properly gives, and is one good reason why the apostle calls it *Justification of life*. (Rom. 5:18) If a king pardons a criminal, he does not thereby give him a title to his crown and kingdom; if he will, when he has pardoned him, take him to court, make him his son and heir, it must be by another distinct act of royal favour. Once more, justification passed on Christ, as our head and Representative, when he rose from the dead, but so did not pardon. We may truly say, that Christ was justified, because the scriptures say so, (1 Tim. 3:16) but we cannot say that he was pardoned; should we, it would sound very harsh in our ears, as well as be, I think, a very unwarrantable expression; therefore pardon and justification may be considered as two distinct things. In fine, if these two are one and the same, the apostle must be guilty of a tautology in our text, where he speaks distinctly of justification, having fully expressed forgiveness of sin in the preceding verse.

2. Justification is not a teaching, or an instructing of men in the way and method how they are or may be justified. When Christ as God's righteous servant, is said to *justify many by his knowledge*; (Isa. 53:11) the meaning is, not that he, by his knowledge, or doctrine, should only teach men how they might be justified, or what is God's way and method of justifying sinners; for this is no more than what the ministers of the gospel do, who are said to *turn many to righteousness*, or, as it is in

the original text, to justify many; (Dan. 12:3) which they do, by preaching the gospel, wherein *the righteousness of God is revealed, from faith to faith*; and which, being blessed and owned by the Spirit of God, is *the ministration of righteousness* to many: but the meaning is, that he should give to many a spiritual knowledge of himself, which, in other words, is faith; by which they should have a comfortable apprehension of their justification by his righteousness.

3. Justification is not an infusion of righteousness into persons; to justify, is not to make men holy and righteous, who were unholy and unrighteous, by producing any physical or real change in them; for this is to confound justification and sanctification together, which are very manifestly distinct; the one being a work of grace *in* us; the other an act of grace *towards* us; the one is imperfect, the other perfect; the one is progressive, and carried on by degrees; the other is complete, and finished at *once*. Besides, justification is never used in scripture in a physical, but in a forensic sense; (see Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15; Isa. 5:23; Rom. 5:16, 18 and 8:33, 34) and stands opposed, not to a state of impurity, or unholiness, but to a state of condemnation.

4. Justification is an act of God's free grace, whereby he clears his people from sin, discharges them from condemnation, and reckons and accounts them righteous for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which he has accepted of, and imputes unto them. Some very excellent divines have distinguished justification into active and passive. Active justification is God's act, it is God that justifies; passive justification is the same act, terminating on the conscience of the believer; active justification is strictly and properly justification, passive justification is improperly so; active justification precedes faith, passive justification is by faith.

Again, justification may be considered either *in foro Dei*, and so it is an eternal, immanent act in God: or *in foro conscientiae*, and so it is declarative to and upon the conscience of the believer; or *in foro mundi*, and so it will be notified to men and angels at the general judgment.

Again, let it be farther observed, that the scriptures sometimes speak of the justification of God's people, either of their persons, or faith, or cause, before men, and then it is ascribed to their works; and, at other times, of their persons before God, which is said to be without works; it is now, not of the former, but of the latter our text speaks, and which I am considering; and shall now proceed,

II. To enquire into the author, or efficient cause of justification, who is the great God of heaven and earth: *It is God that justifies*; (Rom. 8:34) which may well be wondered at, when it is considered that he is the supreme Judge of all, who will do right; that his law is the rule by which he acts in this affair; that this law is broken by the sin of man; that sin, which is a breach of the law, is especially committed against him, and is hateful to him; that he is a God that will not admit of an imperfect righteousness, in the room of a perfect one; and that he has power to condemn, and reason sufficient to do it; when, I say, these things are considered, it is amazing that this God should justify. For the farther illustration of this head, I shall endeavour to shew the concern that all the three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, have in the justification of the elect.

1. God the Father is the contriver of the scheme and method of our justification; he *was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses*; (2 Cor. 5:19) he drew the model and platform of it, which is *Nodus Deo vindice dignus*. It would have remained a puzzling question to men and angels, *how should man be just with God?* had not his grace employed his wisdom to find

out a ransom, whereby he has delivered his people from going down to the pit of corruption; which ransom is no other than his own Son, whom he sent, in the fulness of time, to execute the scheme he had so wisely formed in his eternal mind which he did by finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness; which righteousness, being wrought out by Christ, God was well pleased with, because hereby his law was magnified and made honourable; and, having graciously accepted of it, he imputes it freely to all his people, and reckons their righteous on the account of it.

2. God the Son, as God, is the co-efficient cause of it, with his Father. As he has equal power with him to forgive sin, he also has to acquit, discharge, and justify from it. As Mediator, he is the Head and Representative; *in whom all the seed of Israel are justified*; as such, he has wrought out a righteousness, answerable to the demands of the law, by which they are justified; and is the Author and Finisher of that faith, which looks unto, lays hold on, and apprehends that righteousness for justification.

3. God the Holy Ghost convinces men of the weakness, imperfection, and insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; he brings near, and sets before them, the righteousness of Christ, and works faith in them to lay hold on it, and receive it; he intimates to their consciences the justifying sentence of God, on the account of Christ's righteousness, and bears a testimony to and with their spirits, that they are justified persons; and hence the saints are said to be *justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*; (1 Cor. 6:11) but *this testimony of the Spirit is not so properly justification in itself, as an actual perception of it, before granted, by a kind of a reflex act of faith*, as Dr. Ames expresses it. Now this is the part which Father, Son, and Spirit, severally bear in justification: the Father has contrived it, the Son has procured it, and the Spirit applies it. I go on,

III. To consider the matter of justification, or what that is for the sake of which God's elect are justified. And,

1. Man's obedience to the law of works, is not the matter of his justification, or that for the sake of which he is justified, for this is imperfect, and therefore not justifying; and was man's obedience his justifying righteousness, his justification would be by works, and not by grace; which is contrary to the whole stream and current of scripture. Besides, *if righteousness is by the law, then Christ is dead in vain*, and his righteousness is needless and useless; which must highly reflect both on the grace and wisdom of God.

2. Nor is man's obedience to the gospel, as to a new and milder law, his justifying righteousness before God. The scheme of some, if I understand it right, is this; that Jesus Christ has procured a relaxation of the old law, and has introduced a new law, a remedial law, a law of milder terms; which new law is the gospel, and its terms, faith, repentance, and new obedience; which, though imperfect, yet being sincere, will be accepted of by God, in the room of a perfect righteousness. But the whole scheme is entirely false; the law is not relaxed, nor any of its severities abated; its power is not infringed, it has the same commanding and condemning power it ever had over those that are under it; nor is the gospel a law, it is a pure declaration of grace and salvation by Christ; it has no commands, but all promises; there is nothing in it that looks like a law; and if faith and repentance were the terms of it, and required by it, as conditions of men's acceptance with God, it would not

be a remedial law, a law of milder terms; for it was much easier for *Adam*, in a state of innocence, to have kept the whole law, than for man, in his fallen state, to repent and believe in Christ of himself; besides, nothing can more reflect upon the justice of God than to say that he will accept of an imperfect righteousness in the room of a perfect one; he who is *the Judge of all the earth, will do right*; and he, *whose judgment is according to truth*, will never call or account that a righteousness which is not one.

3. Nor is a profession of religion, even of the best, a matter of our justification. Men may have a form of godliness, and deny the power of it, have a name to live, and yet are dead, appear outwardly righteous to men, and yet be inwardly full of all manner of impurity; they may submit to all Christ's ordinances, be baptized in his name, sit down at his table, and constantly attend on his word, and yet be far from righteousness, their fear towards God being only taught by the precept of men; yea, supposing they were sincere in all this, they could not be justified by it. Sincerity, in any religion, even in the best religion, is not our justifying righteousness: there may be sincere *Mohammedans*, sincere *Papists*, and sincere *Pagans*, as well as sincere believers in Christ; one man may be a sincere persecutor of the true religion, as well as another may be a sincere professor of it. Our Lord told his disciples, that the time would come, when some men should think they did God service in killing them; (John 16:2) and it is certain the apostle *Paul* before his conversion, *thought with himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth*. (Acts 26:9) But taking sincerity in the best sense, for a grace of the Spirit of God, which indeed, runs through, and accompanies all other graces, and makes our faith to be unfeigned, our love to be without dissimulation, and our hope without hypocrisy; I say, taking it in this sense, it belongs to sanctification, and not to justification; which are two distinct things, and not to be confounded; for the whole real work of sanctification is neither the whole or a part of our justifying righteousness; and if the whole work is not, then not a part of it and if not a part of it, then,

4. The τὸ *credere*, or act of believing, which is a part of sanctification, is not imputed to us for justification, as *Arminius* and his followers have asserted; endeavouring to establish this notion from some passages in Romans 4:3, 5, 9, where faith is said to be counted for righteousness; particularly the faith of *Abraham*; by which the apostle means not the act, but the object of faith, even the righteousness of Christ, which God, in verse 6, is said to impute without works. That this is his sense is manifest, from this one single consideration the very same *it*, which was imputed to *Abraham* for righteousness, is *imputed to all those who believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead*, verses 22-24. Now supposing that *Abraham's* faith was reckoned and imputed to him for a justifying righteousness, it cannot be reasonably thought that it should be imputed also for righteousness to all that believe; besides, it ought to be observed, that the apostle does not say that this was imputed, ἀντὶ δικαιοσύνης, *instead of righteousness*; but εἰς δικαιοσύνην, *unto righteousness*, and intends no more here than what the apostle elsewhere says, that *with the heart man believes unto righteousness*; (Rom. 10:10) that is, with his heart, or heartily, he believes in Christ for righteousness; which righteousness, and not faith, is imputed to him for justification; for faith, as it is our act, is our own; hence we read of *his* faith, and *my* faith, and *thy* faith in scripture; (Hab. 2:5; James 2:18) but the righteousness by which we are justified is the righteousness of another, and therefore not faith. Moreover, faith, as an act of ours, is a duty; for whatsoever we do, in a religious way, we do but what is our duty to do; and, if it is a duty, it belongs to the law; for, as all the declarations and promises of grace belong to the gospel, so all duties belong to the law; and if faith belongs to the law, as a duty, it is a work of it, and therefore by it we cannot be justified; *for*

by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified. Besides, faith is imperfect, it has many deficiencies; and, was it perfect, it is but a part of the law, though one of the weightier parts of it; and God, *whose judgment is according to truth*, will never reckon or account a partial conformity to the law a complete righteousness. Add to this, that faith and righteousness are manifestly distinguished; (Rom. 1:17 and 3:22) *the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; it is unto all, and upon all them that believe.* Something else, and not faith, is represented as our justifying righteousness: faith is not the blood, nor obedience of Christ, and yet by these we are said to be justified, or made righteous. (Rom. 5:9, 19) We are, indeed, by faith said to be *justified by faith*, (Rom. 5:1) but not by faith, as an act of ours, for then we should be justified by works; nor by faith as a grace of the Spirit, for this would be to confound sanctification and justification; but we are justified by faith objectively, as it looks to, receives, apprehends, and embraces Christ's righteousness for justification. And let it be observed, that though we are said to be justified by faith, yet faith is never said to justify us. And here give me leave to correct a vulgar, though but a verbal mistake, in calling faith, justifying faith. I am well satisfied sound divines have used this phrase without any ill meaning; and no less a person than the great Dr. *Goodwin*, whose works I much value and esteem, has entitled one of his treatises, *Of the Object and Acts of Justifying Faith*: But why it should be called justifying faith, any more than adopting or pardoning faith, I see not; since it has just the same concern in adoption and pardon, as it has in justification. Are we said to be justified by faith, or, by faith, to receive the righteousness of Christ for justification? We are also said, by faith, to receive the remission of sins, and to be the children of God, by faith, in Christ Jesus. (Acts 26:18; Gal. 3:26) Besides, what do we, or can we say more of the righteousness of Christ; than that it is a justifying one? In one word, it is God, and not faith, that justifies. But,

5. The matter of our justification, or that for the sake of which we are justified, is the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; by which I mean not his essential righteousness as God: nor his righteousness and fidelity to him, that appointed him, in the discharge of his mediatorial office; nor do I take in any of his actions performed by him in heaven, as Jesus Christ the righteous; only those which he wrought in his state of humiliation here on earth: and not all these neither, for his extraordinary works and miracles must be excluded; for "they, as a great man well observes, rather transcend the predicaments of the Ten Commandments, than are parts of the righteousness of the law: they were proofs of his divinity, and the signs and badges, rather than the duties of his office. He, indeed, by them, shewed himself to be the only Mediator, but he did not act the Mediator in them; and he did them that men might believe in his righteousness, but they were no ingredients in that righteousness on which they were to believe." But by the righteousness of Christ, I mean that which consists of what is commonly called his active and passive obedience; by the former, is meant the conformity of his life to the precepts of the law, and is, strictly speaking, that obedience of his, by which we are made righteous; and by the latter, is meant his sufferings and death, which in scripture, are expressed by his blood. This distinction, though taken from the schools, is not very accurate. Passive obedience is a contradiction in terms; nor can Christ's sufferings and death be properly called obedience. Obedience belongs to the predicament, or class of action, and sufferings and death to that of passion. Besides, Christ's sufferings and death flow from his obedience; they are the effects of it, they are in consequence of his subjection and submission to his Father's will. What looks most likely to prove Christ's sufferings and death to be an obedience, is the text in *Philippians 2:8*, where Christ is said to be *obedient unto death*. But this will fall short of doing it; for as a judicious divine observes, it may as well be inferred, because *Peter* and *Paul* confessed Christ unto death, therefore their confession and death were one and the same. The true sense of the

words is, that Christ was obedient to his Father, from the cradle to the cross, during the whole course of his life, even to the very moment of his death. It will be allowed, that Christ was, in some sense, active in his sufferings, he being God, as well as man. Hence he is said to *lay down his life of himself*; (John 10:18; Isa. 53:12; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:14) to *pour out his soul unto death*; to *give himself an offering and sacrifice*; yea, *through the eternal Spirit, to offer up himself to God*; and it will be as readily granted that Christ's sufferings and death, which are commonly called passive obedience, are requisite unto, and are imputed to us for our justification. Hence we are said to have *healing by his stripes*, (Isa. 53:5; Rom. 5:9, 10) to *be justified by his blood*, and to be *reconciled to God by his death*: but then this is not to be understood as exclusive of the imputation of his active obedience, nor of the holiness of his human nature. There are some divines that exclude Christ's active obedience from being any part of the righteousness by which we are justified: they allow, that it is a condition requisite in him, as Mediator, which qualifies him for his office, and that without it his death would not have been effectual and meritorious. But they deny that this obedience strictly and properly speaking, is the matter of our justification, or that it is imputed to us, or reckoned to us, as ours: they suppose that Christ was obliged to this obedience as a creature for himself, and that it was unnecessary to us, because his sufferings and death were sufficient for our justification. On the other hand, I firmly believe, that not only the active obedience of Christ, with his sufferings and death, but also that the holiness of his human nature is imputed to us for justification. The law requires an holy nature, and perfect obedience, and, in case of disobedience, enjoins punishment. Through sin, our nature is become unholy, our obedience imperfect, and so we are liable to punishment. Christ has assumed an holy human nature, and in it performed perfect obedience to the law, and suffered the penalty of it; all which he did not for himself, but for us; and unto us it is all imputed for our justification. He *is of God, made unto us*, that is, *by imputation, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*. (1 Cor. 1:30) *Wisdom* may stand in general for justification, because there is in it such a manifest display of the wisdom of God; and the other three may be considered as so many parts of it. *Sanctification* may intend the holiness of his human nature; which is that *law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which frees from the law of sin and death*. *Righteousness* may signify his active obedience, by which *many are made righteous*; and *Redemption* may express his sufferings and death, whereby *sin was condemned in the flesh*, and so the whole *righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us*. I shall now very briefly give some reasons why, I think, Christ's active obedience, in particular, as well as his sufferings and death, is imputed for justification.

1. Because all that must be imputed for our justification, which the law requires, and without which it cannot be satisfied. Now, let it be observed, that the law, before man had sinned, only obliged him to obedience; since his fall, it obliges him both to obedience and punishment; and, unless its precepts are perfectly obeyed, and its whole penalty endured, it cannot be satisfied; and unless it is satisfied, there can be no justification by it. If Jesus Christ, therefore, engages, as a surety, to make satisfaction to the law, in the room and stead of his people, he must both obey the precept of the law, and suffer the penalty of it; his submitting to the one, without conforming to the other, is not sufficient; one debt is not paid by another; his paying off the debt of punishment did not exempt from obedience, as the paying off the debt of obedience, did not exempt from punishment. Christ did not satisfy the whole law by either of them separately, but by both conjunctly by his sufferings and death he satisfied the threatenings of the law, but not the precepts of it; and, by his active obedience, he satisfied the preceptive part of the law, but not the penal part of it; but, by both, he

satisfied the whole law, and magnified it, and made it honourable, and therefore both must be imputed for our justification.

2. Because we are justified by a righteousness, and that is the righteousness of Christ. Now righteousness, strictly speaking, consists in actual obedience; *it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments, Deuteronomy 6:25*. Christ's righteousness lay in doing, not in suffering. "All righteousness is either a habit, or an act; but sufferings are neither, and therefore not righteousness: no man is righteous because he is punished; if so, the devils and damned in hell would be righteous, in proportion to their punishment; the more severe their punishment, and the more grievous their torments, the greater their righteousness must be; if there is any righteousness in punishment, it must be in the punisher, not in the punished." If then we are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, it must be by his active obedience, and not merely by his sufferings and death; because these, though they free us from death, yet they do not, strictly speaking, make us righteous.

3. Because we are expressly said to be *made righteous by the obedience of one*, (Rom. 5:19) which is Christ. Now by obedience, in this place, cannot be meant the sufferings and death of Christ; because, strictly speaking, they are not his obedience, but flow from it, as has been observed. Besides, the antithesis, in the text, determines the sense of the words; for if, by one man's actual disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the rule of opposition, by one man's actual obedience, many are made righteous.

4. Because the reward of life is promised not to suffering, but to doing; the law says, Do this and live; it promises life not to him that suffers the penalty, but to him that obeys the precept. "There never was a law, as an excellent divine observes, even among men, either promising or declaring a reward due to the criminal, because he had undergone the punishment of his crimes." Christ's sufferings and death being satisfactory to the comminatory, or threatening part of the law, are imputed to us for justification, that so we may be freed and discharged from the curse, and hell, and wrath. But these, as they do not constitute us righteous, do not, properly speaking, entitle us to eternal life; but the active obedience, or righteousness of Christ, being imputed to us, is our *justification of life*, or what gives us the title to eternal life.

5. Because Christ's active obedience was performed for us, in our room and stead, and therefore must be imputed to us for justification. If it should he said, that Christ, as a creature, being made of a woman, and made under the law, was obliged to yield obedience to that law for himself; I answer, that he assumed human nature, became a creature, subjected himself to the law, and obliged himself to yield obedience to it, not for himself, but for us; not upon his own, but our account; *to or for us a Child is born, a Son is given*; (Isa. 9:6) and if Christ only in his sufferings, and not in his obedience, is given to us, we should not have a whole Christ given us, only a suffering Christ, not an obeying one.

Let it be further observed, that Christ's active obedience to the law for us, and in our room and stead, does not exempt us from personal obedience to it, any more than his sufferings and death exempt us from a corporal death, or suffering for his sake. It is true, indeed, we do not suffer and die in the sense he did, to satisfy justice, and atone for sin; so neither do we yield obedience to the law, in order to obtain eternal life by it. By Christ's obedience for us, we are exempted from

obedience to the law in this sense, but not from obedience to it, as a rule of walk and conversation, by which we may glorify God, and express our thankfulness to him, for his abundant mercies. Well then, it is what is commonly called Christ's active and passive obedience, together with the holiness of his nature, from whence all his obedience flows, which is the matter of our justification before God. Many things might be said in commendation of this glorious righteousness of the Mediator. The nature and excellency of it may be collected from the several names, or appellations, by which it is called in scripture.

1. It is called *the righteousness of God*; (Rom. 1:17 and 3:22) and that not only because it stands opposed to the righteousness of man, but because it was wrought out by one that is God, as well as man; and is greatly approved and graciously accepted of by God, and by him freely imputed to all his people, who are justified from all things by it in his sight.

2. It is called, *the righteousness of one*; (Rom. 5:18) that is, of one of the Persons of the Trinity; it is not the righteousness of the Father, nor of the Spirit, but of the Son, who though he is a partaker of two natures, yet is but one Person; it is the righteousness of one, who is a common head to all his seed, as *Adam* was to his. It may, indeed, be called the righteousness of many, even of all the saints, because it is imputed to them, and they all have an equal right to it; but yet the Author is but one; and therefore we are not justified, partly by our own righteousness, and partly by Christ's; for then we should be justified by the righteousness of two, and not of one only.

3. It is called, *the righteousness of the law*; (Rom. 8:4) for though righteousness does not come by our obedience to the law, yet it does by Christ's obedience to it; though, by the deeds of the law, as performed by man, no flesh living can be justified, yet, by the deeds of the law, as performed by Christ, all the elect are justified. Christ's righteousness may be truly called a legal righteousness; it is what the law requires and demands, and is every way commensurate to it; it is a complete conformity to all its precepts; by it the law is magnified and made honourable. It is true, indeed, it makes no discovery of it, for it is *manifested without the law, though witnessed to both by law and prophets*; it is the gospel that is the ministration of it; for therein it is revealed from faith to faith.

4. It is called, *the righteousness of faith*; (Rom. 4:13) not that faith is our righteousness, either in whole, or in part; it is not the matter of our justification, as has been before observed; it has no manner of causal influence on it, nor is it imputed to us for it; but Christ's righteousness is called so, because faith receives it, puts it on, rejoices in it, and boasts of it.

5. It is called, *the gift of righteousness*, (Rom. 5:15-17) and a *free gift*, and a *gift by grace*; because it is freely wrought out by Christ, and freely imputed by God the Father, and faith is freely given to lay hold on it, and embrace it.

6. It is called, *the best robe*, or, as in the *Greek* text, *the first robe*; (Luke 15:22) for though *Adam's* robe of righteousness, in innocence, was first in wear, this was first provided in the covenant of grace; this was first in designation, though that was first in use: and it may well be called the best robe, because it is a better robe than ever sinful fallen man had; his being imperfect, and polluted, and insufficient to justify him before God, or screen him from divine justice, or secure him from divine wrath; yea, it is a better robe than ever *Adam* had in *Eden*, or the angels have in heaven for the righteousness of either of these, is but the righteousness of a creature, whereas this is the

righteousness of God besides, the righteousness of *Adam* was a righteousness that might be lost, and which was actually lost; for *God made man upright, and he sought out many inventions*, whereby he lost his righteousness; so that now there is none of *Adam's* posterity righteous in and of themselves; no, not one; and as for the righteousness of the angels, it is plain, it was a losable righteousness, for many of them left their first estate, and lost their righteousness; and the true reason why the others stand in theirs is, because of confirming grace from Christ; but Christ's righteousness is an everlasting one, and cannot, nor will it, ever be lost.

It is a righteousness which justice can find no fault with, but is entirely satisfied with; it justifies *from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*; it secures from all wrath and condemnation, and silences all accusations; for *who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth*: It will *answer for us in a time to come*, and give us an admittance into God's kingdom and glory; when such that have no better righteousness than what the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had, shall not enter there; and all that are without this *wedding garment*, shall be shut out., and *cast into outer darkness, where is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth*. But I proceed,

IV. To consider the form of justification, which is by the imputation of this righteousness of Christ, I have been speaking of; *even as David describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works*. (Rom. 4:6) The *Hebrew* word *כִּשְׁב*, and the *Greek* words, *λογίζομαι, ἐλλογέω, ἐλλογέομαι*, which are used to express this act of imputation, signify to reckon, repute, estimate, attribute, or place any thing to the account of another; as when the apostle *Paul* said to *Philemon*, concerning *Onesimus*, *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account*; (Philemon 18) *τὸ ἐμὸν ἐλλόμεναι*, let it be reckoned or imputed to me; so when God is said to impute Christ's righteousness to us, the meaning is, that he reckons it as ours, being wrought out for us, and accounts us righteous by it, as though we had performed it in our own persons. And now, that it may appear that we are justified by the righteousness of Christ *imputed* to us, observe,

1. That we are in our own persons ungodly, who are justified, for God *justifieth the ungodly*; (Rom. 4:5) if ungodly, then without a righteousness, as all *Adam's* posterity are; and if without a righteousness, then if we are justified, it must be by some righteousness imputed to us, or placed to our account; which can be no other than the righteousness of Christ.
2. We are justified either by an inherent, or by an imputed righteousness; not by an inherent one, because that is imperfect, and nothing that is imperfect can justify us. Besides, this is a righteousness within us, whereas the righteousness by which we are justified is a righteousness without us; it is *unto all, and upon all them that believe*. (Rom. 3:22) And, if we are not justified by an inherent righteousness, then it must be by an imputed one, because there remains no other.
3. The righteousness by which we are justified is not our own righteousness, but the righteousness of another, even the righteousness of Christ: *That I may be found in Christ*, says the apostle, *not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ*. (Phil. 3:9) Now, the righteousness of another cannot be made ours, or we be justified by it, any other way than by an imputation of it.

4. The same way that *Adam's* sin becomes ours, or we are made sinners by it, the same way Christ's righteousness becomes ours, or we are made righteous by it. Now, *Adam's* sin becomes ours by imputation, and so does Christ's righteousness, according to the apostle: *As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.*

5. The same way that our sins became Christ's, his righteousness becomes ours. Now our sins became Christ's by imputation only; the Father laid them on him by imputation, and he took them to himself by voluntary susception; they were placed to his account, and he looked upon himself as answerable to justice for them. Now, in the same way his righteousness becomes ours: *For he, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,* 2 Corinthians 5:21. But I hasten,

V. To enquire into the date of justification, concerning which there have been various sentiments. Some have thought that it will not be completed until the day of judgment; others, that it commences at, or upon believing, and not before; others, that it took place at Christ's resurrection from the dead, when he was justified, and all the elect in him; others, that it bears date from the time that Christ was first promised, as the Mediator, which was quickly after the fall: others carry it up as high as the covenant transactions between the Father and the Son, and the surety-ship engagements of Christ from eternity, which are the present sentiments of my mind. The method in which I shall endeavour to represent them to others, shall be as follows:

First, I shall endeavour to prove that that which is properly justification, is antecedent to any act of believing.

Secondly, That the justification, by, or at, or upon believing, is not properly justification.

Thirdly, Answer the objections made against this doctrine.

First, I shall endeavour to prove, that that which is properly justification, is before faith, or antecedent to any act of believing of ours; which, I apprehend, may be fairly concluded from the following considerations.

1. Faith is not the cause, but the fruit and effect of justification. The reason why we are justified, is not because we have faith; but the reason why we have faith is because we are justified. Was there no such blessing of grace as justification of life provided for the sons of men, there would be no such thing as faith in Christ bestowed upon them, nor, indeed, would there be any use for it; and though it is provided, yet since not for all men, therefore all men have not faith. The reason why some do not believe, is, because they are *not of Christ's sheep*; (John 10:26) they never were chosen in him, nor justified by him, but are justly left in their sins, and so to condemnation; the reason why others do believe, is, because they *are ordained to eternal life*, (Acts 13:48) have a justifying righteousness provided for them, and are justified by it, and shall never enter into condemnation and, in asserting this, I say no more than what Dr. *Twisse*, the famous Prolocutor to the Assembly of Divines, has said before me. His words are these: "Before faith the righteousness of Christ was ours, being in the intention of God the Father, and Christ the Mediator, wrought out for us; and, because wrought out for us, therefore God, in his own time, gives us grace of every kind, and among others, faith itself, and, at last, the crown of heavenly glory." And, a little after, he

says: "Before faith and repentance the righteousness of Christ is applied unto us; since it is on the account of that, that we obtain efficacious grace, to believe in Christ and repent." Likewise the judicious *Pemble* writes to the same effect, when, observing a two-fold justification, he says, the one is "*In foro divino*, in God's sight, and this goes before all our sanctification; for even whilst the elect are unconverted, they are then *actually justified*, and freed from all sin, by the death of Christ, and God so esteems of them as free, and, having accepted of that satisfaction, is *actually* reconciled to them. By this justification, we are freed from the guilt of our sins; and *because* that is done away, God, in due time, proceeds to give us the grace of sanctification, to free from sin's corruption still inherent in our persons." The other is, "*In foro conscientiae*, in their own sense, which is but the revelation and certain declaration of God's former secret act of accepting Christ's righteousness to our justification." And *Maccovius* says, "That because that God justifies us, therefore, he gives us faith, and other spiritual gifts." Now, if justification is the cause, and faith the effect; then, as every cause is before its effect, and every effect follows its own cause, justification must be before faith, and faith must follow justification.

2. Justification is the object, and faith is the act, which is conversant with it. Now the object does not depend upon the act, but the act upon the object. Every object is prior to the act, which is conversant with it; unless it be when an act gives being to the object, which cannot be the case here; unless we make faith to be the cause or matter of our justification, which has been already disproved. Faith is the evidence, not the cause of justification; and if it is an evidence, that of which it is an evidence must exist before it. *Faith is indeed the evidence of things not seen*; but it is not the evidence of things that are not: what the eye is in the body, that faith is in the soul. The eye, by virtue of its visive faculty beholds sensible objects, but does not produce them; and did they not previously exist, could not behold them. We see the sun shining in its brightness, but did it not exist before, it could not be visible to us; the same observation will hold good in ten thousand other instances. Faith is the hand which receives the blessing of justification from the Lord, and righteousness, by which the soul is justified from the God of its salvation; but then this blessing must exist before faith can receive it. If any should think fit to distinguish between the act of justification, and the righteousness of Christ, by which we are justified; and object, That not justification, but the righteousness of Christ, is the object of faith; I reply, Either the righteousness of Christ, as justifying, is the object of faith, or it is not: if it is not, then it is useless, and to be laid aside in the business of justification; if, as justifying, it is the object of faith, what is it else but justification? Christ's righteousness justifying me, is my justification before God, and as such, my faith considers it, and says with the church, *Surely, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.* (Isa. 45:24)

3. The elect of God are justified whilst ungodly, and therefore, before they believe; the reason of the consequence is plain, because a believer is not an ungodly person. That God's elect are, by nature ungodly, will not be denied; as such, Christ died for them; *While we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* (Rom. 5:6) And it is as evident, that, as such, God justifies them: *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* (Rom. 4:5) Not that God justifies the ungodly without a righteousness; but he imputes and reckons to them the righteousness of his Son; for otherwise he would do that himself which he abhors in others: *For he that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, they both are an abomination to the Lord.* (Prov. 17:15) Nor does he justify them in their ungodliness, but from it; and indeed, *from all things, from which they could not be justified, by the*

law of Moses; and yet he justifies them being ungodly. Now, if it can be proved that a believer is or may be called, an ungodly person, then there is no strength in my argument; but, I apprehend, it cannot be proved, from scripture, that a believer is so called; nor can any just reason be given why he should; seeing an ungodly person is one that is without God, that is, without the grace and fear of God; and without Christ, being destitute of a true knowledge of him, faith in him, and love to him; all which is incompatible with the character of a believer. I conclude then, that if God justifies his elect when they are ungodly, then he justifies them before they believe, which is the thing I have undertaken to prove.

4. All the elect of God were justified in, and with Christ, their Head and Representative, when he rose from the dead, and therefore before they believe. The Lord Jesus Christ having, from eternity engaged as a Surety for his people, all their sins were laid upon him, imputed to him, and placed to his account; for all which he was responsible to divine justice, and accordingly, in the fulness of time gave full satisfaction for them, by his sufferings and death; and having done this, was acquitted and discharged; for, as he was put to death in the flesh, he was justified in the Spirit. Now as he suffered and died not as a private person, but as a public one, so he rose again, and was justified as such. Hence, when he was justified, all those for whom he made satisfaction, and brought in a righteousness, were justified in him; which seems to be the meaning of that scripture, *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* (Rom. 4:25) This justification of the elect, at the resurrection of Christ, and upon the foot of the oblation and sacrifice, already offered up, is acknowledged by many excellent and judicious divines; some of whom, though they only allow a decretive justification from eternity; yet assert a real and complete one at the resurrection of Christ, on the account of his actual oblation and sacrifice. Dr. *Ames* says, that "The sentence of justification was, 1. As it were conceived in the mind of God, by the decree of justifying. 2. Pronounced in Christ our Head, when he arose from the dead." The learned *Hoornekeek*, summing up the tenets of the people called *Antinomians* in *England*, takes notice of their sentiments concerning justification; and observes, that the difference between them and others, "May easily be reconciled, by distinguishing justification into active and passive, the former, says he, is the act of God justifying; the latter the termination and application of it to the consciences of believers. The one was done at Christ's satisfaction; the other is, when a person actually believes." And a little after he adds; "Justification was designed for us from all eternity, in the decree of predestination; promised immediately after the fall: wrought at the death and resurrection of Christ, *for these are to be joined together*, Romans 8:34, being, at the one, merited by Christ, and, at the other, declared and ratified by God." *Witsius*, who engaged as a Moderator in the *Antinomian* and *Neonomian* controversies, moved here in *England* says: "Christ verily was justified, when God raised him from the dead, and gave him an acquittance for the payment made by Christ, and accepted by him: *And the same Christ was raised again for our justification*, Romans 4:25. For when he was justified, the elect were justified together in him; for as much as he was their Representative." And, not to forget our great *Dr. Goodwin*, who observes, that "At the instant when he, that is, Christ, arose, God then performed a farther act of justification towards him, and us in him; admitting him, as our advocate, into the actual possession of justification of life; acquitting him from all those sins, which he had charged upon him. Therefore we read, that as Christ was made sin in his life and death, so that he was justified also, 1 Timothy 3:16. And that he should be thus justified, is not spoken of him, abstractly considered in himself, but as he hath us conjoined in him, and as he connotes us." And a little after he says: "As when he ascended, we ascended with him, (*and therefore we are said now to sit together with him in heavenly places*,

Eph. 2:6) so when he was justified, we are justified also in him. And as it may be said, *Adam* condemned us all, and corrupted us all when he fell; so did Christ then perfect us all, and God justified us all, when he died and rose again." Some divines call this a virtual justification: the phrase I confess, is unintelligible to me. The famous *Parker* calls it an actual justification, both of Christ and us. His words are these: "Christ is said to be justified when he rose again, 1 Timothy 3:16, and we to be then justified in him, Romans 4:25, because the discharge, that is, his Father's raising him up, was an *actual justification* of him from the sins of others, for which he had satisfied, and *of us* from our own sins, for which he became a surety." Those who assert there is no justification before faith, ought duly to consider this argument, so well founded in scripture, and so agreeable to the sentiments of great and good men. But,

5. I shall go a step higher, and endeavour to prove, that all the elect of God are justified from eternity. When, I say, the elect of God are justified from eternity, I do not think, that they had an actual personal existence from eternity, though they had a representative one in Christ; or that an actual payment of their debts, or an actual satisfaction for their sins was then made by Christ, though he engaged to do it; nor do I intend justification from eternity, in such a sense, as to set aside the imputation of *Adam's* sin to the condemnation of the elect in him; or to render Christ's bringing in an actual righteousness in time unnecessary; or to make faith useless in our justification, in our own consciences, as, I hope, I shall shortly make appear; yet, on the other hand, I mean more by justification from eternity, than merely God's prescience, or foreknowledge of it, to whom *all works are known, from the beginning of the world, ἀπ' ἀῶνος, from eternity*; (Acts 15:18) more than a mere resolution and purpose to justify his elect in time, he *calling things that are not, as though they were*; (Rom. 4:17) or, in other words, more than a decretive justification, as some divines call it; who apprehend that God's elect can, in no other sense, be said to be justified from eternity, than they may be said to be sanctified or glorified from eternity, because he had decreed to sanctify and glorify them: I say, I mean more than thus, and assert, with Dr. *Ames*, that justification "is a sentence conceived in the mind of God, by the decree of justification;" that this is an act in God, all whose acts in him are eternal; that this is the grand original sentence of justification; of which that pronounced on Christ, as our representative, when he rose from the dead, and that which is pronounced by the Spirit of God in the conscience of believers, as well as that which will be pronounced before men and angels, at the general judgment, are no other than so many repetitions, or renewed declarations; that this includes the whole complete *esse* of justification; being, as Mr. *Rutherford* observes, "An eternal and immanent act in God, and not transient upon an external subject. Of which sort, adds he, are the acts of election and reprobation, which have their whole complete being before the persons elected, reprobated, or justified, either begin to be, live or believe, or do any thing good or evil." In a word, I apprehend, that as God's eternal decree of election of persons to everlasting life, is the eternal election of them, so God's will, decree, or purpose, to justify his elect, is the eternal justification of them; though his eternal will to sanctify them is not an eternal sanctification of them; because sanctification is a work of God's grace upon us, and within us, and so requires our personal existence. Justification is an act of God's grace towards us, is wholly without us, entirely resides in the divine mind, and lies in his estimation, accounting and constituting us righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; and so required neither the actual existence of Christ's righteousness, nor of our persons, but only that both should certainly exist in time. For the further confirmation and illustration of this truth, let the following things be observed:

(1.) That there is an eternal election of persons to everlasting life, and that the objects of justification are God's elect: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth.* (Rom. 8:33) Now, if God's elect, as such, can have nothing laid to their charge, but are, by God, acquitted, discharged, and justified; and, if they bore this character of elect from eternity, or were chosen in Christ before the world began, then they must be acquitted, discharged, and justified by God from eternity, so as nothing could be laid to their charge. Besides, electing grace before the world began, put them in Christ: *he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.* (Eph 1:4) And if electing grace then put them in him, they must be considered in Christ as an unrighteous person, or as unjustified, or as in a state of condemnation. And, I think, we may be allowed to argue an eternal justification from eternal election, since eternal justification is a branch of it; and, as such, as one observes, "Is the Father's eternal purpose and agreement with the Son, that the elect should be everlastingly righteous in his sight, in the righteousness of this dear Son of his; in which act he constituted and ordained them so to be." And his act, as the same excellent person observes, is no other than "setting apart the elect alone to be partakers of Christ's righteousness, and setting apart Christ's righteousness for the elect only." It think we may safely conclude, that if there is an eternal election of persons in Christ, there must be an eternal acceptance and justification of them in him; since as he always was the beloved Son of his Father, in whom he is ever well pleased, so he always has graciously accepted of, and is well pleased with all his elect in him.

(2.) That there was, from all eternity, a covenant of grace and peace made between the Father and the Son, on the account of these elect persons; when all the blessings of grace, and promises of life, provided and secured in that covenant, were put into the hands of Jesus Christ for his people; and though they had then no personal or actual existence, yet they had a representative Being in Christ, in whom they were then *blessed with all spiritual blessings.* (Eph. 1:3) And, if with all spiritual blessings, then with this of justification; which was no inconsiderable part of that *grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* (2 Tim. 1:9) But I cannot express this better than in the words of Dr. *Goodwin*, who speaking of the date of justification, says: "The first progress, or step, was at the first covenant-making and striking of the bargain from all eternity: we may say, of all spiritual blessings in Christ, what is said of Christ, that *his goings forth are from everlasting.* Justified then we were, when first elected, though not in our own persons, yet in our Head, as he had our persons then given him, and we came to have a being and interest in him: *You are in Christ,* (saith the apostle) and so we had the promise made of all spiritual blessings in him, and he took all the deeds of all in our name; so in Christ we were blessed with all spiritual blessings, Ephesians 1:3. As we are blessed with all other, and with this also, that we were justified then in Christ. To this purpose is that place, Romans 8:30, where he speaks of all those blessings which are applied to us after redemption, as calling, justification, glorification, as of things already past and done, even then when he did predestinate us: whom he hath predestinated, them he hath called, them he hath justified, them he hath glorified. He speaks it as in the time past; neither speaks he thus of these blessings, as past simply in regard of that presence, in which all things stand before him from eternity; all things past, present, and to come, being to him as present: nor doth he speak it only in regard of a resolution, or purpose, taken up to call and justify, he calling things that are not as though they were, Romans 4:17. For thus it may be said, of all his other works towards the creatures in common, that he hath created and preserved them from everlasting: but in a more special relation are these blessings decreed, said to have been bestowed, because, though they existed not in themselves, yet they existed really in a Head that represented them and us, who was

by to answer for them, and to undertake for them, which other creatures could not do; and there was an actual donation and receiving of all these for us, (as truly as a feoffee in trust may take lands for one unborn) by virtue of a covenant made with Christ; whereby Christ had all our sins imputed to him, and so taken off from us, Christ having then covenanted to take all our sins upon him, when he took our persons to be his; and God having covenanted not to impute sin unto us, but to look at him for the payment of all, and at us as discharged. Of this seems that place, 2 Corinthians 5:19, evidently to speak, as importing that everlasting transaction; *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself not imputing their trespasses to them*, that is, not imputing them then when he was reconciling us unto himself in Christ. So as then God told Christ, as it were, (for it was a real covenant) that he would look for his debt and satisfaction of him, and that he did let the sinners go free; and so they are, in this respect, justified from all eternity. And, indeed, if the promise of life was then given us, (as the apostle *Paul* speaks, Titus 1:2) then also justification of life, without which we could not come to life. Yet this is but the inchoation, though it be an estating us into the whole tenure of life."

(3.) Christ was set up from everlasting, as the Mediator of this covenant: his goings forth, and acting therein, on the behalf of his people, were of old, from everlasting. He then engaged to be a surety for them, and was accepted of by God the Father as such; who thence forward, to use the Doctor's words, just now cited, looked for his debt, and expected satisfaction of him, and let the sinners go free, for whom he engaged. Looking at him for the payment, he looked at them as discharged; and they were so in his eternal mind, and, in this respect, were justified from eternity. And indeed, it is a rule that will hold good, "That as soon as any one becomes a surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted;" which is the case here. And it is certainly most prudential, when a man has a bad debt, and has good security for it, to have his eye upon the bondsman or surety for payment, and not upon the principal debtor, who will never be able to pay him.

(4.) That as soon as Christ became a surety, the sins of all those persons, for whom he became a surety, were reckoned and accounted to him; and, if accounted to him, then not to them; if they were laid to his charge, then not to theirs; and, if he was answerable for them, then they were discharged from them. If there was an imputation of them to him, then there must be a non-imputation of them to them; which the apostle plainly intimates, when he says, *God was in Christ, that is, from everlasting, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* (2 Cor. 5:9) *Witsius*, citing this text of scripture, says: "God hath reconciled the whole world of his elect to himself, and hath declared that he will not impute their trespasses to them, and that because of the consummate satisfaction of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:19, wherefore, says he, I am of opinion, that this act of God may be called the general justification of the elect." Nor ought it to be thought strange, foreign, or far-fetched, that the justification of God's people is inferred from the imputation of their sins to Christ, and the non-imputation of them to them; since the apostle *Paul*, in Romans 4:6-8, has so manifestly deduced, and strongly concluded the imputation of righteousness, which is the *ratio formulis* of justification, from the non-imputation of sin, and remission of it.

(5.) That God from eternity willed to punish sin, not in the persons of the elect, but in the person of Christ their surety. That it is the will of God to punish sin, not in his people, but in his Son, is plain and manifest, from his *setting him up* (Rom. 3:25) in his purpose, *to be a propitiation for their sins*;

from his sending him forth in the likeness of sinful flesh; to condemn sin in the flesh; and from his being made both sin and a curse for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. This will was notified to man quickly after the fall, though it did not then begin, for no new will can arise in God; he wills nothing in time, but what he willed from eternity. If it was God's eternal will not to punish sin in his people, but in his Son, then they were eternally discharged, acquitted from sin, and secured from everlasting wrath and destruction; and, if they were eternally discharged from sin, and freed from punishment, they were eternally justified. Dr. *Twisse* makes the very quiddity or essence, of justification and remission of sins, which he takes to be the same, to lie in God's will not to punish. His words are these: "Forgiveness of sin, if you regard the quiddity of it, is no other than a negation of punishment, or a will not to punish: be it therefore, that to forgive sin is no other than to will not to punish; why, this will not to punish, as it is an immanent act in God, was from eternity."

(6.) That the saints under the Old Testament were justified by the same righteousness of Christ, as the saints under the New; and that before the oblation, or sacrifice, was actually offered up, or the everlasting righteousness was actually brought in; before an actual payment of debts was made, or an actual satisfaction for sins given. For Christ's blood, when it was shed, was shed for *the remission of sins that were past*. (Rom. 3:25, 26; Heb. 9:15) And his death was *for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament*. Now if God could, and did, actually justify some, having taken his Son's word as their surety, upon a view of his future righteousness, three or four thousand years before this righteousness was actually wrought out; why could he not, and why may it not be thought that he did, justify all his elect from eternity, viewing the same future righteousness of Christ, which he had engaged to work out for them, and which he knew full well he would work out; since, though they had not then an actual, yet they had a representative Being in Christ their Head? But I proceed,

Secondly, To shew that the justification, which is by, at, or upon believing, is not properly justification, but the manifestation of it. The phrase we frequently meet with in scripture, of being *justified by faith*, must be understood either in a proper or in an improper sense: those who understand it in a proper sense, make the τὸ *credere*, or the act of faith, to be imputed for justification; or, in other words, to be the matter of it; or to be accepted of God in the room of a legal righteousness: this is the way the *Papists*, *Socinians*, and *Remonstrants* take. On the other hand, sound Protestant divines understand the phrase in an improper, tropical, or metonymical sense; and say, that faith intends neither the habit, nor the act of faith because then our justification would be placed in that which is a part, and a principal part of sanctification; nor would there be a proper antithesis, or opposition, between faith and works, in the business of justification: therefore by faith they understand, and very rightly, the object of faith, as in Galatians 3:23. *But before faith came, &c.* that is, before Christ, the Object of faith, came: so that we may be said to be justified by faith objectively, the act of faith being put for the object of it; the reason of which is, because it is to faith that this object is revealed. Faith is the recipient of it; it is the grace by which the soul lays hold on, apprehends, and embraces Christ's righteousness, as its justifying righteousness before God. So that when we are said to be justified by faith, it is to be understood not in a proper, but in an improper, tropical, or metonymical, sense; faith being not our justification itself, but the evidence of it. For

Faith adds nothing to the *esse*, but to the *bene esse* of justification. Justification is a complete act in God's eternal mind, without the being or consideration of faith; that is to say, God does not justify any because they believe in Christ, nor on the foresight of their future faith in him. A man is not more justified after faith, than he is before faith, in God's account; and, after he has believed, his justification does not depend upon his acts of faith; for though *we believe not, yet he abides faithful* (2 Tim. 2:13) to his covenant-engagements with his Son. Faith, indeed, is of great use for our comfortable apprehension of it; without this grace we neither know, nor can claim, our interest in it; nor enjoy that peace of conscience, which is the happy result of it. But

Faith has no manner of causal influence upon our justification. It is not the impulsive, or moving cause of it, for that is the grace of God; nor the efficient cause of it, for it is God that justifies; nor is it the matter of it, for that is the obedience and blood of Christ; nor is it an instrument, or instrumental cause of it, which is no other than a less principal efficient cause. For, as Mr. *Baxter* himself well argues, "if faith be the instrument of our justification, it is the instrument either of God, or man. Not of man, for justification is God's act; he is the sole Justifier, Romans 3:26, man doth not justify himself: nor of God, for it is not God that believeth." Nor is it *causa sine qua non*, or that without which a man cannot be justified in the sight of God. For, I hope, I have already proved, that all God's elect are justified in his sight, and in his account, before faith; and if before faith, then without it. Besides, all elect infants, dying in infancy, are completely justified, who are not capable of the *act credere*, or act of believing in Christ, whatever may be said for the habit or faith in them.

Faith is the sense, perception, and evidence of our justification. Christ's righteousness, as justifying, *is revealed from faith to faith*. It is that grace whereby the soul, in the light of the divine Spirit, beholds a complete righteousness in Christ, having seen its guilt, pollution, and misery when it is enabled to renounce its own righteousness, and submit to the righteousness of Christ; which it puts on by faith, as its garment of justification: which it rejoices in, and gives him the glory of; the Spirit of God bearing witness with his Spirit, that he is a justified Person, And so he comes to be evidently and declaratively *justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*.

Now neither the manifestation of justification to our consciences, by the Spirit of God; nor our sense and perception of it by faith, are properly our justification: for they both relate to some prior act or sentence, wherein the very essence of the thing lies. The pardon of a criminal is complete, when signed and sealed by the king. Neither the act of bringing it to the criminal, nor his act of receiving it, is his pardon; though both are necessary to his knowledge of it, and to his pleading it in court, as well as to the peace, quiet, and satisfaction of his mind. When a man is justified and acquitted in court, and hath the copy of his indictment given him, who will say the copy of his indictment is his justification or acquittance, and not the judgment and act of the court? For a man may be truly and legally acquitted, and yet not have a copy of his indictment. For a man to have the copy of his indictment may be of great service in some cases, and be a good testimonial of his acquittance; but it is not the thing itself. Just so, neither the intimation of the sentence of justification, made to our consciences by 'the Spirit of God; nor our sense and perception of it by faith, so intimated, is, strictly and properly speaking, our justification: for, if they were, then believers themselves might be without it, since they may be with out those intimations of the blessed Spirit, and a comfortable sense and perception of their justification by faith which seems to

be the case of *David*, when he said, *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit.* (Ps. 51:12)

What I have now said, I think, perfectly agrees not only with the scriptures of truth, but with what some of the best and soundest divines have said on this subject. I have already observed that Dr. *Ames* says, that "The testimony of the Spirit is not so properly justification, as it is an actual perception of it before granted." As also what the judicious *Pemble* has asserted, when speaking of justification *in foro conscientiae*, he says: It is "but the revelation and certain declaration of God's former secret act of accepting Christ's righteousness to our justification." Besides these, give me leave to add one or two testimonies more. *Maccovius*, speaking of the *Arminian* tenet, "That we are not justified before we believe," observes, that this mistake arises from their not allowing the distinction of active and passive justification, which he proves thus: "It is said of God that he justifieth, Romans 4:5, and of us, that we are justified, chapter 5. Not that there is a twofold justification; for passive justification, says he, is improperly called justification, and is only the sense of active justification." Mr. *Rutherford* says, that "Justification taken passively, or in the termination of it, is to declare a man both living, and actually believing, righteous, by a judicious act, terminated upon the conscience of a guilty sinner, cited before the tribunal of God, and convicted of sin; in which law-suit the sinner is absolved, and actually perceives and apprehends the declared absolution, and by a fiducial stay relies on Christ, now reaching out the manifestation of this sentence: yet, says he, justification in this form of speech, so usual in the scriptures, does not suppose any new will in God, beginning in time, as the *Arminians* with their own *Socinus* assert; but an intimation of God's eternal will, now made to the conscience." I will conclude this head with the words of Dr. *Twisse*: "Justification and absolution, as they signify an immanent act of the divine will, are from eternity: but the external notification of the same will and manner of a judicial and forensic absolution, which is made by the Word and Spirit, at the tribunal of every one's conscience, is that imputation of Christ's righteousness, remission of sins, justification and absolution, which follow faith. For hereupon absolution is pronounced, as it were by the mouth of a judge, and so that internal purpose of absolving, which was from eternity, is made manifest." But I shall now go on,

Thirdly, To consider the objections which are made against this doctrine.

1. It is objected, that persons cannot be justified before they exist; they must *be*, before they can *be* justified; and this is strengthened with some old trite philosophical maxims: as, *Non entis nulla sunt accidentia, nullæ affectiones; accidentis esse, est inesse*; "No accidents can be predicated of a non-entity; no affections can be ascribed to it, &c." To which I answer, with *Maccovius*, That this is true of non-entities that have neither an *esse actu*, nor an *esse cognitum*; that have neither an actual being, nor is it certain, or known, that they shall have any future being. But God's elect, though they have not an *esse actu*, an actual being from eternity, yet they have an *esse cognitum*; it is certain by the prescience and fore-knowledge of God, that they shall have one; for *known unto God are all his works from eternity.* (Acts 15:1) Besides, they have an *esse representativm*, a representative being in Christ; which is more than other creatures have, whose future existences are certain; and therefore they were *blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, before the foundation of the world;* (Eph. 1:3) and had *grace given them in Christ before the world began.* (2 Tim. 1:9) Moreover, "Justification is a moral act, which does not require the present existence of the subject; it is enough that it shall exist some time or other." It is, indeed, granted, that justification taken

passively, as it is declared to, and passes upon the conscience, by the Spirit of God, and is received by faith: that this requires the actual existence of the subject on whom it terminates; but we are not speaking of justification as a transient, but as a an immanent act; not as received by us, but as it is in God, who justifies.

2. It is objected, that if God's elect are justified from eternity, then they were not only justified before they themselves existed, but also from that which, as yet, was not committed, that is, sin; and it seems absurd to say, that they are justified from sins, before they were committed, or any charge was brought against them for sin. To which I answer; it is no more absurd to say, that God's elect are justified from their sins, before they were committed, than it is to say, that their sins were imputed to Christ, and laid upon him, as he was delivered up to justice, and died for them, before they were committed. And as this will not be denied by those, who believe the substitution of Christ in the room and stead of the elect, the imputation of their sins to him, and his plenary satisfaction to divine justice for them, by his sufferings and death; so it is an answer which ought to be satisfactory to them.

3. It is suggested, "That justification strictly speaking, cannot be said to be from eternity, because the decree of justification is one thing, and justification itself another; even as God's will to save and sanctify is one thing, and salvation and sanctification itself another; and therefore, though the decree is from eternity the thing itself is not." To which I reply: That as God's decree to elect certain persons to everlasting life and salvation, is his election of them to everlasting life and salvation; so his decree, will, and purpose to justify any, is his justification of them: for by, or through the decree of justification, as Dr. *Ames* expresses it, (which was before observed) the sentence of justification was conceived in God's mind; and, being there conceived, was complete and perfect. God's will, not to impute sin to his people, is the non-imputation of it to them; and his will to impute Christ's righteousness, is the imputation of it to them, The same may be said of all God's immanent acts of grace concerning us; such as election, &c. Which are entirely within himself, and do not require that the object should exist; only that it certainly shall exist some time or other; but this cannot be said of transient acts, which produce a real, physical and inherent change upon the subject. It is one thing for God to will to act an act of grace concerning us, and another thing to will to work a work of grace in us. God's will in the former instance, is his act; in the latter it is not: wherefore though God's will to justify is justification itself, because justification is a complete act, in his eternal mind without us: yet his will to sanctify is not sanctification, because this is a work wrought in us. Hence it appears, that there is not the same reason to say, we were created, called, sanctified or glorified from eternity; as to say, that we were justified from eternity. Because, as Mr. *Eyres* observes; "These import an inherent change in the person created, called, glorified; which forgiveness does not, it being perfect and complete in the mind of God:" by which he means justification.

4. It is observed, That the apostle *Paul*, in recounting the several blessings of divine grace, in his famous chain of salvation, Romans 8:30, places vocation before justification, as something antecedent to it; from whence it is concluded, that vocation is, in order of time, before justification. To which I reply: That the order of things is frequently inverted in scripture. The Jews have a saying, That "there is neither first nor last in the law," that is, it does not always observe to put that first which is first; and that last which is last; but frequently changes the order; so that nothing strictly is to be concluded from thence. And as this is obvious in the law, and in the other writings

of the Old Testament, so it is in the books of the New Testament; where it is easy to observe, that the order of the three Persons in the Trinity is not always kept to. Sometimes the Son is placed before the Father, and sometimes the Holy Spirit is mentioned before the Father and Son. And though this may well express the equality there is between them; yet it ought not to be urged, to confound the order among them. But to consider the instance of vocation before us: let it be observed, that this is sometimes placed before election, as in 2 Peter 1:10, *Make your calling and election sure*. And yet none but an *Arminian*, and scarcely such an one, will infer from hence, that vocation, or calling, is before election. And, on the other hand, salvation is placed before vocation, 2 Timothy 1:9, *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling*. From whence it may be as strongly concluded, that salvation, and so justification, is before vocation, as that vocation is before justification from the other text. If, indeed, by justification is meant the declarative sentence of it upon the conscience, by the Spirit of God, and received by faith, it will be allowed, that it follows vocation, and that vocation precedes it.

5. "The several passages of scripture, where we are said to be justified by, or through faith, are urged, as declaring faith to be a prerequisite to justification; which cannot be, say they, if justification was from eternity." To which I answer: That those places of scripture, which speak of justification, by, or through faith, do not militate against, nor disprove justification before faith: for though justification before, and by faith differ; yet they are not opposite and contradictory: yea, justification by, or through faith; supposes justification before faith. For if there was no justification before faith, there can be none by it, without making faith the cause or condition of it. As to those places of scripture, which speak of justification by, or through faith, declaring faith to be prerequisite to justification, I reply: If by a prerequisite, is meant a prerequisite to the being of justification, it is denied that those scriptures teach any such thing; for faith adds nothing to the being of justification: but if by it, is meant a prerequisite to the sense and knowledge of it, or to a claim of interest in it, it will be allowed to be the sense of them. But a learned author says: That "to refer them to a sense of justification only, is weak and foreign to the mind of the apostle *Paul*." But I must beg leave to differ from him, till some reasons are given why it is so. But let us a little consider some of the scriptures which are insisted on. Perhaps the words of my text may be thought to stare me in the face and to furnish out an objection against justification, before faith; when the apostle says, *And by him all that believe are justified*. From whence it can only be inferred: that all who believe are justified persons, which no body denies; and they may be justified before they believe, for aught that the apostle here says. And if any one should think fit to infer from hence, that those who believe not, are not justified, it will be allowed that they are not declaratively, or evidentially justified: that they do not know that they are; that they cannot receive any comfort from it, nor claim any interest in justification; but that they are not justified in God's sight, or in Christ the Mediator, cannot be proved. Again, the apostle in 1 Corinthians 6:11, says of the *Corinthians*, that they were *now justified*, as if they were not justified before. But this I conceive, does not at all militate against justification before faith: for they might be justified *in foro Dei*, and in their Head, Christ Jesus, before *now*, and yet not till *now* be justified in their own consciences, and by the Spirit of God; which, it is plain, is the justification the apostle is here speaking of. But the grand text, which is urged to prove justification a consequent of faith, is Galatians 2:16. *Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ*. Here the apostle is speaking of justification, as it terminates upon the conscience of a believer; and this is readily granted to follow faith, and to be a consequent of it; for that none are justified by faith until they believe, is acknowledged by all. The apostle's meaning then is, that we have believed in Christ, or

have looked to him for justification, that we might have the comfortable sense and apprehension of it, through faith in him; or that we may appear to be justified, or to expect justification alone by his righteousness, received by faith, and not by the works of the law. In the same light may many other scriptures, of the same kind, be considered.

6. It is urged: "That justification cannot be from eternity, but only in time, when a man actually believes and repents; because else it would follow, that he, who is justified, and consequently hath passed from death to life, and is become a child of God, and an heir of eternal life, abides still in death, and is a child of wrath; because he who is not converted, and lies in sin, abideth in death, 1 John 3:14, and is of the devil, 1 John 3:8. and in a state of damnation, Galatians 5:21." In order to solve this seeming difficulty, let it be observed, That God's elect may be considered under two different *Heads*, and as related to two different covenants at one and the same time. As they are the descendants of *Adam*, they are related to him, as a covenant-head, and as such, sinned in him; and, through his offence judgment came upon them all to condemnation; and so they are all, by nature, children of wrath, even as others. But then, as considered in Christ, they were loved with an everlasting love: God chose them in him before the foundation of the world; and always viewed and accounted them righteous in Christ, in whom they were eternally secured from eternal wrath and damnation. So that it is no contradiction to say, that the elect of God, as they are in *Adam*, and according to the covenant of works, are under the sentence of condemnation; and that as they are in Christ, and according to the covenant of grace, and the secret transactions thereof, they are justified and freed from all condemnation. This is no more a contradiction, than that they are loved with an everlasting love, and yet are children of wrath at one and the same time, as they certainly are. And again, this is no more a contradiction, than that Jesus Christ was the Object of his Father's love and wrath at one and the same time; sustaining two different capacities, and standing in two different relations when he suffered in the room and stead of his people.

7. It is objected, that this doctrine makes assurance to be of the essence of faith. And, indeed, I think, that assurance, in some degree or other of it, is essential to faith: but then by this I do not mean such an assurance as excludes all doubts and fears, and admits of no alloy of unbelief; which the apostle calls, *The full assurance of faith*, (Heb. 10:22) and is the highest degree thereof. Nor do I intend assurance in so low a sense, as the mere assurance of the object; for this may be in devils, in hypocrites, and formal professors: but I mean an assurance of the object with relation to a man's self in particular. As for instance: That faith by which a man is said to be justified, is not a mere assurance of the object, or a bare persuasion that there is a justifying righteousness in Christ; but that there is a justifying righteousness in Christ for him; and therefore he looks unto, leans, relies, and depends on, and pleads this righteousness for his justification: though this act of his may be attended with many doubts, fears, questionings, and unbelief. And what is short of this I cannot apprehend to be true faith in Christ, as the Lord our righteousness.

8. It is objected: That if justification is before faith, then there is no need of faith; it is a vain and useless thing. To which I answer, that though faith does not justify us, it being neither the whole, nor a part of our justifying righteousness, nor the cause or condition of our justification; yet, as it apprehends and receives Christ's righteousness for our justification, it brings much peace, joy, and comfort into our hearts. The awakened sinner, before faith is wrought in his soul, or be enabled to exercise it on Christ, finds himself in a state of bondage, and under a sentence of condemnation; as he really is, as a descendant of *Adam*, and according to the open rules of God's word: so that there

is nothing else but a fearful expectation of fiery indignation to consume him. But when the Spirit of God brings near Christ's righteousness, and puts it into the hand of faith, and declares the justifying sentence of God, upon the account of that righteousness, in the conscience, his mind is unfettered, his soul is set at liberty, and filled *with a joy unspeakable and full of glory*. So that faith is just of the same usefulness in this respect, as a condemned malefactor's actually receiving the king's pardon into his own hand is to him; when, in consequence of this, he is not only delivered from prison and confinement, and all the miseries which attended such a state; but also freed from all those fears, terrors, horrors, and tortures of mind, which arose from his daily expectation of just punishment. In fine, justification is by faith, and in a way of receiving, as the whole of salvation is, *That it might be by grace*, that is, that it might appear to be of grace, and not of works. Thus have I freely given my thoughts concerning justification, both before and at believing, and have endeavoured to remove the objections made against it. I leave what I have said to the blessing of God, and pass on,

VI. To consider the objects of justification, who are God's elect: (Rom. 8:33, 34) *Who shall lay any, thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies*, that is, his elect; who are described,

1. By their number: They are many: *By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many*. (Isa. 53:11) *And, by the obedience of one many are made righteous*. (Rom. 5:19) Jesus Christ engaged as a surety for many, and *gave his life a ransom for many*, (Matthew 20:28, Heb. 9:28) and *was offered up to bear the sins of many*; which is the true reason why many are justified by him. Many are brought to believe on him for life and salvation, even *as many as were ordained to eternal life*; (Acts 13:48) and many sons, in consequence of all this, will be brought to glory: *Many shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven*. (Matthew 8:12; John 14:2) And hence there *are many mansions in Christ's Father's house* preparing for them. This leads us to observe,

(1.) That they are not a few who are justified by Christ. Though Christ's flock is but a little flock, in comparison of the world's goats; though Christ's people are but, few in comparison of the vast number of hypocrites and formal professors; (*for many are called, but few chosen*; (Matthew 20:16; Luke 13:24) *many strive to enter in at the strait gate, but few there be that enter in at it*;) yet, considered in themselves, they are a great number, which no man can number. Now this serves to magnify the grace of God, to exalt the satisfaction and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to encourage distressed souls to seek and look to Christ for righteousness; seeing it is wrought out for many, and many are justified by it. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, they shall be filled*. (Matthew 5:6)

(2.) This shews that all mankind are not justified. Though they are many who are justified, yet they are not all. For all men have not faith to receive Christ's righteousness; nor are all men saved, as they would be, if they were justified: for those who *are justified by his blood, shall be saved from wrath through him*. (Rom. 5:9) Yet all the elect are justified: For *in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory*. (Isa. 45:25)

2. The objects of justification are described by the quality of them, or by their state and condition. Before conversion, they are represented as ungodly; and after conversion, as believers in Christ. Thus, in our text: *All that believe are justified*. By whom we are to understand, not nominal

believers, or such who only profess to believe in Christ; but real ones, who with the heart believe unto righteousness, and whose faith works by love to Christ and to his people. But I go on,

VII. To mention the several effects of justification, which are these following:

1. A freedom from all penal evils in this life, and that which is to come. A justified person shall never enter into condemnation; his afflictions in this life are not, strictly speaking, punishments for sins, but fatherly chastisements. They are not inflicted in a way of vindictive wrath, or that by bearing them they should make satisfaction for their sins; for this would highly reflect on the justice of God, be a lessening of the satisfaction of Christ, and contrary to the whole gospel-declaration.

2. Peace with God is another consequent, or effect of justification: *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*, (Rom. 5:1) that is, peace of conscience, which passeth all understanding, and is one of the most valuable blessings of life.

3. Access to God through Christ with confidence is another effect of it. A justified person can go to God, in the name and strength of Christ, with much boldness, making mention of his righteousness, and of his only; and use much freedom at the throne of grace, in asking for such things as he stands in need of.

4. Acceptance of person and service with God, through Christ, follows upon our justification. God is well pleased with his righteousness, and, for the sake of it, with all his people. Their persons are accepted in the beloved, and their sacrifices and services are also acceptable to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

5. Adoption is another consequent of justification: for though this blessing was originally provided, bestowed, and secured in predestination; yet way is made for our actual reception of it, by our redemption, which is in Christ Jesus; who hath redeemed *them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of children*. (Gal. 4:5) hence *Junius* calls Justification *via adoptionis*, the way to adoption.

6. Sanctification is also an effect of justification: faith, as has been already shewn, follows upon it, and is a very considerable part of sanctification. In fine, certainty of salvation, which may be strongly concluded from our justification, and an undoubted title to the glorious inheritance; yea, the full possession of it arise from it, and depend upon it: for *whom he justified, them he also glorified*. (Rom. 8:30) But I proposed only to mention these things therefore proceed to the

VIII. And last thing, which is to consider the several properties of justification.

1. It is an act of God's free Grace: *Being justified freely by his grace*. (Rom. 3:24) It was grace that resolved on, and fixed the scheme and method of justification: and which called and moved Christ to engage as a surety for his people; and which sent him, in the fulness of time, to work out a righteousness for them. And then it was grace in God to accept of this righteousness for them, and to impute it to them, and bestow faith on them to receive it; especially will all this appear to be free grace, when it is considered that these persons are all by nature sinners, and ungodly ones; yea, many of them the chief of sinners.

2. It is universal and not partial. All God's elect are justified, and that from all things, as in our text, that is, from all their sins, and are freed from all that punishment which is due unto them. The whole righteousness of Christ is imputed to them; by being hereby justified, they are perfect and complete in him.

3. It is an individual act, which is done at once, and admits of no degrees. The sins of God's elect were laid at once on Christ, and he made satisfaction for them at once. God accepted of Christ's righteousness, and imputed it at once unto his people, who all have their sins and transgressions forgiven at once. The sense of justification, indeed, admits of degrees: *for the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith*; (Rom. 1:17) but justification itself does not. There are several fresh declarations, or manifestations, or repetitions of the act of justification; as at the resurrection of Christ; and again, by the testimony of the Spirit to the conscience of the believer; and last of all, at the general judgment, before men and angels. But justification, as it is an act of God, is but one, and is done at once, and admits of no degrees; and is not carried on in a gradual and progressive way as sanctification is.

4. It is equal to all, or all are alike justified. The same price was paid for the redemption of one, as for another; and the same righteousness is imputed to one, as to another; and, like precious faith, is given to one, as to another though not to all in the same degree, yet the weakest believer is as much justified as the strongest, and the greatest sinner as the smallest. Though one man may have more sanctifying grace than another, yet no man has more justifying righteousness than another.

5. It is irreversible and unalterable. It is according to an immutable decree, which can never be frustrated. It is one of God's gifts, which are without repentance: it is one of the blessings of the covenant of grace, which can never be broken. The righteousness by which the saints are justified is an everlasting one; and that faith, by which they receive it, shall never fail: And though a righteous man may fall into sin, yet he shall never fall from his righteousness, nor shall he ever enter into condemnation, but be eternally glorified.

6. Justification, though it frees persons from sin, and discharges them from punishment due unto it, yet it does not take sin out of them. By it, indeed, they are freed from sin, insomuch that God sees no iniquity in them to condemn them for it. Though he sees and beholds all the sins of his people, *in articulo providentiæ*, in respect of providence, and chastises them for them; yet *in articulo justificationis*, in respect of justification, he sees none in them; they being acquitted, discharged, and justified from all. Nevertheless sin dwells in them *For there is not a just man upon earth that liveth and sinneth not.* (Eccl. 7:20)

7. It does not destroy the law, nor discourage a careful performance of good works. It does not destroy the law, or make it void; no, it establishes it; for the righteousness by which we are justified, is every way commensurate to the demands of the law; by it the law is magnified, and made honourable. Nor are persons, by this doctrine, discouraged from the performance of good works; for this doctrine of grace teaches men, *That denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.* (Titus 2:11, 12) To conclude: If your souls are under the powerful and comfortable influence of this doctrine, you will, in the first place, bless God for Jesus Christ, by whose obedience you are made righteous: You will value his justifying righteousness, and make mention of it at all proper times; you will glory alone in Christ,

and will give the whole glory of your justification to him; and will be earnestly and studiously desirous of having your conversations as become the gospel of Christ, and this truth of it in particular.

The

DOCTRINE OF IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS

Asserted And Proved

*The Works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.—PSALM
111:2*

*Even as David also describeth the Blessedness of the Man unto whom God imputeth Righteousness
without Works.—ROMANS 4:6*

This Epistle is written on purpose to state, explain, and vindicate, the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God, by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. In order to which, the Apostle takes up his two first chapters, and part of the third, in proving, that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin, that they have by sinning broke the law of God, and so are become liable to its curses and condemnation, and therefore cannot be justified in the sight of God, by their obedience to it; and then strongly and justly concludes, that a man is justified by faith, in the imputed righteousness of Christ, without the deeds of the law. This doctrine he confirms in the beginning of this chapter, by instances of two of the greatest men, for religion and godliness, that ever were in the Jewish nation. The one is *Abraham*, who was the friend of *God*, and the father of the faithful, and yet he was not justified before God by his works; for what saith the Scripture? *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*, in verse 3. The other is *David*, a man after God's own heart, raised up by the Lord to fulfill all his will. Who yet was so far from trusting to, or depending upon his own righteousness, for justification, that he wholly places the happiness of men, and so unquestionably his own, in a righteousness imputed to him by God, without works, as in the words I have read unto you. In speaking to which, I shall,

- I. Inquire what that righteousness is, which God imputes to his people for justification.
- II. What is meant by an imputation of it.
- III. The manner in which it is imputed to them without works.
- IV. The blessedness of those persons, who have it thus imputed to them.

I. I Shall inquire what this righteousness is which God imputes to his people for justification; and also endeavor to shew, what it is not, and then what it is.

First; What it is not. And 1. It is not man's obedience to a law of works, because this at best is imperfect, and therefore cannot justify. Those persons who have most eagerly pursued after righteousness by the works of the law, and have made the greatest advances towards it this way, yet have fell abundantly short of it, as the people of *Israel* in general, and in particular the *Pharisees*, whose righteousness made the greatest pretences to a justifying one, of any people at the time in which they lived, and yet our Lord says of it (Matthew 5:20). Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. If it should be said there men were a parcel of hypocrites, and therefore their righteousness is not to be mentioned, with the righteousness of real and sincere Christians, it is easily replied, in the words of the wise man (Eccl. 7:11). There is not a just man in the earth, who doeth good and sinneth not. The most holy men that ever lived on the earth, have been always ready to acknowledge the imperfections of their obedience and righteousness. Job, was very early convinced of this, and very ingenuous in his confession of it, when he says (Job 9:30, 31), If I wash myself with snow water and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me. Or, as the words may be rendered, shall cause me to be abhorred; or will discover me to be abominable; that is, my garments of righteousness which I have took so much pains with to work out, make and keep clean, will be so far from rendering me grateful, in the sight of my Judge, that they will rather discover the abominable filthiness of my nature, and so make me the object of his abhorrence. It is upon this account, and with the same view, that *David* desired (Ps. 143:2). That God would not enter into judgement with him, because that in his sight, no flesh living could be justified; that is, by their own righteousness. And so the Church in *Isaiah's* time (Chap. 64:6) acknowledges, that all her *Righteousness were as filthy rags*, and therefore could not be justifying. Besides this can never be the righteousness intended in my text. Because this is a righteousness of works. Whereas the righteousness God is here said to impute, is a righteousness without works. Moreover man's obedience to the law of works is his own righteousness. Whereas the righteousness here mentioned must be another's, because it is an imputed one. A man's own righteousness, inherent in him, needs no imputation of it to him. Add to this, that the blessedness of a man, does not consist in, or result from, his own righteousness; for salvation, which is the whole of a man's happiness, as to spiritual things, is not by works of righteousness done by men, but springs from, and is brought about, by the grace, mercy, and love of God through Christ; for if man's happiness consisted in, or was procured by his own righteousness, the grace, mercy, and love of God in man's salvation, would be greatly obscured and lessened, his wisdom, in the tuition of his Son, would be liable to be impeached and arraigned, his mission would appear needless, as well as his death, as the Apostle (Gal. 2:21), argues, *if righteousness comes by the law, then Christ is dead in vain*. Which argument deserves special notice.

2. This righteousness is not man's obedience to the gospel as a new and milder law. The scheme of some persons, if I apprehend it right, is this, that Christ came into this world, to relax the old law of works, and to mitigate and abate the severities of it, and to introduce a new law, a gospel law, a law of milder terms, a remedial law, the terms and conditions of which, are faith, repentance, and sincere obedience, which though imperfect, is through Christ and for his sake accepted of, in the room of a perfect righteousness. The whole of which scheme is entirely false. For, in the first place, Christ came not into the world, either to destroy, or relax the law of God, but to fulfill it, which he

did completely, by his active and passive obedience to it. He fulfilled every jot and tittle of the perceptive part of the law, which required a holy nature and perfect obedience, both which were found in him. He bore the whole penalty of the law, in the room and stead of his people, all its exactions, requirements and demands were answered by him; all its severities were executed on him; he was not spared or abated any thing, and hereby he magnified the law, and made it honorable. He indeed freed his people from the curse and condemnation of it; but has not either abolished or relaxed it, but keeps it in his own hands as a rule of life and conversation to them, and has left it in its full mandatory, cursing and damning power over others without the least mitigation, relaxation, or infringement of it. Moreover the gospel is no new law, it: is no law at all, there is nothing in it that looks like a law, it is called (Acts 20:24), The gospel of the grace of God; because it is a discovery of the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness to lost man, through Jesus Christ It is called the gospel of our salvation, because it reveals the Savior, it gives an account of his person, office, and grace, and of the great salvation he has wrought out; and points out the persons who shall share in it, and be everlasting possessors of it, as the word εὐγγέλιον itself translated, gospel, signifies good news, or glad tidings. Now what is there either in the name, or thing, that looks like a law. The gospel is no other than a pure promise, a free declaration of peace and pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation to poor sinners by Jesus Christ. The sum and substance of it is, that this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15).

Again; faith and repentance are not the conditions of the new covenant, or terms of any new law, as duties incumbent on us, they belong to the moral law, or law of works, which obliges us to obedience to every thing God does or shall reveal as his will. As graces bestowed upon us by God, they are parts, they are blessings of the new covenant of grace, and not conditions of it. Besides, if they were terms or conditions of this new law, or gospel law talked of, which indeed is a contradiction in terms, they would not be more easy than the terms of the law of works were to Adam in innocence. Nay it was much more easy for Adam to have kept the whole law of works, than it is for any of his fallen posterity to repent and believe of themselves. And how does this appear to be a remedial law, or a law of milder terms, as it is called.

Once more, it is not consistent either with the truth or justice of God, to accept, of an imperfect righteousness, though ever so sincere, in the room of a perfect one. It is not consistent with his truth. He whose judgement is according to truth, can never account that a perfect righteousness, which is imperfect. It is not consistent with his justice, he who is the judge of all the earth will do right, and therefore he will by no means clear the guilty, without a full satisfaction to, and a reparation of his broken law. This is the true reason why he set forth Christ to be the propitiation for sin. Namely, that he might appear to be just whilst he was the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. Whereas, was he to justify persons upon the foot of an imperfect Righteousness, he would neither appear just to himself, or to his law, which requires a perfect and complete obedience.

3. This righteousness is not a man's profession of religion, or his submission to the ordinances of the gospel, for men may draw near to God with their mouths, and honor him with their lips, and yet their hearts be removed far from him, and their fear of him be only taught by the precepts of men; they may seek the Lord daily, and seemingly delight to know his ways, as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinances of their God; they may ask of him the ordinances of justice, and in an outward shew take delight in approaching to him; they may appear to be

outwardly righteous before men, and yet be inwardly full of all manner of impurity. May have a name to live and yet be dead; they may have the form of godliness, and yet deny the power thereof; they may submit to the ordinance of baptism, and constantly attend the Lord's supper, and yet be destitute of a justifying righteousness. Yea, even a real and genuine profession of religion, and an hearty submission to gospel ordinances, from right principles to right ends, is not a man's righteousness before God.

4. Neither is sincerity in any religion, no not in the best religion, this righteousness; for it is possible that a man may be sincerely wrong, as well as sincerely right. There may be a sincere *Pagan*, or a sincere *Papist*, or a sincere *Mahometan*, as well as a sincere *Christian*. Nay it's possible for a man to be a sincere *persecutor* of the true religion, as well as a sincere *professor* of it. The apostle *Paul*, was sincere in persecuting the gospel, as well as he afterwards was, in preaching that faith he once destroyed. For he thought with himself (Acts 26:9), that he *ought*, in conscience, for the glory of God, and the advancement of religion, *to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth*. And our Lord tells his disciples (John 16:2), that the time was coming, that whosoever killed them would think that he did God service. So that sincerity is not a man's righteousness before God. And indeed take sincerity as a distinct grace of the Spirit of God, and it belongs to sanctification, and not to justification, though it seems rather to be what runs through every other grace, than to be distinct from them; and is what makes our faith unfeigned, our love without dissimulation, and our hope without hypocrisy.

5. Nor is the whole real work of grace and sanctification upon the soul its justifying righteousness, for this would be to confound justification and sanctification together; which two blessings of grace, though they meet in one and the same subject, and come out of one and the same hand, yet are they in themselves distinct. Sanctification is a work of grace within us, justification is an act of grace upon us. Sanctification is a gradual and progressive work; it is signified (2 Pet. 3:18), by a growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ; and it is a work that is but begun, yet is not yet finished, and is carried on by degrees. Justification *is done simul et semel*, it is a complete act at once; it is expressed (Col. 2:10), by the saints being complete in Christ, and perfected by his one sacrifice.

6. If the whole work of sanctification, is not our justifying righteousness before God, then certainly the *to credere*, or act of believing, which is only a part of this work, cannot be it. There are indeed some scriptures in this chapter wherein is my text, which are by some thought to favor this notion, as when it is said in verse 3. Abraham *believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness*; and in verse 5, his faith is counted for righteousness; and in verse 9, for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness; in all which places, not the act of faith, but the object of faith is intended, as will appear from this single consideration, namely, that this *it*, or faith, which was imputed to Abraham, is said to be imputed to others also, as is evident from verses 22, 23, 24, and therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now if it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom *it*, the very self same *it*, shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Now, whatever reason persons may think they have to conclude, that *Abraham's* act of faith was imputed to himself, as his justifying righteousness; yet it cannot with any reason be concluded, that his act of faith should be imputed to others also as such. The plain meaning is, that object, which *Abraham's* faith respected and was reckoned to him for his righteousness, is also imputed for righteousness to all others who

believe in Christ. Besides, it ought to be observed, that the apostle does not use the preposition anti but εἰς; he does not say that faith was imputed anti δικαιοσύνην instead of righteousness, but εἰς δικαιοσύνην, unto righteousness, and the meaning of the phrase is the same, with the meaning of the words in Romans 10:10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness* ; and is expressive of the great doctrine of justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ. That the *to credere*, or act of believing, is not the righteousness intended in my text, may appear yet more manifest, from the following considerations.

1st. Faith as a duty performed, or as a grace exercised by the believer, is his own; hence we read in scripture of my faith, and thy faith, and his faith; the just man is said to live by his faith (Heb. 17:5). And says our Lord to the woman of Canaan, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt (Matthew 5:28). And says the apostle (Jam. 2:28), shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. But now the righteousness by which a man is justified before God, is not his own, but another's, and therefore imputed to him. Hence the apostle Paul desired to be found in Christ, not having on, says he, mine own righteousness, which is of the law (Phil. 3:9). Whereas if faith had been his righteousness, he should have desired to have on his own righteousness, and not another's.

2d. Faith as such is a work of the law, as it is the gift of God, and a grace bestowed upon us; it is a part of the covenant of grace, as has been already observed, but as it is a duty required of us, and performed by us, it belongs to the laws and is done in obedience to it. It is called the commandment of God. This is his commandment, that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 3:23). It is called the work of God (John 6:28, 29), not only because it is wrought in us by God, but also because it is required of us by him; every command and all duty belongs to the law, as every promise and all grace does to the gospel. Now if faith, as an act of ours, is our justifying righteousness, then we are justified by a work of the law, whereas the scripture says (Rom. 3:20): By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.

3d. Faith is imperfect in the best of saints; our Lord frequently called his own disciples, men of little faith; and so conscious were they themselves of the imperfection of it, that they prayed to him, saying (Luke 17:5), Lord increase our faith. There are τα ὑστερήματα τῆς πίστεως, some deficiencies, something lacking, in the faith of the best of God's people. Every one has reason to say, more or less, as the poor man in the gospel did (Mark 9:24), Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief. And for this reason faith cannot be our justifying righteousness, for that ought to be perfect. Besides, was it perfect, it is but a part of the law. It is indeed one of the weightier matters of the law, as in (Matthew 23:23), but then it is not the whole of the law. Now the scripture says (Gal. 3:10), Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them. And God whose judgement is according to truth, cannot reckon that a perfect conformity to the law, which is only a partial one.

4th. Faith is manifestly distinguished from righteousness (Rom. 10:10), when a man is said to believe unto righteousness, when the righteousness of God is said to be revealed from faith to faith, and when it is said to be through the faith of Christ, and is called the righteousness of God by faith. Now then, if faith and righteousness are two different things, then faith is not our justifying righteousness, and so not the righteousness mentioned in my text.

5th. Something else is represented, as the righteousness by which a sinner is justified before God. The people of God, are said to be justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and some times by the blood of Christ, and at other times by the one man's obedience (Rom. 2:24; 6:9-19). Now, faith is not the redemption in Christ Jesus, nor is it the blood of Christ, nor is it his obedience either active or passive, and therefore is not that which is imputed for justification. Nevertheless, faith must be allowed to have a very great concern in the business of justification. Hence we are said to be justified by faith (Rom. 5:1), not by faith either as a work performed by us, or as a grace wrought in us, but we are justified by it relatively or objectively, as it respects, apprehends, and lays hold on Christ and his righteousness for justification; or we are justified by it organically, as it is a recipient of this blessing, for faith is the hand which receives the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation. Faith is that grace to which this righteousness is revealed, and by which the soul first spies it. When beholding its glory, sufficiency and suitableness, it approves of it, and renounces its own righteousness. It is that grace by which a soul puts on Christ's righteousness as its garment, and rejoices therein, by which all boasting in a man's own works is excluded, and by which all the glory of justification is given to Christ. But I proceed,

Secondly, To shew, what is this righteousness intended in my text, which God imputes unto his people, and that is, the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. By which I mean not his essential righteousness as God, as *Osiander* dreamed. For though he who is our Righteousness is *Jehovah* (Jer. 23:6), yet that righteousness of his by which he is *Jehovah*, is not our justifying righteousness but that which results from his active and passive obedience as Mediator (Rom. 5:1). For by one man's obedience many are made righteous, or is, that righteousness of Christ, which consists of the holiness of his nature, the conformity of his life and actions to the law of God, and his sustaining the whole penalty of that law, in the room and stead of his people. In the commendation of which righteousness, many things might be said; let these few following suffice at present.

1. It is a law honoring, and a justice satisfying righteousness, and therefore God is well pleased with it (Rom. 5:9); is well pleased for his righteousness sake, because he hath magnified the law and made it honorable. The law is made more honorable by Christ's obedience to it, than it is by the obedience of all the angels in heaven, or than it could be by all God's people on earth, supposing their obedience was never so perfect. The reason is because of the greatness of his person, he being God as well as man, who obeyed and wrought out a righteousness, which is also such an one, as justice can find no fault with, but is entirely satisfied with, and in which God's people appear even in the eye of justice, unblameable, and irreproveable.

2. It is perfect and complete, and acquits from all sin and condemnation, those who are interested in, are perfectly comely through the comeliness which is put upon them; they are complete in Christ, the head of all principality and power; they are justified by this righteousness, from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of *Moses*; they are freed from all guilt of sin, are not under obligation to punishment, and shall not enter into condemnation; their sins are now covered and hid from the eye of divine justice, and when they are sought for hereafter shall not be found.

3. It is the righteousness of God, and so serves for many; if it had been only by the righteousness of a creature, it could have been of no use and service, but to the creature who was the author of it;

but it being the righteousness of God, it is to all and upon all that believe; many are made righteous by it, even all the elect of God and seed of Christ. For in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory. It is a garment down to the foot, and covers every member, even the meanest and lowest in Christ's mystical body.

4. It is an everlasting righteousness. Our righteousness is both imperfect and of a short continuance. Like *Ephraim's* goodness, it is as the morning cloud and the early dew. But Christ's righteousness will abide for ever, it is a garment that will never wear out, or wax old, it is a righteousness that will last our lives, be of service at death, appear fresh at judgement, and will answer for us in a time to come, and give us an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. It is a better righteousness than *Adam* had in innocence, or the angels now have in heaven. Adam's righteousness was the righteousness of a creature, but this the righteousness of God. That was looseable and was actually lost (Eccl. 7:9), for God made man upright, but he sought out many inventions, in seeking which he lost his righteousness; but Christ's righteousness can never be lost, it abides for ever. The same may be said of the righteousness of Angels, which at best is but a creature righteousness, and might be lost, as it was by a large number of them, and might have been by the rest, had it not been for confirming grace from Christ. Christ's righteousness may well be called (Luke 15:22), the best robe, for it is such an one as *Adam* never had to his back in innocence, or the angels now have in glory. But I go on,

II. To inquire what is meant by the imputation of this righteousness; which is the way in which it becomes ours and indeed is the only way in which it can become ours. The Hebrew word חשב in Genesis 15:6 and the Greek word λογίζομαι used by the apostle here, signifies to estimate, reckon, impute, or place something to the account of another. So the righteousness of Christ is estimated, reckoned, and imputed to be his people's, and is placed to their account as such by God the Father, and looked upon as much by him as their justifying righteousness or as though it had been wrought by them, in their own persons. That this righteousness becomes ours this way, is manifest. For in the same way that Adam's sin became ours, the same way the righteousness of Christ becomes ours; or the same way we are made sinners by the disobedience of Adam, are we made righteous by the obedience of Christ (Rom. 5:19). For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners. So by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. Now Adam's sin became ours, or we were made sinners, through his sin; by imputation, it was reckoned, it was placed to the account of all his posterity. So Christ's righteousness becomes ours, or we are made righteous, through that righteousness of his; by the imputation of it to us, it is reckoned, it is placed to our account. Again, the same way our sins became Christ's, Christ's righteousness becomes ours, as appears from 1 Corinthians 5:21. He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Now the way in which Christ was made sin for us, was by imputation; he never had any sin inherent in him, though he had it transferred unto him and laid upon him. So the way in which we are made the righteousness of God, must be by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and indeed we cannot be made righteous any other way, than by imputation. For the objects of justification are ungodly persons in themselves; for God justifies the ungodly, as in the verse preceding my text. Now if they are ungodly in themselves, then they are not justified by a righteousness of their own, it must be by the righteousness of another. And if they are justified by the righteousness of another, that other's righteousness must be some way or other made theirs, it

must be placed to their account, and reckoned as their own, which is only done by an imputation of it to them. But,

III. I shall now consider the manner in which this righteousness is thus imputed, and that is, without works. That this righteousness is imputed without works, is manifest from the character the persons bear, whom God justifies, which is that of ungodly ones, as has been just now observed. If they are ungodly, they are without works; good works, or works of righteousness. If God therefore will justify such, as he certainly does, he must justify them by imputing a righteousness to them, without any consideration of works done by them. And, indeed, if God did not impute righteousness for justification in this manner, justification would not be an act of free grace, as it is always represented to be. We may argue about justification, as the Apostle does about election, when he says (Rom. 11:6), and if of grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. We are said (Titus 3:7), to be justified, not only by the grace of God, but freely by his grace, to express the abundance and freeness of divine grace, in the free gift of righteousness unto justification of life. Besides, if righteousness was not imputed without works, boasting would not be excluded, as it is in God's way of justifying sinners, by Christ's righteousness, without any consideration of them. And, indeed, works are not causes of any sort in the affair of justification, they are not the moving cause of it. For that is the free grace of God; nor are they the material cause of it, for that is the obedience and righteousness of Christ. Nor are they the instrumental cause, for that is faith, nor are they the *causa a sine qua non*, or causes without which persons are justified, who never performed good works. And indeed those that are justified, are justified, if not without the presence of them, yet without the efficiency of them, or any consideration of them as having any casual influence on justification; for with reference hereunto, they are not to be admitted into the lowest class or range of causes. It may perhaps be said, how then can the Apostles, *Paul* and *James*, be reconciled in this matter, seeing the one positively affirms (Rom. 3:28), that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law; and the other (Jam. 2:21, 24, 25), as positively asserts that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. To which I answer, there are two things, which when observed, will rectify and quickly remove the seeming difficulty, and reconcile the Apostles to each other, which are,

1. They speak of two different things. The Apostle *Paul* speaks of the justification of a man's person before God, and this he truly asserts to be, by a righteousness imputed without works. The Apostle *James* speaks of a justification of a man's faith, or of his cause before men, which he also truly asserts to be by works, for wisdom is justified of her children (Matthew 11:19). True and undefiled religion is discovered and bore witness to by good works. Faith is shewn forth, made known, and evidentially perfected by them; in justification by imputed righteousness, a man has not whereof to boast before God. In justification of a man's cause by works, a man has whereof to boast before men, and in some cases with a becoming modesty may say with Samuel (1 Sam. 12:3): Whose ox have I taken? whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded?

2. They speak to two different sort of persons. The apostle *Paul* had to do with self *Justiciaries*, who fought for righteousness not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, who being ignorant of God's righteousness, went about to establish their own righteousness, and so submitted not to the righteousness of Christ. The apostle *James* had to do with a set of men called *Gnostics*, who boasted of their knowledge, from whence they took their name. These were the *Libertines* and

Antinomians of that day, who trusting to their speculative notions and historical faith, despised the law, and disregarded and neglected the performance of good works, accounting their knowledge sufficient unto salvation. And this also occasioned those different modes of expression in these Apostles, who otherwise were agreed in the same truths. I go on,

IV. To consider the blessedness of those persons who have this righteousness imputed to them.

1. They are freed from all sin and condemnation, not from the being of sin, but from the guilt of it, and all obligation to punishment (Rom. 8:1). For there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, to them who are made the righteousness of God, in him, they may say as the apostle did (Rom. 8:33, 34), Who shall say any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies, who shall condemn; it is Christ that died. And therefore they must be happy persons, for blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin, with which words David (Ps. 32:1), describeth the blessedness of the persons interested in this righteousness —

2. Their persons and services are both acceptable to God, he is well pleased with both, for Christ's righteousness sake. Christ's garments smell of myrrh, aloes and cassia, with which his people being clad, the Lord smells a sweet smell in them, as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed; their persons come up with acceptance before him, and their sacrifices both of prayer and praise are grateful to him, through the person, blood, righteousness and mediation of Christ's righteousness which is imputed to them, shall never be taken away from them, is one of those blessings he will never reverse, and one of those gifts of his which are without repentance. —

3. It shall go well with these persons in life, at death, and at judgment (Isa. 3:10), *Say ye to the Righteous it shall go well with him*. It shall go well with him in life, for all things work together for his good. It shall go well with him at death. For the righteous hath hope in his death, founded upon this righteousness imputed to him. It shall go well with him at judgment, for this righteousness will answer for him at that time, and bring him off clear at God's bars and introduce him into his kingdom and glory.—

4. Such persons are heirs of glory, and shall everlastingly enjoy it, for being justified by grace, they are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Justification and glorification are closely connected together. For whom God justified, them he also glorified (Rom. 8:30). Justified persons may comfortably argue, from their justification, to their glorification, and strongly conclude with the apostle (Rom. 5:9). That if they are justified by the blood of Christ, they shall be saved from wrath through him. I shall add no more, but some short improvement of what has been said, and

1. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, for without a righteousness there will be no admittance into heaven, and such an one it must be, as is commensurate to all the demands of God's righteous law, for no other will be satisfactory to divine justice. —

2. Go to Christ for such an one, in whom only it is to be had, who is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believes (Rom.10:4), it may be had in him, it cannot be had in any other. For surely, or only, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength (Isa. 45:24).

3. Admire the grace of God, in imputing this righteousness to you, and rejoice therein; it is grace in Christ: to procure, and grace in the Father to impute it, and grace in the Spirit to apply it. Admire the grace of each person herein, and ascribe the glory of your justification to it.

4. Miserable will those persons be, who will be found at the last day without this righteousness, for such shall not inherit the kingdom of God, they will not be admitted into the wedding chamber, not having on the wedding garment, but orders will be given to bind them hand and feet, and cast them into outer darkness, where will be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth.

THE
NECESSITY OF CHRIST'S MAKING

SATISFACTION FOR SIN,

PROVED AND CONFIRMED.

A Sermon,

Preached *June* 19, 1766, to an Assembly of Ministers and Churches, at the Rev. Mr. Burford's Meetinghouse, in *Goodman's-Fields*.

HEBREWS 2:10.

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

IN the preceding verse we have an account of the low estate and condition our Lord was brought, into in human nature; he was made *a little lower than the angels* so he was with respect to his incarnation in general; for whatever may he said for the likeness or equality of an human soul without sin, to an angelic spirit, both being spiritual substances, rational and intelligent, immaterial and immortal it is certain, that the corporal part of human nature is inferior to the nature of angels; but what the apostle has respect unto in particular, is Christ's suffering death in human nature; in, and during which, he was made *a little*, or as it may be rendered, and as it is in the margin of some Bibles, *a little while lower than the angels*; that is, whilst he was suffering death, and lay under the power and dominion of it; Seeing angels die not but he *tasted death for every man*, or rather for *every one*; that is, for every one of the sons, that he was to bring to glory; for every one of the brethren he was not ashamed to own as such for every member of the church, in the midst of which he sung praise; and for every one of the children God gave unto him, and for whose sake he partook of flesh and blood, as the context shews. Now, in the words read, a reason is given why Christ was made thus low; and the necessity of his suffering and tasting death for his people is observed, *for it became him, &c.* It was fitting and necessary that if God would save sinners, and bring them to glory, that the Saviour of them should suffer in their room and stead all that the law and justice of God could require. Hence we read, that Christ *must suffer many things, and he killed: and ought not Christ to have suffered these things?* Matt. 16:21; Luke 24:26; There was a necessity for it, by the decree of God, by which it was determined; by the covenant-engagements between the Father and the Son, in which it was agreed to and settled; and by the prophecies of the Old Testament, which spoke of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, and therefore must he endured; or otherwise, *how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?* Matt. 26:54, and the salvation of sinners made his sufferings necessary, as without which it could not be obtained.

In the words there is a periphrasis of the divine Being, by which he is described; and such a like descriptive circumlocution of him is in *Romans 11:36*. *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things*. Here he is described as the final cause or last end of all things, *for whom are all things*; for he has made all things for himself, for his own glory, for the glorifying of all his perfections; and as the efficient cause of all things; *by whom are all things*, that is, by whom all things are made; all things in nature, for he has made the heavens, the earth, and the sea, and all that in them are; and all things in providence are done and overruled by him; *my father worketh hitherto*, says Christ, that is, all things in providence, *and I work* conjunctly with him, *John 5:17*, and all things in grace, for they all take their rise from him, and are begun by him, being planned by him; *All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ*, *2 Cor. 5:18*. An intimation is likewise given of a gracious design of his to save and bring some persons to glory, who are said to be *sons*, and these *many*. Sons by divine predestination, whom God predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ; for whom this blessing is provided and secured in covenant, which runs thus, *I will be their father, and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*. Whom Christ has redeemed from under the law, that they might receive the adoption of children; and to whom, believing in Christ, he gives the power and privilege to become the sons of God; and so they are openly and manifestatively the children of God, by faith in Christ; and to these it is their heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom: and since they are many, even the many that are chosen of God; the many that Christ gave his life a ransom for; the many, for the remission of whose sins his blood was shed; the many that are made righteous by his obedience; hence many mansions of glory are prepared for them in Christ's Father's house: and there is a way in which they are brought thither. God has chosen them *through sanctification of the spirit, and the belief of the truth, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Christ has died for them, and by means of his death, they receive the promise of the eternal inheritance, and the inheritance itself. God calls them by his grace to eternal glory, and makes them *meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light*: the person by whom they are brought thither is Christ, here called *the captain of their salvation*: that is, the author of it, as he is said to be in a following chapter, chap. 5:9, whom God appointed to be the Saviour of men, and who has with his own arm wrought out salvation for them; in whom it is, and in no other: and the way and means by which he has procured it, is by his perfect sufferings and death; *for though he was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered*; and *being made perfect*, that is, in suffering, *he became the author of eternal salvation*, as in the place before referred to; and it was necessary, that he, the surety and Saviour, *should suffer, the just for the unjust*, in their room and stead, *to bring them unto God*, into his presence here, and unto eternal glory hereafter. This was necessary for the glorifying of his divine perfections; not only those of grace and mercy, but of justice and holiness. The plain sense of the words is this; that since it was the design and pleasure of the all-wise and all-powerful former and maker of all things, to bring some of the sons of men, and who are made the sons of God, to eternal glory and happiness, by Christ the captain and author of their salvation; it was becoming and fitting, and so necessary, that he should completely and perfectly suffer in their room and stead, all that the law and justice of God could require to make satisfaction for their sins; and so be brought to glory in a way consistent. with the divine perfections.

I shall not insist on the various doctrines contained in these words: I shall take no farther notice of those which relate to the being, nature, perfections, ways, and works of God; nor to the adoption of his people, nor to the glory they are brought unto; nor to their salvation, and to Christ, the author of

it; nor to the sufferings of Christ, and the completeness of them; only to the *satisfaction* of Christ by them, and the *necessity* of that.

The word *satisfaction* is not syllabically expressed in scripture, as used of that which is made by Christ; but the thing itself is frequently spoken of. What Christ has done and suffered, in the room and stead of sinners, with content, well-pleas'dness, and acceptance to God, is what we call *satisfaction*; and this is plentifully declared in the word of God; as when God is said to be *well-pleas'd for Christ's righteousness sake*, and with it; because it answers all the demands of law and justice; and by it the law is magnified and made honourable: and when the sacrifice of Christ, and such his sufferings be, is said to be *of a sweet smelling savour to God*, because it has expiated and made atonement for sin; that is, made satisfaction for it, and taken it away, which the sacrifices under the law could not do; hence there was a remembrance of sin every year; but by the sacrifice of Christ it is put away for ever, *Isai. 42:21; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:26.* and chap. 10:3, 4, 14; and there are also terms and phrases used of Christ and his work, which are equivalent and synonymous to satisfaction for sin, and expressive of it; such as *propitiation, reconciliation, atonement, &c.*

The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sin, is the glory of the Christian religion; what distinguishes it from all other religions, and gives it the preference to them; and without which, that itself would be of little worth. It is a doctrine of the utmost importance, for without satisfaction for sin, there can be no salvation from it. The *Socinians* take a great deal of pains to damn themselves, and every body else, as much as in them lies, by denying and attempting to destroy this doctrine, which only secures salvation if there are such things as *damnable heresies*, as the scripture assures us there be, the denial of *Christ's satisfaction* is certainly one; since without this, sin cannot be pardoned, nor a sinner saved, nor a son brought to glory. Those that set themselves to oppose it, are in dangerous circumstances; and if they do it wilfully, obstinately, and knowingly, which is what the apostle means, when he says, *if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth*, of this truth, the atoning sacrifice of Christ, by denying that such are inevitably lost and undone; there is no help nor hope for them in heaven or in earth, from angels or men, or from any quarter whatever; for *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins*; there never will be another atoning sacrifice offered up, another Saviour provided, another Jesus sent to save men from their sins, by making satisfaction for them; there will be nothing else *but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries* of this truth, or who are contrary, and oppose themselves to it; for *if he who despised Moses's law*, neglected and broke the moral law, and the precepts of it, *died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the son of God?* denied and rejected the eternal sonship of Christ, as the Socinians do, *and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy or common thing*; no other than the blood of a mere creature, as the same persons affirm, and of no more efficacy to take away sin than that? see *Heb. 10:26-28*; how much does it concern us then to receive and embrace this truth, and earnestly contend for it, which is of so much importance in the great affair of our salvation.

I propose not to treat of the doctrine of satisfaction, at large, in all the parts of it, which cannot be comprised in a single discourse, I shall not consider the ground and foundation of it, and on which it proceeds, which are the council and covenant of peace, and the suretyship engagements of Christ therein; nor the causes of it, the efficient and procuring, the impulsive and moving causes of it; nor the matter of it, the fulfilling of the whole law, as to precept and penalty; or Christ's doing and

suffering all that the law and justice of God could require; nor the form and manner in which it was made, through Christ's bearing the sins of his people imputed to him; for this doctrine includes the imputation of their sins to Christ; and through his dying for their sins, thereby making atonement for them; and through his dying for sinners, in their room and stead, as their surety and substitute; nor the ends which were to be answered, and are answered by it: I shall only very briefly treat of the *necessity* of it; shewing that without it sin cannot be pardoned, nor a sinner saved, nor a son brought to glory. And there are two things I desire may be granted, and which I think may be easily granted, and then satisfaction for sin will appear necessary; and they are, the one, that men are sinners; and the other, that it is the will of God to save sinners, at least some sinners; but if neither of these are facts, a satisfaction is unnecessary, and it is in vain to talk about it.

First, Let it be granted that *men are sinners*; and, one would think, this would be allowed at once, unless any can work themselves up into such a fancy, that they are an innocent sort of beings, whose natures are not depraved, nor their actions wrong, neither offensive to God, nor injurious to their fellow-creatures; and one would imagine the opposers of Christ's satisfaction have entertained such a conceit of themselves, or they would never set themselves against a doctrine so suitable and salutary to them; but if this is the case with them, scripture, experience, conscience when awakened, and daily facts are against them. The scriptures declare that *all men have sinned in Adam*, are made, constituted, and accounted sinners by his disobedience; yea, that they are actual sinners, *have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God*; that they *are all under sin*, involved in the guilt and pollution of sin, under the power and dominion of, it, and liable to punishment. for it; and that this is the case of all, not one excepted. Now as men are sinners, they are transgressors of the law of God; for *sin is a transgression of the law*; and *every, transgression*, of that, and *disobedience* to it, has *received*, does receive, or will receive a *just recompence of reward*; that is, righteous punishment: there never was a sin, nor will he one, but what is punished either in the sinner, or in the surety for him, 1 *John* 3:4; *Heb.* 2:2, the law being broken, it accuses of sin, pronounces guilty for it, proceeds to curse and condemn, passes the sentence of condemnation and death; which, without a satisfaction, must be executed; the, sanction of the law is death the law is never abrogated, nor the sanction of it changed, altered, nor abated; God never relaxes that; though he puts a favourable construction on his law, by admitting a surety in the room of the delinquent, yet punishment is always inflicted.

Men by sin are alienated from the life of God, are estranged from him, are set at a distance from him, and are in a state of separation from him, as to communion; and without reconciliation and satisfaction made for sin, can never be admitted to it. An irreconcilable sinner can never enjoy nearness to God and fellowship with him; for *what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?* a righteous God and unrighteous men? and whenever it is had, it is the fruit of Christ's sufferings and death; he *suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them unto God*, who were at a distance from him with respect to communion, though not with respect to union; to bring them into his gracious presence, into an open state of favour with him; it is through his blood, making peace for them, that *they who were afar off from God*, and fellowship with him, *are made nigh*, and favoured with it, 1 *Peter* 3:18; *Ephes.* 3:13, 14. I do not say that the satisfaction of Christ procures the love of God, it is the fruit and effect of it; but this I say, it opens the way into the embraces of his arms, stopped up by sin, which must be removed, in order to enjoy them.

And here let me observe to you something relating to experience, which you would do well to lay up in your minds; it may be of use to you hereafter, when you may be tempted to doubt of your interest in Christ's satisfaction. Have you any reason to believe that you have, at any time, had communion with God, in private or in public, in your closet, or in the family, or in the house of God, under any ordinance, either the ministry of the word, or prayer, or the supper of the Lord? Then you may be assured Christ has made *satisfaction* for you; or you would never have enjoyed such communion.

Again; Men by sin are become enemies unto God, and therefore a reconciliation, or *satisfaction* for sin is become necessary they are *enemies in their minds, by wicked works*; there is an inward enmity in their hearts, which is outwardly discovered by their evil actions; yea, their carnal mind is enmity itself against God; and besides this, there is, on the part of God, a law-enmity, an enmity declared in the law: in the eye of the law, and in the sight of justice having sinned, they are viewed as enemies to God, and rebels against him, and so are declared in and by the law, and considered as such not that there is any real enmity in the heart of God to elect sinners; this is inconsistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love to them; but there is a law-enmity which must be slain and removed, and was slain and removed in and by the death of Christ as when subjects rise up in rebellion against their king, there may be no enmity in his heart to them, yet by the law of the land, they are declared and looked upon as enemies, rebels, and traitors to his crown and government; and are treated as such, and proceeded against in due form of law, though at length pardoned, at least, some of them; and it is this sort of enmity which makes the satisfaction of Christ for sin necessary. Had there been only an inward enmity in men's minds to God, manifested by their works, that might have been removed, and is removed, by the Spirit of God causing the arrows of the word to be sharp in the hearts of such enemies of the king; whereby the people fall under him, lay down the weapons of their rebellion, and submit unto him; and are reconciled to the righteousness of Christ, to the way of salvation by him, and to his laws and government; and by the grace of God, the enmity of their hearts is overcome, and love is implanted in their souls. To remove this enmity, the sufferings and death of Christ seem not necessary; and though it is said, while God's elect *were sinners, Christ died for them*; and, when they *were enemies, they were reconciled to God by his death*; yet this is not to be understood of the inward depravity and enmity of their hearts; for the far greater part of those for whom Christ died, and whom he reconciled, were not then in a state of actual corruption and enmity, for they were not in actual being; but the sense is, that they were then considered as sinners in *Adam*; and as enemies, rebels, and traitors in the apostate head; when Christ died for them, and reconciled them to God, by making satisfaction for their sins, which this enmity made necessary: there is a twofold reconciliation, with respect to this twofold enmity; the one is the work of Christ, the other the work of the Spirit of Christ; the one was made at Christ's death, and by it; the other, at conversion; and we have them both in one text, *Rom. 5:10. If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, then the law-enmity was slain, and reconciliation and satisfaction made for sin; *much more, being reconciled*, that is, by the grace and Spirit of God at conversion, when the inward enmity is removed, and the heart is filled with love to God, and is made willing to serve him; *we shall be saved by his life*. A text worthy to be written in letters of gold; no such passage is to be found any where but in the word of God; not in all the voluminous writings of the heathens; it contains a thought, a sentiment, which could never have entered into the heart of man to conceive of, had it not been revealed by God himself in the sacred scripture; ENEMIES RECONCILED TO GOD BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON! Thus then it appears, if men are sinners, and so transgressors of the law, and aliens from

God, and enemies to him, *satisfaction* must be made for their sins, if ever they are pardoned, saved, and brought to glory.

Secondly, The other thing to be granted, in order to make satisfaction for sin appear necessary, is, that it is the will of God *to save sinners*, at least some of them; and this surely will be allowed by such who believe a divine revelation. God has decreed to save some; he has resolved upon it within himself, and has said, *I will save them by the Lord their God*. He has appointed some not unto wrath, which they deserve, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ. He has chosen them to it, *through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*. There are some who are ordained unto eternal life, who are vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; and there was a provision made for their salvation in the council and covenant of grace, In the council of peace between the Father and the Son, the scheme of salvation was planned; and in the covenant of peace it was settled, and the Son of God was agreed upon to be the author of it; and accordingly, in the fulness of the, he was sent to be the Saviour of men; he came to seek and to save that which was lost, and he has *saved his people from their sins*. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners*; and he has obtained salvation for them; and that by his sufferings and death, by the shedding of his blood, to which it is ascribed; *being made perfect in suffering, he is become the author of salvation*; he has redeemed men to God by his blood, and reconciled them to him by his death; all which was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God: what Jews and Gentiles did to Christ; and what he suffered by them, were no other than what the hand and counsel of God determined before should be done; and therefore it was necessary they should be done, and that Christ should suffer and die to make *satisfaction* for the sins of men.

Some have affirmed, that God could forgive sin, and save sinners without a satisfaction: this is said by the Socinians, and by some others, (I am sorry to say it) who own that a satisfaction is made, and that it was fit and expedient it should be demanded and made, at least, some sort of one, as some have expressed it; but to say it was fit and expedient, is giving up the point; for what was fitting and expedient to be done, in the affair of salvation, was *necessary*: God could not but do, or will to be done, what was proper and fitting to be done. Such a way of talking tends to undermine the doctrine of satisfaction by Christ; and to encourage, and strengthen the hands of the Socinians, the opposers of it; much the same arguments being used by the one as by the other. Indeed, it is not becoming us to limit the holy one of *Israel*, or to lay a restraint on his power; we should proceed cautiously and warily in this matter. His power is unlimited, *power belongs to God*; infinite, unlimited, unbounded power; he can do more than we can think or conceive of; with him nothing is impossible; yet it is no ways derogatory to the glory of his power, nor is it any impeachment of it, nor does it argue any imperfection or weakness in him, to say there are some things he cannot do; for not to be able to do them is his glory, when to do them would be weakness and imperfection; and the scripture warrants us in so saying, which for instance, more than once, says, that *God cannot lie*; for that is contrary to his veracity and truth; nor can he commit iniquity, that would be contrary to his purity and holiness; nor can he do any act of injustice to his creatures, that would be contrary to his justice and righteousness; nor can he deny himself, that would be against his nature, and the perfections of it; and for the same reason, he cannot forgive sin without a satisfaction; for that would not accord with his perfections, as will be seen presently. After all, it is a vain and fruitless thing to dispute about the power of God, what he can do, or what he cannot do, in a case where he has declared his will, what he will do, or will have done, as in the case before us: for at

the same the that he proclaimed his name, a God *forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin*; it is added, *by no means clearing the guilty*; that is, without a *satisfaction* to his justice, or not letting go the guilty unpunished, *Exod. 34:7; Num. 14:18*. Nor is a pardoned sinner left altogether unpunished, as the same phrase is rendered in *Jer. 30:11*, for though he is not punished in himself, he is in his surety. Besides in the everlasting covenant of grace God made with his Son, he declared to him what was his will in this case, and which he agreed unto, and came into the world to do, saying, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*; and what was that? to offer up the body prepared for him, together with his soul, an offering for sin, to make atonement and satisfaction for it; and which is farther manifest from our Lord's prayer in the garden; which could there have been another way of pardoning sin, and saving sinners, than through the blood, sufferings, and death of Christ, as a sacrifice and satisfaction for sin, that importunate request would have brought it forth, *O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*: if the persons thou hast given me, and I have undertook to save, can be saved and their sins pardoned, without my drinking this bitter cup of sufferings and death for them, let me be excused drinking it; *nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, thy will he done; and what that will was that was done, is notorious.

It may be said, that to affirm that God cannot forgive sin without a *satisfaction*, is to make God weaker than man and to represent him as not able to do what men can do a creditor can forgive a debtor, when he is unable to pay the debts that are owing to him; and an offended person can forgive an offender against him; and, in some cases, should, and is to be commended for the same. But it should be observed, that sins are not pecuniary debts, and to be remitted as they may. They are indeed called *debts*, not properly, but allusively; if they were proper debts, they might be paid in their kind, one sin by committing another, which is absurd; but they are called debts, because as debts oblige to payment, so these oblige to punishment; which debt of punishment must be paid, either by the debtor, the sinner, or by a surety for him; sins are criminal debts, and can be remitted no other way. God therefore in this affair, is to be considered not merely as a creditor, but as the rector and governor of the world; as the judge of all the earth, who will do right; as the great lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy, and who will secure his own authority as such do justice to himself, and honor to his law, and shew a proper concern for the good of the community, or universe, of which he is the moral governor. So, though one man may forgive another a private offence committed against himself, and as it is an injury to him, he cannot forgive one, as it is an injury to the commonwealth, of which he is a part. A private person, as he cannot execute wrath and vengeance, or inflict punishment on an offender of the law; so neither can he let go unpunished one that has offended against the peace and good of the commonwealth: these are things that belong to the civil magistrate, to one in power and authority; and a judge that acts under another, and according to a law which he is obliged to regard, can neither inflict punishment, nor remit it, without the order of his superior. God indeed is not under another, he is of himself, and can do what he pleases; he is the maker and judge of the law; but then lie is a *law* to himself; his nature is his law, and he cannot act contrary to that. Wherefore as *Joshua* says, chap. 24:19, *he is an holy God: he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins*; that is, without a satisfaction to his justice, which is his nature, and to his law, which is his will, the honour of both which he is jealous of; sin is *crimen læsæ majestatis*, "a crime committed against the majesty of God;" it disturbs the universe of which he is the governor, and tends to shake and overthrow his moral government of the world; it introduces atheism into it, and has a tendency to bring it into disorder and confusion; and to withdraw creatures from their dependence on God, and their obedience to him; and therefore requires satisfaction, and an infinite one, it being objectively

infinite, as committed against an infinite Being; and therefore satisfaction for it cannot be made by a finite, but by an infinite person, as Christ is; and such a satisfaction the honor of the divine Being, and of his righteous law transgressed by sin, requires; which leads to observe, that to forgive sin without a satisfaction, does not accord with the perfections of God.

1. Not with his justice and holiness: God is naturally and essentially just and holy; all his ways and works proclaim him to be so; he is *righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; all creatures acknowledge his justice and holiness; angels ascribe the same to him; the angel of the waters said, *Thou art righteous, O Lord*; devils must confess it; men good and bad own it; wicked *Pharaoh* said, *The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked*: the good prophet *Jeremiah*, and even when distressed about the providences of God, and under a temptation about them, could not but acknowledge the justice of God, *Righteous art thou, O Lord—yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments*. God the righteous Lord loves righteousness, and hates iniquity; he is of purer eyes than to behold it with delight; he is not a God that takes pleasure in sin, but bears an utter hatred to it; he cannot but hate it, and shew his hatred of it, which he does by punishing it; and punitive justice is essential to him, though the Socinians, in order to enervate the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, deny it; but *God is a Consuming fire*; and as it is natural to fire to burn combustible matter put to it, so it is natural to God to punish sin and consume sinners with the fire of his wrath, comparable to thorns and briars. The righteousness of God is seen and known by the judgments which he executes in the punishment of sin and sinners, for which he is applauded, commended and praised; it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble his people; his judgments on antichrist and the antichristian states, are pronounced true and righteous by angels and saints, by the angel of the waters, and by the voices of much people in heaven, *Rev. 16:6, 7* and chap. *19:1, 2*. And the last judgment will be a righteous one, when sinners will be judged according to their works, and sentenced to everlasting punishment: nor does it comport with the justice of God to let sin and sinners go unpunished.

2. Nor with the truth and veracity of God, with respect to his holy and righteous law. God had a right to give a law to his creatures, and it became him as the Governor of the universe to give a law to them; for *where there is no law, there is no transgression*; men may live with impunity, no charge can be brought against them: *sin is not imputed where there is no law*; but God has given a law, which is *holy, just, and good*, and which shews what is his good and perfect will; and this law has a sanction annexed unto it, as every law should have, or it will be of no force to oblige to an observance of it, and deter from disobedience to it; and the sanction. of the law of God is nothing less than death, than death eternal, which is the just wages and proper demerit of sin; and which God has declared he will inflict on the transgressor, *in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*; which as it was the sanction of that positive law, is of every moral precept. Now the veracity, truth, and faithfulness of God are engaged to see the sanction established and threatening executed, either upon the transgressor himself, or on a surety for him; for the judgment of God, is, that such a person is worthy of death and his judgment is according to truth, and must and will most certainly take place; *let God be true and every man a liar*.

3. Nor does it agree with the wisdom of God, that sin should be forgiven without a satisfaction for it. It is not the wisdom of any legislature to suffer the law not to take place on a delinquent; it is a weakness whenever it is admitted; and is either through fear of some persons or things, or through favour and affection, and the influence of some about the throne of a prince; it may be called

tenderness, lenity, and clemency, but it is not justice: nor is it an act of prudence; the consequences of it are bad; it tends to weaken the authority of the legislature, to bring government into contempt, and to embolden transgressors of the law; in, hope of escaping with impunity; the all-wise lawgiver will not act such a part: besides, the scheme of man's reconciliation and redemption by Christ, is represented as the highest act of wisdom known to be formed and brought about by God; for *herein he has abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence*: but where is the consummate wisdom of it, if it could have been done in an easier way, with less expense, without the sufferings and death of his Son? Had there been another and better way of saving sinners, infinite wisdom would have found it out, and divine grace and mercy would have pursued it.

4. Nor does it seem so well to comport with the great love and affection of God to his Son Jesus Christ, called his beloved Son, his dear Son, the Son of his love, to send him into this world in the likeness of sinful flesh, to be vilified and abused by the worst of men; to be buffeted, lashed, and tortured by a set of miscreants and to put him to the most cruel, painful, and shameful death of the cross, in order to make reconciliation and atonement for sin, if sin could have been forgiven and the sinner saved without all this; even by a hint, a nod, a word speaking to a sinner, telling him his iniquities were forgiven, and he should be saved: nor does it so fully express the love of God to his saved ones, but tends to lessen and lower their sentiments of it. God giving his Son to suffer in the room and stead of sinner's, to die for them while they were sinners, to be the propitiation or propitiatory sacrifice for their sins, is always ascribed to the love of God, and represented as the strongest expression of it; but where is the greatness of this love, if salvation could be effected with less expense, and at an easier rate? and indeed if it could have been done in any other way: the greatness of his love appears in this view, either the sinner must die, or Christ must die for him; now rather than the elect sinner should die, such was the love of God to him, that he chose His only-begotten Son should die for him.

To evince the *necessity* of a *satisfaction* for sin, in order to forgiveness of it, it may be further observed, that there is something of it appears by the light of nature in the sentiments and practices of the heathens, who had nothing else to direct them in this affair; which though it did not provide and direct to a proper satisfaction for sin, yet gave some hint of the necessity of one: by the light of nature they were led to see the evil of sinful actions, at least of some of them; hence accusations of conscience in them upon sinning: they were also sensible by it, that when sin was committed, deity was offended, and even angry with them, and incensed against them; hence those dreadful horrors and terrors of mind in them, lest they should be punished by it; they saw it was necessary that deity should be appeased some way or another; hence the various, though foolish and fruitless methods, they took to appease the anger of God; and some even barbarous and inhuman as to *give their first-born for their transgressions, and the fruit of their bodies for the sins of their souls*; which shews their sense of a necessity of making some sort of satisfaction for offences committed, and of appeasing *justice*, or *vengeance*, as they call their deity; *Acts 28:4*. As for the Jews, who were favoured with a divine revelation, the case is quite clear with them, that they had knowledge of the doctrine of satisfaction for sins, and pardon upon the foot of it; and were directed by the sacrifices they were instructed to offer, to the proper method of satisfaction for sin and pardon of it, through the sufferings and death of the Messiah: all their sacrifices, especially those of a propitiatory kind, were typical of it, and plainly shewed the necessity of a satisfaction for sin; and plainly pointed out forgiveness as proceeding upon it: how often in the book of *Leviticus* is it said, that the *priest should make atonement for the sins of the people, and their sins should be forgiven them*? see chap

4:20, 26, 31, 35, and chap. 5:10, 13, 16, 18, and chap. 6:7. Indeed these did not and could not really, only typically, expiate sin, and make atonement for it; but if God could forgive sin, without any *satisfaction* at all, why not forgive it on the foot of such sacrifices? The true reason is, and it is plain, because he could not, consistent with himself and his own perfections, do it without the sacrifice of his Son, typified by them. Wherefore, upon the whole, it may be strongly concluded, that a plenary satisfaction for sin by what Christ has done and suffered, was absolutely necessary to the forgiveness of sin; *without shedding of blood is no remission*: there was no typical remission under the law, without the shedding of the blood of animals; and there was no real remission or forgiveness of sins then or now, without the shedding of the blood of Christ, *Heb. 9:22*, there never was, nor never could be, any without it.

There are various objections made to this doctrine; some of the more common and principal ones I shall take notice of, and return a brief answer to.

1. It is suggested, as if the doctrine of *satisfaction for sin* to the justice of God, and as required and received by that, is inconsistent with the mercy of God, and leaves no room for it. But the attributes of justice and mercy are not contrary to each other, they subsist and accord together in the same divine nature. God is described by them both, *gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful*, Ps. 116:5; merciful, though righteous; and righteous, though gracious and merciful; see *Exod. 34:6, 7*; and, and as they agree as perfections in the divine Being, so in the exercise of them they do not clash with one another, no not in this affair of satisfaction; here *mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other*. Justice being satisfied, a way is opened for mercy to display her stores.

2. It is objected, that pardon of sin upon the foot of a full satisfaction for it, cannot be said to *free*; this, it is suggested, eclipses the glory of God's free grace in the forgiveness of sin: it is certain that remission of sin is through the tender mercy of God, and is owing to the multitude of it; it is according to the riches of free grace, and yet through the blood of Christ, and both are expressed in one verse as agreeing together; *in whom (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*, Ephes. 1:7. The free grace of God is so far from being eclipsed in the forgiveness of sin through the *satisfaction* of Christ, that it shines the brighter for it; for consider, it was the free grace of God which provided Christ to be a sacrifice for sin, to atone for it; as *Abraham* said to *Isaac*, when he asked, *Where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? My son*, says he, *God will provide himself a Lamb for a burnt-offering*, Gen. 22:7, 8; so God of his rich grace and mercy has provided Christ to be an offering and a sacrifice for sin; and his grace appears the more, in that it is his own Son, his only-begotten Son, he provided to be the atoning sacrifice, the lamb to take away the sin of the world: it was grace that set him forth in the divine purposes and decrees, proposed him in counsel and covenant, and sent him forth in time to be the propitiation for sin; it was grace to us that he spared him not, put delivered him up for us all; and it was grace in God to accept of the satisfaction made by Christ; for though it was so full and complete as nothing could be more so, yet it would have been a refusable one, had he not allowed Christ's name to be put in the obligation. Had it not been for the compact and covenant agreed to between them, God might in strict justice have marked our iniquities, and insisted on a satisfaction at our hands; he might have declared, and abode by it, that *the soul that sinned, that should die*; it was therefore owing to the free grace and favour of God, to admit of a surety in our room, to make satisfaction for us; and it was grace to accept of that satisfaction, as if made by ourselves. Besides,

though it cost Christ much, his blood, his life, and the suffering of death, to make satisfaction for sin, and procure the forgiveness of it by it; forgiveness costs us nothing, it is all of free grace to us. Moreover, *grace* in scripture is only opposed to the *works* of men, and satisfaction by them, but not to the work of Christ, and his satisfaction.

3. It is pretended, that the scheme of pardon, upon a *satisfaction*, makes the love of Christ to men greater than that of the Father, and so they are more beholden to the one than to the other; it represents the one as tenderly affectionate, compassionate, and kind to sinners; and the other as inexorable, not to be appeased, nor his wrath turned away without satisfaction to his justice: but the love of both is most strongly expressed in this affair of Christ's satisfaction; and he must be a daring man that will take upon him to say, who of them shewed the greatest love, the Father in giving His Son, or the Son in giving himself, to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin; for as it is said of Christ, that he *loved the church, and gave himself for her*; and loved us and give himself for us; and loved me, says the apostle, and gave himself for me, *Ephes. 5:2, 25; Gal. 2:20*. So it is said of the Father, that he *so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son* to suffer and die for men; and that *herein his love was manifested, not that we loved God, but he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*; and that he *commended his love towards us, in delivering up his Son to death for us, and that while we were yet sinners*; John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10; Rom. 5:8. Can there be greater love than this expressed by both? and which is greatest is not for us to say.

4. It is said, if Christ is God, a divine person, he must be a party offended by sin; and if he has made satisfaction for it, he must have made satisfaction to himself, which is represented as an absurdity. All this will be allowed, that Christ is truly God, a divine person in the deity, and as such equally offended with sin as his divine Father; and that he made satisfaction, and that in some sense to himself too, and yet no absurdity in it, There are some cases in which men may be said to make satisfaction to themselves, without being charged with absurdity: indeed in case of a private pecuniary loss, it would be a mere farce, and quite absurd for one to repair the loss, and make it up to himself, and make satisfaction to himself for it; but in case of a public offence to a community, of which he is a part, he may be said, by making satisfaction to the whole body, to make satisfaction to himself, without an absurdity. So a member of parliament, having violated the laws and rules of the house, and is called to the bar to make satisfaction, when he makes satisfaction to the house, he may be said to make it to himself, as a member of it. It is possible for a lawgiver to make satisfaction to his own law broken, amid so to himself, as the lawgiver. Thus *Zaleucus*, "a famous legislator, made a law which punished adultery with the loss of both eyes; his own son was the first that broke this law, and in order that the law might have full satisfaction, and yet mercy be shewn to his son, he ordered one of his own eyes and one of his son's to be put out; and so he might be said to satisfy his own law, and to make satisfaction to himself, the lawgiver." But in the case before us, the satisfaction made by Christ, is not made to God personally considered, that is, to any one person in the Deity singly and separately, but to God essentially considered in all the three persons, or rather to the *justice* of God subsisting in the divine nature common to the three persons. This perfection subsisting in the divine nature as possessed by the first person, the Father, is offended with sin, resents it, requires satisfaction for it, and it is given by the second person in human nature, or as God-man; the same divine perfection subsisting in the divine nature as possessed by the second person, the Son of God, shews itself in like manner in loving righteousness and hating iniquity, is affronted by sin, and demanding satisfaction for it, it is given it by him as the God-man and mediator; who, though a person offended, could mediate for the offender, and make

satisfaction for him, without any absurdity or contradiction, as making satisfaction to himself. The same may be observed concerning the *justice* of God, as a perfection of the divine nature possessed by the third person, the Spirit, requiring satisfaction, and having it given by Christ, the surety and Saviour of sinners; so that the satisfaction is not made to one person solely and singly, but to the justice of God in all his persons; who is the Lord, Judge, and Governor of the whole world; and who ought to maintain, and does and will maintain the honour of his justice, and of his glorious majesty, and of his righteous law.

5. Once more, it is said, that this doctrine of Christ's *satisfaction* for sin, weakens men's obligation and regard to duty, and opens a door to licentiousness; but this is so far from being true, that on the contrary it strengthens the obligation, and excites a greater regard to duty, and promotes holiness of life and conversation in those who have reason to believe that Christ has made satisfaction for their sins; for the love of Christ in dying for them, in being made sin, and a curse for them to satisfy for their sins, constrains them in the most pressing manner to live to him, according to his will and to his glory; being bought with the price of Christ's blood, and redeemed from a vain conversation by it; they are moved the more strongly to glorify God with their bodies and spirit, which are his, and to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear. The grace of God which has appeared in the gift of his Son, and in Christ's gift of himself, to be the Redeemer and Saviour of ins people, and to be their atoning sacrifice and reconciler, teaches them most effectually to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in thin is evil world, *2 Cor.* 5:14; *1. Cor.* 6:20, *1 Peter* 1:17, 18; *Titus* 2:11, 12. To close with a word or two:

1. We may learn from hence the vile nature of sin, the exceeding sinfulness of it, what an evil and bitter thing it is; that nothing can make atonement and give satisfaction for it, but the bloodshed, sufferings, and death of Christ.

2. We may observe the strictness of divine justice, that would make no abatement, but insisted upon Christ's doing and suffering all that the law could require to make satisfaction for the sins of his people; and if it spared not the Son of God, standing in their room and stead, but demanded and had full satisfaction at his hands, it will not spare Christless sinners, who have no interest in his satisfaction; and what a fearful thing will it be to fall into the hands of the living God, the judge of the whole earth, who will do right?

3. Let us admire and adore the perfections of God, his wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, as well as his love, grace and mercy, which shine so gloriously in this affair of *satisfaction* and *reconciliation for sin* made by the blood of Christ; *for it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

THE ELECT OF GOD,

CHOSEN VESSELS OF SALVATION,

FILLED WITH

THE OIL OF GRACE.

2 KINGS 4:6

*And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel.
And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.*

IN the context is related a very remarkable case. A certain widow of a prophet, applied unto Elisha for relief in her distressed circumstances; and in a very wonderful manner was delivered. Her husband was one of the sons of the prophets. Who he was, cannot with certainty be said. The Jews commonly suppose he was Obadiah; for no other reason, I conceive, but that of his *fearing the Lord. Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest, that thy servant did fear the Lord.* (2 Kings 4:1) It is said of Obadiah, that he *feared the Lord from his youth;* (2 Kings 18:12) otherwise, he was a steward of Ahab's family, and so does not appear to be the son of a prophet. Be this as it may, the prophet, the husband of this woman, was dead. This is the lot of prophets, as well as others. *Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?* (Zech. 1:5) This prophet, it seems, was a poor man; which was very frequently the lot of such persons. More than this, he died insolvent. His widow and children were therefore in great distress, on that account. The creditor, who was a severe man, took the two sons of the widow for bondmen, to sell them, in order to pay the debt; which was usual in those countries, at that time. To which our Lord seems to refer in the parable of the king, who called his servants to account: one of whom owed ten thousand talents, and had nothing to pay. He therefore commanded him, his wife, and children, and all that he had to be sold, and payment to be made. In like manner the creditor of the husband of this poor widow was about to proceed. Therefore she applied to Elisha, being the chief of the prophets in those days, and who had great interest with God in prayer, and great gifts in performing miracles; so that she might conclude from one, or both these circumstances, that she might meet with relief from him. After she had told her case, thus, *Thy servant, my husband, is dead, and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons, to be bondmen.* Elisha said unto her, *What shall I do for thee?* what do you expect from me, a poor prophet? *Tell me, what hast thou in thine house?* and she said, *Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.* Then he orders her to go to borrow of her neighbours, *empty vessels;* and of those, *not a few.* Then bids her, when she had got as many as she could, to go into the house, with her two sons, and pour out the oil into these empty vessels. She did so, and it was multiplied, as she poured it out. The pot, or vessel, was, no doubt, a small one; yet so miraculously was the oil multiplied, that it filled all the vessels she could get together. When she had filled them all, she

asked for another vessel; one of her sons tells her there is no more. They were all full; and then the oil was stayed.

Now this being done, the prophet ordered her to sell this oil, to pay her debt, and live upon the rest. Thus she was extricated out of her present difficulties, and had a sufficient maintenance for herself and sons. A most wonderful event this!

Having stated to you the connection of the text, with the preceding verses, and given you a short account of this remarkable part of Scripture history, what I shall endeavour further to do is, to accommodate the subject in the following way.

I. By considering the oil in a figurative sense; as expressive of the grace of God, to which it is sometimes in Scripture compared.

II. By comparing these vessels to the chosen vessels of salvation; which, while in a state of nature, are empty ones.

III. By shewing, that the oil of grace is put into them; and enquire when they may be said to be vessels full. And,

IV. By observing, That when all the chosen vessels are full, the communication of the oil of grace will cease; and not till then.

I. I shall consider the oil in a figurative sense, as expressive of *the grace of God*. Sometimes indeed the word oil is used to signify temporal blessings. The land of Canaan, among other descriptions of it, has this for one, that it was a land of oil-olive: abounding with all temporal good things, both for conveniency and delight. When a famine is expressed, it is sometimes signified by the *labour of the olive failing*: while plenty of the things of this world is signified by that hyperbolical expression, *rivers of oil*. The great plenty Job possessed, before his troubles, is expressed by himself, in such language as this; *The rock poured me out rivers of oil*. (Job 29:6) That is, he was supplied with very great plenty of temporal things. Now, generally speaking, the vessels full of this sort of oil, are the children of this world; whose belly Jehovah is said to fill with *his hidden treasures*: and who have as much of this kind, as heart can wish.—Sometimes the term *oil* is but for spiritual blessings, and plenty of them. Thus runs a prophecy of gospel times; *They shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden*: (Jer. 31:12) by all which are meant not the outward blessings of life; but inward and spiritual ones. Of which, when the souls of God's people are made partakers, they become like a watered garden; very prosperous and flourishing. By these may be meant, those *spiritual blessings*, with which the saints are blessed in *heavenly things in Christ Jesus*. Happy those persons, who with Naphtali, are satisfied with the special grace of God, and are full of the blessings of the Lord. The Lord's people may say, as Jacob did, *I have enough*: or, as it is in the original text, *I have all things*. For a believer has *all things pertaining to life and godliness*. He has an interest in all the blessings of life and salvation. *All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's*. (1 Cor. 3:23)

Sometimes oil, in a figurative sense, intends the gospel, and the precious doctrines of it, So in Zechariah 4:11, 12, you read of *two olive-trees standing before the Lord of the whole earth*, which *emptied the golden oil out of themselves*, through the golden pipes or channels. By these two olive-trees are meant the ministers of the gospel, the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles and ministers of the New. By the golden oil, emptied out of themselves, the gospel is meant, which they have in their earthen vessels and which they, through the ministration of the word and ordinances, empty out of themselves into other proper vessels, that are made so by the Lord. Such were the three thousand, who received the word gladly; and all others, into whose hearts it is brought, and it becomes the *engrafted word*. They receive it, *not as the word of man; but as it is in truth, the word of God*. (1 Thess. 2:13)

Sometimes oil designs, in a figurative sense, the Spirit of God, the gifts of the Spirit, and even the more extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; such with which the human nature of Christ was endowed without measure. Thus it is said in a prophecy of him: *thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellow's*. (Psa. 45:7) This the apostle Peter interprets of the Holy Ghost; for speaking of Christ, he says, *Ye know how that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost*. (Acts 10:38) That *oil of gladness*, is no other than the Holy Ghost: his gifts and graces, with which Christ was anointed above his fellows; or above the many brethren, among whom he is the first-born. He received the Spirit of God and his gifts without measure, while they have them in measure.

But in other places we find oil is made use of, to express the ordinary communications of the grace of God to his people. Thus we are to understand it in the parable of the virgins. The foolish virgins took no oil in their vessels with their lamps, as the wise ones did: they were not concerned about that, as the others were. By which oil in their vessels with their lamps, we are to understand the true grace of God in the heart, with the lamp of an external profession. Now this is that anointing, that unction saints receive from the Holy One, Jesus Christ; or that grace which every one of them receives *out of his fulness, even grace for grace*; an abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness. This is signified by oil; either in allusion to the holy anointing oil, made by divine appointment for sacred uses, under the former dispensation; or in allusion to oil in common. The anointing oil, made by divine appointment for sacred uses, was a very peculiar composition. It was made of the principal spices, with peculiar art, and none was to be made like unto it. The matter of it was the principal spices; such as myrrh, cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, and oil-olive. And it is easy to observe, that by each of these, the grace of the Spirit is signified in Scripture. Of that grace, *myrrh*, in the language of Scripture, is frequently an emblem. So Christ, in the communication of grace to his people, is said to be like a *bundle of myrrh* (Song 1:13) unto them; sweet smelling myrrh. He is said (being ornamented with the graces of the Spirit) to be *perfumed with myrrh* and frankincense. (Song 3:6) It is said of the church, when the various graces of the Spirit were in exercise, that her *hands dropped with myrrh, and her fingers with sweet smelling myrrh upon the handle of the lock*. (Song 5:5) Christ, her beloved is said to come into his garden, and gather his myrrh with his spices: (Song 5:1) expressive of that peculiar pleasure he takes in the exercise of his own grace in the hearts of his people. *Cinnamon*, was also a principal spice; very delightful and pleasant. It is reckoned among the *chief spices*. (Song 4:14) It was in former times more especially very rare. So grace is a rare thing; for the generality of men have it not; only those to whom it is given. Very refreshing and cheering this spice is and the Lord's people are, at times, *filled with joy*

and peace in believing. It is very acceptable to God himself; and indeed, *without faith, it is impossible to please God.* (Heb. 11:6)

Another of the principal spices of which this anointing oil was made, was *sweet calamus*, or sweet canes, which come *from a far country*; as it is expressed in Jeremiah. (Jer. 6:20) Very proper, therefore, to express the grace of God by, which comes from heaven: for a man can receive nothing of this kind, unless *it be given him from above*. This shews the nature of the grace of God in the hearts of his people, especially when in exercise. It is a sweet smelling savour to the Lord himself. *Thou hast ravished mine heart with one of thine eyes, (says Christ, meaning faith) with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thing ointments than all spices!* (Song 4:10) For like reasons also, the grace of God may be signified by *cassia*, a sweet smelling herb, or plant, mentioned among other odoriferous ones. *All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia.* (Psa. 45:8) To these were added, *oil-olives*. Now, as the church is sometimes compared to the olive-tree, so our Lord Jesus Christ is the true olive-tree, from whom this oil springs; or grace from his fulness, is received.

As the sacred anointing oil was a composition of various spices, so the grace of God in the heart, consists of faith, hope, love, and other fruits of the Spirit. As that compound was to be put together, *according to the art of the apothecary*, as we are told; (Exod. 30:25) so the grace of God is a curious piece of workmanship; exceedingly delightful; and is not made by man, but by the Lord himself. For regenerating grace is *not of blood, nor of the will of man*, but of God. He only *works in us to will and to do, of his own good pleasure*. There was nothing to he made like unto this composition; signifying, that counterfeit grace is not to be accounted as grace. A feigned faith may be, where there is no grace. There may be a hypocritical hope, which is *as the giving up of the ghost*; and there may be dissembled love, which is in word only, and not in deed, and in truth; but no account is to he made of such counterfeit graces.

The nature of this oil was such, that it is said to be holy, and durable. It is called the *holy* anointing oil; so grace is, in its own nature, and in its effects, holy. The several graces of the Spirit of God make up that work of grace upon the heart, which is commonly called by the name, *Sanctification*. Every grace is holy. Faith is holy, in its nature and effects. It works by love, and is productive of good works. It purifies the heart, as it deals with the precious blood of Jesus. He that has a *good hope through grace*; founded on the person, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; *purifies himself*, by dealing with that blood and righteousness, *even as he is pure*. Love influences men to obey the commandments and ordinances of a blessed Redeemer. *If ye love me, keep my commandments*. And as that holy anointing oil was throughout the generations of Israel, always to continue; so the graces of the Spirit of God are abiding. *Now abideth these three, faith, hope, and charity*, or love. These always continue. The grace of God in the hearts of his people, is *a fountain of living water, springing up to everlasting life*: an immortal seed.

As to the use of this oil; there is an agreement between that, and the grace of God. It was to anoint the tabernacle, the vessels thereof, and divers persons. To anoint the tabernacle, typical of the human nature of Christ; that *tabernacle which God pitched, and not man*. The Holy One was filled with the graces of the Spirit above measure, to anoint his people: who are sometimes called *tabernacles*, are the Lord's anointed ones, and go by the name of Christians, from their anointing. The holy oil was also to anoint the various vessels of the Sanctuary: and, by the grace of God, the

chosen vessels of salvation are anointed; the vessels of mercy afore prepared for glory. By this the Lord's people are made vessels meet for their Master's use.

This oil was intended also to anoint persons with; namely, Aaron and his sons, the priests, typical of our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, *who is consecrated for ever more*. And as the ointment was poured upon Aaron's head, and ran down to his beard and to the skirts of his garments; so the grace of God which is poured upon the head of our great High Priest, from him descends to all the members of his mystical body. And as the High Priests were consecrated with this oil; so are all believers: for they are made priests unto God; *to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*. Nay, in virtue of this, they present themselves a holy and acceptable *sacrifice to God, which is their reasonable service*.

The prophets of old were also anointed with oil, to point them out as persons intended for that office: and our Lord Jesus Christ was anointed for that purpose, according to Isaiah 61:1. *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me: because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek*. So all the Lord's people are, by the grace of the Spirit, made, in some sense, prophets; for that anointing which they receive *teaches them all things*. The people of God not only learn much by reading the word of God, and hearing it preached by the ministers thereof; but also by their own experience. Those who have received the grace of God, have a witness in themselves to the truth of what they read and hear; and thereby are qualified, in some sort, to teach others, by conference and conversation.

Moreover, as Kings were anointed with oil; so our Lord Jesus Christ is for the same reason called the *Messiah*, or the anointed one: *I have set, or anointed, my King over my holy hill of Sion*. So all the saints are made kings, as well as prophets. They are all anointed, by the grace of God, as kings. And this grace reigns in them, *through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord*. Thus, in allusion to the holy anointing oil, the grace of God is frequently expressed by the word *oil*.

So it may also, in allusion to oil in common; which is of a very refreshing delightful nature. Hence it was made use of in ancient times, and in the eastern countries more especially, for the refreshment of travelers after their journey, and for the pleasure of guests, at a feast: to the latter of which David alludes, when he says, *Thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over*. So the disciples of Christ enjoy the grace of God, with spiritual pleasure and delight. Jehovah fills them with joy and peace in believing; for which reason, the grace of God is sometimes called *the oil of joy* that is given for mourning. Oil was made use of to beautify persons: as Esther and others made use of the oil of myrrh: so grace makes beautiful. It made the human nature of Christ beautiful: hence it is said, *Thou art fairer than the children of men*. How came he to be so, as a man? why it follows, *Grace is poured into thy lips*. Grace without measure bestowed upon him, made him fairer than all the sons of men. And in proportion as it is bestowed upon any of the sons of Adam, it makes them beautiful. The king's daughters are all fair: they appear in the beauty of holiness.— Grace, like oil, is of a fattening nature. Those who are partakers of it, in the exercise thereof, become *fat and flourishing*: fruitful in the house of the Lord our God.

Oil is of a supplying and healing nature. Hence where it is observed of the people of Israel, that *the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint*; it is added, *They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment, or oil*. So the man that had fallen into the hands of

thieves, the Samaritan that found him, *poured oil and wine into his wounds*, for the healing of them. Grace, and particularly pardoning grace, is of this nature, so that the inhabitants of Sion, who are partakers thereof, have no reason to say, *I am sick; for the people that dwell therein are forgiven their iniquities.*—*Once more*, Oil is of such a nature that it will not mix with any other liquids, neither will grace mix with the corruption of our nature. Though grace and sin dwell in the same heart, they will not mix together; they will continue and appear to be distinct principles. The one is called *the law in the members*; the other, the law of the mind The one, *the old man*; the other, the *new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*. The one is called the *flesh*, and the other is called *the spirit*, and these two *are contrary the one to the other, so that a man cannot do the thing that he would*. I proceed now,

II. To observe, that the empty vessels into which this oil of grace is put, are no other than the elect of God, who, in themselves, are like empty vessels. They are often called vessels, with different epithets, though expressive of the same thing. Sometimes, *chosen vessels*; so Paul is said to be *a chosen vessel, to bear the name of Christ*, that is, the gospel. He was chosen, indeed, to something higher than saints in common: chosen to be an apostle, to have extraordinary gifts, and to do extraordinary work; but all the saints are in a sense chosen vessels also; chosen to enjoy grace here, and glory hereafter. In consequence of this choice they are, sooner or later, filled with the grace of God. For *as many as were ordained to eternal life believed*; they had the grace of God bestowed upon them, which is called *the faith of God's elect*. And they are not only chosen to that grace, but to all others. They are chosen to holiness in general; to *sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*. These are insured unto them by their being chosen, and they most certainly partake thereof, in order to enjoy eternal happiness. They are also called *vessels of mercy*, (Rom. 9:23) *afore prepared unto glory*. Vessels of mercy, not that they deserve the mercy of God more than others; for they are in no wise better than others, being all under sin. But they are vessels of mercy, through the sovereign good will of God to them; who *will have mercy on whom he will have mercy*. They are vessels filled with the mercy of God, in regeneration: when they, who had not obtained mercy, openly and visibly obtain mercy. The mercy of God is in a manifest way displayed in their regeneration and conversion. *God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved them, quickens them when dead in trespasses and sins; and, according to his abundant mercy, begets them again to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance*. Likewise through the grace of God bestowed upon them in conversion, they become *vessels meet for their master's use*, as the apostle expresses it. (2 Tim. 2:21) Now men, in a state of unregeneracy, are unmeet for every good work; but when persons are called by the grace of God, they are ready to every good work. They only are able and sufficient persons for that purpose, being created in Christ Jesus unto good works; having the Spirit of God bestowed upon them, to enable them to walk in the ways of the Lord, and to keep his statutes, and do them.

Some vessels are of a larger, and some of smaller size; but all are sooner or later filled. Some are strong in faith, and have a larger measure of that grace than others: some are weak in faith, and have a less degree of it. Some are newborn babes; some are young men, and some fathers in Christ; but all in their natural state were empty vessels had nothing good in them. *Vain man*, (says Zophar, Job 11:12) or, as it may be rendered, *EMPTY man, would be wise, though was born like the wild ass's colt*. It is said of the house of unclean spirits, that when the man returned into it, he *found it empty, swept and garnished*. This is the case even with external professors, outwardly righteous men, who are destitute of the grace of God. For, however they may be garnished with some

external performances, or outward professions, they are empty of the grace of God. Indeed, the elect of God, while in a state of unregeneracy, are *without Christ and without God in the world*. They are destitute of the image of God, in which our first parents were formed. God made man after his own image, and in his likeness; but that image is greatly defaced, and obliterated. *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*; which lay chiefly in righteousness, and holiness. *God made man upright; but he hath sought out many inventions. There is none righteous, no not one*. Man hath nothing that deserves the name of righteousness, that will stand him in any stead to justify him in the sight of God. He is empty of righteousness, and full of all unrighteousness. He is empty of all that is good: for, if the apostle says of himself, *that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing*: how can it be thought, that there should be any good thing in an unregenerate man. He is destitute of the fear of God; it is neither before his eyes, nor in his heart. As Abraham said of a certain town, *Surely the fear of God is not in this place*; so it may be said of every unregenerate man's heart, *The fear of God is not in it*.—Carnal men are empty of the true knowledge of God; without any knowledge of him, especially as he is revealed in Christ Jesus. *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God*. So far from it, that the language of their souls is, *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*.

They are without Christ; and empty of the knowledge of him: of faith in him, of love to him; and so of the Spirit, and his various graces. *Sensual, not having the Spirit*. (Jude 19) This now is the real condition of all men naturally. They are empty vessels not having the grace of God in them.

Now, in conversion, the Lord's people are made to see, that they are these empty creatures; and as such they come to Christ, and to his fulness to be filled from thence. No others, indeed, can receive out of his fulness; for if they are *full*, what can they receive from Christ? Paul, when addressing some vain, conceited professors in the church at Corinth, says: *ye are full, ye are rich*; like the Laodicean members, who thought they were rich, and increased in goods, and stood in need of nothing, when they *were poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked*. Now let such persons come to Christ, what does it signify? They are so full, they can receive nothing from him; and they are sent away empty as they come. *The rich he hath sent empty away*. They came rich in their own conceit, and go away empty; but sensible souls, who see their emptiness of the grace of God, and the need they stand in of coming to Christ, are filled. *He filleth the hungry with good things*.

III. I am to take some notice of the vessels being filled. We have compared the oil to the grace of God, and the empty vessels to the chosen vessels of salvation. Now let us enquire when they may be said to be full vessels? I answer, when they are *filled with the Holy Ghost*, as some persons in Scripture are said to be. The first churches were ordered to look out such men for deacons. Acts 6:3. And Stephen, one of them, is said to be, Acts 7:55. The same is said of Peter and others, which, as it relates to them, denotes that they had superior gifts of the Spirit, whereby they are capable of defending the truth against opposers, with boldness, courage and intrepidity of mind; and as at that time the church consisted of all nations, who spake different languages, so they were filled with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, especially that of speaking with divers tongues. But while some have been filled with the gifts and graces of the Spirit in an extraordinary way, others have been so, in an ordinary way, as common believers: and who may be said to be so when the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit; when they are full of joy and peace in believing, and are filled with the knowledge of the will of God in Christ, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. In

a word, then may the chosen vessels of salvation be said to be filled, when they have received so much grace from Christ (in whom the fullness of it dwells) as shall make them meet for heaven; for out of his fullness they do receive grace in this life, in order to the perfection of glace, or glory, in the other.

IV. hen all the vessels of salvation are thus filled, then will cease to flow the communications of grace, and not till then. Grace has been running ever since the fall of Adam. It has been flowing from the beginning of time, before the flood, and since the flood; and how many millions of vessels have been filled since grace began to be poured out! It is still flowing; and every vessel of mercy shall be sooner or later filled. Grace will continue to be dispensed till the last chosen vessel is called and filled. And then (to refer to the language of the prophet, when the head stone is brought forth) there will be general shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace, unto it.

On the whole, you have, related in the text and context, a most surprising fact. A miracle is wrought for the supply of a prophet's widow and her family. We hence see what notice God takes of the families of his prophets. Let widows be encouraged, and prophets' widows especially, to trust in the Lord, and to leave their fatherless children with him. Let it be an instruction to us all to pay an attention to such persons and their families. We are to imitate God, and though we cannot work miracles, yet we are *to do good and to communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

A PRINCIPLE OF
GRACE IN THE HEART,
A GOOD THING
ALWAYS TENDING TOWARDS
THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL.

1 KINGS 14:13

Because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.

The whole verse reads thus, *And all Israel shall mourn for him; for he only, of Jeroboam, shall come to the grave; because in him was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.*

These words are spoken of Abijah, son of Jeroboam, king of Israel. He was now sick, and Jeroboam was concerned for him. He wanted to know what would become of him; whether he would recover from his sickness, or not. Therefore he sends his wife to Abijah the prophet, upon this errand: but, as he knew the prophet had no good opinion of him (a dislike to him, indeed, because of his idolatry), he orders his wife to disguise herself, and go as a country-woman, with presents to the prophet, to know what would become of the child. She goes; but as soon as she enters the prophet's house, he, being before apprized of it by the Lord, gives her to understand he knew who she was: told her, he had a message from the Lord, that would be disagreeable to her, and her family; namely, that God, for the idolatry of her husband, had determined to cut off her whole family: that such of them as died in the city should be eaten by dogs; and such as fell in the field, should be devoured by the fowls of the air: and that, as to the child she came to inquire about, he should die as *soon* as she got home, or before her feet entered the city. But in as much as he was a promising youth, he informs her, there would be a general lamentation for him by all Israel; and also, that he was the only one of the family that should be interred in a decent manner, for the reason given in the text; *Because in him there was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.* It seems, there did appear in him some dislike of that idolatry his father had set up in the kingdom, and in his own family; and he had some regard to the pure worship of God; which raised the expectations of the people of Israel, that when there should be a change, things would be the better, both with regard to civil and religious affairs.

Those things which they observed in him, arose from a principle of grace, which the Lord had implanted in his heart, called, *some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.*

The observation that I make upon these words, is, That in every regenerate person there is some good thing towards God; let him be of what family he will, or in what place he may. This child was the son of a king, brought up in a palace, educated in a family very idolatrous; and yet there was *some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel*.

The apostle Paul says indeed of himself, that *in him, that is in his flesh, dwelt no good thing* (Rom. 7:18): even then he was a regenerate person. How then must we understand the apostle, seeing it is manifest there is *some good thing* in every regenerate man; and no doubt was in *him*. It may be replied, there was no good thing in him naturally; for *there is none that doeth good, no not one* (Ps. 14:3); and the reason is, because there is no good thing in them. If there was, there would be some good thing done by them; but there is no good thing in them naturally, and therefore there is none done by them. Paul means, there was no good thing in him, except what grace had produced: for if there be any good thing in man's heart, it is not by the power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. It is he *that works* in all good men, *both to will and to do of his own good pleasure*. There was no good thing in him, that he could call his own; whatever good thing was in him, it was from the Lord. Was he spiritually alive? it was not he that lived, *but Christ that lived in him* (Gal. 2:20). Did he perform so many great and good things, more than others? It was not he, *but the grace of God, that was with him*. Besides, there is a restrictive clause in that passage; *In me, that is, in my flesh*; which signifies there was some good thing in another part of him, though not in his *flesh*; or the old man, in whom there is no good; from whom nothing good comes; and by whom nothing good is done. But, in the inward man of the heart, there dwelt some good thing; and so it is, in every regenerate man.

I shall now endeavour to shew,

- I. What that good thing is, which is in every regenerate man.
- II. That this good thing, is something in them.
- III. That it is but *some* good thing, not every good thing; or however, that it is not every good thing complete.
- IV. That this good thing in regenerate men, will be found in them, sooner or later. For in him is *found* some good thing.
- V. That this good thing is sometimes found in a child, the child of a king; and one that comes from a bad family. Some good thing was in this young man in *the house of Jeroboam*. There is an emphasis upon that, *in the house of Jeroboam*; that sinful, vile, idolatrous family.
- VI. Wherever there is a good thing in any, it is always towards the Lord God of Israel,

I. I shall inquire what this good thing is, that is in the heart of every regenerate man. In my last discourse I have shewn you what wickedness there is in the heart of man: and what the plague of a man's heart is; and now I shall shew you what goodness there is in a regenerate man's heart. This, in general, is no other than the good work of grace in the heart; which the apostle calls a good work: *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ* (Phil. 1:6). The efficient cause of it is good, even God; who is good essentially; independently good; and from whom every good thing comes. Whatever is done by

him, must be good, whether in nature, providence, or grace. The work of creation, when he reviewed it, was declared to be *very good*. The work of the new creation, the spiritual workmanship of grace upon the soul, is also good, very good. The moving cause of this is the goodness, grace, and mercy of God, who, *for the great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickened us, when dead in trespasses and sins* (Eph. 2:4, 5). The mean, by which this work is generally wrought, is the good word of God. *Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth* (Jam. 1:18). The effects thereof are good. It makes a man good: it enables him to do good works. It is productive of every thing that is good. The grace of God, not only as a doctrine, but more especially as a principle, influentially *teaches men, that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world*. Now it is this good work, in general, which is the good thing that is found in every regenerate man.

In particular it may design the various graces of the Spirit of God, which are wrought in the souls of those who are born again. Indeed the Spirit of God himself has a place in the hearts of such persons, as the author and finisher of this good thing, the work of grace: and who himself is good. *Thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness* (Ps. 143:10). He is good himself, essentially good. Good in his influence, operations, gifts, and graces. He is promised in the covenant of grace; *I will put my Spirit within them*. He has, in conversion, a place in the hearts of his people; *received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* (Gal. 3:2). And, indeed, this indwelling of the Spirit of God in the hearts of his people, is the grand criterion which distinguishes a regenerate from an unregenerate man: *Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit*. Ye are not in a carnal and unregenerate state, but in a spiritual and regenerate one; *if so he that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his* (Rom. 8:9).

The Spirit of God is in his people, as the author of the good work of grace upon their souls. In consequence of his being there, a new heart is given them; a new spirit is put within them, in which are new principles of grace, holiness, life, love, joy, peace, and comfort; new desires, new affections, new resolutions; all things are become new. This is the new creature, the new man the Scripture speaks of; which is no other than an assemblage of the several graces of the blessed Spirit. The fruits and graces of the Spirit are many; the principal of which are these three, Faith, Hope, and Charity, or Love; but the greatest of them is love. Where one is, there are the others. Where Faith, the principal, cardinal, leading grace is, there is Hope; for *Faith is the substance of things hoped for* (Heb. 11:1); and there also is love; for *faith works by love* (Gal. 5:6). There are besides these, several other graces, which, altogether, make up this good thing that is found in every regenerate man, and which is *towards the Lord God of Israel*.

Thus, for instance, there is the grace of *repentance towards God*. In Acts 20:21, the apostle uses this phrase of the doctrine of repentance, and so of faith; but what he says of either of these, as a doctrine, is true of them as a grace; *Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*. For true evangelical repentance, is no other than a godly sorrow, or a sorrow after a godly sort, and for sin because it is committed against a God of love, grace, mercy, and goodness. The Spirit of God convinces every man, that he powerfully works upon, *of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment*; shews him the evil nature of sin, and the just demerit of it; shews it to him in the glass of the divine law, where he sees it in its proper colors; and thereby it becomes exceedingly sinful unto him; fills him with shame and confusion of soul; brings him to God in an humble manner to confess

it, and causes a self-loathing and abhorrence, on account of his offences. Thus it was with Job, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes* (Job 42:6). There is no doubt to be made, of his having *some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel*, when he said these words. So there was undoubtedly in the poor publican, when he stood, and dared not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, and said, *God be merciful to me a sinner*. There was in him repentance towards God.

There is the *fear of God*, and that is a good thing. This the Lord, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, puts into the hearts of his people, when he calls them by his grace. *I will put my fear in their hearts* (Jer. 33:40). This appears as early in conversion, as any grace whatever; for *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom* (Prov. 9:10). As soon as ever a man is made, in any measure, wise to salvation, the fear of God appears in him. There is a tenderness of heart and conscience. He cannot do the things which others do, or which he himself before had done: as Nehemiah says of some that governed before him, that he did not, as they, because of the fear of the Lord. There is a fear implanted in their hearts of offending God; for the fear of the Lord, as the wise man defines it, is to hate evil, and depart from iniquity (Prov. 8:13).

There is *love* towards the Lord God of Israel, God appears in his amiable perfections, in the declarations and promises of his grace, and the expressions of his love. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart, and that causes him to love God. *We love him, because he first loved us* (John 4:19). Christ appears in all the loveliness of his person, offices, and grace; and in his love in dying for his people. Thus he becomes the object of such a soul's love, to such a degree, that he cannot but say as Peter did, *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee* (John 21:17). There is also love to the brethren, to the saints, upon whom the image of Christ appears: and by this it is known that such are passed from death to life; that they are born again, because they love the brethren (1 John 3:14). There is love to the good word and ways of God, the worship of God, and ordinances of God, and to every thing that is good.

There is also *hope of happiness* in another world. Though a man before conversion was without hope: yet being regenerated, he is *begotten again to a lively hope*. Christ being set before him as the object of hope, and he encouraged to flee to him, and lay hold upon him; he expects everlasting life. His hope is *as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which enters into that within the veil* (Heb. 6:19). This must be allowed to be some good thing surely; for it is called *a good hope through grace* (2 Thess. 2:16).

There is *faith* also; and that is another part of this *good thing towards the Lord God of Israel*. A sinner that is wrought upon, as just now described, trusts in God as his Saviour, and says, as Job did, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him and he also shall be my salvation* (Job 13:15, 16). Now this faith is the gift of God unto him; it proceeds from the operation of the Spirit of God upon him, by the instrumentality of the word. *Faith comes by hearing* (Rom. 10:17); and it is productive of good works for *faith without works is dead* (James 2:20). Now this is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.

There are other graces also which I might mention such as *patience*, under afflictive dispensations of providence. For though no affliction is joyous, but grievous; yet it works the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to them who are exercised therewith and the chief of these is a peaceable frame of

soul, or quietness of mind under the rod. Tribulation, to regenerate persons, sometimes is of use; to increase their patience, rather than to destroy it. *Tribulation worketh patience* (Rom. 5:3); is a mean of increasing it. The apostle James says, *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations* (Jam. 1:2). He means, not the temptations of Satan; but afflictions, which are temptations, or trials, of the graces of God's people. For he adds, *The trying of your faith worketh patience; and let patience have its perfect work* (Jam. 1:4). When this appears in exercise, it is a clear case *there is some good thing* in such a person, *towards the Lord God of Israel*. When, like Aaron, they hold their peace under trying circumstances; and with David, are dumb because the Lord did it; are still and know that he is God, a sovereign Being, who does whatever he pleases.

There is also *resignation* to the will of God. Those who are not inured to afflictions, are *like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*; fret and are impatient under it. But where there is *some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel*; there will be, more or less, of submission to the will of God. Such will say, as Eli did; *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. Not my will, but thine be done*.

In a word, this good thing, found in the heart of a regenerate man towards the Lord God of Israel is, the *sanctification of the Spirit*, in all the several branches thereof, of which those that I have mentioned are some. It is called *the sanctification of the Spirit*, because he is the author of it: for if we are sanctified, it is *in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God* (1 Cor. 6:11). This, in the present state, is imperfect; but is carrying on, and will be brought to perfection in all those in whom it is begun. The God of truth will sanctify us throughout, and will preserve our whole souls, bodies, and spirits, blameless, to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Where this is, there will appear many good things. The text says, *some good thing*: several good things it may be truly said. *Good thoughts* will arise in the hearts of such. For though the heart of man is bad, and so wicked as I represented unto you in my last discourse, though the thoughts of a carnal man's heart are only evil, and that continually and though regenerate persons have a great deal of reason to complain, of the vanity of their minds and the sinfulness of their thoughts; yet there are good thoughts arise in them, which are of God. I say, *of God*; because we cannot think a good thought, *of ourselves* (2 Cor. 3:5). But there do arise good thoughts concerning God, his being, perfections, and purposes; his love, his everlasting love to his people *We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple* (Ps. 48:9) And O, how pleasant are the thoughts, how sweet the meditations of God's people, upon the everlasting love of God, and the fruits of it! It is pleasing to the Lord, when his people are thus thoughtful of him. A book of remembrance was written for them that thought upon his name (Mal. 3:16); upon his name as proclaimed, a *God gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth*.

There are also *good desires* in the hearts of regenerate persons. The desires of their souls are to the name of the Lord, and to the remembrance of him. There are spiritual breathings after him, *as the hart panteth after the water brooks*. There are *holy resolutions* which are formed in their minds, under the influence of divine grace. In the strength of divine grace, they resolve to make mention of the Lord, of his righteousness, and of that only. In the strength of divine grace, they are enabled to resist sin; to strive against it, and to abstain from all appearance of evil: to resist Satan's temptations, and to do every good work. It was the holy resolution of Joshua, and it shewed *some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel*, when he said, *As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord*. Resolutions indeed, taken up in a man's own strength, signify nothing; but when

they are made in the strength of divine grace, arising from an internal principle, they are of worth, and come to something. In short, where there is *some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel*, the good word of God dwells in the heart. The matter of this word is good, and the effects of it are good. Now this *comes, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance* in the hearts of regenerate persons; where it works effectually, and where it dwells. It abides, it *dwells richly in all wisdom*. It is received in the love of it, and is highly esteemed, more than necessary food. It is more, to the Believer, than thousands of gold and silver. If now we put all these things together, and others that your own experiences may dictate, you will know in some good measure, what is that *good thing* that is in the heart of every regenerate man.

—But I go on,

II. To observe, that this good thing, possessed by regenerate persons, is something *within* them, The text says not, some good thing *done by them*; but some good thing *in* them, towards the Lord God of Israel: this good thing is all internal; nothing external. It is not an outward form of godliness: there may be that, where there is not the inward power. The apostle speaks of some that had *a form of godliness*, that is, the outward form, but *denied the power* (2 Tim. 3:5); that is, the inward power upon the heart. There may be a notion of things, where there is no grace. There may be an outward profession of faith, where there is no true faith; and an external obedience to the ordinances of the gospel, and yet this *good thing* may be wanting; as in Simon Magus, who professed to believe, but was destitute of true faith, and was in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity (Acts 8:23).

This good thing is not an outward reformation of manners. There may be this, and no good thing in the heart. Herod heard John gladly, seemed to have a great flow of affection for what he heard; yea, it is said, he *did many things*; that is, agreeable to what he heard preached: he did them externally. There was an appearance of good things done by him, and yet there was no good thing in him. So the scribes and pharisees were outwardly righteous: looked like good men; made a fair shew in the flesh; and thought themselves very holy and religious; but inwardly, as our Lord says, were full of all manner of wickedness. So that there is a great difference between some good thing in a man, and such good things as may appear outwardly.

This *good thing*, is not an outward humiliation for sin; such as was in Pharaoh, while he was under the terror of the plagues of thunder, hail, and lightning; who cried out, *The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked* (Ex.9:27); but, as soon as the storm was over, he returned to his former hardness of heart. Such a disposition was in Ahab, concerning whom the Lord says, *See how Ahab humbleth himself* (1 Kings 21:29): yet it was only an external humiliation; for there was no good thing *in* him. There may be a great many tears shed by persons, seeming on account of sin; but these are no true mark or sign of good things *in* them. Esau sought the blessing with tears, but found no place for repentance. Judas made a confession of sin, and yet there was no good thing in him.

An abstinence from the gross enormities of life, is not this good thing. Restraints may be laid upon persons, by their parents, masters, or civil magistrates; or through the force of conviction in an awakened conscience; which when over, they return like a dog to his vomit, and like a sow that is washed, to her wallowing in the mire. But this good thing is within a man: some good thing *in* him towards the Lord God of Israel; something in a man's heart. This appears by all the names that it

goes by in Scripture. Sometimes it is called the inward man: *I delight in the law of God, after the inward man*, says the apostle (Rom 7:22). *The inward man renewed day by day* (2 Cor. 4:16). *The hidden man of the heart* (1 Pet. 3:4); or that which is out of sight, *For he is not a Jew that is one outwardly. Circumcision is not that of the flesh, but of the heart*. It is sometimes called spirit; not only from the author of it, the Spirit of God, (*whatsoever is born of the Spirit of God, is Spirit* [John 3:6]) but from the seat of it, the spirit or heart of man. *He is renewed in the spirit of his mind* (Eph. 4:23). It is sometimes called seed, which lies under ground; and is not to be seen: *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible* (1 Pet. 1:23): the seed of the word; the seed of divine grace, which remains. Hence the apostle John says, such *cannot sin*, (that is, live in a course of sin) *because their seed remains in them*: that is, an inward principle of grace, which forbids them so to act. It is sometimes called a root. *The root of the matter is found in me*, says Job (Job 19:28). *The root of the righteous*, which is a hidden principle of grace in them, and brings forth much fruit. The reason why the stony ground hearers relinquished their profession, was, because there was *no root* (Matthew 13:6). Sometimes it is called oil in a vessel (Matthew 25:4). The lamp is an outward profession; the oil is an internal principle of grace in the heart. Sometimes it is signified by an epistle. *Ye are our epistle*, says the apostle (2 Cor. 3:2). God inscribes, upon the hearts of his people, his laws and his word. *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts* (Jer. 31:33). All which shews, that this good thing is within a man.

This also is clear from the several parts of which this good thing consists. It includes in it, the illumination of the understanding, raising the affections to things above, where Jesus is; renewing of a man in the spirit of his mind: making of him willing, in the day of God's power, to submit unto his way of salvation, through the justifying righteousness of Jesus Christ; sprinkling the heart from an evil conscience, and the like; all which shews it to be an internal work.

III. This is but *some* good thing; not every good thing; or, however, not every good thing complete. There is a great deal, indeed, bestowed upon God's people, and wrought in them in their regeneration, and first conversion; for *where sin abounded, grace does much more abound. The grace of God is exceeding abundant, with faith, and love*, and every other grace. For as before observed, where one grace is, there is every grace. Where there is hope, there is faith; and where there is love, there are faith and hope. These always go together. Yet this *good thing* is imperfect in the best of saints. The good work of grace is but a *begun* work. It is, however, carrying on gradually, and will be performed till the day of Christ. Faith has its deficiency; hope is defective; love is imperfect; and *we know but in part* (1 Cor. 13:9). In some this good thing is very little, as at first conversion. It is *a day of small things* with newly regenerate persons: little knowledge, faith, hope, and the like; and therefore compared to *the bruised reed and smoking flax*: and yet, by these appearances, it is clear there is some good thing. In the bruised reed there is a moistness which shews it to be alive; in the smoking flax there are fire and heat. So in the lowest believer, in the exercise of grace in the weakest manner, there appears some good thing in him (though it is but little) towards the Lord God of Israel. Some light in him, though it is but small: a little knowledge of himself, and the corruptions of his nature: a little knowledge of the person, offices, and excellencies of Christ: a little light in the doctrines of the everlasting gospel. It is as much as he can say, *One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, I now see* (John 9:25). He has sight, but it is glimmering, in comparison of the light he afterwards has; for *the path of the just is as a shining light, which shines more and more to the perfect day*.

There is affection evident, and more affection, perhaps, than judgment; and more zeal than knowledge; which is generally the case with young converts; yet for all this, *there is some good thing*. There is hope, though it is but in a small degree. Under all his discouragements, such an one can say, *I will put my mouth in the dust; if so be, there may be hope*. "I do not know whether there is any foundation for hope or no; but I will put my mouth in the dust, I will be in an humble manner at the feet of God. I am told there is hope in Israel concerning this thing; and therefore, I will encourage myself as much as I can, that there will be favour shewn to me, a wicked, miserable creature." Now, in these humble expressions, there is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel. And yet, indeed, he does not *abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost*: he has not arrived to *the full assurance of hope*; but there is some *good hope through grace*, though it is but small. So faith, at first, is like a grain of mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds. There is but little faith, as our Lord says, in his address to his disciples, *O ye of little faith* (Matthew 6:30); and to Peter in particular, *O thou of little faith* (Matthew 14:31). Faith is but mere peradventure at first. The language of such a soul is, "I cannot say he will receive me; but I will venture upon him. If I perish, I perish." Now in this language *there is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel*. But,

IV. Wherever this good thing is, it will be *found*; for *in him* (says my text) *is found some good thing*. God has found it there: and there is very good reason why he finds it; because it was he himself who put it there.

The Lord knows the good thing he hath put into the hearts of his people, and he finds it. He sees not as man sees: he knows the heart, and sees what is in the heart. As it is said of our Lord, *he knows what is in man*. He knew what good was in the heart of Peter; he knew how he loved him. Though there was but very little seen of it when he had so lately, and so basely denied him; yet he knew himself, he had love in his heart to Christ, and he knew that Christ was acquainted with it. *Lord* (says he) *thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*. So wherever there is any good, ever so small, towards the God of Israel, God will find it out, because he put it there. This also will be found by the person himself, sooner or later. *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: Know ye not, that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* (2 Cor. 13:5); except ye be *void of judgment*, as the word more properly signifies. It is not so well rendered *reprobates*; it being a word somewhat startling to the minds of men. "If ye are not spiritual persons, ye cannot know whether Christ is in you, or not; but if you have any spiritual knowledge, judgment, or feeling; then, upon reflection and self-examination, you will find Christ is in you. You will experience, if you observe it, some outgoings of your souls to Christ, and acts of faith and hope upon him." Thus this good thing in the hearts of God's people may be found by themselves.

So it is also by others, that converse with them. Such as *fear the Lord, often speak one to another*; and as they are speaking one to another, they find what good thing is in each other. Thus the apostle Paul, though in his former life he was an enemy to the Christian religion, when he came before Peter, James, and John, and they conversed with him, they *perceived the grace of God in him*. They found there was some good thing in him towards the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he had persecuted; and then they gave him the right hand of fellowship. And where there is *some good thing* in the heart, it will shew itself in the life and conversation; and it will be found at the great day of account. The apostle says of faith, *That it might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ* (1 Pet. 1:7). And I am persuaded, that there is in many persons some

good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, that does not appear now; and it may be, may never appear to satisfaction in this world: and yet will be found at the great day of accounts, when *God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the secrets of every heart*; what he had wrought there.

V. This good thing is sometimes to be found in a Jeroboam's house; or in a wicked man's family; and is sometimes, as I observed, to be found in a youth. Jeroboam's son is, in this chapter, called a child: how old he was is not certain; but God works this good thing betimes in the hearts of some persons. Obadiah knew the Lord from his youth; and Timothy, from a child, knew the holy Scriptures. Those that seek the Lord early shall find him.

Sometimes this is found in one of princely birth, as this child was, the son of Jeroboam king of Israel, though it is a rare thing. For *not many mighty, not many noble, not many wise men after the flesh, are called* (1 Cor. 1:26): but some there are; some in the family of a king. *All the saints salute you; chiefly they of Caesar's household* (Phil. 4:22). Sometimes this good thing is found in one of a bad family. Jeroboam's family was a bad one. He was an idolater, and set up the calves of Dan and Bethel. It is often said of him, to his disgrace, *Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that made Israel to sin*: and yet there was some good thing in his family; which shews grace does not run in a line. Good men *are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God* (John 1:13). How many good men have had bad children? Eli's sons, and Samuel's sons, did not walk in their father's steps. And so it is, that some in the family of bad men are chosen by God. The Lord takes one of a family, and two of a tribe: takes one, and leaves another. Those who are instances of this kind, have abundant reason to admire distinguishing grace.

VI. This good thing, found in the heart of every regenerate person, always acts towards the Lord God of Israel. The bias of it is towards him sin inclines the mind to that which is evil: hence *the imaginations of the thoughts of men's hearts are only evil, and that continually*. There is an aversion to God, and all that is good. The language of an unregenerate man is, *Depart from me, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways*; but where grace is, where this good thing is, it biases the mind towards God and Heaven. Wherever that exists, the language is, *My soul thirsteth after God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?* As all grace comes from God, so it returns to him in its acts and exercises. Repentance is towards God. Faith, hope, and love are towards God. Every grace acts towards God; it is exercised upon him, and upon the Lord Jesus Christ: *whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory* (1 Pet. 1:8). Christ is the object of faith, of love, of joy, and of every other grace.

Where this good thing is, the thoughts will be employed about God, and the affections, *like pillars of smoke, perfumed with frankincense*, will ascend towards him. The desires of the soul will *be to his name, and to the remembrance of him*. This good thing in the heart will operate and shew itself in thankfulness to God for all the good things bestowed. A man that has some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel, will call upon his soul, and all that is within him, to bless the name of the Lord. He will bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for *all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ*; especially, for Christ, the unspeakable gift of his love. This good thing will cause a man to manifest his concern for the honour of God; for his cause and interest in the world. Such in whom this good thing is, love the habitation of his house, the place where his

honour dwells. His tabernacles are amiable, and a day in his courts, is better than a thousand elsewhere. They cannot give themselves the liberty of being absent from the house and worship of God; but must attend upon them. They will exhort and stir up one another to love and good works. They will not only attend the worship of God themselves, but endeavour to bring others with them; saying, *Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord; for he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.*

Those in whom this good thing is, will lay out themselves, their time, their talents, and, all they have and are, for the honour of God, and his cause and interest. They will honour the Lord with their substance, and with the first fruits of their increase. Where there is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, there will be some good thing done for the honour of the Lord God of Israel.

This leads me to mention, *Our yearly collection for the poor Ministers, and the Churches in the country.* I persuade myself there is some good thing in many of you, and if so, there will be some good thing done by you: and I doubt not, but this will be attended unto, which is certainly a good work, as it serves greatly to promote the honour and interest of religion, and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a work which you have been used to, and I need not take up much of your time to inform you of the nature of it. It has been continued in the churches in and about London, between forty and fifty years (This sermon was preached, September 1762). The fund was raised so long ago, by several churches, that united in the benevolent design. It is in some measure increased; and the interest of the stock and fund, together with the collections made by the several churches, are annually distributed for the relief of poor ministers and churches in England and Wales. A great number there are assisted and made more comfortable thereby. Pastors, whose churches are not able to give them a proper maintenance, but are obliged to work with their own hands, are, by your liberality a little eased; their families are a little better provided for, and the gospel a little oftener preached, than otherwise it would be, were it not for your generosity. An attention to this, therefore, must be a good thing, and I am satisfied of your readiness to assist in so good a work.

This business is managed by your deputies, who are annually chosen to see that the money is distributed to none but such as are sound Ministers of the Gospel: and you, yourselves, are in some measure witnesses that those persons are, as you now and then have an opportunity of hearing them. You hear what sound, savory, spiritual, and evangelical ministers they are. You are sometimes drawn thereby into admiration and thankfulness, that the churches in the country are so well supplied with ministers; surely then, this will excite such of you, in whose hearts there is some good thing, to do this good thing for the interest of your Redeemer. Many arguments might be made use of to engage you to this. It is, by the providence of God, so ordered in the common course of things, that some have a larger share of the things of this world, and others are in a poorer state of life; that one may supply the other. So it is in the churches: there are some that have more in number, and among them, persons that are capable of handing forth for the relief of others: thus the churches in Macedonia relieved the poorer saints in Jerusalem: and so it should be with you. You have many mercies to be thankful for. Temporal mercies; the health of this city, and of the whole nation, is a mercy to be taken notice of. The plenty of provisions; the peace we have at home, and now we are upon the eve of a general peace, when your trade and commerce will be more enlarged,

without fear from the enemy: but above all, the gospel of the grace of God, continued with you, and which is likely to be so by means of our gracious Sovereign upon the throne: These things should encourage us to do all we can to promote the interest of the Lord our God. It cannot be thought, indeed, that all of you should be sufficiently provided for this good work at this time, many of you having not heard of it before. For the sake, therefore, of such, this collection will be repeated next Lord's day, and then finished. It is to be hoped you will come with open hearts and open purses, and liberally contribute: and let none of you stay away upon this account. Come yourselves, and bring as many of your friends as you can with you: bring those who are now absent, whom you are acquainted with; bring your children, encourage your servants, and every one to do according to their ability; and thus make it manifest there is some good thing in you, by doing something for the honour of God, and the good of his cause.

**THE MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST,
AS A SAVIOUR TO HIS PEOPLE,
A CAUSE OF GREAT JOY.**

1 CHRONICLES 12:40.

For there was joy in Israel.

In this chapter we have an account of the association of great multitudes of the people of Israel unto David: first in his exile, when he was obliged to flee from Saul, and was persecuted by him from place to place. In different places, whither he was obliged to retire, many came unto him; as, at the cave of Adullam, in the hold in the wilderness, and at Ziklag. The names, numbers, and characters of those persons that gathered together to him at these several times and places, are mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. In the latter part of it, we have an account of the tribes, that came to him at Hebron to make him King over all Israel; (1 Chron. 12:23). *These are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the Lord. All these men of war that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David King over all Israel* (1 Chron. 12:38). This was after he had reigned over Judah seven years and an half. Upon this, there was a feast made for this great company; and there they were with David three days, eating and drinking what David had provided for them. Those at Hebron, those of the tribe of Judah, with the assistance of others, brought bread, meat, meal, cakes of figs, bunches of raisins and wine and oil, with oxen and sheep abundantly: for the inhabitants of Hebron, and the tribe of Judah, were not sufficient to have regaled this great company. Then follow the words I have read; *For there was joy in Israel*. The civil war, between the house of Saul and that of David, was now ended. The man, who was the darling of the people; who was a wise prince and a successful general; who had the good of his country at heart; and from whose administration the people had raised expectations, being now, by divine appointment, made King over all the tribes, *there was joy in Israel*.

But great as that joy was, there is abundant reason for much greater in the spiritual Israel, on account of David's illustrious son, the King Messiah, the Saviour of his people; whom God hath set, as King, over his holy hill of Zion, and given intimations of his Kingly office in various prophecies of the Old Testament. For thus it is written: *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem. Behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation* (Zech. 9:9). It is also intimated in prophecy, what should be said upon this joyful occasion. *This is our God, we have waited for him; and he will save us. This is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation* (Isa. 25:9).

It is in this view of the words, that I shall endeavour a spiritual improvement of them, by showing,

I. The cause of joy in Israel, with relation to the King Messiah, the Son of David, our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. Where, and among whom, this joy is and will be. And,

III. The nature of this joy: by which it may be judged, in some measure, whether it is pure and genuine, in those who profess to have it.

I. I shall consider the cause, the reason, the matter of this joy, as it relates to the King Messiah, the Son of David, our Lord Jesus Christ: and this with respect to every manifestation of him, as the King, the Saviour of Israel. First, in the Flesh; then in his coming to his people at conversion; and then in the latter day, both in his spiritual and personal reign. At each of these periods there has been, is, and will be great joy; and that more abundantly than when David was made King over all Israel.

1. His coming in the flesh is a matter of joy, as he then appeared King of Israel, and the Saviour thereof. He came as a King; not as a temporal, but as a spiritual one. The Jews expected him as a temporal King; and it is very probable the wise men of the East, had no other notion of him, when being led by the star, they came and inquired where he was, *that was born King of the Jews*. But though he was a King, as he confessed to Pilate, yet he was not a temporal monarch. His kingdom, as he told him plainly, was *not of this world*. His kingdom came not with external pomp and grandeur. He appeared, not as a temporal prince, with majesty and glory; but in the form of a servant. He came, *not to be ministered unto*, to be served and waited upon in a grand and pompous manner; *but to minister*; to be a servant, *and to give his life a ransom for many*. In short, his being King in Israel, is no other than being the Redeemer and Saviour of his people. For he came *not to judge the world*, to rule and govern it, in the manner as kings and princes do: *but to save the world* so that the work he wrought, as a Saviour, as the King of Israel, and deliverer of his people, was, truly speaking, the cause of joy. *There was joy in Israel upon his appearance as the King of Israel*.

Now, as such his business was, in general, to work out salvation; in particular to bring in an everlasting righteousness, and to make atonement for the sins of his people: all which lay a solid foundation for joy in the spiritual Israel, or among the people of God, who have any notion of these things. His great work was to procure salvation for his people: for that is the thing on account of which the church is called upon to rejoice at his coming. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! for thy King cometh having salvation*. Salvation! that is the thing which is the source, the foundation of spiritual joy in Israel: the salvation of the souls of men. Thus the apostle Peter stiles it; Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Your Souls, which are so valuable and excellent, of more worth than the whole world: and by how much the soul is more excellent than the body, by so much the more great and excellent is the salvation of the one than the other: and, therefore, the greater reason for joy. If a corporal salvation lay a foundation for joy, as it often does; then much more the salvation of the soul; which is wrought out by Jesus Christ. This is an eternal salvation. God, as the God of nature and providence, is *our King and our God, working salvation in the midst of the earth*. He is the author of every deliverance therein, and on that account to be praised; and gladness appeals in those who are sharers therein. But the salvation that Christ, as our King, and our God, is the author of, or has wrought out for his spiritual Israel, is a spiritual and eternal salvation. *Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation*; and therefore justly occasions great rejoicing.

This is a salvation from sin, and from wrath to come, from eternal death, and from every spiritual enemy. It is a salvation from sin. Christ is called by the name of Jesus, *because he saves his people from their sins*. From the sin of their nature, or original sin; and all consequences of it from actual transgression; sins of heart, lip, and life of omission and commission, greater, and lesser sins. Christ saves from them all. It was foretold of him that he *should redeem Israel from all his iniquities*.

The salvation wrought out, is a salvation *from wrath to come*, which sin is deserving of; on account of which it *is revealed from heaven*, and *comes upon the children of disobedience*; and every sinner may expect it. Christ saves his people from wrath to come. Being justified by his blood and righteousness, they are saved *from wrath through him*. In short, they are saved from hell, death, and every enemy whatever; and therefore, there is great reason for joy in Israel.

This work of salvation is what his divine Father called him to, and gave into his hands. *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*: he means the work of salvation. God sent him in the fullness of time, to be the Saviour of men. He came into this world, *to seek and to save them that were lost*: lost in Adam, even in his fall. He is *become the author of eternal salvation*. He has *obtained eternal redemption* for his people, and that by himself, without the assistance of any creature, angel, or man. His own arm hath wrought salvation. It is a complete work.

Now it is matter of great joy in Israel, that Christ is come as a King and a Saviour; and hath wrought out salvation; And the rather, in as much as this salvation is for sinners; and for the chief of sinners. It is for sinners; and indeed, none else could stand in need of it; nor do any but *sensible* sinners see their need of it. *The whole need not a physician*, a Saviour, *but they that are sick*. Christ *came not to call the righteous*, self-righteous persons, that imagine their own righteousness will be sufficient to justify them: he came not to call these, *but sinners to repentance*. This salvation is for the chief of sinners. If it were for sinners of such and such a size only, whose lives were not tarnished with any notorious crime; or who had lived very regular lives, and had committed only some few faults that are common to all mankind: had this been the case, Saul the persecutor, the blasphemer, the injurious person, would have had no part in this matter: but it was the foundation of his faith, hope, and joy, that *this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief*. The Corinthians, of whom the apostle says, *such were some of you* (having given a list of the vilest sinners that ever lived), would not have been *washed, sanctified, and justified*, had Christ wrought out salvation for sinners only of such or such a size: but it is for the worst and vilest of sinners, that this salvation is wrought out.

It is to be had freely; and that is another cause of joy in Israel. Salvation is by the free grace of God, not by works. If it were only for persons so and so disposed: so and so qualified; or who had done such and such works of righteousness; there would be great reason for despondency in the minds of many persons: but it is *not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. Not of works, lest any man should boast*. Salvation, and the blessings of it, may be had freely. For though our Lord exhorts persons to come and *buy of him gold tried in the fire, and white raiment*, expressive of grace and the blessings of it; they are to be bought *without money, and without price*.

The salvation that Christ hath wrought out, as King, which occasions joy in Israel, is a great salvation; it cannot be said how great it is. Eternity itself is not enough to set forth the greatness

thereof. *How then shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* Salvation wrought out by the great God; a salvation wrought out for great sinners, obtained at a great expense, even the precious blood of Jesus: for we are bought or *redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold: but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* A salvation expressive of the greatest love; of the love of the Father, in giving his Son: and of the Son in giving himself; and it is hard to say, which is the greatest. A salvation complete. A salvation of the whole man, soul and body. A salvation from every sin, and from every spiritual enemy. A salvation to the utmost; a salvation that secures grace here, and glory hereafter; and on account of which, those who share in it, are said to be complete in Christ.

This is a salvation in which the glory of God is greatly concerned, as well as the interest of his people secured. The glory of all the divine perfections are secured in this salvation. *Mercy and truth here meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.* The angels saw this, and praised the Lord at Christ's incarnation: they sung, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.*

On account of this great salvation, wrought out by the King of Israel, when he appeared in our world, *there was joy in Israel,* and good reason for it. A particular branch of his work, as King of Israel, was the working out an *everlasting righteousness* for his people. When he is prophesied of as the King of Israel, that should appear in the fulness of time, he is spoken of under this character; *The Lord our Righteousness.* It is said, *the Lord will raise up to David a righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and prosper. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name,* whereby this King, this righteous Branch, *shall be called,* The Lord our Righteousness (Jer. 23:5, 6). He is the author of righteousness, and his work was *to bring in everlasting righteousness.* He came into this world to fulfil all righteousness: not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. He is the fulfilling *end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes:* and this causes joy. Hence says the church, *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with a robe of righteousness* (Isa. 61:10). In the like exulting strain does she express herself in another place, *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness; and in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory* (Isa. 45:24, 25): make their boast, rejoice, and be glad, that they have a righteousness in Christ, and are justified by it. This righteousness is truly called in Scripture, *the righteousness of God;* because he that wrought it is God as well as man. Hence the apostle, speaking of the gospel, says, *Herein is the righteousness of God revealed, from faith to faith.* And again, *The righteousness of God is unto all, and upon all them that believe.* A righteousness it is which God the Father approves, and is well pleased with; because quite agreeable to his law, and to his justice. He therefore imputes it freely to his people, without works. This righteousness is entirely agreeable to the law of God, and answerable to all its demands: for though its commands are *exceeding broad,* this righteousness is of equal extent. The law indeed is said to be *magnified* by it, and *made honorable:* more honorable than it could have been by the most perfect obedience of angels, or of men. It is a righteousness with which the justice of God can find no fault; but is entirely satisfied with. Those that are justified by it are *without fault,* even before the throne of God, as the Judge of all the earth: for, by this righteousness, they *are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses:* they are acquitted from all sins. Those whom God clothes with change of raiment, or with his righteousness; he causes all their iniquities to pass away. They are without spot and blemish; and hence they are accepted with God, through his righteousness. They

are comely, through that comeliness put upon them. This is matter of joy; and the rather, because this righteousness is to be had freely. Those whom God justifies by it, are in themselves ungodly. He imputes righteousness to them *without works*; without any consideration of any works of theirs. It is a gift which they receive of him; and proceeds from the *abundance* of *grace*. It is by faith that this gift is received; even righteousness from the God of our salvation. The grace of faith, by which a soul receives this righteousness from the Lord, is also the gift of God. In virtue of this righteousness being imputed, and applied to the soul by faith, it enjoys much solid peace and comfort. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*. The effect of this righteousness is peace, quietness, and assurance for ever. These are not the effects of a man's own righteousness, or of works done by himself; for they yield no satisfaction, when he reflects upon the impurity of them, and upon the imperfection that is in them: but the righteousness of Christ lays a solid foundation for peace. Hence the kingdom of God is said to consist not in *meat and drink, but in righteousness and peace*: first righteousness, then peace. The righteousness of Christ imputed and applied: then solid peace and comfort. This righteousness entitles to eternal life; and it is only the righteousness of Christ that can give this title. The justification therefore that arises from it, is called *the justification of life*. Now all these, and many other things, that might he said of this work of righteousness which Christ hath wrought, lay a solid foundation for *joy in Israel*.

We may observe, before we conclude this head, that the work of Christ, as our King and Saviour, was to make atonement for sin; to *finish transgression, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness*. He came into our world, in our nature, to *make reconciliation for the sins of the people*. God set him forth in predictions, and sent him forth in the fulness of time to be a propitiatory sacrifice for sin. Propitiation is made by him and believers, by faith receive it. This causes *joy in Israel; for we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement*: received it in our hearts, and so feel great joy on that account: and there is great reason for it; since Christ hath done that which the blood of millions of slain beasts could not do: namely, take away sin, or make atonement for it. This he hath done by the sacrifice of himself: he, by one offering, *hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*. This sacrifice is of a sweet smelling savor to God; and therefore must occasion *joy in Israel*. It is the work of Christ manifest in the flesh, that is the cause of great *joy in Israel*.

2. The spiritual coming of Christ in the hearts of his people at conversion, is another event, that causes *joy in Israel*. In conversion he breaks open the everlasting doors of their hearts, and enters in as the King of glory; sets up his throne; forms a governing principle in the soul, which reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life by him. This occasions great joy. When Christ is revealed as a Redeemer and Saviour; when he is made manifest in the hearts of his people, as *the hope of glory*; it occasions joy to a poor sensible sinner, who before thought himself just ready to perish; having scarce any hope at all of being saved; there being nothing *but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation* to consume him, justly, because of his sins. Now to have Christ revealed to him as a Saviour, to have hopes of pardoning mercy, and of a perfect righteousness through him; what joy must this create in his soul? as in the first followers of our Lord; who, when they had found him, cried out with an ecstasy of joy, *We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write*. So Nathaniel speaks of him, in a rapture, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel!* that is, the Redeemer and Saviour of men. Thus it was with Zaccheus, when the Lord called him by name, and bid him come down: it is said, he came down, *and received him joyfully*. Thus it was with the three thousand, who cried out, *Men and brethren,*

what shall we do? What will become of us? Is there any hope? An intimation being given that there was pardon through the blood of Christ, *they gladly received the word.* And thus it is with every sensible sinner, into whose heart Christ comes: there is great joy on that account.

Similar joy is also experienced by the saints, in the manifestations of divine favor after desertion. When Christ has withdrawn himself from his people, when they do not enjoy that communion with him as they used to have; when, they seek him earnestly, in this and the other ordinance, and at last find him; then they adopt the church's words in the Song of Solomon, *I held him and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me:* all which is expressive of the joy of a sinner on finding the Beloved. Thus it was with the disciples of our Lord, when he had been absent from them; of whom it is said, *Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.* And every true believer is so, after a time of darkness and desertion, when he is visited again with his sensible presence: for Christ is his all. None in heaven or upon earth like him; and he stands in every endearing relation to his people; and he never pays them a visit, but he brings something along with him, which occasions joy. *I will not leave you comfortless: I will come unto you.* Whenever he comes he always brings something with him, which renders him welcome unto them. But,

3. In the latter day, when Christ will be more manifest, and, like David, will be *King over all the house of Israel*, and over the whole world; then there will be joy and gladness. In the spiritual reign of Christ it will be so, *The four and twenty elders;* that is, the ministers of the gospel church will fall down, and give thanks to him that sits upon the throne; because he has taken to himself his great power, and reigns. There will be joy in Israel, when *the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ;* when he will destroy Antichrist, *with the breath of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming.* Then prophets, evangelists, and all the saints will be called upon to rejoice and be glad, because God hath shewed his justice in taking vengeance on Antichrist, and the Antichristian states. Read the first and sixth verses of the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, and you will see what joy there will be in Israel on that account. There will be joy in Israel, when the Jews shall be converted; when the Lord's ancient bride, the church, shall be ready, and there will be a grant for her to *be clothed with fine linen, clean and white,* and then will be the marriage of the Lamb: when Gentiles, in all parts of the earth, will be converted, and called upon to rejoice. Great joy there will be in Israel, in his spiritual reign when there will be so much increasing light in the world: yea, when the whole earth will be enlightened with the glory of the uncreated Angel of God's presence; when *the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;* when the watchmen, and all the saints, shall see eye to eye, in a wonderful manner; when there shall be peace and harmony among the people of God, *Ephraim shall no more vex Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim:* when brotherly love, according to the name of the *Philadelphian* church state, shall take place; when holiness shall be common among *all that name the name of Christ;* when the kingdom of Christ shall be enlarged *from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth;* when he will be *King over all the earth;* and when there shall be *One Lord, and his name one.*

Was there great joy in Israel, because David was made *King* over all the tribes of Israel? much greater will the joy be, when Christ shall be *King* over all the earth and much more when he shall appear, *personally, without sin. unto salvation;* when there shall be *a new heaven and a new earth;* and when Christ shall take up his residence among his people when there will be no more sorrow,

no more pain, and all tears wiped away from their eyes. There shall be great joy in Israel, when Christ shall *reign before his ancients* in Jerusalem *gloriously*; and they also with him, in glory; which state will issue in ultimate happiness. Then those who are made Kings and Priests unto God shall be in his presence, where is *fulness of joy*, and at whose *right hand are pleasures for evermore*. We must now inquire,

II. Where, and among whom, is this joy? In Israel. This, in a spiritual sense, we must understand, not of the people of the Jews only, who were of the natural stock of Israel; but of the Gentiles also, that are of the spiritual Israel of God. There was joy among them, on account of Christ's appearance in human nature as King of Israel: for his incarnation was not only on account of the Jews, or his people among them; but of the Gentiles also. Therefore, the angels that brought the news, declared, they brought good tidings of great joy to all people (Luke 2:10, 11).

The death of Christ was not for the Jews only, or for the Lord's people among them; no, not for that nation only, but *to gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad*: Christ became the *propitiation*, not only for the sins of the Jews (as John says), *but for the sins of the whole world*; that is, for all the elect of God, without difference. So there is joy in Israel, not among the Jews only, but among the Gentiles also, the whole Israel of God. This is especially the case with every true Israelite, when Christ is revealed in him, *the hope of glory*; for it is an ingredient in the character of a true believer: *We are, says the apostle, the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*.

Among these Christ reigns, as King. He is set as King, upon *the holy hill of Zion*. There he is acknowledged as King. The church says, *The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us*. These rejoiced in him, as their King; agreeable to that command, *Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King* (Ps. 149:2). Here the gospel is preached, glad tidings of peace and salvation by Jesus Christ, which occasions joy *in Israel*. Here the ordinances are administered; which, to those that believe, are means of joy and gladness. This may be said of Baptism; and the ordinance of the Supper is *a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees well refined* (Isa. 25:6). There was a great feast on account of David's being made King over all the tribes; and this occasioned joy in Israel. But we have a greater feast than that, which the Lord hath prepared for his people in Sion; and it is the cause of greater joy. Here is a feast of fat things for his people to feed upon, in commemoration of what the King of Israel, the Saviour, has wrought for them.

There will be joy in Israel in the latter day, both in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ. There will be great joy, when there shall be but *one fold, and one Shepherd*: when David's son and Antitype, the King Messiah, shall rule over all the elect. Then they will be called upon to rejoice; as it is written, *Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people*.

III. I shall now say something of the nature of this joy in Israel, on account of these things: but here I shall be very brief. This joy is not carnal, or concerning carnal things: it is of a spiritual nature, and comes from the Spirit of God. It is called *the joy of our Lord*; from its accompanying faith in Christ. Where there is faith, there is, more or less, joy, and as faith increases, so will joy; and therefore it is called, *the joy of faith*. Hence the apostle prays, that the Romans might *be filled with joy and peace in believing*; believing in him, as their atoning sacrifice, and their justifying

righteousness. Joy comes through believing; and it is only believers in Christ, that have any real experience of this spiritual joy. It is a *joy that the world knows nothing of*; a stranger intermeddles not with it: one that is a stranger to God, to Christ, and salvation by him, knows nothing at all of this joy. It is a joy that is *unspeakable, and full of glory*; that is better experienced than expressed; and sometimes it is so great that it cannot be told. As there is a sorrow in the saints, which is only expressed by sighs and groans, and cannot well be uttered; so there is a joy they cannot well express. It is well said to be *unspeakable, and full of glory*. Believers *rejoice in hope of the glory of God*.

It is a joy to be *constantly exercised*. *Rejoice evermore*, is an exhortation of the apostle. *Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice*. There is always reason for rejoicing in the spiritual Israel, let their case and circumstances be what they may; as the prophet says, *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom; neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herds in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation*. Let the circumstances of believers be what they may, there is always occasion for joy. It is true, indeed, this joy may be, and often is interrupted: partly through the corruptions of nature; partly through the temptations of Satan; and partly through divine desertions; *thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled*. But, then, it may be again revived, and increased: according to that promise, *The meek shall increase their joy in the Lord; and the poor among men shall rejoice in the holy One of Israel* (Isa. 29:16). Increase it may, partly by means of the word and ordinances but chiefly through fresh manifestations of interest in Christ, and the shedding abroad of his love in the heart.

This joy will be, at last, full and complete. In the heavenly state, the true Israelites will be called to *enter into the joy of their Lord*; and will be introduced into his presence, where there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Let us now consider what experience we have had of this spiritual joy. What sort of a joy is ours? Is it of this kind? Is it such as is attended with faith in Christ, which springs from a view of his work, what he hath done for us, his having wrought out salvation, brought in a righteousness, and made an atonement for our sins by his blood? Is it founded upon these things, or is it not? If we are partakers of this sort of joy, let it be our great concern to *hold fast the rejoicing of our hope firm unto the end*. It is pleasing in the sight of God, that we should be joyful, and express our gladness unto him. It should be our great concern to have this joy increased; and, that it may be so, let us make use of all the means which God hath appointed for the increase thereof.

A KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST,

AND OF INTEREST IN HIM,

THE SUPPORT OF A BELIEVER

IN LIFE AND IN DEATH.

A Discourse occasioned by the Death of Mr. Joshua Hayes.

2 TIMOTHY 1:12

I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

THE occasion of my reading these words, at this time is the decease of Mr. Joshua Hayes, late member of this church of Christ: who frequently made use of them, and expressed his faith in a living Redeemer by them. It was therefore thought, by his friends, that they would be very suitable for the subject of a Funeral Discourse; in compliance with whose request, I have read them unto you.

In the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter, we have the sum and substance of the everlasting gospel; which lies in salvation by the free grace of God (in distinction from the works of men), according to the eternal purpose of God, and the wise scheme of things formed in the divine mind from everlasting: where it was a secret and hidden thing, but now made manifest by the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ in our nature; who by his obedience, sufferings, and death, hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. All this you will see in the verses I have referred to, which run thus: *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel.* Which exactly agrees with what the apostle elsewhere affirms, that we are saved *by grace not by works, lest any man should boast.* (Eph. 2:9) And that these, who are the chosen of God are *blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus; according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world.* (Eph. 1:3, 4) Christ incarnate is become the high Priest of these great things laid up in the everlasting purpose, covenant, and promise of God: and has abolished death, even corporal death, as a penal evil, and destroyed the second death, so that it shall have no power over those whom he has redeemed by his precious blood and by his obedience, sufferings and death, hath opened a way for them to enjoy eternal life. He came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10) This is a compendium of the grace of the gospel; of that gospel, of which the apostle says he was appointed a preacher. And a gospel preacher indeed he was. Never was the gospel more freely, fully, faithfully, and powerfully or constantly preached,

than it was by him. He was appointed to this work from all eternity. He was a chosen vessel of salvation (as the Lord himself says) to bear his name among the Gentiles. (Acts 9:15) He was also appointed by a gospel church at Antioch: for, said the Spirit of God in the prophets there, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.* (Acts 13:12) He was an apostle of Jesus Christ, and had all the signs of apostleship in him. *An apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus C/inst:* (Gal. 1:1) sent forth, commissioned and qualified by him for the important work of preaching the everlasting gospel. And particularly he was, as he said, a teacher of the Gentiles: for though all the apostles and ministers of the word were included in the same commission, and commanded to go into all nations, teaching and baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; yet our apostle had a special and particular commission to preach the gospel among the Gentiles. As the gospel of the circumcision was committed to Peter (for he was the person more particularly pitched upon to preach the gospel to the circumcised Jews), so Paul was particularly pitched upon to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, And it is not easy to say, to how many nations he was sent, and among whom he preached the gospel, and among whom he was made successful in founding and raising churches for the honour and glory of God.

Now, on the account of this his office, and the faithful execution of it, he met with much persecution. *For the which cause* (says he), *I also suffer these things;* (2 Tim. 1:12) for he was at this time a prisoner at Rome. Again, he says, *I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elects' sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.* And this was no other than what he always expected wherever he came. He knew, from the nature of things, and from divine appointment, that bonds and afflictions awaited him wherever he went; and he cheerfully endured them for the good of souls, and the glory of the divine name. *For the which cause, I also suffer these things,* verse 12, that is, for being a preacher of the gospel, an apostle of Christ. He was hated by Jews and Gentiles on this account: of the Jews, partly because he preached the gospel, and partly because he preached it to the Gentiles, that they might be saved; than which nothing more provoking to them. Hated by the Gentiles, because they thought he introduced a new religion among them, and that he was a setter up of strange Gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection; (Acts 17:18) because his ministry tended to the demolishing of idolatry and superstition amongst them. Wherefore he was hated by them, and endured the things he did; to all which he was appointed, as well as to be a preacher of the gospel. *Nevertheless,* (he adds) *I am not ashamed.* Not ashamed of the sufferings I endure in a righteous cause: not ashamed of the gospel, for which I suffer these things, which is the power of God unto salvation. Nor am I ashamed of Christ, the sum and substance of this gospel; not ashamed of my faith in him, nor of my hope of eternal life and salvation by him; for hope makes not ashamed. (Rom. 5:5) Now the ground of all this, lies in the words I have read: *For I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day.* This was the foundation of the apostle's joy and comfort, of the satisfaction of soul, and serenity of mind, which he enjoyed amidst all the sufferings he endured for the sake of the gospel. He had believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew the object in whom he had believed. He knew him at first conversion; and had, throughout the whole of his ministrations, committed his natural life, and the preservation of it, into the hands of a good God, and a blessed Redeemer. He was therefore easy, come what would. Whatever suffering he endured, he knew all was safe. *I know whom I have believed.* I know he will never leave me, nor forsake me; he will preserve and bring me safe to his everlasting kingdom and

glory, where I shall enjoy the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. (2 Tim. 4:8)

And that which was the ground and support of bin], under all his trials and exercises, may be, and often is, the support of the people of God under all their trials and exercises; or what gives them relief under their present troubles, and in the view of an eternal world, This will better appear, and we shall have a clearer understanding thereof, by enquiring into, and observing the following things.

I. Who the object of the apostle's faith was, or who it was he believed and trusted his all with *I know whom I have believed, or trusted.*

II. The knowledge he had of this object of Faith whom he believed and trusted. *I know, &c.*

IN. The persuasion he had of the ability of this person he had believed in, to keep what he had committed to him against a certain day.

IV. The support this was to him in his present circumstances, and in the view of death and eternity, which he saw was near at hand; for he says in a following passage, *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.* (2 Tim. 4:6)

I. Let us consider who it was that was the object of the apostle's faith, and is the object of the faith of every true believer. Now this can be no other than our Lord Jesus Christ. How often do we hear him speak of his faith in our Lord Jesus Christ! This was the constant course of his spiritual life. This he assures us himself. *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* (Gal. 2:20) From hence it is clear, that the object he believed in, or trusted, was the Son of God: the Messiah: the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he is the object of every true believer's faith, and ought to be so. Our Lord himself directs unto it when he says to his disciples, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.* (John 14:1) There is the same reason to believe in Christ as in God the Father because he is equally God with him; so is as proper an object of faith as the first person in the blessed Trinity. And it is unto him that souls, made sensible of their lost state and condition by nature, are encouraged to look, to believe in, and exercise faith upon, as you will observe in the instance of the Jailor. When he came in trembling and said, "Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?" they answer at once, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* (Acts 14:31)

Christ is the object of a sensible sinner's trust: the object of a true believer's faith in the business or salvation. But then let us enquire a little into the nature of this faith he exercises upon Him. It is not to be considered as a mere *historical* faith: a bare assent to a set of propositions concerning Christ, his person, offices, and the like; no, the devils have a faith; they have a creed, and in many respects a more orthodox one too than some that call themselves Christians. The devils believe that there is a God, and that there is one God; though they tremble at it. They know and believe, that Jesus Christ is the Holy One of God; yea, that he is the Son of God, and that he is the Christ, the Anointed of the Lord, sent into the world to be time Saviour of men. All this they believe, and a

great deal more that they are obliged to believe, and cannot help it, concerning the Son of God; but this is not the faith of God's Elect. There are some weak people in our days that talk of a bare belief of the simple truth, and call this, faith in Christ Jesus; but it falls greatly short of it. For a man may have all faith of this kind, may believe every thing that is proposed and revealed in the word of God, and yet not have that faith which is of the operation of God.

Special faith is a spiritual thing. It is a spiritual sight of Christ. Yea, faith is the eye of the soul, the enlightened eye of the soul opened by the Spirit of God, to see the glory, the excellency, there is in our Lord Jesus Christ: to see his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth to see him as the able, willing, all-sufficient, and most suitable Saviour. Faith is said to be the evidence of things not seen. It has a sight of unseen things, as of the unseen Saviour; and in its continual and constant actings is a looking unto Jesus. Looking off from every other object (a man's own righteousness, and every thing else) unto Jesus Christ the Lord our righteousness, as the living Redeemer, the only and all-sufficient Saviour. It is no other than a soul's going out of itself to Christ, to lay hold upon him, and trust in him for everlasting life and happiness. Expressed often by a coming to him, influenced by his Spirit and grace, and the declarations of grace he makes, saying, *Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give rest.* (Matt. 11:28) *And all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* (John 6:37) A poor sinner, sensible of his wretched lost state by nature, and of what he deserves, is encouraged to go out of himself to lay hold on Christ, who is the tree of life to them that lay hold upon him. It is, I say, a going forth and laying hold of Christ, under a sight of sin and a sense of danger, of ruin and destruction without him.

Some people in our days talk of faith as a very easy thing—only believe—only believe, say they; but it is to be feared these persons that talk in this manner, and make such an easy thing of believing in Christ, never saw their lost state by nature, the sinfulness of sin, and the ruin and destruction that it brings: never saw themselves upon the precipice of hell, dropping as it were into everlasting damnation. Let a person be in these circumstances, and then let him tell me, whether it is an easy thing for him to believe in Christ for life and salvation: and yet this is done, and herein lies the trial of faith. This shews the genuineness of it, when a soul under a sense of all its iniquities, with all their aggravating circumstances, demerits and deserts, can venture his soul upon Christ. Give me this man. It is he that knows what it is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. But he finds a great many discouragements, doubts, and fears; a thousand objections before he can do this. He does not find it a very easy thing: it is a work of almighty power and efficacious grace.

It was under such a sense of sin as I have mentioned, that the apostle trusted in Christ; and he considers that grace as *exceeding abundant* which communicated faith and love to his soul who had been before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious. 1 Timothy 1:13, 14. And his faith arose to a full assurance, as the words of our text expresses; and elsewhere he says, *The life I live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* (Gal. 2:20) He had a firm belief of interest in Christ: an assurance of faith in Christ. And it is what the Lord is pleased to grant unto some of his children that have not that share of grace and gifts as that great man had; *Let us* (he says) *draw near with a true heart.* (Heb. 10:22) He does not mean himself only, and his fellow apostles, or men of the highest gifts and character in the church; but the children of God in general; believers in common: *Let us, all of us, draw near to God with a true heart, in a full assurance of faith.* In full assurance of the object of faith prayed unto; that he is, and that he is a

rewarder of them that diligently seek him. In full assurance of having those petitions put up unto him that are agreeable to his will answered; in full assurance of a Mediator between God and man, and of an interest in his prevailing mediation and intercession; "Let us draw near with true hearts in full assurance of faith," by the blood of Jesus. For that is the ground and foundation of all assurance: even the precious blood of Jesus, shed for many for the remission of sins.

Now this faith, whether in a higher or in a lower degree, as to the principle of it, is *of God*. It is not of a man's self; no, it is by the *grace* of God, and the *power* of God, that it is wrought. *All men have not faith* : (2 Thess. 3:2) no, far from it. The greater part appear to have none, no true faith; and it is to be feared, that many that talk of it, are destitute of it, and know not what the thing is. And they that have it, have it not of themselves: *By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.* (Eph. 2:8) Hence our Lord says, *No man can come unto me, (that is, believe in me) except it be given unto him of my Father.* (John 6:65) Special faith is a gift of God's grace; and it is of the operation of the Spirit of God in the soul. He works it there. It is he that gives this spiritual eye, the eye of faith; which communicates light to the understanding, and enables the soul to go out of itself to Christ, and venture upon him for life and salvation. It is the fruit and effect of electing grace; and therefore it is sometimes called *the faith of God's elect.* (Titus 1:1) It is an exceeding precious grace in all, it is *like precious faith*; (2 Peter 1:1) for those that have the least degree of it, obtain the same precious faith as the greatest and strongest believer. It is precious faith, it can never be lost; it is more precious than gold which perisheth. Gold is a very durable metal, but it perishes; but faith never does. Christ, who is the object and the author of it, he is the finisher of it; and he prays for his people, as he did for Peter, that their faith fail not. That same Spirit of grace that works faith in the soul, performs the work of faith with power upon the soul. Those that truly believe in Christ, shall most certainly receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. So much for the first thing, the object of faith; and the exercise of faith upon the object. *I know whom I have believed.*

II. I am to consider the knowledge the apostle had of the object of his faith; and which every true believer also has. *I know whom I have believed.*

Faith in Christ, is not a blind and implicit thing, a faith in an object unknown; no, it is in a known object. Faith and knowledge go together! where the one is, the other is also. Though there may be, and is, faith in an *unseen* Christ, that is, who is not seen with the bodily eyes; *whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory:* (1 Peter 1:8) yet an *unknown* Christ can never be the object of faith. He must be known, or he can never be believed in. Our Lord said to the blind man, whom he had cured, *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* (John 9:35) The poor man made answer, and very wisely, *Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?* Suggesting, that he must know him, before he could believe in him. He knew there was such a person as the Messiah, that was to come into the world as the Saviour of Sinners; but as yet he did not know him, and therefore says, *Who is he?*

There is an external knowledge and hearing that is necessary, even to a bare assent; before any can know or believe in him; *For how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* (Rom. 10:14) so there is a special knowledge necessary to special faith. And as a man's knowledge is, so is his faith: if he has only an historical knowledge of Christ, he has only an historical faith: if he has a special knowledge of Christ, he has a special faith. And as his knowledge increases, so does his

faith, They that know the Lord, follow on to know him; and as they know more of him, faith grows stronger and stronger in him. *They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee.* (Ps. 9:10) And the more a soul knows of Christ, the more will he trust him; the stronger will his faith be in him. As it is among men, the more we know a man, a friend, the greater confidence we put in him; so the more we know of Christ, and of God in Christ, the stronger will our faith be in him. But then, this knowledge is not to be understood of a speculative knowledge: it is not a mere notional knowledge of Christ, of his person, his nature, and his offices: or, as he is revealed in the sacred Scriptures, as the Saviour of men; it is a more spiritual knowledge than this. Men may have a great deal of knowledge of Christ, and of things relative to him, and yet have no spiritual knowledge. They may have that kind of knowledge that may enable them to preach him to others, and plead in the great day, "Have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils: and in thy name done many wonderful works?" (Matt. 7:22) To whom Christ will say, "Depart from me, I never knew you." And therefore you may depend upon it, they never knew him, notwithstanding all the knowledge they may pretend to have had; or otherwise, he would not thus address them. *Spiritual knowledge* of Christ is joined with spiritual affection to him. It is a knowledge of approbation: a knowledge of his person, as the chiefest among ten thousand. It is a knowledge of Christ is a Saviour, altogether suitable and all sufficient; and which determines a soul at once to look to no other but him, and to say, *He also shall be my salvation.* (Job 13:26) He first knows him, then believes in him, and commits his all unto him. And this is an *experimental* knowledge of Christ, which is expressed by the various senses; for there is that in the new man which answers to all the senses of the outward man, It is a *seeing* the Son, and believing on him; (John 6:40) It is a *hearing* his voice, so as to distinguish it front that of a stranger. (John 10:4, 5) It is a *tasting* that the Lord is gracious. (1 Peter 2:3) A *handling* the word of life; (1 John 1:1) and a *savoring* the things of God, and not of man; *smelling* a sweet smell in Christ's garments, which smell was of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. (Ps. 45:8) These expressions set forth the exercise of faith in Christ, on a true knowledge of him, and show that knowledge to be not merely notional, but really experimental.

This is also an *appropriating* knowledge, more or less; a soul that thus knows Christ, is able to appropriate him, in a measure, to himself, and sometimes arrives to such a confidence as to point him out, and say with the church, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.* (Song 5:16) And with Thomas, *My Lord and my God!* (John 20:28) and with the apostle, *Who loved me, and gave himself for me.* (Gal. 2:20) The nature of the expression in the text is such, as when the apostle says, *We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God:* (2 Cor. 5:1) that is, we are assured of it; it is not a mere conjectural knowledge, but a thing we are quite satisfied about. So Job expresses his faith in a living Redeemer, in such language, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* (Job 19:25) He not only knew there was a Redeemer, and that he would appear upon the earth another day; but he knew him to be his, "I know that *my* Redeemer liveth." Every degree of knowledge has something of certainty in it, or else it would be skepticism, a mere conjectural knowledge; but this is not the case with the knowledge of true believers, they can say with the apostles, *We believe, and are sure, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.* (John 6:69)

This knowledge, though it is imperfect in the present state, yet it is a *growing* knowledge. There is such a thing as growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, by means of the ministration of the word, and the administration of the ordinances. The path of the just is as the shining light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day. Every degree of this spiritual knowledge of

Christ has salvation inseparably connected with it, *For this is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* (John 17:3) And therefore it must be the most excellent of all knowledge, which made the apostle say, *I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.* (Phil. 3:8) What signifies what a man knows, if he don't know Christ crucified: and the way of life and salvation by him? All his knowledge in things natural, civil, or even in religious matters, is of no avail. What if his eyes are opened as Balaam's were, who saw the vision of the Almighty, and who said, he should see him (the Saviour) but not nigh? What signified all the prophetic knowledge and light he had, while he was destitute of a spiritual knowledge of Christ? Nothing short of this will be of any avail: and if a man has but this, it is enough.—If he has but the smallest degree of it, he shall be saved; for *every one which seeth the Son* (it is not said, whoever has such and such a degree of spiritual sight) *and believeth on him* (even though his faith be but small) *shall have everlasting life.* (John 6:40)

Now this spiritual knowledge comes from God, as faith does; it comes from God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All the three Divine Persons are concerned in communicating this spiritual light and knowledge. The Father. To him our Lord ascribes it, when he says to Peter, *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood, (carnal sense and reason) hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven.* (Matt. 16:17) Sometimes it is attributed to God the Son, *We know* (says the apostle John) *that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ.* (John 5:20) And sometimes to the blessed Spirit, who is styled a *Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ.* (Eph. 1:17) And it is a special gift of God's grace, and for which we should be thankful who have any share in it.

III. We may observe the firm persuasion the apostle had of the ability of the person he had believed in, to keep what he had committed unto him against a certain day.

We will here enquire what he committed to him. Not his labors and sufferings, expecting they would hereafter be brought forth to his advantage. They were, indeed, great: but they were performed by the grace of, and through strength communicated from God. As for his sufferings, they were many indeed, more than others of his fellow-laborers in the gospel; but then he knew that the sufferings of this present life, were not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in him.

Rather he may mean the souls of the persons he had been instrumental in the conversion of; and we find him sometimes commending such persons to God and to the word of his grace. (Acts 20:32) These he committed to Christ, and believed that he would keep them, and that he should meet them as his joy and crown of rejoicing in another day: or it may be interpreted, of his natural life which he had committed unto the hands of his Redeemer, who he knew would take care of it, who told him, at first setting out, not to be afraid. And he had experienced many a time, that he had saved it when in imminent danger: though it seems best of all to understand it of his precious and immortal soul, and the everlasting concerns thereof. This he committed to his dear Redeemer at first conversion, when he first knew him, and he knew he was able to keep it safe against the day here referred to. So every true believer does the like; commits and commends his immortal soul into the hands of his Redeemer, and there he leaves it.

This Let of committing it to Christ, supposes knowledge. No man that is wise, will commit any thing or worth into the hands of one unknown to him; and much less will any commit his immortal soul into the hands of one unknown. No, he must know him, *they that know thy name, will put their trust in thee;* (Ps. 9:10) and it implies the giving the preference to Christ, above all others. We may consider the apostle as looking about among all the sons of the mighty upon earth, and angels in heaven, to see whether any of those were fit to commit his soul unto, and finding none of them were, he says, *Whom have I in heavens but thee? and there is none upon earth, that I desire beside thee.* He saw on insufficiency in all others; that they were unequal to the task of saving his soul; that salvation was not to be hoped for from the mountains; that truly in the Lord, and in him only, was salvation to be found. Such a view have all true believers, and therefore say they, *Ashur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, ye are our Gods ;for is thee the fatherless find mercy.* (Hosea 14:3) Each of them addresses Christ, as Ahab did Benhadad, *I am thine, and all that I have.* (1 Kings 20:4) "I give up my soul, and all that I have, to be saved in thee, with an everlasting salvation." It denotes trusting in Christ for grace here, and glory hereafter: leaving all with him, believing that he is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him.

As to the day here referred to, this may be understood of the day of death. Death is appointed by the Lord, to every man; (Heb. 9:27) and against this day, the apostle committed, and so every true believer commits, his soul into the hands of Christ, when he hopes to meet with the Lord, and to be for ever with him, out of all danger from every enemy. Or it may be understood of the day of the resurrection. The first resurrection. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and happy will they be; for on them the second death shall have no power, and they shall be for ever with the Lord. Or it may be understood of the day of judgment, in which they must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, in which he will make an open acknowledgment of them, and say, "These persons are the gift of my Father unto me: I have redeemed them with my blood; and by my grace they have been enabled to commit themselves into my hand: lo! here am I, and the children which God hath given me,"

The ground and foundation of this trust in Christ, arises from his proper *Deity*. He being God over all, blessed for evermore, it is this that encourages a soul at first, and that from the declaration Christ himself has given, *Look unto me, and he ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am GOD, and there is none else.* (Isa. 45:22) His being the former and the maker of all things, forming all things by the word of his power, is another argument. "He whose hands laid the foundation of the earth, and whose right hand hath spanned the heavens," may well be considered as able to keep the soul which is committed to him against that day. His having already performed the work his Father gave him to do, is another foundation from whence this trust and confidence in him arises. He came, and his own arm has brought salvation. The work is done. He has obtained eternal redemption for all his people; and seeing it is done, what encouragement is here for a poor soul to commit himself into the hands of Christ; believing that he is able to keep him. To which may be added, the consideration of God the Father trusting Christ with the souls of his people. He has put all his beloved ones into the hands of his Son; he has trusted him with all their persons, grace, and glory; and he is faithful to him that appointed him, and will at last say, "Lo! here am I, and the children which thou hast given me." "Well then, (may a soul say) If God the Father hath trusted him with thousands of souls, surely I may trust him with mine. If he hath been faithful to him that

appointed him, in keeping the souls that were committed to him; I may believe that he will keep mine."

IV. I pass on now to the last thing, namely, that this is the support of every true believer, in life and in death; that they know whom they have believed, This was the apostle's support under all his trials, afflictions, and sufferings, for the sake of the gospel. Hear his own words, *For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed.* (2 Tim. 1:12) "I am easy under them, I know whom I have believed." So let the believer's afflictions and sufferings be what they will, if he knows whom he has believed, he is sure that they will all work together for his good; that ere long he shall be free from them, and be for ever with the Lord, into whose hands he has committed his immortal soul. This the apostle knew, that though men were able to kill the body, they could not reach the soul. That was in the hands of Christ, and therefore it was safe; bound up in the bundle of life; hid with Christ in God; laid and built upon that Rock of Ages, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. The apostle was now in the view of death and eternity; and this was his support in the view of an eternal world. And the same upholds every true believer, more or less. O what a support must this be to a dying saint, that though he is leaving the world, and all things in it; though he has no more an interest in his worldly substance, relations, friends, and acquaintance, and soul and body are parting, yet still his interest in a blessed Redeemer continues! He knows whom he has believed. When flesh and heart, and every thing else fails him, God is the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever. Christ is his Redeemer and Saviour; who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. What a supporting consideration must this be to him; that when he is brought to the streams of Jordan's river, that blessed Redeemer, who has been his God and guide through life, will not leave him now; but will be with him through the valley of the shadow of death; therefore he fears no evil. Now he is not at a loss for a surety and Saviour; he knows whom he has believed. He knows the Lord his Righteousness; and that he has a righteousness in him that will answer for him in time to come. How delightful the thought, when he is just upon the borders of another world, that now he is departing from hence, to be for ever with the Lord to be lodged in those mansions his Saviour and Redeemer is gone before to prepare for him; that he may be with him where he is, and for ever behold his glory.

But these are but some short hints of what gracious souls more largely experience under present troubles, and in the views of death and eternity.

This knowledge of Christ was the support of our deceased friend, whose death has been the occasion of my discoursing on these words. His standing in this church has been but a short time; though an ancient professor and disciple of Jesus Christ. He belonged to other churches in the country; who gave him the character of an upright man. For the time that he hath been with us, he has behaved as one that made a good profession of the grace of God. He walked answerable to it; and appeared to have a great deal of affection to, and a liveliness in, divine and spiritual things.

In his last illness he was very comfortable. To one that visited him, he said, he had been many years walking through a dirty narrow lane; but hoped he was now come near the end of it and he desired to depart, and be with Christ. He had no darkness nor fears upon his mind; all was bright and serene. He expressed his faith in Christ, as that foundation that will never give way: he knew whom he had believed. And so I find he continued, until he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus: and there we must leave him till the resurrection morn.

Upon the whole we may see, of what importance an interest in Christ is; to know whom we have believed, and to commit our souls to him. Of what use is this, both in life and in death! A soul may well say, "Give me an interest in Christ, or I die." There is no happiness without it and a knowledge of that interest how comfortable it is!

As to those of us who have made a profession, let us enquire what is the object of our faith and trust? Is it any thing of our own, or is it Jesus Christ? If we trust in a wrong object it will do us no good. We should also consider what our knowledge of Christ is, whether it is notional or experimental; as it is the latter only which issues in eternal life. As to those of you who are trembling, doubting believers, I would say, Give not way to unbelief. Were not you enabled years ago to give up yourselves unto Christ: to venture your souls on him. And is he not the same yesterday, today, and for ever? Why then should you give way to an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God? Leave all with him, and fear not.

To conclude, what encouragement is there for poor sensible sinners, to commit their souls into the hands of Christ, who is able to save to the uttermost; and who hath assured us, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE

CLEARED FROM THE

CHARGE OF LICENTIOUSNESS

A Sermon,

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture in

Great-Eastcheap, December 28, 1737.

1 TIMOTHY 6:3

And to the doctrine which is according to godliness.

The apostle *Paul* well understood the doctrine of the gospel, and its natural tendency to influence the lives of men; and was very much concerned for the honour and credit of it; that the conversations of professors might be as became it, and that they would in all things adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. He was very desirous of instructing men of the meanest capacities, and in the lowest situation of life as servants, to behave agreeable to their masters, *that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed*, ver., 1, 2. He charges *Timothy*, to *teach these things, and exhort men to their duty*; and adds, ver. 3. *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, &c*; plainly intimating, that the words of Christ, or the salutary doctrines of the gospel, perfectly accord with practical godliness; and that a dissolute life and conversation is very disagreeable to them. My view in reading these words is to vindicate the doctrine of grace from the charge of licentiousness, and to prove it to be a godly doctrine, and tending to godly edification; or that it is, as expressed in the text, a *doctrine according to godliness*. The method I shall take in treating on this subject, will be as follows:

- I. I shall explain what is necessary in the proposition, "That the doctrine of grace is according to godliness."
- II. Consider the Charge of licentiousness, which is brought against it, and the nature of it.
- III. Make some concessions concerning the abuse of the doctrine, by evil and wicked men. And,
- IV. Prove that the doctrine itself is pure and innocent, and free from the imputation of libertinism.

I. I shall explain what is necessary in the proposition, "That the doctrine of grace is according to godliness." By *the doctrine of grace*, I mean that system of evangelical truths which is commonly called Calvinistical; as, that God has from all eternity loved some of the human race, and has chosen them unto everlasting salvation, by Jesus Christ; that he has made a covenant of grace with his Son on the behalf of the chosen ones, which is absolute and unconditional; that Christ in the fulness of time assumed human nature, suffered and died, to redeem a special and peculiar people to himself; that by bearing their sins, and all punishment due unto them, he has made full satisfaction to the justice of God; that a sinner's justification before God is only by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, without any consideration of works done by him; that pardon of sin is only through the blood of Christ, and for his sake, according to the riches of his grace; that God sees no sin in his justified and pardoned ones, so as to condemn them for it; that regeneration and conversion, are by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; and that those who are effectually called by grace, shall persevere to the end, and be eternally saved, This is the doctrine of the Bible, of the *scriptures given by inspiration of God*, and which are *profitable for doctrine*, (2 Timothy 3:16) for explaining, stating, and defending this doctrine. This is *the doctrine of Christ*, which if a man brings not with him, who pretends to be a preacher of the gospel, he is not to be received, nor *bid God speed*. (2 John 9:10) This is the doctrine of the apostles (Acts 2:42) we are steadfastly to continue in and abide by; and is summarily comprised in that excellent chain of truths, *Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* (Romans 8:29, 30)

By *godliness* I understand not any particular grace, or the exercise of it; which seems to be the sense of the apostle, when he says, *Add to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness;* (2 Peter 1:6, 7) nor the whole of internal religion only; though that is the main and principal part of godliness, and is what an inspired writer means, when he observes, that *bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things;* (1 Timothy 4:8) but by it I understand the whole of practical religion, both external and internal, the exercise of every grace, and the discharge of every duty: which is what the apostle designs, when he thus concludes; *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?* (2 Peter 3:11)

By the doctrine of grace being a godly doctrine, or a doctrine *according to godliness*, I mean, that godliness is the very life and soul of it; that it runs through every part of it, and is breathed by it; that it is *the truth which is after godliness;* (Titus 1:1) that there is a perfect harmony and agreement between them; the mystery of Christ, of his person, and grace, being *the great mystery of godliness;* and that nothing more powerfully and effectually teaches and engages men to *deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present evil world,* (Titus 2:11, 12) than the doctrine of *the grace of God, which bringeth* the news of free and unconditional *salvation* by Jesus Christ.

II. Though such is the nature and tendency of the doctrine of grace, a charge is brought against it, as encouraging looseness of life, and opening a door to libertinism; and it is urged, that "if God has chosen some infallibly to salvation, and made a covenant with them in Christ, to give them grace and glory, in an absolute and unconditional way; if Christ has redeemed them by his blood, and

they are justified alone by his righteousness, and being called by his grace shall never perish; then they may live as they list, and take their whole swing of sin, since their state is safe and unalterable." But this charge is no other than a suggestion of Satan; the reasoning is borrowed from him; the argument is an aping of him; it is shaped according to his plan; and perfectly agrees with what he said to our Lord; *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone;* (Matthew 4:6) which is, as if he should say, "if this is the case, thou mayest do what thou wilt with thyself, no damage can arise unto thee, no hurt can be done thee." Moreover, Satan never more transforms himself into an angel of light, than when he sets up for a preacher of holiness, in opposition to the doctrine of grace; nor do his ministers ever more act the same part, than when under the guise of *ministers of righteousness*, or preachers of good works, they endeavour to undermine and sap the foundation of gospel-doctrine. This charge springs from malice and ignorance; and it is hard to say which is the most predominant in it; the men that bring it, are, *as concerning the gospel, enemies for our sake*, (Romans 11:28) and do as *Diotrephes* did, *prate against us with malicious words;* (3 John 10) their *carnal minds* being *enmity against God*, and whatsoever is spiritually good; and being without any spiritual discerning of the things of the Spirit of God, they pronounce them foolishness, and *speak evil of the things they understand not*. The charge is false and groundless, and to be treated as mere slander and calumny, and must be rejected with the utmost abhorrence and indignation; and ought to have no other answer than what the apostle gives; *What shall we say then, Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* (Romans 6:1, 2) However, this may serve somewhat to relieve and alleviate our minds under this horrid and heavy charge, that it is no other than what was leveled against Christ and his apostles. The spiteful and ignorant Jews charged our Lord with being an Antinomian, both in doctrine and practice; in doctrine, as appears from his vindication of himself; *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; am not come to destroy, but to fulfill:* (Matthew 5:17) In practice, as is evident from those words of his; *John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say he bath a devil;* (Matthew 11:18, 19) he is an unsociable man, he will not be conversed with in any form: *The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners;* but, adds he, *Wisdom is justified of her children*. And that the apostles of Christ were treated after this manner, is plain from what the apostle *Paul* says; *And not rather, as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just.* (Romans 3:8) All which should confirm us in the doctrine of grace we hold and maintain as true; since the same objections are made unto it, as were to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles.

III. It will be allowed, that the doctrine of grace may be, and has been abused by evil and wicked men, The apostle *Jude* speaks of some men in his days, who were *turning the grace* of God *into lasciviousness;* (Jude 4) where by *the grace* of God is not to be understood the love and favour of God shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit; for that can never be turned to such a purpose, it always working in a contrary way, as it did in *David;* *thy loving kindness, says he, is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth:* (Psalm 26:3) nor the principle of grace wrought in the soul by a divine power; for that being of a spiritual nature lusteth against the flesh, and can never be turned into it: But by it is meant the doctrine of the gospel, which, though lasciviousness is not in the nature of it, nor has it any natural tendency to it, yet wicked men transfer it from its original nature, design, and use, to a foreign one: Just as *unlearned* and *unstable* men, who have no spiritual understanding of

the word of God, nor any scheme of truth consistent with it, *wrest the scriptures to their own destruction*. (2 Peter 3:16) But then, as the scriptures are not to be thought the worse of, because of these men's wresting them; so neither is the doctrine of grace a whit the less to be valued, because it is abused by ill-disposed men. Let the characters of the men that turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, be enquired into; and *first*, they appear to be *ungodly men*, men devoid of the fear and reverence of God, and devotion to him; who are not worshippers of him. Now who are they that neglect the private and public worship of God? Who are they that walk abroad in the fields on Lord's-days? or take their horses and ride, seeking their own pleasure? Who are they that frequent taverns and public houses, when they should be attending the house of God? Are these the men who are commonly called Calvinists, the asserters of the doctrine of grace? Should the examination be strictly made, the above persons will be found, if not to a man, yet by far the greatest part, Arminians, if capable of giving any account of their religious sentiments. And *secondly*, the other part of their character looks with a dreadful aspect upon, and plainly points out those who are on the other side of the question; *denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. Who are the deniers of Christ's person, of his proper deity and equality with the Father, of his plenary satisfaction and expiatory sacrifice, of his imputed righteousness, and the efficacy of his blood? The deniers of these things are the men that turn the grace of God into lasciviousness; either by asserting it to be a licentious doctrine; or by treating the doctrine of special grace in a wanton and ludicrous manner, scoffing at it, and lampooning it; or by making the doctrine of grace universal, extending it equally alike to all mankind, and thereby harden and encourage men in sin.

Again: Be it so, that some who have notionally received and professed the pure doctrine of grace, have abused it to vile purposes; the doctrine itself is not to be rejected on that account, but the abusers of it. The best things in the world may be ill used by wicked men; yea, even the perfections and providences of God. Mercy is a perfection of the divine nature, and what God delights in: God is merciful, and therefore, says a profane sinner, I will take my fill of sin, and doubt not, if I have but opportunity at last to say, "Lord have mercy on me," all will be well. God is patient, long-suffering, bears with sinners, and does not stir up all his wrath immediately: What effect has this upon them? Does it lead them to repentance? It should do so: But they *despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance*. (Romans 2:4) Yea, as the apostle *Peter* says, and we have lived to see it verified, *There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*. (2 Peter 3:3, 4) Which is as if they should say; we see no likelihood of the coming of the Judge, nor of the awful judgment, or dreadful doom that shall befall ungodly persons, which have been talked of; this is all dream and enthusiasm; and therefore we will take our own pleasure, and walk after our own lust. Thus *because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*. (Ecclesiastes 8:11) Now must it be said that God is not merciful, patient, long-suffering and forbearing, or that he ought not to be so, because sinners make such an ill improvement of these things? How are the common mercies of life, and the most kind instances of divine providence abused, by the worst of men! Yea, even *Jeshurun* himself, when he *waxed fat he kicked, then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation*. (Deuteronomy 32:15) But must we deny the providences of God, and reject the instances of his goodness, because of the ill use that is made of them, through the wretched depravity of human nature? Nor should we discard the doctrine of grace on such an

account: At this rate, the best of things, the plainest facts, and clearest truths, must be denied and rejected.

Once more: It will be owned, that there have always been some bad men in the best of societies. There was a *Judas* among Christ's disciples; there has always been chaff upon his floor, and will until the winnowing time comes; and tares among the wheat, wolves in sheep's clothing, and foolish virgins among the wise, until the bridegroom appears. But then the faults and blemishes of some are not to be imputed to the whole body, nor these to principles held and professed. If this must be admitted the measure and rule of judgment, no church or congregation, no society or set of men whatever, have been, or can be free from the vilest imputations. But are the generality of those who are called Calvinists, or Antinomians, men of bad characters? Or are there more immoral persons among them, than on the other side of the question? Let them look at home, we are ready to compare notes and numbers with them; we are obliged in defence of ourselves, since our principles are charged, to use some sort of boasting, and say, in like manner as *Samuel* did; *here we are, witness against us, before the Lord, and before his anointed: Whose ox or ass have we taken? Whom have we defrauded; or oppressed?* (1 Samuel 12:3) This is worthy of notice, that the doctrine of grace never had a run among rakes and debauchees whereas it is well known the opposite to it has been, and is embraced by such, Strange! if the doctrines of free grace are of such a malignant nature and influence, have such a tendency to licentiousness, and give so much encouragement to sin, as is said, that such persons should not greedily catch at them and embrace them, at least make trial of them; when it is plain they are ready to give into all the absurd and wretched schemes of Infidelity and Atheism, in order to keep their lusts; but, instead of this, none shew a greater hatred to them: And indeed, these are as forward as any to be our accusers; though the charge comes with an ill grace from such who are abandoned to the worst of crimes, and are avowed enemies to holiness of life. One thing more I would observe, and that is, That when any who have embraced and professed the doctrine of grace fall into any open and scandalous sin, there is immediately a great clamour and uproar about it; whereas when it is the case, as it frequently is, on the opposite side, little or no notice is taken of it. What should be the reason of this? Because the case is common on one side, and comparatively rare, and but seldom heard of on the other: So that the noise that is made, and the notice that is taken, do but indeed make to our credit and reputation in general. But supposing the instances of immorality were more than they are, and whenever they happen, are matter of lamentation: yet,

IV. I aver, that the doctrine of grace itself is pure and innocent, and not to be charged with the faults and blemishes of any of the professors of it; nor does it give any encouragement to sin, but is all the reverse: And this will be made to appear, by considering the several particular doctrines contained in it. As,

1. The doctrine of God's everlasting and unchangeable love to his elect, in every state and condition and circumstance of life into which they come. This is no ways contrary to the purity and holiness of the divine nature; for though he loves the persons of his people, and delights in them as considered in Christ, he takes no delight in their sins; sin is the abominable thing he hates; he is of purer eyes than to behold it with approbation and delight; *he is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with him:* nor does he encourage them in sin; or connive at it, but rebukes and chastises them for it in a fatherly way; though at the same time he does not take away his loving-kindness from them; for he takes pleasure in their persons, though he bears a displeasance

to their sins; nor does this doctrine in the least lead men to sin, but on the contrary, most strongly engages to the love of God, and a cheerful obedience to him: his love to them indeed does not arise from their love to him, it being prior to theirs; but then they *love him because he first loved them*; (John 4:19) and this love in them to him, constrains them to a willing obedience; when their hearts are *enlarged* with it, then do they *run* with alacrity *the ways of his commandments*; when this loving-kindness of God in choosing them in Christ, redeeming them by his blood, and calling them by his grace is before their eyes, and they have a sense of it upon their hearts, they *walk in his truth*; (Psalm 119:32, 26:3) in the truth of his gospel, and have their conversations as become it. This love, according as it is shed abroad in their hearts, *casts out fear*, and influences them to *serve* the Lord *without fear, in righteousness and holiness all the days of their lives*. (1 John 4:18) What can lay a man under a greater obligation to love the Lord, fear and obey him, than this consideration, that he loved him when he had no love in his heart to him, nay was an enemy to him; and that his thoughts were concerned about his everlasting salvation, when he had no thoughts of God, nor any for himself? Such a consideration as this, must work much more powerfully upon him, as it must upon any ingenuous mind, than such a one as this; that the Lord began to love him and continued to do so, because he loved him and was obedient to him; and would continue to do so as long, and no longer. That is the purest obedience that is influenced by love; it is the obedience of a child, and not of a slave; and must be the most acceptable unto God; nay, there is no other service that is acceptable to him, but what springs from love influenced by his own.

2. The doctrine of the eternal, personal election of some of mankind unto everlasting salvation. Good works indeed are not the causes of God's act of election: *For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*: (Romans 9:11-13) Nothing that is temporal can be the cause of that which is eternal; nor the will of man, nor any thing done by it, be the cause of the will of God; but yet good works are what *God has fore-ordained*, that his chosen people *should walk in them*. (Ephesians 2:10) Holiness is a means that is fixed in election, and an end that is secured by it; all those who from the beginning, from everlasting, are chosen unto salvation by Christ, are chosen to it *through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*; (2 Thessalonians 2:13) all that are *elect according to the fore knowledge of God the Father*, are so *through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus*: (1 Peter 1:2) which sanctification is as infallibly secured, as salvation itself; for though men are not chosen because they were, yet they are, *that they should be holy*; and in consequence of electing grace become so through the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God. Election is the source and spring of all true and real holiness: There would not have been such a thing as holiness in the world, since the fall of *Adam*, had it not been for electing grace; *except the Lord had left a seed, and reserved a remnant* for himself, *according to the election of grace*, the world had been as *Sodom* and as *Gomorrah*: And so it is, where there are no instances of this grace. Strange then, that this innocent doctrine, so friendly to holiness and good works, should be thought to open a door to licentiousness! Besides, holiness of heart and life is an evidence of election; the internal grace of sanctification is an evidence, being a fruit of it to the person himself: *Knowing, brethren, says the apostle, your election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance*. (1 Thessalonians 1:4, 5) External holiness, or that which appears in the outward conversation, is the evidence of election to others. Hence that advice is given to the saints, to *give diligence to make their calling and election sure*; (2 Peter 1:10) that is

by good works, as in some copies it is read, and as the sense requires; since both calling and election are to be made sure by some third thing. Not that they can be made surer in themselves, or to the believer, than they are; but a more sure and certain evidence may be given of them to others. Nor does any thing, nor can any thing more powerfully engage men to holiness and good works, and to honour and glorify God that way, than the consideration of this; that they are *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*; that they *should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.* (1 Peter 2:9)

3. The doctrine of the absoluteness and unconditionality of the covenant of grace, is far from being a licentious one. It is true indeed, that the good works of men do not put them into this covenant, nor their evil works, their transgressions and sins, turn them out of it, who are in it; yet this does not suppose that God overlooks and connives at the sins of his people; since it is expressly said, and it is a part of this covenant, *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my Statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.* (Psalm 89:30-34) Besides, nothing more fully provides both for internal and external holiness, than the covenant of grace; and that by the most absolute and unconditional promises: it provides for internal holiness, by such promises as these, *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh:* (Ezekiel 36:25, 26) And in another place, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* (Jeremiah 31:33) It provides for external holiness, and that in the most effectual manner; since God in it promises, saying, *I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.* (Ezekiel 36:27) Nor is there any thing under the influence of divine grace that more powerfully operates upon, and stirs up. the desires of the saints, their care, diligence, and industry to discharge their duty, than the absolute and unconditional promises of grace; such as these: *As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty.* (2 Corinthians 6:16, 18 and 7:1) *Wherefore,* says the apostle, *having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* Add to all this, that God in the covenant of grace provides in an absolute and unconditional way for the saints final perseverance in faith and holiness; saying, *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* (Jeremiah 32:40)

4. The doctrine of particular redemption by Christ, is free from any imputation of libertinism. It is indeed a redemption from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of the law; but does not exempt from obedience to it, as it is in the hands of Christ; for saints are still *under the law to Christ*; (1 Corinthians 9:21) nor do any more delight in the law of God after the inward man, or more cheerfully serve it with their mind, than those who are most sensible, that they are become dead unto it, and delivered from it by the blood of Christ. Redemption is a deliverance from sin, from all sin, original and actual; and that not only from the guilt of sin, and the punishment due unto it: but in consequence of redeeming grace, the redeemed ones are delivered from the dominion and governing power of sin, and at last from the being of it. Christ saves his people from their sins; he does not indulge them in them; the deliverer that *comes out of Zion, turns away ungodliness from*

Jacob. Strange! that a redemption from a vain conversation should ever be an encouragement to one; or that a person's being ransomed out of the hands of Satan, and taken as a prey out of the hands of the mighty, should he an argument with him to give up himself to him and his service; or can he thought to have any tendency to engage him in a state of bondage to him, to be led as a captive by him at his will. Besides, the great end of Christ's giving himself for any of the sons of men, is, *that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* (Titus 2:14) Nor does anything lay such an obligation upon men to *glorify God with their body and spirit*, as the consideration of this, that they *are not their own, but are bought with a price*, (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) even with the precious blood of Christ; nor can any thing like the love of Christ, the redeeming love of Christ, constrain men to obedience, *to live not unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15)

5. The doctrine of Christ's bearing our sins, and making satisfaction for them to the justice of God, is another pure and holy doctrine: For though Christ has bore all the sins of his people, all the guilt and filth of them, and all the punishment due unto them; has taken all away, for his blood cleanseth from all sin; it removes all that is in sin, and belongs to it; yet this gives no encouragement to sin; for one end of Christ's bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, was, *that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.* (1 Peter 2:24)

Though Christ as a priest has satisfied justice, by fulfilling the law, yielding perfect obedience to its precepts and bearing the whole penalty of it; yet this does not free those for whom he has made satisfaction from obligation to regard the law, as held forth by him as King of saints; whom they own, and look upon themselves obliged to own as their judge and lawgiver; and indeed consider themselves under still greater obligation to obey his laws and commands, since he has finished transgression for them, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Though they *through the law are dead to the law*, yet it is, that they *might live unto God*; (Galatians 2:19) the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself a pure and spotless sacrifice for sin, *purges their consciences from dead works, that they may serve the living God*: (Hebrews 9:14) it is only such who *walk in the light* and have fellowship with Christ, whom his *blood cleanses from all sin*; for *if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth*; (1 John 1:6, 7) Christ's suffering, *the just for the unjust*, the punishment due to sin, was *to bring us to God*; (1 Peter 3:18) not only to reconcile us to him, and to enjoy his favour, but to walk with him, to walk in his ways, and to walk humbly before him; whereas if it gave a loose to sin, and encouraged in it, it would set us at a greater distance from him Christ's satisfaction for sin does not at all weaken our obligation to duty, but increases it.

6. The doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, is a doctrine according to godliness, however it may be traduced as a licentious one; It neither makes void the law: nor discourages the performance of good works; nor encourages in sin; it does not annul, or make the law useless: *Do we*, says the apostle, *make void the law through faith*, that is, by the doctrine of justification through the righteousness of Christ, received by faith? *God forbid: yea, we establish the law*; (Romans 3:31) since we assert that men are justified by a perfect righteousness, which is every way agreeable to the demands of the law, and by which that is magnified and made honourable. Nor does it at all discountenance the discharge of duty, but is the greatest motive and inducement to it. Thus, the apostle, having observed that we are not saved by works of righteousness done by us, that we are justified by the grace of Christ, and are made heirs according

to the hope of eternal life, adds, *This is a faithful saying; and these things, that is, these doctrines, I will that thou affirm constantly;* (Titus 3:8) that thou assert them without any doubt or hesitation about them; and that thou dwell upon them in thy ministry, and frequently inculcate them; that to this end and purpose, *they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works.* Nothing like these doctrines will induce them thereunto. Nor does this doctrine give any countenance to sinful practices; for though God justifies the ungodly, yet he does not indulge them in ungodliness. Christ's righteousness justifies from all sin, but does not justify persons in a continuance in sin. Besides, *faith, which receives this blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of salvation,* (Psalm 24:5) which is the reason why men are said to be justified by it, *works by love;* (Galatians 5:6) is an operative grace, is attended with the fruits of righteousness, is evinced by good works, made perfect by them, and is without them dead. Yet some will say, the doctrine of justification by faith is no licentious doctrine, but the doctrines of eternal justification and eternal union are. This comes from another quarter, from a set of men who should know better. What diabolical charm? what satanic influence can there possibly be in a date? If justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone, without the works of the creature, has no bad influence upon the life and conversation; the moving of the date of it higher than where it has been commonly put, can never be attended with any bad consequence that way; nor can any consequences arise from it, but what must also unavoidably follow upon eternal election: And as for eternal union with Christ, it is the foundation of all the good things Christ has done for his people, of all the good things the Spirit works in them, and of all the good works which are done by them; and therefore can never give birth and countenance to evil practices.

7. The doctrine of free and full remission of sins, according to the grace and mercy of God, and by the blood of Christ, and for his sake, and not on account of our repentance and good works, as procuring it, has no influence to make the conversation of a truly sensible sinner bad, but the reverse; sin never appears so odious, and in its true colours, or so exceeding sinful, as it does in the glass of pardoning love; a soul is never more ashamed of sin, and confounded on the account of it, or blushes at it, than when he is most sensible and most satisfied that God is *pacified towards him for all that he has done;* (Ezekiel 16:63) and that all is forgiven through the blood of Christ: nor does he ever more truly and heartily, and in an evangelical manner, *mourn* over sin, or is humbled before the Lord for it, than when he *looks* to Christ, and views all his iniquities bore by him, and washed away in his blood; (Zechariah 12:10) nor can any thing more powerfully engage men to forsake their evil ways, and course of living, and turn to the Lord, than this consideration, that he does *abundantly pardon;* (Isaiah 4:7) and indeed the end which the Lord has in setting forth Christ in his purposes to be the propitiation for sin, and procure the remission of it, and in providing this blessing in the covenant of his grace, and in sending Christ to obtain it, through the shedding of his blood, and in publishing and proclaiming it in his gospel, and in applying it by his spirit, is that he might be heartily and sincerely feared and worshipped; *there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* (Psalm 130:4) He would have been feared with a slavish fear, or dreaded, as he is by devils, if there had been none; but he would never have been feared by sinful men, with a filial and godly fear, or have been worshipped in sincerity and truth, had it not been for pardoning grace and mercy through the blood of Christ; and such must be very disingenuous indeed, that can abuse such a doctrine as this, that because God has pardoned them, therefore they will sin the more against him; if there are any such that go on in sin upon such a presumption, that their sins are pardoned, they manifestly shew, that they never had any true sense of sin, or application of pardon to them.

8. The doctrine of God's seeing no sin in his people, is spoken against as an immoral one, and giving liberty to sin; but is pure, holy and innocent: For this doctrine does not suppose sin not to be sin; or that that is not sin which is done amiss by them; or that God does not in any sense take notice of their transgressions. Though they are, as considered in Christ, *holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight*; (Colossians 1:22) yet, as considered in themselves, they have and do many things which are faulty and blameworthy. Though God sees no sin in them, with respect to the article of justification, yet he sees all their sins, with respect to the article of his omniscience; or though he sees them not with his avenging eye of justice, yet he sees them all with his eye of omniscience. Again: Though he sees no sin in them, to condemn them, yet he takes notice of their iniquities and transgressions, so as to rebuke and chastise them in a fatherly way on the account of them. *There is indeed no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*; but then these are described as such *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*. (Romans 8:1) God has nothing against his people, as they are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and washed in his blood; but he has many things against them, which he takes notice of in a providential way, for their good, and his glory: *Nevertheless*, says Christ to the church at *Ephesus*; *I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent*. (Revelation 2:4, 5) This is the true state of this doctrine. Let any one judge, whether, in this view of it, it can be thought to be a licentious one.

9. The doctrine of efficacious grace in conversion, or of effectual vocation by the powerful and insuperable grace of God, can surely never be reckoned to have any tendency to lead persons into a vicious course of living; since they that are called by it, are called with an *holy calling*, and *unto holiness*: They have new principles of grace and holiness implanted in them: they are formed anew for God, are made new creatures, new men; and have *put on the new man, which after God is created in*, or unto, *righteousness and true holiness*: (Ephesians 4:24) They are *created in Christ Jesus unto good works*; and are put into the best capacity of performing them, from the best principles, with the best views and to the best ends.

10. The doctrine of the saints final perseverance can never be chargeable with encouraging immorality; unless continuance in faith and holiness is an immorality; or that it can be thought, that the way to persevere in holiness is to abound in sin. Nor does this doctrine make the use of means, or exhortations to diligence, care and watchfulness, unnecessary. The apostle *Peter* though he asserts that those who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and are begotten again according to his abundant mercy, *are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*; (1 Peter 1:5) yet exhorts these same persons to *gird up the loins of their mind, to be sober, and hope to the end, to be holy in all manner of conversation, and to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear*; (1 Peter 1:13, 15, 17) and makes use of their sure and certain redemption by the precious blood of Christ, from a vain conversation, to move and engage them to a regard to these things. And indeed, though there is no danger of true believers falling, so as to be lost, and perish; yet inasmuch as through the weakness of the flesh, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this world, they may so fall, as to dishonour the name of God, wound their own souls, and stumble others, there is good reason why *he that thinks he stands, should take heed lest he fall*. (1 Corinthians 10:12) It is, indeed, in the way and use of means, that the Spirit of God leads on the saints in faith and holiness to the end.

Thus we have seen that the several peculiar doctrines of grace are pure and innocent, having no manner of tendency to licentiousness; but the genuine nature and design of them are, to promote holiness of life and conversation. We might easily recriminate, by shewing that the charge of licentiousness may be brought with much more truth and justice against the opposite doctrines: As for instance; if Christ has redeemed all mankind, every individual of human nature, then may a profane sinner say, "I am redeemed by the blood of Christ, and shall undoubtedly be saved, let me live as I will; for Christ could not die, or his blood be shed in vain." Should it be said, that though it is asserted that Christ died for all men, yet none can receive any benefit by his death, but such as believe, and repent of their sins: Be it so; since it is affirmed that man has a power to believe and repent when he pleases; the profane sinner may go on to say, "Seeing this is my case, I am endued with a free-will, I can believe and repent at pleasure, I will take my fill of sin, and at a convenient time I will reform, repent and believe, and doubt not but all will be well with me." So the doctrine of the saints apostasy may be improved by wicked men, to encourage them to continue in sinful courses, and to procrastinate all concerns as yet about a future state: "For," may the sinner say, "if this is the case, that a man may be truly converted, be a true believer, and penitent, and a real child of God, and yet so fall and apostatize, as to be in the same state he was before; may amend, and fall away again, and in this way go on to the end, so that it is very uncertain and precarious in what state he will die then I may, for the present at least, indulge myself in sinful pleasures; for certainly it will be acting the wiser and more rational part, for me to amend, repent, and put myself into a good state, since these are in my power, toward the close of my days, when it may be more rationally concluded I shall continue therein, and so die in a happy situation." Thus, I say, we might easily recriminate; but I choose not to load principles with consequences which are denied; nor should our opponents charge ours as they do, when we declare our abhorrence of every thing of this nature.

To conclude: Let us, notwithstanding these imputations, value and esteem the doctrine of grace, and not entertain the less opinion of it on this account. Let us stand fast in it, abide by it, and earnestly contend for it. Let us endeavour, by the assistance of the grace of God, to have our conversations as become the gospel; to adorn the doctrine of Christ in all things; to *hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience*; and so to live, as to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and such to the blush, who falsely accuse the doctrine of grace, and our conversation in Christ.

THE NECESSITY
OF
GOOD WORKS UNTO SALVATION,
CONSIDERED:

OCCASIONED BY SOME

Reflections and Misrepresentations of Dr. *Abraham Taylor*,

in a Pamphlet of his lately published, called, *An Address to young Students in Divinity, by way of Caution against some Paradoxes, which lead to Doctrinal Antinomianism.*

Above *six years* ago I sent a printed letter to the Gentleman whose name stands in the *title-page* to this, on account of some ill usage of myself, and contemptuous treatment of some doctrines of grace; to which he never thought fit to return an answer. The impression of that letter quickly went off, and I have frequently been solicited by my friends to reprint that, and my *Discourses on Justification*; but could never be prevailed upon to do any thing of that kind till now for no other reason but this; I saw that he and his friends were not inclined to enter into a controversy about these things, and I did not chose to move it afresh, or appear forward to it, which I thought reprinting would look like, or might be so interpreted; and therefore I determined to sit still, and only defend myself when any attacks were made upon me. In this resolution. I have persisted, notwithstanding the little, mean, and *disingenuous methods* this Gentleman has made use of, to render my character odious among men. The letter above mentioned was not written with any design to provoke to wrath and anger; nor is there a single sentence, that I can remember in it, that has any tendency that way: But it seems a grudge was conceived, which has been broiling upon his heart ever since, and now at this distance of time he, takes up a single phrase, and inveighs against it with the utmost wrath and fury; whereby he has most sadly verified that observation of the wise man, that *anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*

A controversy has of late been moved, or at least revived, by some ministers of the *Independent denomination*, about the duty of unconverted persons to believe in Christ, or about the nature of that faith which such are obliged to; a controversy in which I have had no immediate concern: And whereas it has been given out, that a book published not long ago, called, *A further Enquiry after Truth*, is of my writing, though another man's name stands to it; I take this opportunity of declaring to the world, in justice to the worthy author of it whose name it bears, and that I may not take the credit of another man's labours, that there is not one single sentence of mine in it; nor did I see the author when he came to town to print, nor his performance, until it was in the press, who I doubt not will give a proper reply to the notice taken of him. The Gentleman I am now concerned with, has thought fit to nibble at this controversy; and which he might have done without meddling with me, since what he has broke his gall about, has no relation to that. He tells the society to whom he

dedicates this *miserable* pamphlet, that he "was glad that an opportunity offered to declare against tenets, which can answer no purpose, but to weaken men's obligation to duty and holiness, and to lead to gross *Antinomianism*." But had he not an opportunity *six* or *seven* years ago of declaring against, not only this single tenet he has now taken notice of, but several others which he imagines has the same tendency, and of attempting a confutation of them, had he either a head or a heart for such a service? For some mouths past, we have been alarmed of this mighty work, that a *learned doctor* had conceived, and that in a short time the mountain would bring forth. But while we were waiting for, and expecting to see the wondrous birth, out turns a *silly mouse*, according to the poet's words:

Parturient montes, nascetur ridicidus mus.

The particular tenet, or principle struck at, is, "that good works are not necessary to salvation, not in any sense; no, not is the antecedent to the consequent." This is called "a filthy dream, a dangerous paradox, an unscriptural absurdity, (Address, &c. p. 5) an extravagant position, (p. 6) a dangerous tenet, big with absurdity; a horrible blasphemy, (p. 7) the senseless paradox, (p. 9) rude and ignorant blasphemy; (p. 10) the blasphemy invented by one of the vilest and lewdest heretics; (p. 12) the draff of those who turned the grace of God into wantonness; and, to close all, an Antinomian paradox." (p. 13) When these ill names and hard words are taken out, there is very little left for me to reply unto. And whether the doctrine opposed deserves such ill language, will be better judged of, when the terms of this proposition, "Good works are not necessary to salvation," and the sense of it, are explained.

By *good works* are meant, not the work of sanctification, principle of grace or internal holiness, which though it is sometimes styled *the good work*, (Phil. 1:6) yet is not the work of man, but the work of the spirit of God, and is therefore called *the sanctification of the spirit*. (1 Thess. 3:13; 2 Thess. 2:13) This I firmly believe is absolutely necessary to eternal happiness, both in infants and adult persons, and that without it neither the one nor the other can ever see the Lord; sanctifying grace being an essential and initial part of salvation, or that branch of grace and salvation which the elect of God and redeemed of the Lamb are first made actually partakers of in their own persons, in order to their enjoyment of the heavenly glory. This man must be conscious to himself that I have expressed myself to this purpose in my letter to him; and yet he most basely insinuates that I hold, and represents me as saying, that "A conformity to him (Christ) in holiness, is not antecedently necessary to our reigning with him in light and glory." (Address &c. p. 13) If by conformity to holiness, is meant that internal conformity of the soul to Christ, the produce of divine grace in regeneration and sanctification; it is a thought that never entered into my head nor heart, and which I abhor. Passive holiness, or that holiness of heart which makes a soul like to Christ, and is no other than Christ formed in it, or his image instamped upon it, in the production of which it is entirely passive, is absolutely necessary to the everlasting enjoyment of him; yea, I believe that an outward conformity to Christ in conversation, or active holiness, external holiness of life, is absolutely necessary to evidence the truth of holiness of heart in all that are saved, who are either capable, or have an opportunity of performing it, and shewing it forth. This writer almost all along takes the liberty of altering the state of the question before us, and instead of *good works* puts *holiness*; thereby to suggest to his readers that I deny the necessity of sanctification to complete happiness; which as it is an iniquitous proceeding, so it gives us a specimen of his skill in the management of a *regular controversy* he prates about. Nor by *good works* are to be understood the internal acts and

exercises of grace, as faith, hope, and love; for though these are our acts, under the influence of divine grace, and so may be called our works, though not with much propriety, and as such good ones; yet these do not usually go by the name of good works, either in scripture, or in the writings of good men, or in our common way of speaking. This I mention to stop the mouths of some silly cavillers, who I perceive are fond of objecting these things. Though even these acts and exercises of grace cannot be thought to be so absolutely necessary to salvation, as that it cannot possibly be without them; since infants, as soon as born, though they may be capable of having the principles of faith, hope and love, implanted in them, yet I apprehend they cannot be capable of acting or exercising these graces: If therefore without these acts and exercises of grace persons cannot be saved, these must stand excluded from the kingdom of heaven. By *good works*, I understand a series of external holiness; not a single action or two, but a course of living soberly, righteously, and godly; a constant performance of religious duties and exercises, in the outward life and conversation: In this sense, and in this only, am I to be understood in the proposition before us, and in all that I have said, or shall say concerning it.

It may be proper next to inquire what is the meaning of the word *necessary*, and in what sense good works are so. That they are necessary to be done, or ought to be done, by all that hope to be saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is readily granted; but not in point of salvation, in order to that, or with a view to obtain it. Good works are necessary to be done, on account of the divine ordination and appointment; for such as are the *workmanship* of God are *created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that they should walk in them*, (Eph. 2:10) They are necessary, *necessitate precepti & debiti*, on account of, the will and command of God, and of that obedience we owe to God, both as creatures, and as new creatures. They are necessary upon the score of obligation we lie under to him, and in point of gratitude for the numerous mercies we receive from him, and that by them both we and others may glorify him our Father which is in heaven. They are necessary to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour; to recommend religion to others, to testify the truth of our faith, and give evidence of the reality of internal holiness. They are necessary for the good of our neighbours, and for the stopping of the mouths of our enemies. These things I have more largely observed and asserted in my letter to this man; all which he conceals from his readers, and most vilely suggests to them, that I have vented the same notion, and am of the same opinion with *Simon Magus, Carpocrates*, and their followers; who held that salvation was through faith and love, but that other good works were not necessary; but were to be looked upon by men as indifferent in their own nature, being neither good nor evil; nothing being naturally evil, and so might or might not be done: Things I never thought of, and of which I have the utmost abhorrence and detestation. With what face or conscience could he insinuate any thing of this kind, when I have so fully expressed myself upon the necessity of doing good works? But what will not a man say, intoxicated with passion? True indeed, I cannot say that good works are necessary to salvation, that is to obtain it; which is the only sense in which they can be said with any propriety to be necessary to it, or in which such a proposition can be understood; and which I charge as a Popish and Socinian tenet, and hope I shall ever oppose, as long as I have tongue to speak, or a pen to write with, and am capable of using either.

Salvation may be considered, either in the contrivance of it from eternity, in the mind and counsel of God; and the designation of persons to it; or in the impetration of it in time by Christ; or in the application of it in effectual vocation by the Spirit of God; or in the entire consummate enjoyment of it in heaven. In every of these views of it, good works are not necessary to it: Not to the

contrivance of it, and designation of persons to it. God when in his infinite wisdom he drew the scheme of salvation in Christ, fixed upon him to be the author of it, and appointed men unto it by him, was not moved hereunto by any works of his creatures, or by any foresight of them; they were then no moving causes with God, no conditions of salvation fixed by him, nor were as the antecedent to the consequent; no, not in the prescience or fore-knowledge of God: As they could not go before, so they were not fore-viewed by God, as any cause, condition, motive, or reason of his choosing one to salvation, and not another; *For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.* (Rom. 9:11) Good works are the consequents and fruits of election to salvation, not antecedent to it. Nor are they necessary to the *impetration* or obtaining of it in time by Christ: These did not move Christ to engage in this work, they were no ways assisting to him in it; they did not help it forward, or in the least contribute to the performance of it, which was done entirely and completely without them.

Nor was it effected by him on condition of men's performing good works, nor were they necessary to it, as the antecedent to the consequent; they did not antecede or go before it, no, not in the divine mind or consideration, and in the view of Christ; for men were then considered, not as having done good works, but as evil amid wicked; for *while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*, and obtained eternal redemption by his blood; and *when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* (Rom. 5:8, 10) Good works do not go before, but follow after redeeming grace: Christ *gave himself* for his people, *that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* (Titus 2:14)

Nor are they necessary to time *application* of salvation by the Spirit of God in effectual calling, neither as causes or conditions, or as the antecedent to the consequent; they can be no moving causes to it, nor do they come into consideration in the divine mind, as the reason or condition of it; they are not the rule and measure of God's procedure in this affair; he *saves and calls with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.* (2 Tim. 1:9) Besides, before regeneration, before effectual vocation, before a principle of grace is wrought in the soul, before the new-creation-work is formed, which is the initial part of salvation, or that branch of it which God's elect are first actually made partakers of in their own persons, there are properly speaking no good works done by them, or can be done by them; and therefore cannot possibly be antecedent to salvation viewed in this light, but must be consequent to it: *We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* (Eph. 2:10) Nor, lastly, are they necessary to the *consummate enjoyment* of salvation in heaven, no, not as the antecedent to the consequent; that is, as an antecedent cause to a consequent effect, which is the easy, common and natural sense of the phrase; for who can hear of an antecedent to a consequent, unless by way of illation, but must at once conceive of that consequent as an effect depending upon the antecedent as a cause? Wherefore if good works are antecedent to glorification as a consequent, *then* glorification must be, and will be considered as an effect depending upon good works as its cause.

And as it will be difficult to fix any other sense upon the phrase, and persons are and will be naturally led so to conceive of it, this, and this alone, is a sufficient reason why it ought to be rejected and disused. This man himself will not say that good works are necessary as antecedent causes, or as antecedent conditions of salvation or glorification: Let him then tell us in what sense they are necessary, as the antecedent to the consequent. His performance is *An address to young*

students in divinity, and he takes upon him to be a tutor and director of them in their studies; but leaves them in the dark, and does not offer to inform them in what sense good works are necessary, as the antecedent to the consequent. Will he say they are necessary as antecedent means of salvation? This is all one as to say they are necessary as antecedent causes, for every mean is a cause of that of which it is a mean. Will he assert that they are necessary, as an antecedent meetness or fitness for heaven? This must be denied. How can our poor, impure and imperfect works, our righteousnesses which are as *filthy rags*, make us meet and fit for the heavenly glory? No, it is not works of righteousness done by us, but the Spirit's work of grace within us, which will be performed until the day of Christ, which is the saints meetness for eternal happiness. Will he say That good works are such necessary antecedents to salvation, though he does not choose to say or cannot say what, as that salvation cannot possibly be enjoyed where they do not go before? I have, in my letter to him, given instances to the contrary; proving that salvation is, where good works do not go before; as in the case of elect infants, and of persons called by grace in their last hours, when just ready to launch into eternity.

If this doctrine is true, that good works are so absolutely necessary to salvation, that there can be no possibility of any, where they do not go before; what an horrible scene must this open to parents of children, who lose by death many, or most or all of them in their infancy? since, upon this principle, they must for ever despair of their eternal happiness. One should think that such a man as this I am concerned with, would have took care to put in a saving clause in favour of infants, especially them suggested to him; who supposes that all the infants of believers are interested in the covenant of grace, and consequently must be saved, at least those who die in their infancy; and if saved, they must be saved without good works, which they neither do, nor are capable of doing.

Maresius, I observe, when treating of the necessity of doing good works, for such ends and uses as have been already mentioned, and which nobody denies, adds; "But this necessity is to be restrained to adult believers, who are able to perform outward good works; for *the infants of believers are saved without them* (even as they were sinners without any properly personal act of their own) though not without an inclination to them, by the grace and spirit of regeneration." Moreover, upon this principle, what hope can surviving relations entertain of their adult deceased friends; who though they have appeared to have had full convictions of their lost and miserable state by nature, clear views of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, an abhorrence of it, and repentance for it, to have seen the insufficiency of any works of the creature to justify before God, and render acceptable to him; the necessity of salvation alone by Christ; and to express some degree of faith in him and hope of the heavenly inheritance yet because they have not lived a regular life in the of health, have not gone through a course of good works, have not lived soberly *righteously and godly in this present world*, must he therefore everlastingly banished from the realms of light? What comfort can a man of this principle be a means of administering? or what comfortable words can he speak to a poor creature become truly sensible of sin, and his lost estate, of his need of Christ, and salvation by him, on a death-bed? Can he, though he is satisfied he has a true and thorough sense of things, encourage him to believe in Christ, and hope in him for everlasting life and salvation? No, he cannot; he must be obliged to tell him that it is too late to think or talk of these things, there is no hope for him; for since he has lived a vicious life, hell must be his portion; for where good works, a religious life and conversation, do not go before, there can be no consequent happiness. Whereas, on the other hand, according to our principle, parents may hope for the salvation of their infants that die in infancy; there is at least a possibility of it, whereas there is none in the other scheme;

surviving relatives may rejoice, in hope of their deceased friends being gone to glory, who they have reason to believe have been called by grace, though at the last hour; ministers and others are capable of speaking words of peace and consolation to distressed minds, whose hearts are pricked and become contrite on their dying beds: All which is a full confutation of what this writer asserts, that "it is absolutely impossible that it" (this tenet, that good works are not necessary to salvation) "should do good to any person whatsoever." I readily own, that good works are necessary to be performed by all that are walking in the way to heaven, and expect to be saved by Christ, and glorified with him, who are either capable or have an opportunity of performing them; but then they are not necessary as causes, conditions, or means of procuring glory and happiness for them; nor are they necessary as the antecedent to the consequent, to pave their way to heaven, to prepared and make them meet for it; or to put them into the possession of it: they do not go before in army such sense, or for any such use; they follow after *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.* (Rev. 14:13)

It is said, (Address, &c. p. 6) that it cannot possibly be for the advantage of a saint or a sinner, to be told that good works are in no sense necessary to salvation, not as the antecedent to the consequent; and that it may do a great deal of harm and mischief to the one and the other. I have already shewn it may be for the advantage, use, peace, and comfort of poor sensible sinners on their death-beds, and of surviving saints: Nor dot see what harm or mischief it can do to saints, lively or declining ones, or to profane sinners; not to lively judicious christians, who are taught and encouraged by this doctrine to continue zealous of good works, and diligently to perform them, for many valuable, necessary uses though not order to salvation. What, will no motive induce a lively christian to do good works, but what is taken and urged from the necessity of them unto salvation? Or can he be a judicious one, that acts from such a principle? Cannot a declining christian be induced to do his *first works*, unless he is told they are absolutely necessary to his salvation? Cannot it be thought that arguments, taker from the command and will of God, from the glory of God, the honour of Christ, religion and truth, a man's own and his neighbour's good, demonstrating the necessity of doing good works, may be made use of as means to quicken his diligence, to cast off his spiritual sloth and carnal security, without insisting upon the necessity of them to salvation? Nor can it tend to harden sinners in sin, or put them upon running into greater transgressions, or induce them to harbour such a conceit, that in may get to heaven, let them live as they please; when they are told, that though good works cannot save them, their evil works may damn them, or be the cause of damnation to them.

As for the texts of scripture produced by this writer, they are all of them impertinently alleged, and none of them at all to the purpose. Some of them do not relate to good works, but to internal holiness, the sanctification of the Spirit, as *2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14; Hebrews 7:14* which is that grace God chooses his people to, in order to their enjoyment of glory; and without which, and that as perfect, for so it will he made by the Spirit of God, they cannot see or enjoy the Lord; and therefore it becomes them, by constant application at the throne of grace, to follow after a daily increase of it, and by their lives and conversations to evidence the truth amid reality of it. Others only express tire necessity of doing good works to testify the truth of faith, or contain motives in them to the performance of them; taken partly from the grace of God bestowed upon the saints here, and from the consideration of that happiness and glory they shall enjoy hereafter, as the fruits of grace, and not as the fruits and consequents of their works as *James 1:17, &c.; 2 Peter 3:10-14;*

Jude 20, 21; 1 *John* 3:1-3. And it is easy to observe, that the whole current of scripture, and especially tire Epistles, run this way, to exclude works entirely from having any hand or concern in the justification and salvation of men. The passage out of *Clement*, I suppose, is chiefly produced to grace his margin with a large citation in *Greek*; since it only sets forth the duty of those to perform good works, who would be found among the number of such who wait for God, and desire to partake of his promised gifts: for certain it is, that *Clement* did not think that good works were necessary to justification or glorification; seeing he expressly excludes them from either, when he says, "All are glorified and magnified, not by themselves or by their works or righteous actions which they have done, but by his own will: So we also, being called by his will in Christ Jesus, are justified; not by ourselves, nor by our wisdom, or understanding, or piety, or works, which we have done in holiness of heart; but by that faith, by which the Almighty God hath justified all from the beginning, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*"

We are next entertained with the rise and original of this tenet, that "good works are not necessary to salvation." And it seems, according to our leaned author, (*Address, &c.* p. 11) that *Simon Magus* was the first broacher of it; And we are exposed as his disciples and followers; and some pains are taken to tell an idle, filthy story, of *Simon's* picking up a whore in a bawdy-house at *Tyre*, and committing fornication with her; no doubt with a view to insinuate to his readers, that our principles being alike, our practice must be so too; or, at least, that our principles have the same tendency. But if it should appear that *Simon's* tenets and ours are not the same, what will become of this little show of reading, and the mean artifice made use of to expose us to scorn and contempt? As for *Simon's* saying that salvation is by grace, and not by works, this was a doctrine he had from the apostles themselves; which he turned into wantonness, and abused to vile purposes; and is in itself never the worse, nor is it to be thought the worse of, for his ill use of it: And as for the inference made from this doctrine, that therefore good works are not necessary; this is none of ours, we disclaim it; there is no agreement between *Simon's* tenet and ours, about good works; he urged they were not necessary to be done, we plead for the necessity of doing them, for the ends before mentioned, and which need not be repeated. *Simon, Carpocrates*, and their followers, who are represented as being in the same sentiments, held that every thing, besides faith and love, were things indifferent, neither good nor bad in their own nature, and so might he done or omitted. But can this man, with any face or conscience, say that these are our sentiments? We affirm, that good works are in themselves good, cannot be dispensed with, but ought to be performed by all men; the tenet of these men was, that good works were not necessary at all in any sense, not necessary to be done. Where is the likeness, the agreement?

Give me leave, on this occasion, to inquire into the rise and original, and to point out the authors, abettors, and maintainers of the contrary tenet, that *good works are necessary to salvation*. The false apostles in *Judea*, and other judaizing professors, were the first broachers of this notion who taught the brethren, not only that circumcision, but that obedience to the law of *Moses*, the moral as well as ceremonial law, was necessary to salvation: see *Acts* 15:1, 5 which gave the true apostles and primitive churches a great deal of trouble. To confute which, the apostle *Paul* especially greatly laboured in all his writings, and particularly in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*. The Papists, the followers of the man of sin, have always been the abettors and maintainers of this principle; and so has *Socinus*, and his wretched adherents. The first among the reformed divines that vented it, was *George Major*, contemporary and familiar with *Luther* and *Melancthon*: He has been represented by some, from whom one should not have expected to have had such a character

of him on this account, as *satelles Romani Pontificis*, a person employed by the Pope of Rome; a tool of the Popish party to create divisions and disturbances among the Reformed. The Papists finding they could not maintain with success their notion, that *good works were meritorious of salvation*, instead of the phrase, *meritorious of salvation*, substituted the other phrase, *necessary to salvation*, as being a softer one, in order to gain upon incautious minds; when one and the same thing were designed by both. And this man was thought to be the instrument they made use of for this purpose. But however this be, certain it is, that the broaching of this doctrine by him gave great offence, and occasioned much disturbance. The writer of his Life intimates, that the consequences of it gave *Major* himself some concern; and that he declared in so many words, that "whereas he saw that some were offended, for the future he would no more make use of that proposition." Among the chief of his opposers was *Nicolaus Amsdorfius*, who in great heat and zeal asserted, in contradiction to *Major's* notion, that "good works were hurtful and dangerous to salvation ;" a position not to be defended unless when good works are put in the room of Christ, and are trusted to for salvation: But it is not doing of them, that is or can be hurtful to salvation, but depending on them when done. This controversy raised great troubles in the churches and gave *Melancthon* a good deal of uneasiness; who at first was ensnared into the use of the phrase, though he afterwards rejected it, as improper and dangerous. *Amsdorfius* did not deny that good works were to *be done*, but could not be prevailed upon to own that they were *necessary*. *Melancthon* at length allowed that "good works were not necessary to salvation;" nor did he dare to assert it: "For these reasons," says he, "we teach that good works; or new obedience, are necessary; yet this must not by any means be tacked to it, that *good works are necessary to obtain salvation and eternal life*." In his answer to the pastors of *Saxony*, he has these words: "Nevertheless, let us not use this phrase, *good works are necessary to salvation*." And, in another place, "Verily I say, that I do not make use of this phrase, *good works are necessary to salvation*; but I affirm, that these propositions are true, and properly and without sophistry thus to be declared; *new obedience is necessary*, or *good works are necessary*; because obedience is due to God, according to that saying, *Debtors we are*." Now these were the sentiments, and which are exactly ours of the great *Melancthon*, that peaceable man, who never was charged within running into extremes in controversy; his greatest fault, and which has been complained of by some of his friends, who have had a great regard to him and his memory, was, that he was for composing differences, almost at any rate, sometimes, as was thought, to the injury of truth, and with the hazard of losing it.

I could easily produce a large number of learned and holy men, who have asserted the same thing: I shall content myself with transcribing *twelve* arguments, shewing that good works are not necessary to salvation, drawn up by that learned and judicious divine *Abraham Calovius*; who has deserved much of all men of learning and true Christianity, for his learned animadversions on *Grotius's* Annotations on several passages in the *Psalms* and *Prophets*, relating to the Messiah; and for his laborious confutation of *Socinus* and his followers, and his excellent defence of the orthodox faith against them. They are as follow. The question put is, "*Whether good works are necessary to salvation?*" The Socinians, says he, affirm this; but this opinion is deservedly rejected.

1. Because no such thing is ever to be found in the scriptures, namely, that *good works are necessary to salvation*. But if this was so principal a part of evangelic truth, as the adversaries plead, it should, upon the foot of the Socinians hypothesis, be contained in express words in the scriptures; since they assert, that all things necessary to be known for salvation, are contained expressly in the scriptures.

2. The apostle treating of the causes of our salvation, removes good works, and entirely excludes them; and teaches, that he only has blessedness, to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, *Romans 4:6*. Compare *Ephesians 2:8*, *Titus 3:5*. If therefore good works are entirely excluded from the causes of salvation, how will the same be necessary to salvation?

3. That which is not necessary to our justification, that is not necessary to salvation; because there are no other causes of salvation than of justification: But good works are not necessary to justification. *Ergo*,

4. If we are saved by grace, then good works are not necessary to salvation; for the antithesis remains firm, *If of grace, then not of works, otherwise grace is not grace, Romans 11:6*. But the former is true, *Romans 6:23*. *Ephesians 2:8, 9*. therefore the latter also.

5. If by the obedience of one Christ we all obtain justification of life and salvation, then we are not saved by our own proper obedience: But the former is true, *Romans 5:17-19*, therefore also the latter.

6. What is ascribed to faith alone, as it is contradistinguished from works, that is not to be attributed to works: But eternal salvation is ascribed to faith alone, *John 3:16*; *Mark 16:16*; *Romans 1:17* and *4:6*; *Galatians 3:11*; *Ephesians 2:8*; *Titus 3:5*. *Hebrew 10:38*. *Ergo*,

7. What is necessary to salvation, that, as much as it is necessary, is prescribed and required in the evangelic doctrine, *Romans 1:16*. and *3:27*. But good works, as necessary to salvation, are not prescribed in the gospel, which is not conversant about works, but only about faith in Christ, *John 3:16* and *6:40*; *Romans 1:17* and *4:6*, seeing the law is the doctrine of works, the gospel the doctrine of faith, *Romans 3:27*; *Galatians 3:12*.

8. Add to this, that this assertion concerning the necessity of good works to salvation, has been already rejected as false, in the false apostles, *Acts 15:5*, where an opposition is formed to the sentiment of the apostles, that we are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, and that we are saved by the keeping of the law, or works, and that the keeping of the law is necessary to salvation.

9. If good works were necessary to salvation, we should have whereof to glory; but the holy Spirit takes away all glorying from us, and for this very reason excludes good works from hence, *Ephesians 2:8, 9*. *Romans 3:27* and *4:1, 2*.

10. If our election to salvation is of grace, and not of works, as the apostle teaches, *Ephesians 1:4-6*; *2 Timothy 1:9*, good works cannot be asserted to be necessary to salvation; for as we are chosen from eternity, so we are saved in time.

11. By whatsoever doctrine the certainty of our salvation is weakened or destroyed, that ought to be rejected: But such is the doctrine of the Socinians, *Ergo*,

12. Wherever the scripture produces reasons for which good works are necessary, it mentions quite others, than that they are necessary to salvation; namely, that we ought diligently to perform good

works, because of God, because of Christ, because of the holy Spirit, because of the holy angels, because of our neighbour, because of ourselves, yea, even because of the devil.

Thus this excellent writer, confuting the Socinian error, that *good works are necessary to salvation*, strongly defends the contrary; which our Theologaster calls a *filthy dream, horrible blasphemy, &c.* This it seems, is one of the paradoxes which lead to doctrinal Antinomianism. But why a *paradox*? A paradox, in the ancient use of the word, signified a most certain truth, at least embraced as such by men of wisdom and learning, though contrary to the opinion of the vulgar; which being unusual, struck them with surprise; whence such verities were sometimes called *παραδοξα*, and sometimes *admirabilia*. This use of the word, I suppose, will not be allowed to be applicable to this tenet. A paradox, in the modern use of the word, or in common acceptation, designs a proposition that carries in it either a real or seeming self-contradiction. Now the proposition, *good works are not necessary to salvation*, is plain and easy to be understood; and is either true or false, but no paradox. We need not go far for instances of paradoxes, this writer can furnish us with enough: As when he says, "Salvation is *all* of free grace, and good works, the fruits of holiness, a part of salvation, are absolutely necessary to *complete* salvation." The word *complete*, in this proposition, is so placed, as that it may be thought to be either a verb of the infinitive mood; and then the sense is, salvation is *all* of grace, and yet good works are absolutely necessary to *complete* it; or as an adjective to the word salvation; and then the sense is, salvation is *all* of grace, and good works are absolutely necessary to salvation *complete* without them: Take it either way, the self-contradiction is manifest enough. As also, when giving the character of a deceased minister of the gospel, whose ashes he might have spared; he says, (Address, &c. p. 14) "he was a person of *real piety*, but discovered *so much pride and wrath* in his writings and conduct," (By the way, how could a man so wretchedly guilty of these things, write this without shame and blushing?) "that it is hard to account for it; except we allow, that he had *a tincture of enthusiasm*." The first of these instances is a *real* self-contradiction, and the other, at least, a *seeming* one; and both paradoxes. Again; why should this proposition, *good works are not necessary to salvation*, be represented as leading to doctrinal Antinomianism? This man ought to have informed his students what doctrinal Antinomianism is. Since he has not, I will. Doctrinal Antinomianism, properly speaking, is a denying, or setting aside the law of God, as a rule of life, action, or conversation. Now what tendency has the above proposition to such a notion? Or how does it appear, that the very quintessence of doctrinal Antinomianism is couched in it, as is suggested? (Address, &c. p. 5) Though we say, that good works are not necessary to salvation; do we say, that they are not necessary to any thing else? Do we say, that they are not necessary to be done? Do we say, that they are not necessary to be done in obedience to the law of God? Do we say, that the commands of the law are not to be regarded by men? That they are things indifferent, that may be done, or not done? No; we say none of these things, but all the reverse. *Do we then make void the law* through this doctrine? *God forbid: Yea, we establish the law*, (Rom. 3:31) as it is in the hands of Christ our Lawgiver; to which we desire to yield a cheerful obedience; to shew our subjection to him as King of saints, and to testify our gratitude for the many blessings of every kind we receive from him. It is not worth my while to take notice of the flirt (Address, &c. p. 35) at the everlasting love of the divine persons being on all accounts *the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever*; which he knows, in his own conscience, only regards that love as in the breast of the divine persons, and not the manifestations of it; which are more or less to different persons, and so, to the same persons at different times.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SAINTS
FINAL PERSEVERANCE,
ASSERTED AND VINDICATED;

In Answer to a late Pamphlet,

called

"SERIOUS THOUGHTS" on that Subject.

The doctrine of the saints final perseverance in grace to glory, being a doctrine so fully expressed in the sacred scriptures, so clearly wrote there as with a sun-beam, having so large a compass of proof; as scarce any other doctrine has; a doctrine so agreeable to the perfections of God, and the contrary so manifestly reflecting dishonor upon them, particularly the immutability of God, his wisdom, power, goodness, justice, truth, and faithfulness; a doctrine so well established upon his purposes and decrees, his counsel and covenant, and which so well accords with all his acts of grace towards, and upon his people; a doctrine so well calculated for their spiritual peace and comfort, and to promote holiness of life and conversation; a doctrine one would think, that every good man must *wish* at least to be true; it may seem strange, that any man believing divine revelation, and professing godliness, should set himself to oppose it, and call such an Opposition *Serious Thoughts* upon it, as a late writer has done; who has published a pamphlet under such a title, and which now lies before me, and which I have undertook to answer, and shall attempt to do it in the following manner. And, it is to be hoped, he will think again, and more seriously, and that his latter thoughts will be better than his former.

I shall not dispute his account of saints, and the characters of them, though there are some things which require distinction and explanation. He has rightly observed, that the question about the saints falling away, is not meant of barely falling into sin, but so as to perish everlastingly and therefore he has not produced the instances of *David, Solomon, Peter*, and others; which, with great impertinence and impropriety are usually brought into this controversy. He has put what he has to say upon this subject into *Eight* propositions, which he endeavors to confirm by scripture authorities. And,

The *First* is, "That one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself, may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly;" in support of which he produces Ezekiel 18:24, *but when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity—In his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.* Which he understands of eternal death, as he thinks is evident from verse 26 (*Serious Thoughts*, hereafter S. T., pp.4, 5). But 1. such a sense of the words is contrary to the scope and design of the whole chapter, which not at all concerns the perseverance or apostasy of saints, and neither their salvation nor damnation; but the sole view of it is to vindicate the justice of God, from a charge of punishing

the Jews, not for their own sins, but the sins of their fathers, and of injustice and inequality in his providential dealings with them, and has nothing to do with the spiritual and eternal affairs of men.—2. The whole context wholly and solely regards the house of *Israel*, and the land of *Israel*, and the conduct of the people of *Israel* in it, according to which they held or lost their tenure of it, and were either continued in it, or removed from it: so that it is quite impertinent to the case before us and this writer is guilty of what he calls a *fallacy* in others, in applying that to the saints in particular, which relates to the Jewish church and nation only, as distinguishable from all other people (S. T., p. 7), and so stands self-condemned.— 3. The righteous man here spoken of, is indeed called and allowed by the Lord himself to be so; yet that righteousness by which he is denominated, only regards him as an inhabitant of the land of *Israel*, and as giving him a title and claim to the possession and enjoyment of it; but not as justifying him before God, and giving him a title to eternal life and happiness. For this righteousness is called *his*, his own, and not another's, which he himself *had done*, and not what Christ had done for him, his own in which he *trusted*; it was a righteousness of works, as appears from verses 5-9, and not the righteousness of faith; there is not a word of faith in the account, nor of the obedience of Christ, nor of the sanctifying grace of the Spirit; this man does not appear to be either a righteous man or a holy man in an evangelical sense; wherefore the instance is quite impertinent. Millions of instances of this kind will never enervate the doctrine of the saints perseverance; let it be proved if it can, that any one that has been made righteous by the obedience of Christ, and has been truly and inwardly sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God, ever so fell away, as everlastingly to perish; let this be proved and we have done: As for a man's own righteousness and outward acts of holiness, we allow a man may turn from them and he lost, but not from the righteousness of Christ, which is *everlasting*, nor from an inward principle of grace and holiness, which ever abides.—4. Besides, admitting that a righteous man in an evangelical sense is here meant., though it cannot be allowed; yet what is here said is only a supposition, which puts nothing in being, and is no proof or instance of matter of fact.—And, 5. the death here spoken of, is not eternal death, or the death of soul and body in hell; for this death was now upon them, what they were complaining of as wrongfully punished with; it being, as they supposed, on account of their fathers sins, and not their own; and from which death also they might be delivered by repentance and reformation, see verses 23, 32. All which cannot be said of eternal death; but it is to be understood of some temporal affliction and calamity, which in Scripture is often called a death, as in Exodus 10:17; 2 Corinthians 1:10 and 11:23, such as captivity in which the Jews now were on account of their sins, and was the subject of their complaint. *Dying in his iniquity*, is the same as *dying for his iniquity*, and both in verse 26 (Ezekiel) signify the same thing, and are not two different deaths; which is repeated to shew the certainty of it; and is also what is meant by the death of the soul, not of the soul only, or of the body only, but of the person of the sinner, punished with a temporal affliction for his sins; and so falls short of proving that a truly righteous and holy man may perish everlastingly.

The *Second* proposition is, that "one who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly." In proof of which is produced, 1 Timothy 1:19, 20, *holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck, of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander* (S. T., p. 8)—But, 1. It does not appear that these men ever had their hearts purified by faith; this should be first proved, before they are produced as instances of the apostasy of real saints; the contrary appears in their characters; they were ungodly men, and were never otherwise for any thing that is said of them; and after their profession of religion, they increased and proceeded to

more ungodliness; they were vain-babblers, opposers of the doctrines of the gospel, and blasphemers of it, and were never upon the foundation that stands sure, or were known by the Lord as his, (see 1 Tim 1:20 and 2 Tim. 2:16, 19; 4:14, 15).—2. Nor is it clear from the text, that they ever had a good conscience, but rather that they never had one; putting it away does not necessarily suppose they had it, but rather that they had it not, they rejecting it with dislike; as the Jews who never had the gospel are said to put it away; when they contradicted, blasphemed and rejected it, the apostle says, *ye put it from you*, *απωθεισθε*, the same word that is here used; ye rejected it, cast it from you, and would not receive it, so here; had these persons ever had a good conscience, it would rather have been said, *which some having put out of them*; but they never had it; when it was proposed to them, as the Christian religion proposes that a man should exercise a good conscience, they disliked it, and put it away, and would not attend to it, and chose rather to drop the faith they professed, as being contrary to their evil consciences and practices; besides, persons may have a good conscience in some sense, and as it is shews itself by an external behavior among men, which does not arise from an heart purified by faith; the apostle had such an one before he had faith in Christ, Acts 23:1. though it does not seem as if these men had ever such an one.—3. The faith they made shipwreck of, is not the grace of faith, which it does not appear they ever had, but the doctrine of faith, the Gospel; *περι της πιστεως*, *concerning the faith*, is a phrase that is never used but of the doctrine of faith, see Acts. 24:24. 1 Timothy 6:21. 2 Timothy 3:8. This is the faith they made shipwreck of, denied and destroyed, or contradicted and blasphemed, as it is explained in the next verse; and the particular doctrine of faith they made shipwreck of. erred concerning, and swerved from, was the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, see 2 Timothy 2:17, 18. Men may profess the doctrine of faith and fall from it; but this is no instance of a man's having true faith which purifies the heart, and falling from God so as to perish.

The Third proposition is (S. T., p. 9), that "Those who are grafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual invisible church: may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly." To support which, the text in Romans 11:17-24 is produced, but to no purpose.—For, 1. By the olive tree, is not meant the spiritual and invisible church of Christ that is, *the general assembly and church of the firstborn which were written in heaven*, and consists only of the chosen redeemed, and saved; to which there can be no addition, and of which there can be no diminution; no fresh engrafture can be made into it, nor any excision from it.—But, 2. The outward Gospel-church-state, or the outward state of the church under the Gospel-dispensation; the national church of the Jews being abolished, and its branches broken, see Jeremiah 11:16, which signify the unbelieving Jews; who because of their unbelief also were left out of the Gospel-church-state; and the few believing Jews were together with the Gentiles grafted into that true olive tree, the Gospel-church and the first coalition was at *Antioch*.—3. Those that are signified by the broken branches, were never true believers in Christ; and because of their unbelief, were broken off, and they were left out of the Gospel-church; they are distinguished from the remnant according to the election of grace among the Jews, and are the rest that were blinded, verses 5, 7; and so no instances of the apostasy of true believers.—4. Though the persons the apostle speaks to were grafted into the olive tree, and were holy believers, and stood by faith, and are threatened in case they did not behave suitable to their character and profession, that they should be cut off: yet this can only intend a cutting off from the outward church-state, in which they were, and from the privileges of it; and had it took place, would have been no proof of their perishing everlastingly.—5. There is a strong intimation, though this writer says there is not the least intimation given, that such that were cut off should be grafted in again; since it is not only said, that God is able to do it, but that if they abode not in unbelief, it

should he done; and the probability of it is argued; and so it will be in the latter day, when the Jews shall be converted, and all *Israel*, be saved, verses 23-26 of which the first Jews that believed in Christ, were the first-fruits and root, said to be holy, verse 16, and so were the pledge and earnest of the future engrafture of their people into the Gospel-church-state. Upon the whole, this is an insufficient proof that any belonging to the invisible church ever so fell, as to perish everlastingly. Let it be proved, if it can, that ever any of the church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven; that any of that church of which Christ is the head, whom he loved, gave himself and died for; that any of that body which is the fullness of him, that filleth all in all; or that any who are baptized by one Spirit into it, and have been made to drink of that Spirit, were ever lost or did eternally perish.

The *Fourth* proposition is, that "those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says I am the vine, ye are the branches, may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly (John 15:1-5), where it is observed, the persons spoken of are branches *in* Christ, some which *abide not* in him, but are *cast* forth from him and his church, and are *withered*, and so consequently never grafted in again, yea cast into the fire and *burned*. Wherefore it is not possible for words more strongly to declare, that even those who are now branches in the true vine, may yet so fall, as to perish everlastingly" (S. T., p. 13). To which I answer, that there are two sorts of branches in Christ the vine, the one fruitful, and the other unfruitful; the one are such who were chosen *in him* before the foundation of the world to be holy and happy; and who are truly regenerated by his Spirit and grace in time, and made his new creatures; for *if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature* (2 Cor. 5:17); these are openly, truly, and savingly in him: he is the green fir tree to them, from whom all their fruit is found; they are rooted in him, and receive their life and nourishment and fruitfulness from him, and abide in him; and can never wither away and perish, as is clear from the text and context: these are the branches which the husbandman, Christ's heavenly father, purges and prunes, that they may bring forth more fruit; and these as they were loved by Christ in the same manner as his father loved him, so they were chosen and ordained by him, to go and bring forth fruit, and that their fruit might remain and so not perish, verses 2, 9, 16, hence this parable of the vine and branches, furnishes out an argument for, and not against the perseverance of the saints. The other sort of branches are such who are in Christ only by profession: who submit to outward ordinances, and get into churches, and so are reckoned in Christ, being professors of him, and in a church-state; as the churches of *Judea* and *Thessalonica*, and others, are said to be in Christ though it cannot be thought, that every individual person in those churches were truly and savingly in him (Col. 1:21; 1 Thess. 1:1). These are such who were never rooted in Christ, or ever received any life, grace, or fruitfulness from him, and so are unfruitful branches; and in a course of time wither away in their profession; and whom the husbandman by one means or another takes away; and who are cast out of the churches into which they get, and by which they have a name of being in Christ, either for their bad principles or practices, or both; and at last, as chaff are burnt with unquenchable fire; but what is all this to real saints or true believers in Christ? no proof at all of their falling and perishing everlastingly.

The *Fifth* proposition is, that "those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to escape the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into these pollutions, and perish everlastingly" (S. T., p. 16); the text to prove it is 2 Peter 2:20, 21, which this writer understands of an experimental knowledge of Christ, which some had and lost and fell back into pollutions, and perished.—But, 1. it does not appear hat the knowledge the persons in the text are said to have, was an inward

experimental knowledge of Christ: had it been such, they could not have lost it for those who truly and experimentally know him, shall follow on to know him; and such a knowledge of him has eternal life inseparably connected with it; yea, that itself is eternal life, and therefore can never be lost (Hos.6: 3; John 17:3).— 2. The effect ascribed unto it, *escaping the pollutions of the world*, does not prove it to be an inward experimental knowledge; since that signifies no more than an outward reformation and amendment of life, which may follow upon a notional and speculative knowledge of Christ, or an outward acknowledgement and profession of him.—3. There is nothing said of these persons which shew that they were partakers of the true grace of God, or but what may be said of such that are destitute of it; all the characters of them in the context, for they are no other than the false teachers there described, shew them to be very vile and wicked men: they do not appear ever to have had any change wrought upon them; they ever were no other than *dogs and swine*; not, only before and after, but even while they were under a profession of religion, and outwardly abstained from gross enormities, as the application of the Proverb to them shews; *it is happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire*, verse 22. Wherefore the characters and case of these persons can never be improved into an argument against the perseverance of real saints, and such as have a spiritual and experimental knowledge of Christ.

The *Sixth* proposition is, that "Those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly;" for the proof of this, we are referred to Hebrews 6:4-6, where it is said, the expressions used are so strong and clear, that they cannot, without gross and palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers (S. T., p. 17).—But, 1. admitting that true believers are meant, the words are only a supposition of their falling away, *if they, fall away*, and prove no matter of fact, that ever any did; and at most are only expressive of the danger they are in of falling, and of the difficulty of restoring them, from a partial fall, a final and total one being prevented by the power and grace of God. But, says our author, the apostle makes no supposition at all, there is no *if* in the original the words are in plain *English*, *it is impossible to renew again to repentance, those who were once enlightened, and have fallen away* but, though the *if* or condition is not expressed, yet it is implied, and the sense is the same as if it was an hypothetical or conditional proposition may be as truly expressed without an *if*, as with it, as it is here; the words in the original lie literally thus, *it is impossible that those who were once enlightened, και παραπεσοντας, and they falling away, to renew them again unto repentance*; that is, should they fall away, which in plain *English* is, if they fall away; our translators have therefore rightly resolved the participle into a conditional verb, as many other learned men have done, as *Erasmus, Beza, Piscator, Paræus*, and others, the words are indeed in some versions translated without the condition, but then in such manner as to contain an argument for the perseverance of the saints, thus: *it is impossible that any that have been once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gifts,—and yet fall away*; that is, it is impossible that such should fall away; and so the *Syriac* version of the words is, *it is impossible, &c. that they should sin again*; so as to die spiritually, or lose the grace of God; which would require the crucifying of Christ again, and exposing him again to open shame; things impossible to be done, and therefore the former: for according to this version, the several other things mentioned are joined the word *impossible*; as that they should be renewed to repentance; and also that they should crucify the Son of God and put him to shame.—But, 2. there is nothing in the characters of these persons which shew them to be true believers; there is nothing said of their believing in Christ, or that necessarily implies it; there is

nothing said that is peculiar to true believers; they are not said to be regenerated by the Spirit of God, called by the grace of God, or sanctified, or justified, or adopted, or heirs of God, and meet for the inheritance, or sealed by the Holy Ghost, or any thing of that kind.—3. What is said of them, is no more than what is to be found in many that are destitute of the grace of God; they might be *enlightened*, or *baptized*, as the *Syriac*, and *Ethiopic* versions understand and render it; or they might be enlightened into the doctrines of the Gospel, and to such a degree as to preach them to others, and yet be strangers to the true grace of God, and the spiritual enlightenings that true believers have of their lost estate by nature, need of Christ, and interest in him; they might *taste of the heavenly gift*, whether it be understood of a justifying righteousness, remission of sins, or eternal life; that is, they might have some speculative notions about these things, and desires after them; which might only arise from a natural principle of self-love, and be destitute of any inward spiritual principle of grace: they might be *partakers of the Holy Ghost*, not of his person or special grace, but of his gifts; and that not only ordinary but extraordinary also, as Dr. *Hammond* and Dr. *Whitby* both understand the phrase, they might *taste the good word of God*, in the bare form and notion of it, and have a superficial knowledge of, and gust for it; and yet never have felt the effectual power of it upon their hearts; they might also *taste the powers of the world to come*; and these, whether they intend the glorious things relating to the state of the church after the first resurrection, or the ultimate joys and glories of heaven; they might have some notions of, and make some natural and self-pleasing reflections on them, without having those foretastes which are peculiar to the people of God: or whether they may intend the *δυναμεις*, miracles, and mighty works done in the times of the Messiah, the Jews, which many, as *Judas*, and others, were able to perform, who were not true believers in Christ, (see Matthew 7:22, 23).— Besides. 4. these persons seem to be represented by the unfruitful earth (v. 8), which bears thorns and briers, and is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, and its end to be burned; and true believers are manifestly distinguished from them, of whom the apostle was *persuaded better things, things that accompany salvation, though he thus, spoke*; put such a case, in the hypothetical and conditional form; and which was applicable enough to other persons, though not to them (v. 9), so that nothing can be fairly concluded from hence, against the final perseverance of the saints.

The *Seventh* proposition is, that "Those who live by faith, may yet fall from God, and perish everlastingly;" to establish which, the passage in Hebrews 10:38 is produced; *now the just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him*: from whence it is inferred that a justified person that now lives the life that is hid with Christ in God, may not endure to the end, may draw back to perdition, and be utterly cast off (S. T., p. 20).— But, 1. One that is just and righteous by the righteousness of Christ, or that is truly justified by it, ever remains so; he cannot be condemned or enter into condemnation; he will be eternally glorified; *whom he justified, them he also glorified* (Rom. 8:30, 33, 34). Such whose life is hid with Christ in God, their life is safe, and can never be destroyed; therefore, when he their life shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory (Col. 3:3, 4), and such who live by faith on Christ, shall never die; for so our Lord himself says, *whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die* (John 11:20), that is, he that lives by faith on Christ, shall never die spiritually, or die the second and eternal death; and therefore, such an one can never so fall, as to perish everlastingly.—2. These words are so far from militating against the doctrine of the saints deliverance, that they greatly establish it; for here are manifestly two sorts of persons mentioned: one that were "*of faith*;" that had true faith in Christ, and lived by faith on him, did not draw back to perdition, but went on believing to the saving of their souls; or till they received the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls; of this

number were the apostle and others with him, included in the word *we*, and every truly just, and righteous man. The other were "*of the withdrawing*," or separation; who forsook the assembly of the saints (v. 25), withdrew from their society and communion, and apostatized from the ways and worship of God; now by this distinction and opposition between these two sorts of persons, it clearly appears, that those that truly believe, do not draw back unto perdition, but continue in the faith of Christ, and in the true worship of God, until they are everlastingly saved; which is a firm testimony to the final perseverance of the saints; so likewise, that those that draw back unto perdition, were not of the faith, were not true believers, nor ever the just ones that live by faith: and so their drawing back or apostasy which was not from faith they never had, but from their profession of religion they once made, is no proof of one that lives by faith falling away, so as everlastingly to perish.—3. It is indeed said, that the text is not fairly translated, and that the original runs thus: *the just man that lives by faith draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*; making *he* that draws back to refer to the just man that lives by faith; but that this cannot be the sense, and so not the true rendering of the words, appears from the original text in Habakkuk 2:4, from whence these words are taken; *Behold his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him*; which the *Greek* version and the apostle render, *if he withdraws, or draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him*: this then is the man that draws back, and who is opposed unto, and distinguished from the righteous in the following clause, *but the just shall live by his faith*: hence it is a clear case, that *he* that draws back, and the righteous man, are not one and the same; and therefore, our translators are to be vindicated in rendering the words by an adversative *but*, and in their supplement of *any man*; which is supported by the authority of other learned men, as *Flaccus, Illyricus, Beza, Piscator*, and others; and even *Grotius* himself, who was no friend to the doctrine contended for, owns the justness of it, that *τις*, *any one*, ought to be supplied, as agreeable to the grammatical construction of the words. Besides, could the translation this writer gives be established, which upon a little reflection he will easily see is inaccurate; it only contains a supposition of a righteous man's drawing back, which proves no matter of fact; and moreover, though such a man may draw back partially, and so as to incur the divine displeasure, yet not draw back into perdition; for from one that does so, the just man is distinguished, as appears from the following verse; *but we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, &c.* which seems to be mentioned on purpose to encourage true believers from the doctrine of perseverance when so many professors were forsaking their communion.

The *Eighth* proposition is, that "Those that are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly;" in proof of which, Hebrews 10:29 is produced; on which it is observed (S. T., p. 22), that it is undeniably plain, that the person mentioned was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant; that he afterwards by known willful sin trod under the foot the Son of God, and hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death, namely, death everlasting; whence it follows, that one so sanctified may fall, as to perish everlastingly. The sense of the passage, and the argument upon it, depend entirely upon the meaning of the phrase, *sanctified by the blood of the covenant*, and of whom it is spoken: and according to the rules of speech, since the immediate antecedent to the relative *he*, is the Son of God, it must be he and not the apostate that is here intended; and it is mentioned as an aggravation of the sin of such a person, that counted that blood unholy by which the Son of God himself was sanctified, set apart, hallowed and consecrated, to the discharge of that part of his priestly-office, which lay in intercession for his people; as *Aaron* and his sons were by the sacrifices of slain beasts, to minister in the priest's office: it was a most grievous sin to treat with contempt such a person, as not only God the Father had sanctified, and

sent into the world, and who had also sanctified, and set apart himself for the redemption of his people, that they might be sanctified through the truth; but having offered himself a sacrifice for their sins, whereby the covenant of grace was ratified and confirmed, was through the blood of that covenant brought again from the dead, and declared to be the Son of God; and so was sanctified or set apart by it to accomplish the other part of his priestly office, intercession for his people; to do which he ever lives and sits at the right hand of God. And this being the sense of the words, it leaves no room for any argument to be taken from hence, against the final perseverance of the saints.—But, 2. admitting that the words are to be understood of the apostate having been sanctified by the blood of the covenant; it should be explained in what sense he had been so, which this writer does not pretend to do, that we may judge whether it is a descriptive character of a real saint, or no; for if it is not, then it is still nothing to the purpose. It is not to be understood of the inward sanctification of nature, or of the heart; for that is by the Spirit of God; this the *Arminians* do not say: Dr. *Whitby* himself owns (*Discourse Concerning Election, &c.* pp. 141, 406), it has no relation to that; yet this is what ought to be proved, to make the person to be a real saint, or a true believer; or else he can be no instance of the saints final and total apostasy. Nor is it to be understood of remission of sins, and justification by the blood of Christ, as the above Doctor interprets it; for either this must be a partial remission of sins, and justification from them, or a full one; not a partial one, for when God forgives sins for Christ's sake, he forgives all sins, and justifies from all iniquities; and if a full one, then even these heinous crimes he is charged with, must be forgiven; and so he stood in no need of any more sacrifice for sin; nor could any punishment be inflicted on him for them nor need he fear any; and especially so sore and severe a one as is here represented: wherefore if these words are to be understood of an apostate, and of his having been sanctified by the blood of the covenant; the meaning must be, either that he was sanctified and separated from others by a visible profession of religion, had submitted to baptism, and partook of the Lord's Supper, had drank of the cup, *the blood of the New Testament or covenant*, though he did not spiritually discern the body and blood of Christ in the ordinance, but counted the bread and wine, the symbols thereof, as *common* things; or else that he professed himself to be sanctified, or to have his sins expiated by the blood of the covenant, and to be justified by it, and was looked upon by others to be so, when he really was not: and take the sense either way, it furnishes out no argument against the final perseverance of the saints.

Thus having gone through the *Eight* propositions, laid down by the writer of the *Serious Thoughts, &c.* and shewn that they are without any foundation or authority in the word of God, and that the doctrine of the saints final perseverance stands unshaken by them; I shall now proceed to offer some arguments in proof of it, and to establish the minds of God's people in it, and shall vindicate such of them, as are excepted to by the above writer. And,

First, This doctrine may be concluded from the perfections of God: whatever is agreeable to them, and they make necessary, must be true; and whatever is contrary to them, and reflects dishonor on them, must be false. The doctrine of the saints final perseverance is agreeable to them, and is made entirely necessary by them, and therefore must be true; and the contrary doctrine, of the falling away of real saints, so as to perish everlastingly, is repugnant to them, and reflects great dishonor on them, and therefore must be false; as will appear by the following particulars.

1. The immutability of God is concerned in this affair; *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed* (Mal. 3:6): if they were, he must change in his love to them, and

whom he now loves he must hate; he must alter his purposes concerning them; whereas, he has appointed them to salvation, he must consign them over to ruin and destruction; he must reverse his promises to them, and his blessings of grace bestowed on them; he must alter the thing that is gone out of his lips, his counsel, and his covenant, and be of a different mind from what he has been; but he is *of one mind, and who can turn him? he is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*: and, therefore, his saints shall never perish; this is inconsistent with the unchangeableness of his nature, will and grace, and would greatly reproach this glorious perfection of his. This doctrine makes God changeable, with whom there is *no variableness nor shadow* of turning; nor can this writer disprove it; he is indeed unchangeably holy, just and good, as he says (S. T., p. 11); but he is also unchangeably loving to his people; unchangeably true and faithful, and unchangeable in his will, purposes, promises, and covenant; which he would not be, if his beloved, chosen, and covenant ones should perish.

2. The wisdom of God is concerned in this doctrine: No wise man that has an end in view, but will prepare and make use of proper means; and, if in his power, will make those means effectual to attain the end, or he will not act a wise part: the end which God has in view, and has fixed, is the salvation of his people; and is it consistent with his wisdom to appoint insufficient means, or not to make those means effectual when it is in his power to do it? which must be the case, if any of those he has appointed to salvation should perish: No, as he has appointed the end, salvation, he has fixed the means, sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, which he prepares, produces, and makes effectual. Where would be his wisdom to appoint men to salvation, and never save them, to send his Son to redeem them, and they never the better for it; to begin a good work of grace in them, and not finish it? No, the wisdom of God is wonderfully displayed in this affair, in providing all blessings for his people in a covenant ordered in all things, and sure; in putting them into the hands of his Son for the security of them; in their complete redemption by him, wherein he has abounded in all wisdom, and prudence; and in assigning the work of sanctification in its beginning, progress, and issue, to the divine Spirit, who is equal to it, and will perform it. *There is no searching of his understanding; hence he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength*.—Wherefore, *they shall run, and not be weary, and walk, and not faint* (Isa. 40:28, 29, 31); shall persevere to the end, and get safe to heaven and happiness.

3. The power of God is concerned in this matter: such who are the *elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father*, and are *begotten again according to his abundant mercy*, who have a *lively hope* of a glorious inheritance, these are *kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation* (1 Pet. 1: 2, 3, 5); they are kept as in a garrison, as the word used signifies they are surrounded with the power of God: he is a *wall of fire round about them* (Zech. 2:5), to protect and defend them, and to offend their enemies: *as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about his people, from henceforth, even for ever*. Wherefore *they that trust in the Lord, shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abides for ever* (Ps. 125:1, 2); and this power of God is continually employed in the preservation of his people, he *keeps them night and day, lest any hurt them* (Isa. 27:3); they are kept in, and through a course of believing unto the end; and their faith is as much secured and preserved by the power of God, as their persons are, who performs the work of faith with power, as well as begins it; they are kept by it, *unto*, and till they come to complete *salvation* in heaven; their *whole spirit, soul and body, are preserved blameless, to the coming of our Lord Jesus*, and safe *unto his heavenly kingdom* (1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:18): and therefore, since the power of God is so strongly engaged for them, they cannot fall so as to perish

everlastingly. The writer, I have to do with, owns, that "undoubtedly so are all they (kept by the power of God) who ever attain eternal salvation; it is the power of God only, and not our own, by which we are kept one day or one hour." Now there are not any real saints who are not kept by the power of God, and do not attain salvation; and it lies upon him to shew how the falling away of such, so as to perish everlastingly, is consistent with the words the apostle *Peter* referred to, as he says it is, or with their being kept by almighty power.

4. The goodness, grace, and mercy of God, serve to establish this truth; his goodness endures for ever; his mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, on them that fear him (Ps. 103:17); the mercy of God as it is free and sovereign, plenteous, boundless, and infinite, so it is sure, permanent and perpetual; those that are once the objects of it, are always so, and therefore can never perish: *it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not* (Lam. 3:22); which they would, should any of his be consumed and perish. Can it be thought that that God who is *gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin*; that he who has *begotten men again, according to his abundant mercy*, and because he is *rich* in it, and for his *great love* to them, *quicken* them when *dead in trespasses and sins*, after all will suffer them so to fall, as to perish everlastingly? No, as the Psalmist says, *the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me*; the work of grace upon his heart, his whole salvation; his reason for it is, *thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever*: hence follows a prayer of faith, *forsake not the work of thine own hands* (Ps. 138:8); God will not.

5. The justice of God requires that those should be certainly and eternally saved, for whose sins Christ has died, for which he has made satisfaction by suffering the punishment due unto them; it is contrary to the justice of God to punish sin twice, once in the surety, and again in the redeemed, Christ is a surety for; and yet this must be the case, if true believers in Christ, for whom Christ suffered and died, should everlastingly perish: for to perish everlastingly, is the same as to be punished with everlasting destruction.

6. The truth and faithfulness of God secures the final perseverance of the saints; his *counsels of old are faithfulness and truth* (Isa. 25:1); whatever he has appointed shall be performed *he is faithful that has promised* (Heb. 10:23); and will make good whatever he has said; and, whereas there are many things he has said respecting the perseverance of his saints, his faithfulness is engaged to fulfil them; *God is faithful by whom they are called to the fellowship of his Son, to confirm them to the end, that they may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus* (1 Cor. 1:8, 9): and though he suffers them to be afflicted and tempted, yet he is *faithful, who will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able to bear, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape* (1 Cor. 10:13): and those whom he sanctifies, shall be *preserved unto the coming of our Lord Jesus, faithful is he that has called them, who also will do it*; and the same *Lord is faithful, who shall establish and keep his people from evil* (1 Thess. 5:23, 24; 2 Thess. 3:3): but if any of these should perish everlastingly, where is his faithfulness? we may be assured therefore they shall not perish, for he will *never suffer his faithfulness to fail* (Ps. 89:33): nor is there any condition annexed to those declarations and promises; the conditions this writer suggests (S. T., pp. 11, 12), are not of God's making, but of his own forging.

Secondly, The final perseverance of the saints, may be concluded from the everlasting love of God unto them. Those who are once the objects of God's love, are always so; his love to them in every

state and condition into which they come is invariable and unalterable: it is constant, permanent, perpetual, and for ever God loves his people with the same love he loves his Son, and therefore it will always continue; and if it always continues, it is impossible they should ever perish; can a man perish everlastingly, and yet be the object of everlasting love? the love of God to him must cease, or he can never perish but that never can; God always *rests* in his love to his people; it is more immovable than *hills* and *mountains*; they may *depart*, but his loving-kindness never shall, that is from everlasting to everlasting; *I have loved thee*, saith the Lord (Jer. 31:3), *with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee*: but it is said (S. T., p. 7), this "simply declares God's love to the Jewish church; be it so, *whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope* (Rom. 15:4). The Jewish and Christian church are loved with the same love; saints under the gospel-dispensation are not less loved, than under the legal one; if the Jewish church was loved with an everlasting love, then much more the Christian church, and believers in it, since their privileges are greater; and if the blessings of goodness bestowed on the Jewish church, by which the Lord drew and engaged them to himself, were evidences of his everlasting love to them; then surely the blessings of the new covenant bestowed upon saints under the present dispensation, and particularly, the Lord's drawing them by powerful and efficacious grace in conversion to himself, and to his Son, must be evidences of his everlasting love to them and therefore, they cannot everlastingly perish, because from his love they can never be separated; *for I am persuaded*, says the apostle (Rom. 8:38, 39), *that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*: which words do not merely declare the apostle's full persuasion of his own perseverance at that time, as our author suggests (S. T., p. 12); for he does not say, *shall not separate me*, but *us*, and expresses his full persuasion of the perseverance of all saints, whether they themselves had the full assurance of faith, or no; even of all the elect of God, against whom no charge can be laid, because God has justified them, and on whom no condemnation can come, because Christ has died for them, and whose salvation is sure and certain, because he ever lives to make intercession for them, and had made them more than conquerors over all their enemies; and therefore, nothing can obstruct their eternal happiness, or the bringing of them safe to glory (Rom. 8:33-37).

Thirdly, This doctrine of the saints final perseverance, may be established from the counsels, purposes, and decrees of God; particularly the decree of election, which *stands*, sure, not upon the loot of *works*, but upon the will of *him that calleth* (Rom. 9:11), which is unalterable and irreversible. I take it for granted, that there is such a decree, by which God has chosen and appointed some men to everlasting salvation by Jesus Christ; this writer may dispute it with me if he pleases. My argument upon it is this, if God has chosen some men to eternal life by Christ, and any of these should everlastingly perish, then the purpose of God according to election concerning them, would not stand; but his *counsel shall stand*, and he *will do all his pleasure* (Isa. 46:10); for who, or what can disannul his purpose? as he *has thought, so shall it come to pass*, and as he *has purposed, so shall it stand* (Isa.14: 24, 27); and therefore they shall not perish. Divine predestination to life, and eternal glorification are inseparably connected together; the former infallibly secures the latter, and all the intermediate grace and means heading to it *whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified* (Rom.8:30).

Fourthly, This truth will receive further strength, from the consideration of the covenant of grace, made with the elect in Christ, before the world began; which is *ordered in all things*, with all blessings and promises, as well to provide for, and secure the certain perseverance, and eternal salvation of the persons in it, as to promote the glory of God; and it is *sure*, all the blessings and promises of it, and the salvation in it, are sure to all the seed, to all the covenant-ones; it is a *covenant of peace*, that can never *be removed*; sooner may rocks, hills, and mountains be removed than that: it has the oath of God annexed to it, and the faithfulness of God is engaged to fulfil it; who says (Ps. 89:33-35), *I will not suffer my faithfulness to fail, my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips; once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David*. Which covenant does not relate wholly to *David* and his family, literally understood, but to our Lord Jesus Christ, the son and antitype of *David*, and who is sometimes called *David* himself; this is he, whom the Lord found in his infinite wisdom to be a proper Saviour of lost sinners; this is the mighty one, on whom he laid the help of his people; this is he, whom he chose out from among them, and anointed to be, and invested with the office of, the Mediator, to whom he promised all help and assistance as man; this is his first-born, he has made higher than the kings of the earth, and whose spiritual seed and offspring shall endure for ever; all which can never be said of *David* and his family, in a literal sense. Nor was this covenant a conditional one; there is no condition either implied or expressed, on the failure of which God failed *David*, altered the thing that had gone out of his mouth, and broke the covenant of his servant; all which is without truth affirmed (S. T., p. 6): sooner may the covenant with day and night be broken than this covenant with *David*. Indeed, in the latter part of the psalm, some objections are made to the everlasting love of God to his Son, to the immutability of his covenant and the certain performance of it, taken from the sufferings and death of Christ, and his continuance under the power of the grave; when the faith and hope of his people were almost sunk and gone, see *Luke* 24:21, and when it seemed to them, being under the prevalence of unbelief, that the covenant made with Christ was made void: but shall the unbelief of men make the faith of God of none effect? whom shall we believe, God that says, *my covenant will I not break*; or his people in unbelieving frames, saying, *Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant?* not the latter, but the former. Besides, these persons whom the Psalmist represents, emerged out of their temptation, darkness, and unbelief, when they saw the Lord risen from the dead, and triumphing over death, and the powers of darkness, having obtained eternal redemption for them; wherefore the psalm is closed with expressions of joy and thankfulness; *blessed be the Lord for ever more, amen, and amen*. Since therefore the covenant of grace can never be broken and made void, those who are interested in it can never perish everlastingly; sooner may *the heavens above be measured, and the foundations of the earth be searched*, than that *all*, or any of the spiritual *seed of Israel*, and of the antitypical *David* be cast off so as to perish, and be lost eternally (*Jer.* 31:35-37; 33:20-21).

Fifthly, This may be further concluded from the special and particular promises made in this covenant, and which stand on divine record, relating to the perseverance of the saints; and these are so many, that to name them all, would be to transcribe a great part of the Scriptures; as that the Lord will establish and keep his people from evil; will confirm them to the end, and preserve them safe to his kingdom and glory (1 Cor. 1:8; 1 Thess 3:2; 2 Tim. 4:18); that he will uphold them with the right hand of his righteousness, that they shall not be utterly cast down (*Isa.* 41:10; *Ps.* 37:23, 24); that the righteous shall hold on their way, and shall grow stronger (*Job* 17:9); that he will put his fear into their hearts, and they shall never depart from him (*Jer.* 32:40); with a multitude of others of the same import, which are all *yea*, and *amen*, in Christ Jesus and these promises are

absolute and unconditional: it is indeed said (S. T., p. 12), that in many the condition is expressed, and in others implied; but let it be named what the condition is, that is either expressed or implied in the above promises: and let the condition be what it will, it will be no difficult thing to prove that it is either elsewhere absolutely promised by the Lord, or undertook by Christ, or will be performed by the Spirit of God, in, and upon the Lord's people; so that their perseverance is not at all affected with it: That famous promise, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*, applied to New Testament believers, Hebrews 13:5. which, as it is an instance of a promise made to a particular person belonging to all the saints in common, and of one being made to a saint under the Old Testament, *Joshua*, belonging to those under the New Testament, so is not a conditional one, as is asserted (S. T., p. 22); so far is any condition from being expressly mentioned in it, or along with it, that that which is said to be so, is strongly enforced by this absolute and unconditional promise; and though it is recited to encourage in things temporal, yet it also may be, and is accommodated to things spiritual; and is of use with respect to such things, as appears from the inference deduced from it; *so that we may boldly say, the Lord is our helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me;* no, nor devils neither: and, if God will never leave his people in time nor eternity, as the phrase takes in both, then they cannot perish everlastingly: now, seeing the promises of God to his people are free, absolute, and unconditional, and he is able to perform them, and his faithfulness is engaged to do it, there is all the reason in the world to believe he will; and, if he will, and does make good these promises to them, it is impossible they should so fall, as to perish everlastingly.

Sixthly, This may be further argued from several acts of God's grace towards his people, which are of such a nature, as ascertain their sure and everlasting salvation; and, besides his acts of election of them, and making a sure covenant with his Son on their account, before-mentioned, and the putting of them into the hands of his Son, with all grace and glory for them, of which more hereafter, the following ones may be observed:

1. The adoption of them into his family. Predestination to it is according to the good pleasure of God's will, and does not arise from, or depend upon any merit, motive, or condition, in the adopted; the covenant in which God takes men into this relation is absolute and unconditional; it runs thus, *I will be a father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters* (2 Cor. 6:18): all obstructions are removed, and way is made for the reception of this blessing through the redemption of Christ; the power and privilege of it is a gift of his, and his Spirit bears witness to it, hence called the Spirit of adoption; and such who thus become the children of God, always remain so; they that are of the *household of God*, are *no more strangers and foreigners*, they *abide* in his *house* and family for ever and are never cast out; if *sons*, no more *servants*, but *heirs of God*, and joint-heirs with Christ, and shall enjoy the eternal inheritance reserved for them (Eph. 2:19; John 8:35; Gal. 4:7); and, therefore, cannot perish everlastingly. To say as our author does (S. T., pp. 23, 246), that "he who is a child of God today, may be a child of the devil tomorrow," is a most vile expression, and reflects great dishonor on that *manner of love the Father has bestowed on men*, that they *should be called the sons of God* (1 John 3:1) his reason for it is weak and groundless: "That a believer today, may be an unbeliever tomorrow, seeing he may make shipwreck of faith, and so no longer be a child of God;" but what, though a blaspheming heretic may make shipwreck of the doctrine of faith, which is all that can be proved from the instance referred to, does it follow that a true believer can make shipwreck of the grace of faith? no he cannot: besides, adoption does not depend upon faith; it is not faith that makes men the children of God, but is what makes them manifest, or makes them

appear to be so; it is the free sovereign grace of God, which puts them into this relation, and keeps them there, and therefore, they shall never perish.

2. The justification of them by the righteousness of Christ. Such who are justified, can never be unjustified, or be removed from the state of justification, in which they are, into a state of condemnation, but always remain righteous persons through the righteousness of Christ, imputed to them; the righteousness by which they are justified is an *everlasting* one; the sentence of justification passed upon them, can never be reversed by man or devil; if God justifies who can bring a charge of any avail? who or what can condemn? there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, and are clothed with his righteousness; they are passed into justification of life, and shall never enter into condemnation; they have a right to eternal glory, through the justifying righteousness of Christ, and shall enjoy it; between their justification and glorification there is an inseparable connection: *Whom he justified, them he also glorified* (Rom. 8:30, 33, 34). Wherefore, those that are righteous in the judgment of God himself, as all such are whom he justifies by the righteousness of Christ, cannot possibly so fall, as to perish everlastingly.

3. The pardon of their sins by the blood of Christ. Those for whom Christ has shed his blood, for whose sins he has made satisfaction by his sacrifice; these God pardons for Christ's sake; and these he forgives *all* trespasses; he heals *all* their diseases, and forgives *all* their iniquities (Col. 2:13; Ps. 103:3); not one sin of theirs is left unsatisfied for by Christ, or unpardoned by the Lord; and if so, then all the sins they ever fall unto, or are guilty of, are pardoned; and consequently, they never so fall, as to perish everlastingly: for, is it possible for a man to go to hell, and perish eternally, with the pardon of all sins? it is impossible; what should he, what can he perish for, when all his sins are satisfied for and forgiven?

Seventhly, This truth may be proved by the love of Christ to his saints, his care of them, what he has done and does for them, their interest in him, and relation to him.

1. The love of Christ to them. They are the objects of his everlasting love; before the world was, his *delights were with these sons of men* (Prov. 8:31), and have continued ever since; as his incarnation, sufferings, death, and intercession show. He loves them as his Father loved him (John 15:3); and therefore, his love to them must be very great, permanent and lasting, *yea* everlasting; and indeed, nothing can separate from it (Rom. 8:35): and therefore, such who are interested in it, can never perish everlastingly; *having loved his Own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end* (John 13:1). This, the writer I am concerned with (S. T., p. 14), understands of the apostles only, and of Christ's loving them to the end of his life, and not theirs; to which may be replied, that all the apostles were not his own in a special sense, one of them was a devil, and was the devil's, and was not the object of Christ's special love, nor did he love him to the end; and besides, were the apostles the only persons that were *his own*? had he, and has he no special property in others also? certainly he has; who are equally the objects of his love as they were; and are loved by him, not to the end of his life on earth only, but to the end of their lives, even for ever, to all eternity; which is the sense of the phrase used: for to understand it only of Christ's life as man on earth, is a most trifling sense; it makes the love of Christ to be only an human affection, and to last no longer than he lived; whereas, Christ loves his not merely as a man, but as a divine person, and the Saviour of men; and loves them as much now he being in heaven, as when on earth; as his advocacy, intercession and preparations for them there show. Moreover, *εις τελος*, which we translate *to the*

end, may be rendered *continually*, as in *Luke 17:5, for ever*; in which sense it is used by the *Septuagint* in *Psalm 9:6, 18. and 44:23*, and answers to an *Hebrew* word, which signifies for *ever*; and so the text in *John* is rendered by the *Ethiopic* version, *he loved them for ever*.

2. Those who are the objects of Christ's love, are *given* unto him by the Father, as his portion and inheritance, and to be kept and preserved by him: and will he lose his portion, his jewels, when it is in his power to keep them? He will not; he will keep them as the apple of his eye; *they shall be mine*, says he, *in the day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his only son that serveth him* (Mal. 3:17): when they were given to him by his Father, it was with such a charge, with such a declaration of his Will, that *of all which he gave him, he should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day* (John 6:39); which Will he perfectly observed; *those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition* (John 17:12). It is indeed said, "the phrase, *those that thou gavest me*, signifies here (if not in most other places too) the twelve apostles, and them only; and that one of those whom the Father had given him, did not persevere unto the end, but perish everlastingly" (S. T., p. 15); and so is rather against than for the doctrine of perseverance; to which I answer, that what in the passage and throughout the chapter is spoken of the apostles, is not said of them purely as such, but as believers in Christ, and the disciples of him, and so in common belongs to all in that character; and, if such a fallacy can take place, once and again observed by our author, that what spiritual things are said of the Jewish church under the Old Testament, and of the apostles in the New, must be restrained to them, and them only, there will be little left for the saints to build their faith and hope upon: besides, it is a most clear case, that others besides the apostles are meant by this phrase, in that chapter where it is so much used; more are meant by the *many* the Father had *given him*, verse 2, to more than the apostles had Christ manifested his Father's name verse 8, such as are given him by the Father are opposed to the whole world, and distinguished from them; and even all that the Father had claimed by him as his, by virtue of this gift, and for whom he prays, verses 9, 10, and it is certain, he prayed for more than the apostles; even for all them that should believe in him through their word, verse 20, as for *Judas*, the son of perdition, it does not appear, though he was an apostle, that he was among those that were given him by the Father; he is distinguished from them in the very passage, and is opposed to them; for, *εἰ μὴ, but*, is not exceptive, but adversative; and the sense is, that none of those that were given to Christ in a way of special grace were lost, but the son of perdition, who was not given him in any such way, he was lost; and so is no instance of the apostasy of such who were given to Christ; for of every one of these at the great day, he will say, *behold I and the children which God hath given me* (Heb. 2:13).

3. These same persons were put into the hands of Christ for safety and preservation, even as early as the everlasting covenant was made with him: *yea he loved the people, all his saints are in thy hands* (Deut. 33:3): hence they are said to be *preserved in Christ Jesus*, as the effect of their being *sanctified*, or set apart by God the Father in election, and previous to their being called effectually by grace (Jude 1); so they were preserved through the fall of *Adam*, though not from it, and in their nature-state, till called to be saints, where they remain safe and secure; they are set as a *seal* on his *heart*, and as a *seal* on his *arm*; they are *engraven* on the *palms* of his *hands*, and their *walls* are *continually* before him; they are a *crown of glory*, and a *royal diadem* in his *hand* (Cant. 8:6; Isa. 49:16; 62:3), and can never be removed from thence; they are called the *sheep of his hand* (Ps. 95:7), from whence none can pluck them; *I give unto them*, says Christ (John 10:28, 29), *eternal life*; and who or what then can hinder them of it? *and they shall never perish*; who dare say they

may or shall, when Christ says they shall not? *neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand; τις*, not any one, man or devil, nor they themselves; nor is there any condition expressed in these words, or in the context, on which the fulfillment of them depends; *hearing* Christ's voice and *following* him, are not conditions of these promises, as is said (S. T., p. 13); but descriptive of the sheep of Christ in his hand, and are plain marks of their perseverance; which is in the strongest manner insured to them by these words of Christ, and still more confirmed by the following; *my Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands. I and my Father are one.*

4. They that are loved by Christ, given him by his Father, and put into his hands, are redeemed by him, and are the purchase of his blood, and therefore, can never perish; should they, it must be either for want of sufficiency in the price paid for them, or of power in Christ to keep them; neither of which can be said: the price of Christ's blood is a sufficient and effectual price for them; and he is able to keep them and will: he will never lose the purchase of his blood; should he in any one instance, his death would be so far in vain; nor could it be said, that *the pleasure of the Lord has prospered in his hand*, or that he *sees of the travail of his soul*, and is *satisfied* (Isa. 53:10, 11); but our author says (S. T., p. 23), *horresco referens*, enough to make a man shudder to read it; "If the oracles of God are true, one who was purchased by the blood of Christ, may go thither, (that is, to hell,) for he that was sanctified by the blood of Christ, was purchased by the blood of Christ, and such an one may nevertheless go to hell." The assertion is bold and shocking, and stands upon a mistaken sense of the passage in Hebrews 10:29, as has been shewn before, and is without any foundation in the oracles of God.

5. Those whom Christ loves, were given to him, and for whom he died, for them he ever lives to make intercession; in which he is always heard, and therefore they cannot perish: in particular he prays for their perseverance; he prays for them that *their faith fail not*; that God would *keep them* through his name, that they might *be one*; that he would *keep them from the evil* of the world, and that they might *be with him where he is*, to *behold his glory*; and now as he himself says to his Father, *I know that thou hearest me always*: if he is always heard, and his intercession is prevalent and effectual in all things, for which it is made, then it is impossible that those for whom it is made, should perish everlastingly; and besides, should they, his preparations of mansions of glory for them in his Father's house would be in vain, John 14:2, 3.

6. There is a close and inseparable union between Christ and the saints which effectually secures them from a final and total falling away, or so as to perish everlastingly; he is the head, and they his body; they are members of his body; they are *the fulness of him that filleth all in all* (Eph. 1:23); and, if any one member, even the least, should perish, they could not be said to be *his fulness*: nay, they that are joined to the Lord, are not only one body, but *one spirit*, with him; they have their life from him; it is *hid with him*, and secured in him; *because he lives, they shall live also*; their life is *bound up in the bundle of life with his* (1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 3:3; John 14:13; 1 Sam. 25:20): so, that as *Luther* said, *si nos ruimus, ruit & Christus*, "if we fall, Christ must fall too." They are laid on a foundation that is sure: they are built on a rock, against which, *the gates of hell* can never *prevail*; and from whence, all the *winds* and *waves* and *floods* of their own corruptions, Satan's temptations, and the world's persecutions can never remove them (Matt. 16:18; 7:24, 25).

Eighthly, The doctrine of the saints final perseverance, may be concluded from the Spirit's work of grace upon their hearts, from his habitation in them; and from his being the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them unto the day of redemption.

1. From his work of grace upon their hearts. The grace that is wrought in them by him, is a *seed* which *remaineth*, and therefore, the man in whom it is, *cannot sin*, that is, *the sin unto death*, or so as to perish everlastingly; the *seed* he is born of is *incorruptible*, immortal, and never dies; the grace which is put into him, is *a well of water springing up into everlasting life*; eternal life is the certain fruit and effect of it; grace and glory are inseparable things; to whomsoever God *gives grace* he gives *glory* (1 John 3:9; 1 Pet. 1:23; John 4:14; Ps. 84:11). The several graces of the Spirit are abiding ones, particularly faith, hope, and love; and *now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three* (1 Cor. 13:13) love, though the first ardour of it, may be abated and *first- love* may be *left*, it cannot be lost; it may wax *cold*, yet cannot be extinguished; *many waters cannot quench* it; nothing can *separate from the love of Christ* (Cant. 8:7; Rom. 8:35); as not from Christ's love to his people, so neither from theirs to him, so that it is entirely gone: No, in the worst of times, under whatsoever darkness, desertion, temptation or affliction, a believer is, still Christ is the object of his love; as the cases of the church in *Canticles* (Cant. 3:1-3; John 21:17), and of *Peter* shew: hope is an *anchor sure* and *stedfast*, being cast on Christ the foundation, from whence it can never be removed (Heb.6:19); and faith is that race, which is *much more precious than gold that perisheth* (1 Pet. 1:7); and what gives it its superior excellency is, because it does not perish itself: Christ is the *author and finisher* of it; he prays for it that it *fail not* (Heb. 12:27; Luke 22:32), and performs the work of it with power: salvation is annexed to it, and inseparably connected within it; *he that believeth shall be saved* (Mark 16:16); nay it is said, that such an one *hath everlasting life*; is entered upon it, does in some sense possess it, has the foretaste, earnest, and pledge of it; and that *he is passed from death to life*; and *shall not come unto condemnation* (John 5:24); and therefore, cannot perish everlastingly. But our author says (S. T., p. 9), the plain meaning is, *he that believeth*, if he continue in the faith, *shall be saved*. But this is an interlineation of his; and to interline a record is felony; and what crime must that man be guilty of that interlines the record of heaven, the great charter of our salvation, the will and testament of our heavenly Father, confirmed by Christ the testator? Besides, he that believes shall continue in the faith; there is no *if* or doubt to be made of it; he *is of them that believe*, or goes on believing, *to the saving of the soul*, till he receives *the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul* (Heb. 10:39; 1 Pet. 1:9); or otherwise it could only be said he *may be saved*: and moreover the phrase, *he shall be saved*, ascertains his continuance in faith, as well as his salvation. But then it is urged (S. T., pp. 8, 9), that "by all the rules of speech," the other part of the sentence must mean "*he that does not believe* at this moment, *shall* certainly and inevitably be *damned*." To which I reply, that there is a great difference between faith and unbelief, or between a believer and an unbeliever at the present moment; the one is certainly final, the other may not be final; he that truly believes this moment goes on to believe, and shall certainly be saved: he that does not believe this moment may believe hereafter, and so not he damned: or take the answer in other words, more in the language of Scripture, *he that believeth hath everlasting life*, now, this moment; and according to the tenor of the Gospel, *he shall be* certainly and inevitably *saved*: *he that believeth not*, according to the tenor of the law, *shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him* (John 3:36), even now, this moment; and he shall be certainly and inevitably damned, unless God of his grace bestows faith on him; and then he is openly entitled to what is in the other declaration, *he that believeth shall be saved*. Upon which every individual

believer may thus argue, whoever believes shall be saved; I believe, and therefore I shall be saved, and not perish everlastingly.

2. In whomsoever the Spirit of God works the good work of grace, in them he takes up his residence; they are his temples in whom he dwells, and in these he dwells, for ever: *I will pray the Father*, says Christ (John 14:16), *and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*; and if he abides with them for ever, then they cannot everlastingly perish; he is that *anointing* they have *received* of Christ, which *abideth* in them (1 John 2:27), from whence they are denominated Christians, and by which they continue such; and it is by virtue of his inhabitation and abiding in them, that their mortal bodies shall be quickened and raised, and be brought into a state of immortality and bliss (Rom. 8:11).

3. The Spirit of God not only continues in the hearts of his people, but he continues there as an *earnest* of their *inheritance*, which ensures it to them, for as sure as they have the earnest, and which they have from God himself, and is no other than the Lord the Spirit, so sure shall they have the whole; and if an earnest makes things sure and certain among men, it must needs do so between God and his people. Moreover, the Spirit is the sealer of them until *the day the day of redemption* (Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30); until their bodies are redeemed from the dust of death, from mortality and the graves, he has set his seal and mark upon them, which can never be broken or erased; and assures them of their salvation, and bears *witness* to their spirits, that they are the children of God, and so heirs of him, and joint-heirs with Christ; but of what avail would this earnest, seal and witness be, if they should eternally perish? But from hence it may be most assuredly gathered that they never shall.

Ninthly, From all that has been said, it clearly appears, that the glory of all the three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit, is concerned in this affair, and they must lose it, if this doctrine is not true; or if the saints should everlastingly perish, where would be the Father's glory in election, in the covenant of grace, and in the mission of his Son? Where would be the glory of the Son of God in the redemption of his people, in his sacrifice and satisfaction, and in his intercession for them? And where would be the glory of the divine Spirit in the sanctification and sealing of them, if after all this they perish everlastingly? For all depends upon their final perseverance and complete salvation. And therefore we may be assured, that since the saints are held with this threefold cord, which can never be broken, their final perseverance is certain, and their everlasting salvation sure.

Tenthly, The contrary doctrine takes away the foundation of a believer's joy and comfort; it makes the love of God changeable: the covenant of grace failable; the redemption and satisfaction of Christ insufficient; and the work and graces of the Spirit loseable; and so, must consequently fill the minds of the children of God with great doubts, fears and distresses, if not despair; since their state and condition is so very precarious: what comfort can a believer take in his present circumstances, if they are such as by a single act of sin, to which he is liable every moment, he may be removed from a state of grace into a state of condemnation, and, notwithstanding all the favors bestowed on him, and promises made unto him, and grace given him, he may perish everlastingly? but this writer I have been considering tells us (S. T., pp. 19, 20), that his comfort is not affected hereby; it does not stand upon this, but upon his present knowledge, sight, faith, frames, and a good conversation; and bids men go and find a more solid joy, a more blissful comfort on this side

heaven. But blessed be God, we have a better foundation for joy and comfort than all this; the true believer, though he lives *by faith*, he does not live *upon* it; he lives by it as *Esau* did by his *sword* (Gen. 27:40); he did not live upon it, that would have been hard living indeed, but he lived upon what it brought him: so a believer lives not on his faith, but upon Christ, and the grace of Christ, faith brings nigh unto him. He has better things than uncertain precarious frames to live upon and receive his comforts from; even the unchangeable love of God; the unalterable covenant of grace; the faithfulness of God, who though we *believe not, yet he abides faithful* (2 Tim. 2:13); absolute and unconditional promises; Jesus Christ the same today, yesterday, and for ever; his precious blood, perfect righteousness, atoning sacrifice, and that fullness of grace which is in him.

To conclude: If a man may be confident of any one thing in this world, he may be *confident of this very thing*, that in whomsoever, whether in himself, or in any other, God *hath begun a good work, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ* (Phil. 1:9); and that *all the true Israel of God shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation* (Isa. 45:17); and that not one of them shall eternally perish.

A DISCOURSE
ON PRAYER.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:15; former Part.

What is it then ? I will pray the Spirit, and will pray with the understanding also.

The design of this epistle is chiefly to reprove the Church at *Corinth* for the divisions and contentions, which were there fomented and kept up on account of their ministers; some being for *Paul*, some for *Apollo*, and others for *Cephas*; and to remove some irregular practices from among them, which were either openly avowed, or connived at by them; such as continuing a wicked person in their communion, going to law with one another before heathen magistrates, and the disorderly attendance of many of them at the Lord's table. The apostle having finished this part of his design, does, in the twelfth chapter, largely insist on the subject of spiritual gifts; where he gives an account of the diversity of them, of their author, and of their various usefulness in the church of Christ; for which reason he exhorts the members of this church to covet them earnestly, though he would not have them depend on them, since they are not saving. In the thirteenth chapter, he prefers charity, or love, to them, and shews, that without this they are useless and unprofitable to those who have them. In this fourteenth chapter, he presses them to *follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather, says he, that ye may prophesy*. He proves, by many arguments, and especially by that taken from edification, that prophesying in a known language, in the mother tongue, which is understood by the people, is preferable to the gift of speaking in an unknown language, not understood by the people, and so unedifying to them. It is evident, that by prophesying, he means not only preaching, but praying, since he instances in it, and argues, in the words preceding my text, thus: *For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful*; that is, when I pray in an unknown language, being under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, I make use of that extraordinary gift which he has bestowed upon me, and my own spirit is indeed refreshed by it: But what I myself conceive, understand, and express, is useless and unprofitable to others, who do not understand the language in which I pray; therefore, says he, in the words of my text, *What is it then?* What is to be done in this case? What is most prudent and advisable? What is most eligible and desirable? Must I not pray with the Spirit at all? Shall I not make use of that extraordinary gift which the Spirit has bestowed upon me? Shall I entirely neglect it, and lay it aside? No, *I will pray with the Spirit*; I will make use of the gift I have; but then it shall be in such a way and manner, as that I shall be understood by others, *I will pray with the understanding also*. In these words may be considered,

I. The work and business of prayer, which the apostle resolved in the strength of Christ, and, by the assistance of his Spirit, to be found in the performance of; *I will pray, &c.*

II. The manner in which he is desirous of performing this duty; *with the Spirit, and with the understanding also*.

I. I shall consider the work and business of prayer, which the apostle resolved, in the strength of Christ, and by the assistance of his Spirit, to be found in the performance of. It will not be amiss, under this head to enquire into the object of prayer, the several parts of it, and its different kinds, I shall begin,

1. With the object of prayer, which is not any mere creature. Prayer is a part of religious worship, which is due to God only. To address a creature in such a solemn manner is idolatry. This is a sin the Gentiles have been notoriously guilty of, who have paid their devoirs this way, both to animate and inanimate creatures. The idolatrous Heathen is thus described by the prophet; (Isa. 45:17) *He maketh a god his graven image; he falleth down unto it, and worshipped it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my god.* Such a practice as this, is an argument of great ignorance and stupidity; (Isa. 45:20) *They have no knowledge, that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save.* It is no wonder that their prayers should be in vain, since *their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands: They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear* (Ps. 115:4-6) *not,* They are insensible of the wants of their votaries, and unable to help them; they are not in a capacity to give them the least relief, or bestow the least temporal mercy on them: *Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Art not thou he, O Lord, our God? Therefore we will wait upon thee; for thou hast made all these things.* (Jer. 14:22) The Papists have followed the Pagans in their idolatrous prayers to angels, the virgin *Mary*, and other saints departed, and even to many that were not saints; but it may be said to them, what *Eliphaz* said to *Job*, (Job 5:1) in another case; *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?*

God only is, and ought to be the object of prayer. *My prayer, says David, shall be unto the God of my life.* (Ps. 42:8) God has a right to this part of worship from us, as he is the God of our lives, *in whom we live, move, and have our being;* who grants us life and favour, and whose visitation preserves our spirits; who daily follows us with his goodness, and loads us with his benefits; to whom we are obliged for every mercy, and on whom the whole support and continuance of our beings depend: and we are under greater obligation still, as well as have greater encouragement, to address the throne of his grace, as he is *the God of all grace, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus;* all which may assure us, that his eyes are upon us, his ears are open to our cries, that he has both a heart and a hand to help and relieve us; he is a God that hears and answers prayer, to whom all flesh shall come, who are sensible of their need of him, and dependence upon him; *his arm is not shortened, that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that he cannot hear; nor did he ever say to any of the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.*

Though the Lord our God is but one Lord; there is but one God, which, with the Scriptures, we assert, in opposition to the polytheism of the Gentiles, who had gods many, and lords many; yet there is a plurality of persons in the Deity, which are neither more nor fewer than Three, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, which Three are One; the Father is God, the Word is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God. Though the Persons in the Godhead are more than One, yet the Godhead itself is single and undivided. Now God in either and each of the Three divine Persons, may be prayed unto. It is lawful for us to address in prayer either God the Father, or God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost distinctly, though not any of them to the exclusion of the others, This I mention, to disentangle the minds of some, who may have some

scruples and hesitations about praying to the distinct Persons in the Deity. Now it is easy to observe, that there are petitions directed to each of the three Persons distinctly; of which I shall give some few instances from the Scriptures.

God the Father is sometimes singly and distinctly prayed unto, though not to the exclusion of the Son or Spirit. It would be too tedious to reckon up all the instances of this kind: The epistle to the *Ephesians* will furnish us with a sufficient number to our purpose. In one place the apostle says to them, (Eph. 1:16, 17) *I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him;* where God the Father is prayed unto, as distinct from the Lord Jesus Christ, whose God and Father he is, and distinct from the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, who as such is prayed for. And in another place, he says, (Eph. 3:14, 16, 17) *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might, by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;* in which passage God the Father is addressed, as the object of prayer, distinct from Christ and the Spirit; the former of which he desires might dwell in their hearts by faith, and that they might be strengthened by the latter in their inner man. If these instances were not sufficient, others might be produced; but about God the Father's being the object of prayer, there is no question nor hesitation.

God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, may be distinctly prayed unto, of which are many instances in Scripture. Sometimes he is prayed unto in conjunction with his Father, as appears from all those passages (Rom, 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3; 2 John 3; Rev. 1:4, 5) in the epistles, where *grace and peace* are desired *from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;* and from many others such as these: (1 Thess. 3:11, 12) *Now God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way unto you; and the Lord, that is, the Lord Jesus, make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and towards all men, even as we do towards you;* and in another place, (2 Thess. 2:16, 17) *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope, through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.* Sometimes Christ is prayed unto singly and alone; as by *Stephen* at the time of his death, when he prayed, saying, (Acts 7:59) *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.* By the apostle *Paul*, (2 Cor. 12:8, 9) when he had *a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him; for this,* says he, *I besought the Lord thrice, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears from the context, that it might depart from me: And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* By the apostle *John*, when Christ said to him, (Rev. 22:20) *Surely I come quickly,* he replies, *Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus.* And by many others; such as those mentioned by *Ananias* to Christ, when he bid him arise, and go to *Saul;* (Acts 9:14) *Lord,* says he, *I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.*

God the Holy Ghost may be also prayed unto, as he is sometimes and singly alone, and as distinct from the Father and the Son; (2 Thess. 3:5) *The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.* By the Lord, I understand the Lord the Spirit, whose work it is to

direct the hearts of believers into the love of God, and to shed it abroad in their hearts; who is manifestly distinguished in this petition from God the Father, into whose love, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, into a patient waiting for of whom, the hearts of the saints are desired to be directed by him. Sometimes he is prayed unto distinctly, in conjunction with the other two Persons, as by the apostle *Paul*; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.* (2 Cor. 13:14) And by the apostle *John*, (Rev. 1:4,5) *Grace be unto you, and peace, from him, which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is a faithful witness.* By the seven spirits cannot be meant angels; for it cannot be thought that they being creatures, should be put upon a level with the divine Being, and be with him addressed in such a solemn manner; but by them we are to understand the Holy Spirit of God, who is so called either in allusion to Isaiah 11:2, or on account of the seven churches of *Asia*, to whom *John* wrote by his dictates, or to denote the perfection and fulness of his gifts and graces.

Now though each divine Person may be singly and distinctly addressed in prayer, and all Three together, being the one God, be considered as the object of it; yet, according to the order of persons in the Deity, and suitably to their several and distinct parts, which they, by agreement, take in the affair of man's salvation, God the Father, the first Person, is generally addressed as the object of prayer, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit: Christ is the Mediator, by whom we draw nigh to God; and the Holy Ghost is the inditer of our prayers, and who assists in the putting of them up unto him.

The first Person is usually addressed in prayer under the character of a Father, and as our Father; so Christ taught his disciples to pray, (Matthew 6:9) *Our Father which art in heaven, &c.* and he is to be considered in this relation to us, either as the Father of our spirits, the Author of our beings, by whom we are provided for, supplied, and supported in them. In this manner the church in *Isaiah's* time applied to him, (Isa. 64:8, 9) saying, *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we are all the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.* Or he may be considered as the Father or Author of our mercies, temporal and spiritual, which he, in a kind and gracious manner, bestows on us, through Christ, and that as the Father of Christ, and as our God and Father in Christ. In this view the apostle addresses him, when he says, (2 Cor. 1:3) *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.* And, in another place, (Eph. 1:3) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.* Now these several considerations furnish out so many reasons and arguments to induce and encourage us to apply to him who is *the God of all grace, and is both able and willing to supply our needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

The second Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is both God and man, is the Mediator between God and man. God absolutely considered, is a *consuming fire*; there is no approaching to him as creatures, and especially as sinful creatures. *Job* was sensible of this, when he said, (Job 9:32, 33) *He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment; neither is there any days-man betwixt us, that might lay his hands upon us both.* Now Christ is the days-man, the Mediator, the middle Person, who has opened a way for us to God, even *a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.* (Heb. 10:20;

John 14:6; Eph. 2:18 and 1:6; 1 Peter 2:5) *He himself is the way, the truth and the life; he is the way of access to God; through him, both Jews and Gentiles, have an access, by one Spirit, unto the Father; he is the way of acceptance with God; our persons are accepted in the Beloved, and our spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise are acceptable to God by Jesus Christ: The prayers of the saints are called odours; (Rev. 5:8 and 8:3, 4) they are of a sweet smelling savour to God; which is owing to the mediation of Christ, the Angel of God's presence, who stands continually at the golden altar before the throne, with a golden censer in his hand, to whom is given much incense, with which he offers the prayers of all saints, and which makes them a sweet odour to God. Our encouragements to prayer, and to the exercise of grace in that duty, are chiefly taken from, and our pleas for the blessings of grace, are founded on the person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and intercession of Christ. Seeing then, says the apostle, (Heb. 4:14-16) that we have a High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession: For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. And in another place, (Heb. 10:22) he exhorts and encourages to this work in much the same manner; Having, says he, an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

The third Person, the Holy Spirit, takes his part, and has a peculiar place in this work; he is the author of prayer, the inditer of it, who forms it in our hearts, creates breathings, and desires after spiritual things, stirs us up to prayer, and assists in it. Hence he is called, (Zech. 12:10) *The Spirit of grace and supplications; both the gift and grace of prayer come from him; he informs us of our wants, acquaints us with our necessities, teaches us both, in what manner, and for what we should pray; what is most suitable for us, and agreeable to the will of God to bestow on us, and helps us under all our infirmities in prayer; which is observed by the apostle, for the use, instruction, and comfort of believers, when he says, (Rom. 8:26, 27) Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God. As Christ is our Advocate with the Father, pleads our cause, and makes intercession at the right hand of God for the acceptation of our persons and prayers, so the Holy Spirit is our Advocate within us; he makes intercession for us in our own hearts; he puts strength into us; he fills our mouths with arguments and enables us to plead with God. Christ is Mediator, through whom, and the Spirit, the assister, by whom we have access to the Father. God, as the God of all grace, kindly invites us to himself; Christ, the Mediator, gives us boldness; and the Spirit of grace, freedom and liberty in our access unto him; and this is what the scriptures call *Praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and praying in the Holy Ghost.* But of this more hereafter. I proceed,*

2. To consider the several parts of prayer; in which I do not design to prescribe any precise form of praying, but to observe to you the method and matter of it, which may serve to direct and assist you in it. It is proper to begin this work with a celebration and adoration of some one or more of the divine perfections; which will at once have a tendency to strike our minds with a proper sense of the divine Majesty, glorify him and encourage us in our supplications to him; all which is highly necessary in our entrance on it. All the perfections of God are instructive to us in this work, and serve to influence our minds and affections towards him, command our fear and reverence of him,

engage our faith in him, strengthen our dependence on him, and raise in us expectations of receiving good things from him. The greatness, glory, power, and majesty of God, the holiness, purity, and righteousness of his nature, oblige us to an humble submission to him, and reverential awe of him. The consideration of his love, grace, mercy, and goodness, will not suffer his dread to make us afraid. We learn from his omniscience, that he knows not only our persons, but our wants, and what is most suitable for us, when the most convenient season, and which the best way and manner to bestow it on us. It can be no small satisfaction to us, *that all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*; the thoughts of our hearts are not hid from him; the secret ejaculations of our minds are known to him; the breathings and desires of our souls are before him; he understands the language of a sigh and groan; and when we chatter like a crane or a swallow, it does not pass unobserved by him. His omnipotence assures us that nothing is too hard for him, or impossible to him; that he is *able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*; that we cannot be in such a low estate or distressed condition, or attended with such straits and difficulties, but he is able to relieve, deliver and save us. We conclude from his omnipresence, that he fills the heavens and the earth; that he is in all places, at all times; that he is a God at hand, and a God afar off; that he is near unto us, wherever we are, ready to assist us, and will be *a very present help in trouble*. His immutability in his counsel, and faithfulness in his covenant, yield the *heirs of promise, strong consolation*. These give us reason to believe that not one of the good things which the Lord has promised shall ever fail; that what he has said, he will do: and what he has either purposed or promised, he will bring to pass: *He will not suffer his faithfulness to fail; his covenant he will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips*. You see that the notice of these things is necessary, both for the glory of God and our own comfort. It is also very proper when we begin our addresses to God, to make mention of some one or more of his names and titles, as Jehovah, Lord God, &c, and of the relations he stands in to us; not only as the God of nature, the author of our beings, the Donor of our mercies, and the Preserver of our lives, but as the God of grace, the Father of Christ, and our Covenant God, and Father in Christ. After this manner our Lord directed his disciples to pray, saving, *Our Father which art in heaven, &c*.

In the next place, it highly becomes us to acknowledge our meanness and unworthiness, to make confession of our sins and transgressions, and pray for the fresh discoveries and manifestations of pardoning love and grace. When we enter into the divine presence, and take upon us to speak unto the Lord, we should own with *Abraham*, (Gen. 18:27) that we are *but dust and ashes*; and with *Jacob*, (Gen. 32:10) that we are *not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which God has shewed unto us*. Confession of sin, both of our nature and of our lives, is a very proper and necessary part of this work. This has been the practice of the saints in all ages; as of *David*, which appears from his own words; (Ps. 32:5) *I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquities have I not hid: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*. So *Daniel*, when he set his face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, made confession both of his own and of the sins of others; *I prayed unto the Lord my God*, says he, (Dan. 9:4-6) *and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant, and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments. We have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts, and from thy judgments; neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land*. And the apostle John, for the encouragement of believers in this part of the duty of prayer, says, (1 John 1:9) *If we confess our sins, he, that is, God, is just and faithful to forgive us our sins,*

and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness: Not that confession of sin is either the procuring cause, or means, or condition of pardon and cleansing, which are both owing to the blood of Christ; in justice and faithfulness to which, and him that shed it, God forgives the sins of his people, and cleanses them from them; but the design of the apostle is to shew that sin is in the saints, and is committed by them, and that confession of sin is right and acceptable in the sight of God; and, to animate and encourage them to it, he takes notice of the justice and faithfulness of God in pardoning and cleansing his people, through the blood of Christ, which, as he had a little before observed, *cleanseth from all sin*. Nay, we are not only to make confession of sin in prayer, but to pray for the pardon and forgiveness of it. Christ directed his disciples to this part of their duty, when he bid them pray after this manner; (Matthew 6:12) *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*. This has been the constant practice of the saints, as of *Moses*; (Ex. 34:9) *O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go amongst us, and pardon our iniquities and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance*. Of *David*; (Ps. 25:11) *For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great*. *Yea*, he says to the Lord, (Ps. 32:6) *For this, shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found*. And of *Daniel*, (Dan. 9:19) *O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do, defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name*. Now it ought to be observed, that very frequently when the saints pray, either for the forgiveness of their own, or others sins, their meaning is, that God would, in a providential way, deliver them out of present distress, remove his afflicting hand, which lies heavy on them, or avert such judgments which seem to hang over their heads, and very much threaten them which, when he does, is an indication of his having pardoned them. We are to understand many petitions of *Moses*, (Ex. 32:32; Num. 14:19, 20) *Job*, (Job 7:21) *Solomon*, (1 Kings 8:30, 34, 36, 39, 50) and others, in this sense: Besides, when believers now pray for the pardon of sin, their meaning is not that the blood of Christ should be shed again for the remission of their sins; or that any new act of pardon should arise in God's mind, and be passed by him; but that they might have the sense, the manifestation, and application of pardoning grace to their souls. We are not to imagine, that as often as the saints sin, repent, confess their sins, and pray for the forgiveness of them, that God makes and passes new acts of pardon; for he has, by one eternal and complete act of grace, in the view of his Son's blood and sacrifice, freely and fully forgiven all the trespasses of his chosen ones, all their sins, past, present, and to come: but whereas they daily sin against God, grieve his Spirit, and wound their own consciences, they have need of the fresh sprinklings of the blood of Jesus, and of renewed manifestations of pardon to their souls; and it is both their duty and interest to attend the throne of grace on this account.

Another part and branch of prayer lies in putting up petitions to God for good things, temporal and spiritual mercies, the blessings of nature and of grace. As we ought to live in a dependence on divine providence, so we should daily pray for the common sustenance of our bodies, the comfort, support, and preservation of our lives; as our Lord has taught us, saying, *Give us this day our daily bread*. (Matthew 6:11) Our requests in this way ought, indeed, to be frequent, but not large: we should not seek great things for ourselves. *Agur's* prayer (Prov. 30:7-9) is a proper copy for us to follow: *Two things, says he to the Lord, have I required of thee, deny me them not before I die; Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain*. The spiritual blessings we should ask for, are such as God has laid up in the covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things, and sure, Christ has procured by his blood, the gospel is a revelation of, and the Spirit of God makes intercession for in

our own hearts, according to the will of God; for these things we should *pray in faith, nothing wavering*; (James 1:6; 1 John 5:14, 15) *for this is the confidence that we have in him, that is, God, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.* When we pray for special mercies, spiritual blessings, such as converting grace for unconverted friends and relations, we ought to pray in submission to the secret will of God.

Thanksgiving for mercies received, is another thing which we should not be forgetful of at the throne of grace; *In every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving*, says the apostle, (Phil. 4:6) *let your requests be made known to God.* As we have always mercies to pray for, so likewise to return thanks for; it becomes us to *continue in prayer*, (Col. 4:2) for constant supplies from heaven, and to *watch in the same with thanksgiving*, that is, to wait for the blessings we have been praying for; and when we have received them, to watch for a proper opportunity, and make use of it, *to offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.* When this part is neglected, it is highly resented by the Lord; as appears from the case of the ten lepers, (Luke 17:15-18) when *one of them saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan;* upon which our Lord says, *Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger.*

Before we conclude the exercise of this duty, it is proper to deprecate such evils from us, which are either upon us, or we know we are liable to, or may befall us; such as temptations of *Satan*, the snares of the world, the distresses of life, public calamities, &c. This was in part practiced by *Daniel*: *O Lord*, says he, (Dan. 9:16) *according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain; because for our sins, and the iniquities of our Fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.* And this is intimated by Christ to his disciples, in that excellent directory of prayer he gave them, part of which was this; *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.* (Matthew 6:13)

At the close of this work of prayer, it is necessary to make use of doxologies, or ascriptions of glory to God; as we begin with God, we should end with him; as in the entrance on this duty, we ascribe greatness to him, so at the conclusion of it we should ascribe glory to him. Such an ascription of glory to God, we find, was used by Christ at the end of the prayer he taught his disciples, in this manner: (Matthew 6:13) *Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory.* By the apostle *Paul* in this form; (Eph. 3:21) *Unto him, that is, God, be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end.* And in another place thus; (1 Tim. 1:17) *Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever.* By the apostle *Jude* in these words; *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy; to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.* (Jude 24, 25) And by the apostle *John* after this manner; (Rev. 1:5, 6) *Unto him that hath, loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* These, and such like ascriptions of glory to God, Father, Son, and Spirit, are necessary at the finishing of our supplications, since the mercies and blessings we have been either petitioning, or returning thanks for, come from him; besides, they serve to shew forth the praises of

God, and to express our sense of gratitude to him, our dependence upon him, and our expectation of receiving good things from him.

The whole of this exercise of prayer should be concluded with pronouncing the word *Amen*; as a testification of our hearty assent to what we have expressed, and of our sincere desires and wishes, that what we have been praying for might be accomplished, and of our full and firm persuasion and assured belief that God is able, willing, and faithful to perform all that he has promised, and give whatsoever we have been asking of him, according to his will. But I proceed,

3. To consider the several sorts and kinds of prayer, or the various distributions into which it may be made, or the different views in which it may be considered.

Prayer may be considered either as mental or vocal. Mental prayer is what is only conceived in the mind; it consists of secret ejaculations in the heart, which are not expressed with an audible and articulate voice. Such was the prayer of *Hannah*, of whom it is said; (1 Sam. 1:12, 13) that *as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah she spake in her heart, only her lips moved; but her voice was not heard, therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.* Vocal prayer is that which, being conceived and formed in the heart, is expressed by the tongue, in words, with an audible and articulate voice, so as to be heard and understood. This the prophet intends, when he says, (Hosea 14:2) *Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord, say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips.*

Again, Prayer may be considered either as private or public. Private prayer is that which is either performed in the family, by the head or master of it, the rest joining with him in it, or by a society of Christians in a private house, or by a single person in secret and alone; concerning which Christ gives these directions and instructions: (Matthew 6:5, 6) *When thou prayest, says he, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men: verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.* Public Prayer is what is used in the house of God, which is therefore called, (Isa. 56:7) *an house of prayer*; where the people of God meet together, and, with the other parts of divine, public, and social worship, perform this. The first Christians, in the early days of the gospel, are commended, among other things, for their *continuing stedfastly in prayers*, that is, in public prayers, (Acts 2:42) they constantly met where *prayer was wont to be made*; and God was pleased to give a signal testimony of his approbation of this their practice; for, at a certain time, *they had prayed, the place was shaken, where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.* (Acts 4:31)

Once more: Prayer may be considered either as extraordinary or ordinary. Extraordinary prayer is that which is made use of on particular and special occasions; as that exercise of prayer, which was kept by the church on account of *Peter's* being in prison. The divine historian says, (Acts 7:5) that *Peter was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him*; which instance of extraordinary prayer was followed with an extraordinary event; for whilst they were praying, an angel was dispatched from heaven, and loosed *Peter* from his bonds, who came to the place where the church was assembled, before they had broke up their exercise. Such also were

the prayers of the elders of the church in those times for the sick, which the apostle *James* speaks of; (James 5:14, 15) *is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* Ordinary prayer is what is used in common in the church of God, in a religious family, or by a single person, at stated times; which, with *David* and *Daniel* under the Old Testament, were three times a day, (Ps. 55:17; Dan. 6:10) evening, morning, and at noon; which practice is laudable enough to follow, provided no stress is laid on the punctual performance of this duty at these precise times, and is not made the term and condition of our acceptance with God, and of our standing in his favour, which would be to reduce us to the covenant of works, ensnare our souls, and bring us into a state of bondage.

II. I come now to consider the manner in which the apostle was desirous of performing this duty.

1. *With the Spirit.* By the Spirit, some understand no more than the human breath, or voice; and suppose, that the apostle's meaning is, that he would pray vocally, with an articulate voice, with distinct sounds, so as to be understood: perhaps some passages in this chapter, which may seem to favour this sense, might incline them to it; as when the apostle observes, (1 Cor. 14:7-11) *that things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise you, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them are without signification; therefore, if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a Barbarian; and he that speaketh, a Barbarian unto me.* But the apostle here, by voice and distinction in sounds, does not intend a clear, distinct, articulate voice, but the mother-tongue, a known language, in opposition to an unknown tongue and foreign language, not understood by the people. This sense of the words is mean, low, and trifling, as well as forced and strained.

By *the Spirit*, rather is meant the extraordinary gift of the Spirit bestowed on the apostle and others, by which they spoke with divers tongues, and which he determined to make use of, though in such a manner, as to be understood: He would not use it without an interpretation. This is the sense I have given of it already, and is the most generally received sense of interpreters, and which may be confirmed by the use of the word in the context; as in verse 2. *He that speaketh in an unknown tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God, for no man understandeth him; howbeit, in the Spirit, that is, by exercising the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, he speaketh mysteries;* and in verse 14, *If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth,* that is, I pray by virtue of the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, bestowed on me; but *my understanding is unfruitful;* I am of no use and service to those that hear me. So likewise in verse 16. *Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit,* that is, when thou givest thanks in an unknown tongue, through the gift of the Spirit, *how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say, Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?*

There is another sense of the phrase, which I am unwilling to omit, and that is this: By *praying with the Spirit*, some understand the apostle's own spirit, or his praying in a spiritual way, with a spirit of devotion and fervency; and indeed, in such a manner he performed every part of religious worship and service, whether preaching or praying, or any thing else: *God is my witness,* says he,

(Rom. 1:9) *whom I serve with my spirit, in the gospel of his Son*; which kind of service is most agreeable to the nature of God: (John 4:23) He is a *Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth*. And it becomes us to be fervent in spirit, whilst we are serving the Lord. Such a frame of soul particularly in prayer, is most suitable to the work, most desirable to the saints, acceptable to God, and powerful with him; *the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much*. (James 5:16)

We may be said to pray with our spirits, or in a spiritual way, when we draw nigh to God with a true heart; or when we are enabled to lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens; people may draw near to him, as the Jews of old did, (Isa. 29:13) with their mouth, and with their lips honour him, and yet, at the same time, their heart may be removed far from him, and their fear towards him, be taught by the precept of men. It is one thing to have the gift of prayer, and another to have the grace of prayer, and that in exercise: it is one thing to pray with the mouth, and another to pray with the heart. Praying in a formal, graceless manner, is mere outside worship, lip-labour, bodily exercise, that profiteth nothing; it is useless to men, and unacceptable to God, who accounts of it, and calls it no other than howling. Hence he says of some, (Hosea 7:14) *They have not cried unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds*. Spiritual fervent prayer is, more or less, performed in the exercise of the grace of faith; such who draw nigh to God with a true heart, should also in full assurance of faith. The apostle *James* directs to prayer in this way; (James 1:5-7) *If any of you, says he, lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him: But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed: for let not that man think, that he shall receive any thing of the Lord*. We should not only have an assurance of faith, with respect to the object whom we address, which is absolutely necessary; (Heb. 11:6) *For he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*; but also with respect to the things we pray for, when they are such which God has promised, which he has laid up in his covenant, put into the hands of his Son, and, we know, are according to his revealed mind and will to give; all which is consistent with that reverence and godly fear, by which we serve God acceptably; with that humility which becomes supplicants, and is grateful to God, who *resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble*: and with that submission and resignation of our wills to his will, in which Christ is a glorious pattern to us, when he in prayer said, (Luke 22:42) *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done*. In a word, when we pray with our spirits, or in a spiritual way, we not only lift up our hearts to God, and what we ask for, ask in faith, with a reverential, filial fear of the divine Majesty, in deep humility of soul, and with an entire submission to God's will; but also in the name and for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ; we do not present our supplications to God for our righteousness's, but for the Lord's sake, and for his great mercies; we come not in our own name, but in Christ's; we go forth not in our own strength, but in his; we make mention of his righteousness, and of his only; we plead the merits and efficacy of his blood; we bring his sacrifice in the arms of our faith; we expect audience and acceptance upon his account alone, and that our petitions and requests will be heard and answered for his sake and we leave them with him, who is our Advocate with the Father. This may be called true, spiritual, fervent, and effectual prayer.

Prayer cannot be performed in such a manner, without the grace, influence, and assistance of the Spirit of God. Some therefore think, that by *the Spirit*, in my text is, meant the Holy Spirit of God; and that praying with the Spirit, is the same which the apostle *Jude* calls, *praying in the Holy*

Ghost. If we take the words in this sense, we are not to suppose that when the apostle says, *I will pray with the Spirit*, that he imagined he could pray with the Holy Spirit, and under its influences when he pleased; his words must be considered only as expressive of the sense he had of the need of the Spirit of God in prayer, and of his earnest desires, after his gracious assistance in the performance of it. I have already observed what place the Holy Ghost has in the work of prayer; he is the Author of it; he is the Spirit of grace and supplications; the inditer of it, he forms it in the heart; (James 5:16) the effectual fervent, ενεργημενη, the inspired, the in-wrought prayer of a righteous man availeth much; that is, such a prayer as is formed in the soul by a powerful energy of the Spirit of God, who puts things into the heart and words into the mouth: *Take* (Hosea 14:2) *with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously:* He directs in the matter of prayer; (Rom. 8:26, 27) *for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.* And, indeed, who so proper as he, who searches the deep things of God, and perfectly knows his mind? he helps the saints under all their infirmities; when they are shut up in their souls, and cannot come forth in prayer with liberty, he enlarges their hearts, and gives them freedom of soul, and liberty of speech, so as they can pour out their souls before God, and tell him all their mind: *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.* (2 Cor. 3:17) Without him we cannot pray, either with faith or fervency; nor can we call God our Father without him, the Spirit of adoption, or use that freedom with him, as children with a Father; but *because ye are sons*, says the apostle, (Gal. 4:6) *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

Perhaps it may be objected, that if the Spirit of God is so absolutely necessary in prayer, then men ought not to pray, unless they have the Spirit, or are under the immediate influences of his grace. To which I answer, That prayer may be considered as a natural duty: and as such is binding on all men, even on a natural man, destitute of the Spirit, and ought to be, and may be, performed by him in a natural way; to which there is something analogous in the brute creatures, whose eyes wait upon the Lord; *And he giveth to the beast his food, and unto the young ravens which cry.* (Ps. 145:15 and 147:9) And we may observe, that the apostle *Peter* put *Simon Magus* upon prayer, though he was in a state of unregeneracy; *Repent*, says he, (Acts 8:22) *of this thy wickedness; and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.* It is true, none but a spiritual man can pray in a spiritual manner; but then the spiritual man is not always under the gracious and Powerful influences of the Spirit of God; he is sometimes destitute of them, which seems to be *David's* case when he said, (Ps. 51:11, 12) *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit; and yet we are to pray without ceasing, to pray always, and not faint.* (1 Thess. 5:17) And one thing we are to pray for is the Spirit, to influence and assist us in prayer, and to work in us whatever is well pleasing in the sight of God; And we have reason to believe that such a petition will be heard and answered; for if earthly fathers *know how to give good gifts unto their children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* (Luke 18:1) And, indeed, when we are in darkness and distress, without the light of God's countenance, the influences of his Spirit, and the communications of his grace, we have need of prayer most, and ought to be most constant at *the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need.* This was *David's* practice; (Ps. 130:1) *Out of the depths*, says he, *have I cried unto thee, O Lord;* and so it was *Jonah's*, when he was in *the belly of hell*, and said, *I am cast out of thy sight; yet*, says he, *I will look again towards thy holy temple:* (Jonah 2:2, 4, 7) And he adds, *When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.*

And so it was the practice of the church in *Asaph's* time; who, under darkness and distress, said, (Ps. 130:3, 4, 19) *Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved. O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?* But I proceed,

2. To observe that the apostle is desirous of performing this duty of prayer, *with the understanding also*, that is, in a language that may be understood by others; for, as he observes in verse 9, *except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?* And for his own part, he declares, in verse 19, *he had rather speak five words in the church with his understanding, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.* This condemns the practice of the Papists, who pray in a language not understood by the people.

Or to *pray with the understanding*, is to pray with the understanding illuminated by the Spirit of God, or to pray with an experimental spiritual understanding of things. A man may use many words in prayer, and put up a great many petitions, and yet have no savoury experience, or spiritual understanding of the things he prays for. The understanding of man is naturally dark, as to divine and spiritual things. The Holy Ghost is the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, who enlightens the eyes of our understanding, to see our lost state and condition by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the impurity of our hearts, the imperfection of our obedience, the insufficiency of our righteousness, the need of Christ, and salvation by him, and the aboundings of God's grace and mercy, streaming through the Mediator's person. Such who are thus enlightened, are able to *pray with the understanding also*: they know who they pray unto, whilst others worship they know not what; they can come to God as their God and Father, as the God of all grace and mercy: they know the way of access to him, and are sensible of their need of the Spirit to influence and assist them, by whom they know what to pray for, as they ought, and are well assured of the readiness of God to hear and answer them for Christ's sake: And, says the apostle, (1 John 5:15) *If we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.* These are the persons who pray with the Spirit, and with the understanding also; these find their account in this work, and it is a delight to them.

I shall conclude this discourse with a few words, by way of encouragement to this part of divine worship. It is good for the saints to draw near to God; it is not only good because it is their duty, but because it yields their souls a spiritual pleasure; and it is also of great profit and advantage to them: It is often an ordinance of God, and which *he* owns for the quickening the graces of his spirit, for the restraining and subduing the corruptions of our hearts, and for the bringing of our souls into nearer communion and fellowship with himself. Satan has often felt the force and power of this piece of our spiritual armour; and it is, indeed, the last which the believer is directed to make use of. Praying souls are profitable in families, neighbourhoods, churches, and common-wealths, when prayerless ones are in a great measure useless. The believer has the utmost encouragement to this work he can desire; he may come to God, not as on a seat of justice, but as on a throne of grace. Christ is the Mediator between God and him, his way of access to God, and his Advocate with the Father; the Spirit is his Guide, Director, and Assister; he has many exceeding great and precious promises to plead with God; nor need he doubt of a kind reception, a gracious audience, and a proper answer, though never so mean and unworthy in himself; since the Lord *will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise his prayer.*

NEGLECT OF
F E R V E N T P R A Y E R

Complained of.

A Sermon,

Preached *November, 21, 1754*, at a Monthly Exercise of

Prayer, in the Reverend Mr. Steven's Meeting-

House near *Devonshire-Square*.

ISAIAH 64:7

And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.

These words are an address of the church and people of God unto the Lord in a prayer, which begins in the latter part of the preceding chapter; in which they first expostulate with him, about his love, grace, and mercy, and the sounding of his bowels towards them, which they feared were restrained; and plead the relation he stood in to them as a father, of which they were assured, however others might; he ignorant of it; and put him in mind of being their redeemer, whose name, as such, was from everlasting; they desire to be returned to God and his worship; complain of the violation of the sanctuary by their adversaries, and observe the difference between them and themselves, with respect to their relation to God: which is mentioned as an argument to engage his regard unto them: and in the beginning of this chapter, they most earnestly entreat that God would *rend the heavens, and come down*, and give some manifest tokens of his presence; they urge, that he had been used to do so in times past, when he did *terrible things*, and unexpected; they take notice of unseen and unheard of things, that God had *prepared* for those that *wait* for him, which the apostle *Paul* (1 Cor. 2:9) applies to the doctrines of the gospel; and suggest that it had been his wonted manner to *meet* in a way of love, grace, and mercy, and indulge with communion with himself, at the throne of grace, and in his house and ordinances, such that *rejoice, and work righteousness*; that rejoice not in a carnal sinful, and hypocritical way, or in their own boastings, all such rejoicing being evil; but in the Lord, in the person of Christ, in his righteousness and salvation, in his grace, and in the hope of glory and that work righteousness; not a justifying one, no man can work such a righteousness, nor ought any man to work righteousness with such a view; the best way of working righteousness is to lay hold by faith on the righteousness of Christ, and to do works of righteousness in faith, without which it is impossible to please God: or perhaps such persons are designed and described, who rejoice to work righteousness, who do it in a cheerful and joyful manner, from right principles, and with right views; and such the Lord usually takes notice of, and

manifests himself unto; even such that remember him in his ways; in his ways of providence, in his ways of love, grace, and mercy, and in his institutions, ordinances, and appointments; or in the ways of his word and worship; but as for them, the people of God now praying, they own indeed they had sinned, and were deserving of the divine displeasure; *behold, thou art wroth, for we have sinned*; and yet they despaired not of salvation; for they add, *in these continuance, and we shall be saved*; either in these sins there is continuance, which are so displeasing to God; for the words may be rendered, *in these* we have been *of old*, or *always*; we have been old sinners, sinners in *Adam*, sinners from our first birth; and, more or less, have continued so ever since; and yet we hope for salvation from sin, through the promised Messiah: or in these works of righteousness there is continuance, and in a cheerful performance of them, under the influence of divine grace, saints persevere in faith and holiness, and so are saved: or rather, the meaning is, in these ways of love, grace and mercy of God, in which his people remember him, is continuance: God continues in his love; in that is permanency, perpetuity, and eternity, as the word used signifies: the love of God is from everlasting to everlasting, immutable and invariable, and *therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed, but saved with an everlasting salvation*; for that the church did not expect salvation from her own works of righteousness, but only from the free grace and love of God, is clear from what follows; *but we are all as an unclean thing* or person; like the leper, that was legally polluted, as well as covered with a loathsome disease, and therefore separated from the society of men: by this the church and people of God confess the impurity of their nature; and it may be, have respect to a general corruption in doctrine and manners, which prevailed in those times among the professors of religion: *and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*; which is to be understood not of the righteousness of hypocrites, which lay in external rites and ceremonies; or of legal and self-righteous persons, consisting of the outward observances of the law; but of works of righteousness done by the best of men, and in the best manner: these are *rags*, imperfect, and so insufficient to cover their persons, and hide their sins from the sight of God; they are *filthy*, being attended with sin and imperfection, and need washing in the blood of Christ, and so cannot render men acceptable before God: *and we all do fade as a leaf*, or fall like leaves in autumn: which might be true of the generality of the professors of that age; but not of such who have the root of the matter in them, who are rooted in the love of God, and engrafted into Christ; therefore *their leaf shall not wither, but be ever green*; or at least shall not finally and totally fade and fall, though they may have their decays; but this is true only of such who are carnal professors, destitute of the grace of God, who fade away and drop their profession, especially in a time of tribulation, just as trees drop their leaves in the fall of the year: hence it follows, *and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away*; as a fading falling leaf is carried away by the wind, so formal professors are carried away by their sins into a total defection and apostasy; and this general declension the church goes on to acknowledge and lament in the words first read; *and there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee*; intimating, that there were but very few that prayed to the Lord, or were concerned about his continuance with them, or return unto them, In the words are acknowledged these two things:

I. That there were none, or but few praying souls among them.

II. That there were as few that observed this, and aroused and bestirred themselves to lay hold on and retain a departing God, or to solicit his return unto them.

1. That there were none, or but few praying souls among God's professing people, in the times referred to: not that there were none at all, not one individual praying person; for this complaint itself is made in prayer to God; so that there were some praying persons, though their number were: but few, the instances scarce and rare; as when *David* says, *Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men:* (Ps. 12:1) his meaning is, not that there was not a godly or faithful man living, but that there were but few of this character: likewise, when the apostle *Paul* observes, that *all seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's;* (Phil 2:21) his sense is, not that there were none that sought the things of Christ, for he himself was one that did, and *Timothy* was another, of whom he is speaking, and whom he is commending; but that they were but very few that sought the things of Christ, in comparison of others that sought their own things; and in like manner are we to understand the expressions here, not simply and absolutely, but comparatively: and when we consider what an incumbent duty on professors calling on the name of the Lord is; or rather, what a privilege it is to be allowed to do it, the neglect of it here complained of must be a very aggravated sin, as will appear by opening the nature of this duty or privilege; in order to which, it may be proper to consider the object to be called upon, the name of the Lord; what he is to be called upon for, and when; the manner of calling upon him; and the arguments in brief exciting and encouraging thereunto.

1st, The object of invocation or prayer, *the name of the Lord;* which includes the nature, being, and perfections of God, as well as his titles and character; also the divine persons in the Godhead; and particularly points at the special name in which God is to be called upon.

1. It takes in the nature, being, and perfections of God; the name of the Lord is the Lord himself: as when it is said, *the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe;* (Prov. 18:10) that is, the Lord himself is a strong tower of safety to the righteous, that betake themselves to him; and again, (Ps. 20:1) *the name of the God of Jacob defend thee;* that is, the God of *Jacob* himself, or he who is so named, protect and defend thee from all evils and enemies. Once more; (Ps. 8:1) *O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!* that is, what a glorious display is there of thy divine perfections, in the works of creation and providence, throughout the whole world, and especially in those of grace and redemption! and there is something in the name of God, in his nature, and in all his attributes and perfections, which is engaging and encouraging to saints to call upon him: he, whose name is to be called upon, has proclaimed his name, *The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth;* (Exod. 34:6) which is very inviting and engaging to souls to make their application to him for grace and mercy. *Benhadad's* servants having heard that the kings of *Israel* were merciful kings, proposed to make their addresses in an humble manner to the king of *Israel*, in favour of the life of their prince; and a very similar argument *Joel* makes use of, to encourage the Jews in his time to humble themselves before the Lord, and turn to him, since *he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness;* for *who knows,* says he, *if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him.* (Joel 2:13, 14) The Lord, whose name is to be called upon, is the Lord God omnipotent; he is able to fulfill all the requests, answer all the expectations, and supply all the wants of his people: the heathens *pray to a God that cannot save;* (Isai. 45:20) but we pray to one whose *hand is not shortened, that it cannot save;* (Isai. 59:1) and who indeed is *able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.* (Ephes. 3:21) The Lord, on whose name we should call, is the Lord God omniscient; he *with whom we have to do* in prayer, to whom our speech is directed, (Heb. 4:13) and our addresses made, has *all things naked and open to his eyes;* he knows our persons, our

cases, our wants, and all the desires and breathings of our souls; he knows the meaning of our sighs and groans, even those that are unutterable; whether we pray in public or private, in the house of God, or in our own houses, or in our closets, *our Father seeth in secret*, and will *reward us openly*. (Matt. 6:6) The God we are called upon to pray unto, is the Lord God omnipresent, who is every where, and fills heaven and earth with his presence; he is at hand to hear the petitions of his people, to assist, protect, and defend them; he is a *present help* in all their times of trouble; this is their great privilege, and in which they excel all other people, that they have *God so nigh unto them, as the Lord their God is, in all things that they call upon him for*. (Deut. 4:7) He is also *El-shaddai*, God all-sufficient, the God of all grace, the author and giver of it; who is able to cause all grace to abound, and whose grace is sufficient at all times, and in all cases. And to these perfections and attributes of God may be added, that the name and title he takes to himself for the encouragement of his people in prayer, is, that he is a God *that hears prayer*, (Ps. 65:2) and answers it too; *he never said, no not at any time, to the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain*: (Isai. 65:19) every praying soul can set his seal to the truth of this testimony, that it is always *good to draw near to God*; (Ps. 73:26) *for his eyes are always upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry*. (Ps. 34:15) To say no more, the Lord that is to be called upon, stands in the relation of a father to his people; and they are taught and instructed to address him in prayer under this character and relation, *our Father which art in heaven*: (Matt. 6:9) and the Lord loves to have his children come about him, and call him their Father, and not turn away from him; it is with pleasure he hears them cry *Abba, Father*, in the strength of faith, and under the testimony of the spirit of adoption; and such may assure themselves, that he will graciously hear and answer their requests; for if earthly fathers *know how to give good things to their children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*, (Luke 11:13) and all other good things they stand in need of. And since then there is such great encouragement from the name, nature, and perfections of God; from the titles, characters, and relations he bears, how heinous must the sin be, to neglect calling upon his name!

2. The *Name of the Lord* takes in all the divine persons who are to be invoked: as baptism so be administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; so the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is to be called upon in prayer, either separately or together. The name of the Father is to be invoked, and for the most part is called upon; *if ye call upon the Father*, or seeing ye call upon the Father, *who without respect of persons judgeth*; (1 Peter 1:17) the apostle *Paul* says, *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*: (Ephes. 3:14) The scriptural instances of prayer are generally in this way; the address is commonly made to the first person, and we usually and for the most part, direct our petitions to him; and there is good reason why they should be directed to him; since the other two Persons sustain an office which he does not, an office with respect to prayer: The Son is the Mediator, by whom we draw nigh to God; and the Spirit, is the Spirit of grace and supplication, who helps and assists in approaches to him; though this is not to be done to the exclusion of either the Son or Spirit, who, in conjunction with the Father or apart, may be called upon or addressed in prayer: the same blessings of *grace and peace* (Rom. 1:7) are frequently wished from our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as from the Father. *Ananias* exhorted *Saul*, when converted, to *arise and be baptized, calling on the name of the Lord*, (Acts 22:17) that is, calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the apostle *Paul* directs one of his epistles to the Corinthians, and to *all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*: (1 Cor. 1:2) special petitions are sometimes put up to him; particularly *Stephen*, in his last moments, called upon him, and said, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*: (Acts 7:59) The holy Ghost is also prayed unto: sometimes along with the other two persons, as in *Rev. 1:4, 5*. and sometimes he is singly invoked,

as when the apostle thus prays, *the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ*; (2 Thess. 3:5) where the Lord, the Spirit, seems to be designed as distinct from God and Christ.

3. This phrase of calling on, or *in the name of the Lord*, as it may be rendered, seems particularly to point at the invocation of God, in the name of Christ; and which perhaps is the true meaning of it here, and in that remarkable passage, *then began men to call upon, or in the name of the Lord*; (Gen. 4:26) not that men did not pray unto God, or call upon him before; but now another seed being raised in the room of *Abel*, whom *Cain* slew, and this increasing and multiplying, men either began to meet together in bodies, in communities, to carry on social worship, particularly to perform social prayer; or having now clearer discoveries, and better notions of the promised seed, the Messiah, they began to call upon God in his name; and this was practiced, more or less, by the saints in all succeeding ages; though it seems greatly to have got into disuse in the times of Christ, who exhorted his disciples to pray to the Father in his name; assuring them, that whatsoever they asked in this way, both he and his Father would do it for them; and complains of their neglect of it; *hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive*: (John 14:13, 14 and 14:23, 24) Christ is the only mediator between God and men; the days-man that lays his hands on both, the only way to the Father, the new and living way by which we have access to God with boldness and confidence; his name is to be used in prayer; our supplications are not to be presented to God for our righteousness-sake, but for his name-sake; we are to make mention of his righteousness, and of his only, and plead his precious blood and sacrifice, and desire the Lord would look upon the face of his anointed, and regard us for his sake; acceptance of our persons and services is only through him: our righteousness is as filthy rags, and cannot render us acceptable unto God; our acceptance is only in the beloved; our sacrifices of prayer and praise become only acceptable unto God, as they are offered up through Christ, and on him, that altar which sanctifies every gift: and all favours and blessings of grace are conveyed through him to his people; the first grace in conversion is shed in the hearts of men abundantly through Christ their Saviour, and all after-supplies of grace are out of his fulness; and therefore, seeing we have such a mediator, advocate, and interceding high priest, to introduce our persons, to present our petitions, and to obtain all grace for us, we have great encouragement to call upon the Lord in his name, and to neglect this, must be an aggravated evil. I proceed,

2dly, To consider for what, and when we are to call upon the name of the Lord, or in his name; and this we are to do for all things; for he is *nigh to us in all things we call upon him for*: (Deut. 4:7) we should pray unto him for all temporal mercies, for he is the father of them we are directed to pray to him for our *daily bread*, (Matt. 6:11) which takes in all the necessaries of life; and such who have the true grace of God, and the power of godliness in them, may expect to be heard and answered; *for godliness has the promise of this life*, (1 Tim. 4:8) as well as of *that which is to come*: and we are to call upon him for spiritual mercies, for all spiritual blessings in Christ; for though these things are in his heart, and in his hands, and which he has laid up in his Son, and in the covenant of his grace, for his people, yet he *will be enquired of by them, to do them for them*; (Ezek 36:37) even for the fresh discoveries and application of pardoning grace, for the light of his countenance, and communion with him, and for all supplies of grace and mercy, to help in time of need. And this is to be done at all times; our Lord spake a parable to encourage men *to pray always, and not faint*; (Luke 18:1) and the apostle *Paul* exhorts the saints to *pray always, with all prayer and supplication, and to pray without ceasing*, (Ephes. 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:17) constantly, continually, and

incessantly, and especially in times of trouble; *Call upon me*, says the Lord, *in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me*: (Ps. 50:15) all times and seasons are proper for prayer, but especially afflictive ones; a time of affliction is a peculiar time for prayer; *Is any afflicted? let him pray*; (James 5:13) yea sometimes, when the people of God are negligent of the work and business of prayer, he sends an affliction to them, to bring them to his throne of grace; *in their affliction they will seek me early*: (Hos. 5:15) and particularly in times of public calamity and distress, it is right and highly necessary to call upon God; and happy it is for a nation, when there are, at such seasons, many praying souls in it; it was well for *Israel* they had a *Moses* to stand in the breach, and deprecate the wrath and vengeance of God, that he might not destroy them; and that they had an *Aaron*, who put on incense, and made atonement., and then *stood between the living and the dead, and so the plague was stayed* : but sad is the case of a people, when there is not one to stand in the gap, and intercede for them, that they perish not. This is what is here complained of.

3dly, The manner in which this duty of calling upon God should be performed; that is, in faith, with fervency, in sincerity of heart, and with great importunity. It cannot be done aright without faith; *for how shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed ?* (Rom, 10:14) Whoever *comes to God*, or draws near to him, in any part or branch of worship, and particularly in prayer, *must believe that he is*, (Heb. 11:6) not only that he exists, and is possessed of all divine perfections, but that he is the God of all grace, that keeps covenant, and is faithful to his promises: he must not only believe in the object of prayer, but with respect to the things prayed for; these must he asked *in faith*, for it is the *prayer of faith* that is prevalent with God; (James 1:6 and 5:15) this is the holy confidence that should he cherished, that whatever we ask according to the revealed will of God, that will make for his glory, and our good, shall be given us: and then our petitions should not be put up in a cold, lukewarm, and indifferent manner, but it becomes us to be *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord* (Rom. 12: 11) in every part of worship, and particularly in this of prayer; for it is *the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man that availeth much*: (James 5:16) and we should also *draw nigh* to God, in this duty, *with true hearts*, as well as with full assurance of faith, in the sincerity and uprightness of our souls; for if men *draw near* to God *with their mouths*, and *honour him with their lips* only, but *remove their hearts far from him*, and *their fear towards him is taught by the precept of man*, (Isai. 29:13) they cannot expect to be regarded by him; but he is *nigh to all them that call upon him in truth*; (Ps. 145:18) who are hearty and sincere in their requests unto him; and such may, and should, use an holy importunity with him. Our Lord has given us two instances of importunity, (Luke 11: 5-9 and 13:1-8) on purpose to encourage the same in prayer; the one is of a man that had a friend come to his house late at night, and he without provisions, upon which he calls up his neighbour at midnight, to lend him some bread, but he excuses rising on account of his door being shut, and his children in bed with him; nevertheless, continuing to solicit him, he rises, and gives him what he would have, not on the score of friendship, but because of his importunity the other instance is that of the unjust judge, who neither feared God, nor regarded man, yet being pressed by a poor widow, time after time, to take her case in hand, and do her justice; he at length did undertake it, not for the sake of doing justice, but lest he should be wearied by her continual coming; which our Lord applies thus, *and shall not God avenge his own elect, that cry day and night unto him?* such as, *Jacob-like*, lay hold on the Lord, and will not let him go without the blessing, always succeed; God cannot deny them any thing that ask in faith, fervently, sincerely, and importunately; and therefore a man that neglects this duty and privilege, must be greatly wanting to his own interest.

4thly, Many are the scripture arguments, exciting and encouraging the saints to call upon the Lord; I shall do little more than name the passages in which they are the Lord himself, whose name is to be called upon, bids, invites, and encourages men to call upon him; *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee; ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find;* (Ps. 50:15; Matt. 7:7) what more can be desired, than to ask and have? *The Lord is nigh to all that upon him in truth;* (Ps. 145:18) he draws near to them in a way of grace and mercy, that draw nigh to him in a way of duty: he is *rich unto all that call upon him;* (Rom. 10:12) that is, he liberally bestows on such the riches of his providential goodness, the riches of his grace here, and the riches of glory hereafter he is *plenteous in mercy to all that call upon him;* (Ps. 86:5) he largely and plentifully bestows his grace and mercy on such; *abundantly pardons* their sins, which, as it is an encouraging argument with sensible sinners, to turn unto the Lord, so it is a no less powerful one, to engage saints to pray unto him for fresh discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy. To add no more, it is said, that *whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved;* (Rom. 10:13) saved from all afflictions and distresses; saved out of the hands of enemies; saved with a temporal, and with an everlasting salvation.

And now how great must the sin and folly be of such professors, that neglect to call upon the name of the Lord! not to call upon the name of the Lord is heathenish; and of heathens nothing else is to be expected; for *how should they call on him, in whom they have not believed?* (Ro. 10:14) they know not God, and have no faith in him, and therefore it is no wonder they do not call upon him; and yet the wrath and fury of God are imprecated *on the heathen, that know him not, and on the families that call not on his name;* (Jer. 10:25) and even these, in time of distress, will call upon those they take to be God, as did *Jonah's* mariners. Not to call upon God, is to do as hypocrites do; who, though they may pray openly and publicly before men sometimes, that they may be seen of them, and seem outwardly to take delight in approaching to God; yet as *Job* says, (Job 27:10) *will he, the hypocrite, delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?* No, he will not; he may for a time, but not always: nor does he ever take any real delight and pleasure in it. Now, for a professing people not to call upon God, is to do as heathens and hypocrites do: and such must be under great decays and declensions, if truly gracious persons, that *restrain prayer before God;* (Job 15:4) so to do is highly resented by the Lord; it is a charge he once brought against his church of old, *she drew not near to her God:* (Zeph. 3:2) such act very unbecoming the names of *Jacob* and *Israel*, by which they are called. *Jacob* had the name of *Israel* given him, because *wrestling with God, he had power as a prince, and prevailed;* but how unsuitable is this name to such who call not on the Lord? or how disagreeable to their name and character do they act? the Lord complains of it, *Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel:* (Isai. 43:22) and this is the first branch of the complaint here in our text. I proceed to consider the other part of it.

II. That there were none, or few, that bestirred and aroused themselves to lay hold of the Lord. Here I shall briefly shew what is to *lay hold on* the Lord; and then, what it is for a man *to stir up himself* to do this; the neglect of which is complained of.

1. It is to exercise faith upon him, as to lay hold on Christ is to believe in him; Wisdom, or Christ is *a tree of life*, the Author and Giver of Spiritual and eternal life *to them that lay hold upon him,* (Prov. 3:18) that is, that exercise faith on him; by faith men look to Christ, go to him, and lay hold upon him; the believer lays hold on Christ as his Saviour; and says, *he also shall be my salvation,*

and none else; and, *though he slay me; yet will I trust in him;* (Job 13:15, 16) this is laying hold on Christ to a purpose: believers come to Christ as the mediator of the covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, and deal with it for pardon, peace, and cleansing; they lay hold on his righteousness, the skirt of him that is a Jew, as their justifying-righteousness; they lay hold on him as the strength of the Lord, and say, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength;* (Isai. 45:24) this is laying hold on him for themselves, and exercising faith upon him; and so to lay hold on God, is to exercise faith on him, as a covenant-God and father; it is to avouch him to be our God. It was a noble act of faith in *David*, when he said, *I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God;* (Ps. 31:14) *Job* wished to find him, that he *might come even to his seat;* (Job 23:2) and what would he have done there and then? why, lay hold on him as his own God. And such believers as these will lay hold on the covenant itself; for this is one of the characters of a good man, *that he chooses the things that please God; and takes hold of his covenant;* (Isa. 56:4) claims his interest in it, and which is his support in life and in death; as it was to *David* in his last moments, who could say, *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure;* (2 Sam. 23:5) this was taking fast hold of the covenant for himself: and such will claim all the blessings of it as theirs, even all spiritual blessings, which are in Christ; he being theirs; and also all the promises of it, of which they are heirs, and so have a right unto them; and who, when they find them; take them to themselves, and rejoice at them, and plead them with God; for there is not a promise in the covenant, but the meanest believer has a right unto: promises as well as blessings are common to all; as may be observed from that peculiar promise made to *Joshua*, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;* which every 'believer may take hold on for himself, and take the comfort of, as appears from *Heb. 13:5, 6.*

2. To lay hold on God, is to exercise faith on him, particularly in prayer: prayer is a wrestling with God; and in wrestling, persons lay hold on one another; faith lays hold of God in prayer, as *Jacob* did on the angel he wrestled with, and will not let him go, without having the blessing he is earnest for: and when this is the case, *whatever men ask in prayer, believing, they shall receive.* (Matt. 21:22) The Lord sometimes seems to be departing from his church and people: As the glory of the Lord in *Ezekiel's* Vision (Ezek. 10: 4, 18) went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and then departed from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim, threatening a removal from the temple; so the Lord sometimes seems to be taking his leave of his people; which, when observed by truly gracious souls, they hold upon him, and most earnestly solicit his continuance with them; as the two disciples that travelled with Christ to *Emmaus*, when he seemed as if he would go further, they *constrained him;* (Luke 24:28, 29) they most earnestly intreated him to stay with them; they held him from going further; and thus faith in prayer lays hold on a departing God to retain him. Sometimes the Lord does really depart from his people; their sins and iniquities separate between God and them, and cause him to hide his face from them; when they seek after him, and seeking find him, and having found him, they hold him fast, and will not let him go, until he returns to his church again; their importunate request to him is, *Return we beseech thee, and behold and visit this vine, and the vineyard thy right hand hath planted.* (Ps. 80:14) Sometimes the Lord, being offended with his dear children, lifts up his hand to correct and chastise; when faith in prayer steps in between, and lays hold on his hands, when he is just going to strike the blow; even as when a father displeased with his child, lifts up his hand to strike him; and a friend that is by him, lays hold on his hand, and will not suffer him to give the blow: this might be exemplified in the case of the Israelites, when they had made the golden calf, and worshipped it; the Lord was greatly provoked by them, and thought to destroy them, or signified his desire to do

so; and therefore says to *Moses*, who he knew would intercede for them, *Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation.* (Exod. 32:10) But *Moses* would not let him alone, nor suffer him to do what he seemed desirous of doing; but interceded for the people, and, as it were, held the hands of the Lord from destroying them. What amazing condescension is this, that the infinite and tremendous Being, should suffer himself to be held by a creature from doing what he shewed an inclination to! See here the force of prayer, and the strength of faith! and what encouragement saints have to *stir* up themselves to lay hold on him; and what that is, I shall next consider.

2dly, To stir up a man's self to lay hold on God, is to be diligent in the use of means in seeking after him; as *Job* was, when being at a loss for him, he went *backwards* and *forwards*, on the *right hand*, and on *the left*, in order to find him; and as the church, who sought her beloved *in the streets of the city, and broad-ways*, and inquired here and there, of one, and of another, till she got tidings and sight of him, and then laid hold upon him: (Job 23:3, 8, 9; Song 3:1-4) it is to *seek the Lord*, where and when; and *while* he is to be *found*; and to *call* earnestly and importunately on him, where and when, and *while* he is *near*; (Isai. 55:6) and even when afar off, not to quit the pursuit of him, and inquiry about him, until he is pleased to appear and shew himself. This stirring up a man's self, is no other than a frequent use of the gift of prayer: gifts, like some metals, if not used grow rusty, but the more they are used, the brighter they are; yea, gifts may be lost, though grace cannot; the gift of preaching, through disuse, may come to nothing, and therefore should be stirred up; that is, not neglected, but diligently cultivated, and frequently exercised: hence that advice of the apostle to *Timothy*, *Stir up the gift of God which is in thee*; just as one would stir up coals under ashes, and embers which seem to be dead, and would go out if not stirred; and is the same with, *neglect not the gift that is in thee*: (2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Tim. 4:14) so to stir up the gift is *not to neglect* it, but frequently to use it; and in like manner the gift of prayer should not be neglected, but be often used; and so to do, is to stir it up: and this is not only to be stirred up, but a man should stir up himself to it; which he may be said to do, when he exerts himself, when he calls upon his soul and all within him as to bless and praise the Lord for favours bestowed on him, so to pray unto him in faith, for what he stands in need of; as the church resolved to do; *With my Spirit within me will I seek thee early*; (Isai. 26:9) that is, with my whole heart and soul, in the most earnest and pressing manner, will I pray unto thee, and seek thy face and favour. Stirring up a man's self is opposed to slothfulness in business, and is expressive of that diligence which becomes the people of God: who should be diligent in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; and as they should be diligent to add one virtue to another, as to the exercise thereof, and to make their calling and election sure and manifest to others, and to be found of Christ in peace; so they should diligently seek the Lord, who is a rewarder of all such: the frame of spirit here complained of, is a backwardness to prayer; a remissness in the performance of that duty; a doing this part of the work of God negligently, or in a cold, lukewarm, sleepy, drowsy manner; being like the disciples of our Lord, who were *sleeping* whilst he was *praying*; whom he thus rebukes, *Could ye not watch with me one hour?* (Matt. 26:40) It becomes christians to bestir, awake, and *arouse* themselves, as the word here used (see Isai. 51:17) signifies, from their spiritual stupor and lethargy, at least, to implore the spirit and grace of God to enable them so to do.

The church of Christ and its members are sometimes as it were asleep; the wise as well as the foolish virgins all slumbered and slept; and this is the case with them, when grace lies dormant, or there is a non-exercise of it; an indifference to the duties of religion, or at most a contentedness in

the outward performance of them; an unconcernedness about sins of omission and commission; and little or no regard to the glory of God, and the interest of religion. Such a spirit arises from the prevalence of the flesh, or corrupt nature; from the heart being over charged and surfeited with worldly cares; from a weariness in spiritual exercises, and a cessation from religious ones; from keeping carnal company; and from its being a night-season: great and many are the dangers such are exposed unto, and the church of God by their means; which is liable to be filled with hypocrites, and over-run with errors and heresies ; for *while men sleep, the enemy sows his tares*; (Matt. 13:25) such are personally exposed to every sin, and snare, and temptation; liable to have spiritual poverty and leanness brought upon them; to lose their spiritual peace, joy, and comfort ; and to be surprised with the midnight-cry wherefore it is *high time* for them to bestir themselves, and *awake out of sleep*; (Rom. 13:11) Christ calls upon them to this purpose, and says, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead*; shake off thy lethargy; throw off thy dead companions, and converse no more with them who have been the means of bringing on this sleepy, drowsy frame, and *Christ shall give thee light*; (Ephes. 5:14) pray, as well as thou canst, that the Lord would *quicken* thee, that thou mayest *call upon his name*. (Ps. 80:18)

To come to a close; we may see our own picture in the people here described, that called not on the name of the Lord, and stirred not up themselves to lay hold on him: this is exactly our case; there are none, or however very few, heartily engaged in such spiritual exercises, and which should be matter of lamentation and humiliation: what has been said, should serve to stir up our minds by way of remembrance of the state wherein we are, and from whence we are fallen; and to quicken us to every duty of religion, and particularly to this of prayer, and to the exercise of faith in it; and as we should stir up ourselves, so one another, to this, and every other good work; and which is a principal end of our meeting together at such times as these; and the Lord grant this end may be answered by this discourse and God be glorified.

The

DISSENTER'S REASONS FOR SEPARATING FROM

The Church Of England,

Occasioned By

A Letter wrote by a Welch Clergyman on the Duty of Catechizing Children.

Intended chiefly for the Dissenters of the Baptist Denomination in Wales.

Whereas Dissenters from the church of *England* are frequently charged with schism, and their separation is represented as unreasonable, and they are accounted an obstinate and contentious people; it may be proper to give some reasons why they depart from the Established church; by which it will appear that their separation does not arise from a spirit of singularity and contention, but is really a matter of conscience with them; and that they have that to say for themselves, which will sufficiently justify them, and remove the calumnies that are cast upon them; and our reasons are as follow.

I. We dislike the church of *England* because of its *Constitution*, which is human; and not divine: it is called *The church of England as by law Established*; not by the law of God, but by the law of man: it is said to be the best constituted church in the world, but we like it never the better for its being constituted by men: a church of Christ ought to be constituted as those we read of in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and not established by *Acts of Parliament*; as the articles, worship, and discipline of the church of *England* be; a *parliamentary* church we do not understand; Christ's *kingdom* or church is *not of this world*; it is not established on worldly maxims, nor supported by worldly power and policy.

II. We are not satisfied that the church of *England* is a true church of Christ because of the *form* and order of it; which is national, whereas it ought to be congregational, as the first Christian churches were; we read of the church at *Jerusalem*, and of the churches in *Judea* besides, so that there were several churches in one nation; and also of the churches of *Macedonia*, and likewise of *Galatia*, and of the seven churches of *Asia*, which were in the particular cities mentioned; yea of a church in an house, which could not be national; there were also the church at *Corinth*, and another at *Cenchrea*, a few miles distant from it, and a sea-port of the Corinthians. A church of Christ is a congregation of men who are gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and who separate from it and meet together in fume one place to worship God; and to this agrees the definition of a church in the xixth Article of the church of *England*, and is this; "The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men:" which is against herself; for if a congregation, then not a nation; if a

congregation then it must be gathered out from others; and if a congregation, then it must meet in one place, or it cannot with any propriety be so called; as the church at *Corinth* is said to do (1 Cor. 11:18, 20; 14:23), but when and where did the church of *England* meet together in one place? and how is it the visible church of Christ? where and when was it ever seen in a body together? is it to be seen in the King, the head of it? or in the Parliament, by whom it was established? or in the upper and lower houses of Convocation, its representatives? To say, that it is to be seen in every parish, is either to make a building of stone the church, which is the stupid notion of the vulgar people; or to make the parishioners a church, and then there must be as many churches of *England* as there are parishes, and so some thousands, and not one only.

III. We object to the *matter* or materials of the church of *England*, which are the whole nation, good and bad; yea, inasmuch as all the natives of *England* are members of this church, and are so by birth, they must in their original admission, or becoming members, be all bad; since they are all conceived and born in sin, and great part of them as they grow up are men of vicious lives and conversations; whereas a visible church of Christ ought to consist of *faithful men*, as the above mentioned Article declares, that is, of true believers in Christ and such were the materials of the first Christian churches; they were made up of such as were *called to be saints, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and faithful brethren in him*; as were the churches at Rome, *Corinth*, *Ephesus* and *Colosse*: there were *churches of saints*; but the church of *England* is a church of the world, or consists for the most part of worldly men; and therefore we cannot hold communion with it.

IV. We are dissatisfied with the *doctrine* preached in the church of England, which generally is very corrupt, and not agreeable to the word of God; and therefore cannot be a true church of Christ, which ought to be *the pillar and ground of truth*; for the visible church of Christ, as the 19th article runs, is "a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached;" of which pure word, the doctrines of grace are a considerable part; such as eternal election in Christ, particular redemption by him, justification by his imputed righteousness, pardon through his blood, atonement and satisfaction by his sacrifice, and salvation alone by him, and not by the works of men; the efficacy of divine grace in conversion, the perseverance of the saints, and the like; but there doctrines are scarce ever, or but seldom, and by a very few, preached in the church of *England*: since two thousand godly and faithful ministers were turned out at once, Arminianism has generally prevailed; and scarce any thing else than Arminian tenets and mere morality are preached, and not Christ and him crucified, and the necessity of faith in him, and salvation by him; wherefore we are obliged to depart from such a communion, and seek out elsewhere for food for our souls. And though the xxxix Articles of the church of *England* are agreeable to the word of God, a few only excepted; yet of what avail are they, since they are seldom or ever preached, though sworn and subscribed to by all in public office; and even these are very defective in many things: There are no articles relating to the *two covenants* of *grace* and *works*; to creation and providence; to the fall of man; the nature of sin and punishment for it; to adoption, effectual vocation; sanctification, faith, repentance, and the final perseverance of the saints; nor to the law of God; Christian liberty; church-government and discipline; the communion of the saints; the resurrection of the dead, and the last judgment.

V. We dissent from the church of *England*, because the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's supper are not duly administered in it, according to the word of God, and so is not a regular church of Christ; for, as the above Article says, "The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful

men, in the which — the sacraments be duly ministered, according to Christ's own ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same:" but the said ordinances are not duly administered in the church of *England*, according to the appointment of Christ; there are some things which are of necessity requisite to the same, which are not done; and others which are of necessity requisite, which are enjoined, and with which we cannot comply.

First, The ordinance of Baptism is not administered in the said church, according to the rule of God's word: there are some things used in the administration of it, which are of human invention, and not of Christ's ordination; and other things absolutely necessary to it, which are omitted; and indeed the whole administration of it, has nothing in it agreeable to the institution of Christ, unless it be the bare form of words made use of, *I baptize thee in the name of the Father*, etc.

1. The sign of the cross used in baptism is entirely unscriptural, an human invention, a rite and ceremony which the Papists are very fond of, and ascribe much unto; and indeed the church of *England* makes a kind of a sacrament of it, since the minister when he does it says, that it is done "in token, that hereafter he (the person baptized) shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier unto his life's end:" this is such an human addition to a divine ordinance, as by no means to be admitted.

2. The introduction of sponsors and sureties, or godfathers and godmothers, is without any foundation from the word of God; it is a device of men, and no ways requisite to the administration of the ordinance: besides, they are obliged to promise that for the child, which they cannot do for themselves, nor any creature under heaven; as "to renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so as not to follow or be led by them; and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life."

3. The prayers before and after baptism may well be objected to, suggesting that remission of sins and regeneration are obtained this way; and that such as are baptized are regenerated and undoubtedly saved: in the prayer before baptism are these words; "We call upon thee for this infant, that he coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration;" and when the ceremony is performed, the minister declares, "that this child is regenerate, and grafted in the body of Christ's church;" and in the prayer after it, he says, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy holy Spirit:" and in the rubric are these words; "It is certain by God's word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved;" yea in the Catechism, the person catechized is instructed to say, that in his baptism he "was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven:" which seems greatly to favor the popish notion, that the sacraments confer grace *ex opere operato*, upon the deed done. There are things which give disgust to many Dissenters, that are for infant-baptism; but some of us have greater reasons than these against the administration of baptism in the church of *England*; for,

4. The subjects to which it is administered are not the proper ones, namely infants; we do not find in all the word of God, that infants were commanded to be baptized, or that ever any were baptized by *John*, the first administrator of that ordinance, nor by Christ, nor by his apostles, nor in any of

the primitive churches: the persons we read of, that were baptized in those early times, were such as were sensible of sin, had repentance for it, and had faith in Christ, or professed to have it; all which cannot be laid of infants: nor can we see, that any argument in favor of infant-baptism can be drawn from *Abraham's* covenant, from circumcision, from the baptism of households, or from any passage either in the Old or New Testament. Moreover,

5. We cannot look upon baptism as administered in the church of *England*, to be valid, or true Christian baptism; because not administered in a right way, that is, by immersion, but either by sprinkling or pouring water, which the rubric allows of in care of weakness; nor do we understand, that it is ever performed in any other way, at least, very rarely; whereas we have abundant reason to believe, that the mode of immersion was always used by John the Baptist, and by the apostles of Christ, and by the churches of Christ for many ages.

Secondly, There are many things in the administration of the Lord's supper, which we think we have reason to object unto, and which shew it to be an undue one: and not to take notice of the bread being ready cut with a knife, and not broken by the minister, whereas it is expressly said, that Christ *brake* the bread, and did it in token of his *broken* body; nor of the time of administering it, at noon, which makes it look more like a dinner, or rather like a breakfast, being taken fasting, than a supper; whereas to administer it in the evening best agrees with its name, and the time of its first institution and celebration; but not to insist on these things.

1. *Kneeling* at the receiving of it is made a necessary requisite to it, which looks like an adoration of the elements, and Foetus to favor the doctrine of the *real presence*; and certain it is, that it was brought in by pope *Honorius*, and that for the sake of transubstantiation and the real presence, which his predecessor *Innocent* the iii rd had introduced; and though the church of *England* disavows any such adoration of the elements, and of Christ's corporal presence in them; yet inasmuch as it is notorious that this has been abused, and still is, to idolatry, it ought to be laid aside; and the rather *sitting* should be used, since it is a table-gesture, and more suitable to a feast; and was what was used by Christ and his apostles, and by the primitive churches, until transubstantiation obtained; or however, since kneeling at most is but an indifferent rite, it ought not to be imposed as necessary, but should be left to the liberty of persons to use it or not.

2. The ordinance is administered to all that desire it, whether qualified for it or not; and to many of vicious lives and conversations; yea the minister, when he intends to celebrate it, in the exhortation, which in the book of Common Prayer he is directed to use, says; "unto which, in God's behalf, I bid you, all that are here present, and beseech you for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, that ye will not refuse to come thereto." Whereas it cannot be thought, that all present, every one in a public congregation, or in a parish, are fit and proper communicants; and there are many persons described in the word of God, we art not to eat with (1 Cor. 5:2). Yet the rubric enjoins, "that every parishioner shall communicate, at the least, three times in the year;" and directs, "that new-married persons should receive the holy communion at the time of their marriage, or at the first opportunity after it;" though none surely will say, that all married persons are qualified for it.

3. This sacred ordinance is most horridly prostituted, and most dreadfully profaned, by allowing and even obliging persons, and these often times some of the worst of characters, to come and partake of it as a civil test, to qualify them for places of profit and trust; whereas the design of this

ordinance is to commemorate the sufferings and death of Christ, and his love therein; to strengthen the faith of Christians, and increase their love to Christ and one another, and to maintain communion and fellowship with him and among themselves.

4. This ordinance is sometimes administered in a private house, which took its rise from laying of private mass; and to sick persons, to whom it seems to be given as a *viaticum*, or a provision for the soul in its way to heaven; and to two or three persons only, and even in some cases to a single person; whereas it is a church-ordinance, and ought to be administered only in the church, and to the members of it.

VI. As the church of *England* has neither the form nor matter of a true church, nor is the word of God purely preached, and the ordinances of the gospel duly administered in it; so neither is it a truly *organized* church, it having such ecclesiastical officers and offices in it, which are not to be found in the word of God; and which is another reason why we separate from it. The scripture knows nothing of Archbishops and Diocesan Bishops, of Archdeacons and Deans, of Prebends, Chantors, Parsons, Vicars, Curates, etc. The only two officers in a Christian church are Bishops and Deacons; the one has the care of the spiritual, the other of the temporal affairs of the church; the former is the same with Pastors, Elders, and Overseers; and such men ought to be of sound principles, and exemplary lives and conversations; and moreover ought to be chosen by the people; nor should any be imposed upon them contrary to their will: this is an hardship, and what we cannot submit to: and it is a reason of our reparation, because we are not allowed to choose our own pastors.

VII. The church of *England* has for its *head* a temporal one, whereas the church of Christ has no other head but Christ himself. That our lawful and rightful sovereign King GEORGE is head of the Church of England, we deny not; he is so by *Act of Parliament*, and as such to be acknowledged; but then that church can never be the true church of Christ, that has any other head but Christ; we therefore are obliged to distinguish between the church of England and the church of Christ. A woman may be, and has been head of the church of *England*, but a woman may not be head of a church of Christ; since she is not allowed to speak or teach there, or do any thing that shews authority over the man (1 Cor. 14:34, 35; 1 Tim.2:11, 12).

VIII. The want of *discipline* in the church of *England*, is another reason of our dissent from it. In a regular and well-ordered church of Christ, care is taken that none be admitted into it but such as are judged truly gracious persons, and of whom testimony is given of their becoming conversations; and when they are in it, they are watched over, that their walk is according to the laws and rules of Christ's house; such as sin, are rebuked either privately or publicly, as the nature of the offense is; disorderly persons are censured and withdrawn from; profane men are put out of communion, and heretics, after the first and second admonition, are rejected: but no such discipline as this is maintained in the church of *England*. She herself acknowledges a want of godly discipline, and wishes for a restoration of it; which is done every *Lent* season, and yet no step taken for the bringing of it in: what discipline there is, is not exercised by a minister of a parish, and his own congregation, though the offender is of them, but in the Bishop's Court indeed, yet by laymen; the admonition is by a let of men called Apparitors, and the sentence of excommunication and the whole process leading to it by Lawyers, and not Ministers of the word.

IX. The *Rites and Ceremonies* used in the church of *England*, are another reason of our separation from it. Some of them are manifestly of pagan original; some favor of Judaism, and are no other than abolished Jewish rites revived; and most, if not all of them, are retained by the papists; and have been, and still are, abused to idolatry and superstition. Bowing to the east, was an idolatrous practice of the heathens, and is condemned in scripture as an abominable thing (Ezek. 18:15, 16). Bowing to the altar, is a relic of popery, used by way of adoration of the elements, and in favor and for the support of transubstantiation, and the real presence; and therefore by no means to be used by those that disbelieve that doctrine, and must be an hardening of such that have faith in it. Bowing, when the name of Jesus is mentioned, is a piece of superstition and will-worship, and has no countenance from (Phil. 2:10). The words should be rendered *in*, and not *at* the name of Jesus; nor is it *in the name Jesus*, but *in the name of Jesus*, and so designs some other name, and not Jesus; and a name given him after his resurrection, and not before, as the name of Jesus was at his birth; and besides some are obliged to bow in it, who have no knees in a literal sense to bow with, and therefore bowing of the knee cannot be meant in any such sense. And as for such ceremonies which in their own nature are neither good nor bad, but indifferent, they ought to be left as such, and not imposed as necessary; the imposition of things indifferent in divine service as necessary, as if without which it could not be rightly performed, is a sufficient reason why they ought not to be submitted to: such and such particular garments worn by persons in sacred office, considered as indifferent things, may be used or not used; but if the use of these is insisted on, as being holy and necessary, and without which divine worship cannot rightly be performed, then they ought to be rejected as abominable. Nor can we like the surplice ever the better for being brought in by pope *Adrian*, A. D. 796. The cross in baptism, and kneeling at the Lord's-supper, have been taken notice of before.

X. The book of *Common Prayer*, set forth as a rule and directory of divine worship and service, we have many things to object to.

1. Inasmuch as it prescribes certain stunted set forms of prayer, and ties men up to the use of them: we do not find that the apostles of Christ and the first churches used any such forms, nor Christians for many ages; and of whatever use it can be thought to be unto persons of weak capacities, surely such that have spiritual gifts, or the gift of preaching the gospel, can stand in no need of it, and who must have the gift of prayer; and to be bound to such pre-composed forms, as it agrees not with the promise of the Spirit of grace and supplication, so not with the different cases, circumstances, and frames that Christians are sometimes in; wherefore not to take notice of the defectiveness of these prayers, and of the incoherence and obscurity of some of the petitions in them; the frequent tautologies and repetitions, especially in the Litany, so contrary to Christ's precept in Matthew 6:7 are sufficient to give us a distaste of them.

2. Though we are not against reading the scriptures in private and in public, yet we cannot approve of the manner the Liturgy directs unto; namely, the reading it by piece-meals, by bits and scraps, so mangled and curtailed as the Gospels and Epistles are: we see not why any part of scripture should be omitted; and the order of these being an invention of a Pope of Rome, and the fixing them to matins and even-songs smelling so rank of popery, no ways serve to recommend them to us: not to take notice of the great impropriety of calling passages out of *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Joel*, *Malachi*, and the Acts of the apostles, by the name of Epistles: but especially it gives us much uneasiness to see lessons taken out of the *Apocrypha*, and appointed to be read as if of equal authority with the sacred

scriptures; nay not only out of the books of *Baruch*, *Wisdom*, and *Ecclesiasticus*, but out of the histories of *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Susanna*, *Bel and the dragon*, and such lessons out of them as contain the most idle and fabulous stories.

3. The book of Common Prayer, enjoins the reading of the book of *Psalms* in the corrupt translation of the *Vulgate Latin*, used by the papists; in which there are great omissions and subtractions in some places; as every where, the titles of the *Psalms* are left out, and in all places there words *Higgaion* and *Selah*, and the last verse of Psalm 72 and in others, there are manifest additions, as in Psalm 2:12; 4:8; 13:6; 22:1, 31; 39:12; 132:4; 136:27; 147:8 and three whole verses in Psalm 14, whereas nothing should be taken from, nor added to the word of God; some sentences are absurd and void of sense, as Psalm 58:8; 68:30, 31; and in others the sense is perverted, or a contrary one given, as in Psalm 17:4; 18:26; 30:13; 105:28; 106:30; 107:40; and 125:3. This translation of the *Psalms* stands in the *English* Liturgy, and is used and read in the churches in *England*.

4. It directs to the observation of several fasts and festivals, which are no where enjoined in the word of God, and for which it provides collects, gospels and epistles to be read: the fasts are, *Quadragesima* or *Lent*, in imitation of Christ's forty days fast in the wilderness, *Ember* weeks, *Rogatian* days, and all the *Fridays* in the year; in which men are commanded to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving. The festivals, besides, the principal ones, *Christmas*, *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, are the several saints days throughout the year; which are all of popish invention, and are either moveable or fixed, as the popish festivals be; and being the relics of popery makes us still more uneasy and dissatisfied with them.

5. Besides the corruptions before observed in the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's supper, in the order for the Visitation of the Sick stands a form of Absolution, which runs thus; "And by his (Christ's) authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost;" which is a mere popish device; Christ having left no such power to his church, nor committed any such authority to any set of men in it; all that the Ministers of Christ have power or authority to do, is only ministerially to declare and pronounce, that such who believe in Christ shall receive the remission of sins, and that their sins are forgiven them; and that such who believe not shall be damned.

6. It appoints some things merely civil, as ecclesiastical and appertaining to the ministry, and to be performed by ecclesiastical persons and ministers, and provides offices for them: as,

1. Matrimony; which seems to favor the popish notion of making a sacrament of it; whereas it is a mere civil contract between a man and a woman, and in which a minister has nothing to do; nor do we ever read of any priest or Levite, that was ever concerned in the solemnization of it between other persons, under the Old Testament, or of any apostle or minister of the word, under the New; not to say any thing of the form of it, or of the ceremonies attending it.

2. The Burial of the Dead; which is a mere civil action, and belongs not to a gospel-minister, but to the relations of the deceased or other neighbors, friends or acquaintance (Matthew 8:21, 22; Acts 8:2): nor is there any necessity for a place to be consecrated for such a purpose. *Abraham* and *Sarah* were buried in a cave, *Deborah* under an oak, *Joshua* in a field, *Samuel* in his house, and Christ in a garden (Gen. 23:9; 35:8; John 24:30; 1 Sam. 25:1; John 19:41). Nor do the scriptures

ever make mention of any service being read, or of any divine worship being performed at the interment of the dead; and was any thing of this kind necessary, yet we must be obliged to object unto, nor could we comply with, the service used by the church of *England* on this occasion; we cannot in conscience call every man and woman, our *dear brother*, or our *dear sister*, as some who have lived vicious lives, and have not appeared to have had true repentance towards God or faith in Christ, have been called; or "commit their bodies to the ground in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life;" since we know there will be a resurrection to damnation as well as to eternal life; nor can we give thanks to God on account of many, "that it has pleased him to deliver them out of the miseries of this sinful world;" nor join in the following petition, which seems to favor the popish notion of praying for the dead; "beseeching — that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul," etc.

XI. We cannot commune with the church of *England*, because it is of a persecuting spirit; and we cannot think such a church is a true church of Christ: that the *Puritans* were persecuted by it in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, and the Dissenters in the reign of King *Charles* the second, is not to be denied; and though this spirit does not now prevail, this is owing to the mild and gentle government of our gracious sovereign King *GEORGE*, the head of this Church, for which we have reason to be thankful; and yet it is not even now quite clear of persecution, witness the Test and Corporation-acts, by which many free-born *Englishmen* are deprived of their native rights, because they cannot conform to the church of *England*; besides, the reproaches and revilings which are daily cast upon us, from the pulpit and the press, as well as in conversation, shew the same: and to remove all such calumnies and reproaches, has been the inducement to draw up the above reasons for our dissent; and which have been chiefly occasioned by a late *Letter on the duty of Catechizing Children*, in which the author, is not content highly to commend the church of *England*, as the purest church under heaven, but reflects greatly on Dissenters, and particularly on such whom he calls *rebaptizers*; and repeats the old stale story of the *German Anabaptists*, and their errors, madness and distractions; and most maliciously insinuates, that the people who now go by this name are tinctured with erroneous principles; for he says, they spread their errors in adjacent countries, which are not fully extinguished to this day: whereas they are a people that scarce agree with us in any thing; neither in their civil nor in their religious principles, nor even in baptism itself; for they were for the repetition of adult-baptism in some cases, which we are not: and used sprinkling in baptism, which we do not: the difference between them and us is much greater than between the papists and the church of *England*; and yet this letter-writer would think it very hard and unkind in us, should we rake up all the murders and massacres committed by Paedobaptists, and that upon principle, believing that in so doing they did God good service; I mean the Papists, who are all Paedobaptists; and yet this might be done with as much truth and ingenuity, as the former story is told: and besides, the disturbances in *Germany* were begun by Paedobaptists; first: by the Papists before the reformation, and then by Lutherans after it, whom *Luther* endeavored to dissuade from such practices; and even the disturbances in *Munster* were begun by Paedobaptist ministers, with whom some called Anabaptists joined, and on whom the whole scandal is laid. But what is all this to us, who as much disavow their principles and practices, as any people under the heavens? nor does our different way of thinking about baptism any ways tend to the same.

The
DOCTRINE OF THE WHEELS,
IN THE VISIONS OF EZEKIEL,
OPENED AND EXPLAINED.

A Sermon,

Preached *April 25, 1765*, to an Assembly of Ministers and Churches, at the Meeting—house of the Rev. Mr. ANDERSON, in *Grafton—Street, Westminster.*

EZEKIEL 10:13

As for the Wheels, it was cried unto them in my hearing, O Wheel.

SOME time ago, on a public occasion, I delivered a discourse (since printed) concerning the *Cherubim*, or Living Creatures, frequently mentioned in these visions of *Ezekiel*; and I then intimated, that as by the *Cherubim* we are to understand the Ministers of the gospel; so by the *Wheels*, the Churches of Christ under the Gospel-dispensation. And since I am about to preach to an assembly of Churches, there can be no impropriety in treating on such a subject at this time.

Various are the interpretations given of these Wheels. The more commonly received sense of them is, that they signify the World, and all things in it, which are changeable, unsettled, and uncertain; and the Providences of God, which are various and different, and cause changes, revolutions, and vicissitudes, in men and things *one generation passeth away, and another cometh*; some are wheeling out of the world, and others wheeling into it; things whirl about continually as the wise man says (Eccles. 1:4, 6) of the wind, and return again according to their circuits; and yet they are not carried by a blind impetus, but are tinder the guidance of unerring wisdom, and under the direction of the omniscient Being, *whose eyes run to and fro through the whole earth*; (Zech. 4:10) hence it is thought these wheels are said to *befall of eyes*: and though the providences of God, many of them are intricate and obscure, and so are as it were a *wheel within a wheel*: the reasons of them are not easily penetrated into, nor the ends God has in view at once to be seen; *his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out*; (Rom. 11:33) yet there is a harmony and consistency between them, they are all of a piece; the Wheels have all *one likeness*; and when the mystery of Cod in providence shall be finished, and his judgments are made manifest, they will appear harmonious, beautiful, and delightful. But from this generally received interpretation, many have thought fit to recede;

some, as by the Cherubim, or Living Creatures, understand the Churches of God, composed of living saints: so by the Wheels they suppose angels are meant, and that what wheels are to chariots, that angels are to churches, useful and subservient to them; *ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who are the heirs of salvation*: (Heb. 1:14) others are of opinion, that churches and members of churches are designed both by the Cherubim and the Wheels; by the one the superior members of the churches, and by the other the inferior ones: such a distinction in churches may be admitted, for *God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, &c.* and the rest of the members, the private and common ones, may be reckoned the inferior, yet all useful and necessary; the Cherubim are thought to be meant by the former, the wheels by the latter; and a chariot without wheels is of little or no use, as wheels without a chariot, or other carriage, are insignificant; and thus, as the apostle argues with respect to the members of an human body, *the eye cannot say to the head, I leave no need of/ice; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you; yea, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.* (1 Cor. 12:21-23, 28) Others, as they interpret the Cherubim of the ministers of the gospel, and I think rightly, so the wheels of the work of their ministry, which is sometimes called a course, a race, or running; thus *John's* ministry is said to be *his course*, and the apostle *Paul* joins his course and ministry together, as meaning the same thing; and elsewhere directs, to *pray that the word of the Lord might leave free course, and be glorified*: (Acts 13:25 & 20:24) and it is observed, that. there is but one wheel, one faith, one doctrine of faiths or system of truths to be delivered and received; and though ministered by different persons, and these have different gifts, yet, as to the sum and substance of it, is the same; as the apostle says, *The son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Sylvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay*; (2 Thess. 3:1; 2 Cor. 1:19) we did not contradict ourselves, nor one another; there is an unity, harmony, and consistence, in the ministration of the gospel; the wheels have one likeness; and though the doctrines of the gospel are mysterious, abstruse, and hidden to many, are like a riddle, or an enigma, or as a wheel within a wheel yet they are plain to enlightened minds, to them that find spiritual and experimental knowledge: and as wheels when set in motion roll on with force and rapidity; so the doctrines of the gospel, when the Spirit of God is in those wheels, or when they are attended with his energy, they come with demonstration and power, and are the power of God unto salvation.

But the key for the interpretation of the Wheels, as the Cherubim, is to be taken from *John's* vision in the fourth chapter of the *Revelation*; for as the Cherubim, or living creatures, in *Ezekiel's* visions, are the same with *John's* four beasts, or living creatures; so the Wheels here are the same with the *four and twenty* elders there, which are the representatives of gospel-churches; described by their number, in allusion to the *four and twenty* courses of the priests, in the time of *David*; by their character, as *elders*, in distinction from the church of the Old Testament, and its members; who were as children in their non-age, under the elements of this world; whereas gospel-churches, and their members, are young men and fathers, grown men in knowledge and understanding; by their seats, and thrones on which they sat, expressive of their power and authority of judging and determining things relative to their own affairs within themselves; as who shall be received among them, retained by them, or excluded from them: *What have I to do, says the apostle, to judge them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?*(1 Cor. 5:12) They are also described by their raiment, *clothed in white linen*; that fine linen, clean, and white, which is the righteousness of the

saints, and that is the righteousness of Christ; and by *having on their heads crowns of gold*, signifying they are made kings and priests unto God by Jesus Christ. And now that these and the wheels signify the same, may be concluded partly by their situation; the same situation the elders have in *John's* vision, the wheels have in *Ezekiel's*; in *John's* vision there was a throne, and one on it, the Lord Jesus Christ; next to this throne were the four living creatures, or ministers of the word; who receive their commission, power, and authority, gifts, grace, light and knowledge, from Christ; on the throne; next to them are the elders, or gospel-churches, to whom they communicate what they receive from Christ; see *Rev.* 4:2, 4 and v. 6, and 7:11. So in the visions of *Ezekiel*, there was a throne, and nearest to the throne were the Cherubim; and *by* the Cherubim were the wheels, see *Ezek.* 1:15, 26 and 10:1, 2, 6, 9, and partly by their dependence on one another, and their order of operation: in *John's* vision the four living creatures move first, and give the lead in divine worship. *Rev.* 4:9, 10 and v. 14. So in *Ezekiel's* visions, as the Cherubim, or living creatures moved, so the wheels did; *when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; and when the living creatures were lift up from the earth, the wheels where lift up*, *Ezek.* 1:19. And again, *when those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when these lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them*, ver. 21; see also chap. 10:16-19. In this light, in this view of things, I shall consider the wheels, and shew the agreement between them and the gospel-churches; and my business will be to observe their name, their number, their situation, their form, figure, and appearance, and their motion.

First, Their name, Wheels, or Wheel; *as for the wheels, it was said in my hearing; or they were called in my hearing*, by the following name, *Galgal*; which signifies something that may be rolled, a wheel, and that is round as that is, a circle, or a globe, or sphere: now as the round and circular form is a symbol of perfection; this may denote the comparative perfection of the gospel-churches to that of the Old-Testament-church under the law: *the law made nothing perfect; the sacrifices of it were not perfect, nor could it by them make the comers thereunto perfect: but the bringing in of a better hope did;* (*Heb.* 7:19) Christ, who is come an high priest of good things to come, the ground and foundation of all solid hope; he by one sacrifice has perfected his people for ever, obtained perfect peace and reconciliation, made a full atonement, wrought out a complete righteousness, and procured a full pardon, and is become the author of eternal redemption and salvation; *God having provided some better thing for us*, under the gospel dispensation, *that they*, of the former dispensation, *without us should not he made perfect:* (*Heb.* 11:40) they were, as before observed, as children not grown up to maturity; but members of gospel-churches, in comparison of them, are arrived *to the measure of the stature of Christ*; though in comparison of the church triumphant, or saints in heaven, they are imperfect, know but in part, and prophesy but in part. The word here used, as hinted before, signifies a globe, or sphere, and is used of the heavenly sphere, the concave, or expanse, which surrounds our globe, and in which the heavenly bodies move; and it is translated *heaven* in *Psalms* 78:18. *The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven;* in *Galgal*, in the heavenly sphere: and it is easy to observe, that the gospel-church-state is called *the heavenly Jerusalem*, (*Heb.* 12:22) in distinction from the former dispensation, and *heaven* itself; and in which sense it is almost always, if not always, used throughout the book of the *Revelation*; and this may suggest unto us, that members of gospel-churches are, or should be, souls born again, born from above; heaven-born souls, partakers of the heavenly calling, and such as are pressing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ.

Gospel-churches may be signified by wheels, because of their moveableness and changeableness. Wheels are rolled about and moved from place to place, and so have churches been. The first gospel-churches were planted in *Judea*, and then the kingdom of God, or gospel-church-state, was taken from thence, and carried into the Gentile world, where various churches were raised, as the seven churches of *Asia*; and what was threatened to one of them, the church of *Ephesus*, has been true of them all; that the candlestick, or church-state, should be removed out of its place; for where are those churches now? Gospel-churches were first in the eastern part of the world, then they came more westerly, and now more northerly, where their chief seat is. Thus they have been wheeled about, and perhaps may take another circuit more southerly. Gospel-churches are not always in the same state and condition, as well as not in the same place: sometimes in prosperity, and sometimes in adversity; sometimes in a state of persecution, and sometimes in a state of peace and liberty. The first gospel-church was at *Jerusalem*, and was at first prosperous and numerous; but at length a persecution arose, by which its members were made havoc of, and its ministers scattered abroad; and so it fared with other churches; but after a time the churches had rest throughout *Judea*, *Galilee*, and *Samaria*, and were edified and multiplied; (Acts 8:1 and 9:31) and so it was with the churches among the Gentiles, they had tribulation *ten days* under the ten Roman emperors that persecuted them; and then there was *silence in heaven for half an hour*; peace and quietness in the churches for a small space of time; in the reign of *Constantine*. (Rev. 2:10 and 8:1) At one time, the church is represented in a most glorious and splendid manner, as *clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars*; expressive of her dignity, and of her purity in doctrine and worship; and presently we hear of her taking two wings, and fleeing into the wilderness, where she is nourished for *a time, and times, and half a time*; (Rev. 12:1, 6, 14) and in a changeable state on one account or another, have the churches of Christ been ever since; our forefathers in the last century suffered persecution; we now enjoy peace and liberty; what this will issue in, time only can discover.

The Cherubim are sometimes called *the chariot of the cherubim*; (1 Chron. 28:18) not that they themselves, abstractedly considered, form a chariot; though the Lord is said to *ride upon a cherub*; (Ps. 18:10) but, they with the wheels make one; for a chariot without wheels, as before observed, is of no use; but with wheels it is fit for carriage; such is the church of Christ; it is said, *king Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon*; (Song. 3:9) by king *Solomon* is not meant literally *Solomon* king of *Israel*, but a greater than he, Christ his antitype, the prince of peace: and by the *chariot* he made for himself, his own use, service, and glory, may be meant his church; which, as composed of persons possessed of the fragrant graces of the Spirit, and having the odours of prayer and praise, and being persevering saints in faith and holiness, may be said to be made of the sweet-smelling and incorruptible wood of *Lebanon*; and in this chariot Christ rides up and down in the world, and does his work and business: and indeed wherever there are wheels of any sort, and upon any account, there is work to be done; and there is scarce any manufacture, but there is a wheel made rise of in one part and branch of it, or another: and in and by the churches of Christ much work is done; here the gospel is preached, the ordinances are administered, the sacrifices of prayer and praise are offered up, souls are converted, and saints edified and comforted, and God in all things glorified. And when wheels are in motion, they make a great rattling and noise: we often read of the *rushing* of chariots, of the *rumbling* of their wheels, and of the *noise of them*

on the tops of mountains; see *Jer. 47:3; Joel 2:5*; and when there is any work doing in the churches of Christ, especially any thing remarkable, it makes a great noise in the world. So in *Judea*, when the gospel was first preached there, and souls were in great numbers converted, and churches planted, the Sanhedrin, the elders, scribes, pharisees, and Sadducees, were alarmed with it; and in the Gentile world, wherever there was a *door opened*, a door of opportunity to preach the gospel, and a door of utterance in ministers, and a door of entrance into the hearts of men, *there were many adversaries*; (1 Cor. 16:9) to oppose Christ's ministers, to stir up men against them, and give out the cry, *those that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also*: (Acts 17:6) yea, there are great noises and shoutings in ministers of the word, and the churches themselves, when any remarkable and extraordinary work is going forward; so at the time of the Reformation, which the 10th chapter of the *Revelation* describes, when the voice of Christ was *as when a lion roareth*, he being *the lion of the tribe of Judah*; *the seven thunders*, the *Boanerges*, or sons of thunder, *uttered their voices*; and when the judgments of God will come down upon antichrist, and upon the antichristian states, and the marriage of the lamb will be come, and the church, the lamb's wife, made ready for him, and the spiritual reign of Christ will take place, a great voice of much people will be heard in heaven, the church; and a voice out of the throne, and the voice of a great multitude, as of many waters, and of mighty thunderings, saying *Allelujah, salvation, glory, honour, and power, to the Lord our God: the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*. Rev. 12:1-7.

Secondly, The number of the wheels is next to be considered. They are called *wheels*, in the plural number, in our text, and yet according to it were named *a wheel, one wheel*, as elsewhere in the vision, and yet four; see chap. 1:15, 16; they seem to be formed in this manner, like two hoops put in a cross and transverse manner, which intersect each other, and make four semicircles; and these four semicircles make one globe or sphere; and so there were one and yet four, and four and but one. Indeed, from ver. 9, 14, it seems as if there were four in this form, since there was a wheel to every cherub, and every wheel had four faces; that is, on the four semicircles: now considered as one wheel, they represent the church catholic and invisible, *the general assembly and church of the first-born*, consisting of all the elect that have been, are, or shall be, even all *those whose names are written in heaven*; and this is but one, of which Christ says, *There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number*; many visible congregated churches, and a great number of particular saints: *My love, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, the choice one of her that bare her*. (Song. 6:8, 9) There is but one church, of which Christ is the head, *the head of the body, the church*; but one church, that he has loved with an everlasting love, and has *given himself an offering and a sacrifice for unto God*. But particular congregated churches are many; and they are signified by the number *four*, partly with respect to the four cherubs, as appears from ver. 9. *And when I looked, behold, the four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub*; so in the first gospel churches, *in every church elders were ordained*; and in every city, that is, wherever there was a church, an elder, or pastor was appointed, and constituted over it; and for the most part but one in a church; though in some churches, which might be very large, there were more: hence we read of the elders of the church at *Ephesus*, and of bishops in *Philippi*; (Acts 20:17; Phil. 1:1) but in the seven churches of *Asia*, there was but *one* angel, pastor, or bishop over each church, *one wheel by one cherub*; and partly the number four may be used with respect to the four parts of the world, where churches have been, or will be placed.

Christ gave his apostles a commission to *preach the gospel to all nations*, in every part of the world; and they did go, and *their sound also, into all the earth*, and unto the ends of the world; and multitudes were converted, and churches raised in all parts of it; and so it will be again, before the end of the world, and the coming of Christ; *the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord*; great numbers will be converted in the four parts of the world; God will bring the spiritual seed of Christ, and of his church, *from the east, and gather them from the west*; he will say to the north, *Give up*; and to the south, *Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth*; (Isai. 403:5, 6) who shall be gathered into gospel-churches; and at the close of time Christ will send forth his angels, and gather together his elect from the four winds, (Matt. 24:31) where they have lived in a gospel-church state.

Thirdly, The situation of the wheels; they were upon the earth, and by the cherubim.

1. They were upon the earth; *Behold, one wheel upon the earth*, chap. 1:15; and where one was, the four were; this is observed, to distinguish the churches of Christ here, from the church triumphant in heaven. Christ's family is partly in heaven, and partly on earth those whom Christ redeemed and gathered together in one head, himself, and reconciled unto God, are *things in heaven, and things on earth*; the chosen, redeemed, and called, are first gathered into Gospel-churches on earth, before they are removed to heaven, from whence they will descend again, as a bride adorned for her husband. This points out the place where saints for the present are; though they are chosen, and called out of the world, yet; they are still in it; and the work done in churches is done by them whilst in the world; here the gospel is preached, and ordinances administered, conversion-work wrought, and edification in the way and manner it is; these are only done on earth: and this may also denote that the moveable and changeable state of the churches of Christ, before observed, is only on earth, and in the present earth; for in the new earth, the tabernacle of God that will be there and then with men, will be *a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken*; (Rev. 21:3; Isai. 35:10) no removing, no rolling, no wheeling from place to place, no change of state, condition, and circumstance; when *the ransomed of the Lord are come to Zion*, to the church above, *everlasting joy will be upon their heads—and sorrow and sighing shall flee away*: (Isai. 35:10) though this may likewise signify the firmness of gospel-churches; they are not in the air, nor on the sea, where wheels cannot be employed, but on *terra firma*; and what that is to wheels, Christ is to his churches, the base and foundation of them; the Lord has founded *Zion*, and it is well founded; he *has laid in it for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, which is Jesus Christ; the foundation of the apostles and prophets*; of their laying ministerially; and on which gospel-churches in all ages are laid, a rock firm and sure, against which the powers of hell and earth cannot prevail.

2. The wheels are said to be *by the cherubim*, or living creatures; see chap. 1:15. and 10:9, 16, 19; to be put in motion by them. The churches are placed by the ministers of the word, near them, and beside them, to put them in mind of, and to stir them up to the exercise of every grace, faith, hope, love, &c., and to put them in mind of every duty both towards God and man; that they be ready to every good work, and careful to maintain it; and to put them in remembrance of the doctrines of the Gospel they have made a profession of, that they hold them fast unto the end. They are placed by them to instruct them in matters of faith, to

declare to them the whole counsel of God, and keep back nothing from them that may be profitable to them; and to go before them, and give the lead to them in matters of worship, and to direct them in matters of discipline; to observe to them the rules of it, that they withdraw from persons that walk disorderly; and *an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject*. They are placed by them to watch over them, to watch for their souls, for the good of them, and to preserve them from every evil and false way, from immorality and heresy, from every thing dangerous and pernicious. They are called *watchmen*, in allusion both to watchmen that go about the city, to give the time of night, and notice of any danger; and to watchmen on the walls, set there to descry an enemy, and give the alarm of his near approach, to provide against him. They are placed by them, the churches by the ministers, that they may feed them with knowledge and understanding, with the wholesome words of Christ, with the words of faith and good doctrine, with *the sincere milk of the word, and with the bread of life*. Wherefore, if any should make the inquiry, where Christ feeds his flocks, let them take the answer and direction he gives; *Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds tents*; (Song. 1:7, 8) go where the cherubim and wheels be, where ministers and churches meet together for religious exercises.

Fourthly, The form, figure, colour, and appearance of the Wheels, the description of which is various.

1. They are said to have four faces, as in the following verse; ver. 14. *And every one had four faces; the first face was the face of a cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third face the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle*; the same with the faces of a cherubim. Ministers, of the churches are, or should be, of the same mind, of the same judgment, and of one accord; they should have the same face and look, and draw the same way; and then they are like *a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot*; (Song. 1:9) they will put shoulder to shoulder, and serve the Lord with one consent. The first face was that of a cherub, that is, of an ox, as appears from chap. 1:10; which has its name from *plowing*, in which the ox was employed, and gives the denomination to the whole figure: now this is a proper emblem of the members of gospel churches, it being a clean creature that chews the cud; and so describes such who ruminate on the word, who meditate in the law and doctrine of God night and day, constantly, as they have leisure and opportunity; and their meditation is sweet when they are led to the nature, perfections, and promises of God, to his everlasting love, and the covenant of grace, to the person, offices, and grace of Christ. The ox is patient under the yoke when accustomed to it; and so are saints who have learnt, and have been inured to bear the yoke in their youth; whether the yoke of Christ's commands, which is easy and light; or the yoke of affliction, reproaches, and persecution, which they bear patiently for Christ's sake; *tribulation works patience* in them, and *patience has its perfect work*. The ox is a laborious creature, strong to labour, and constant in it; and so fitly represents the members of gospel churches, who are, or should be, *steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*; as the members of the first gospel-church were, who *continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers*.

The *second* face was the face of a man; signifying that they were knowing and understanding persons; were, in understanding, men, and had attained to a large measure of knowledge of divine and spiritual things, and were still *growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ*;

and that they were, or should be, humane, kind to one another, tender-hearted, and put on bowels of compassion and tenderness to each other; and forgive one another any quarrel they lead, as God for Christ's sake forgave them; and that. they were sympathizing with each other in every condition and circumstance; *wept with those that wept, and rejoiced with those that rejoiced.*

The *third* face was the face of a lion; denoting courage, holiness, and intrepidity in the saints, who are, should be, as bold as a lion in the cause of Christ, and in the profession of him, holding fast his name, and not denying his faith, even where Satan's seat is; not being afraid of the faces of men, as they have no reason; for if God is for them, and on their side; if he is their light and life, their salvation and strength, they have nothing to fear from men or devils.

The *fourth* face was that of an eagle, a bird that has a piercing eye, and soars aloft, and describes such who mount up with wings as eagles, in the exercise of faith and love: who dwell on high, in God and Christ, and upon everlasting things; who seek after, and set their affections on things above, where Jesus is.

2. *The appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a beryl stone*, ver. 9, so in chap. 1:16; which was one of the precious stones in the high priest's breast-plate, and one of the twelve foundations of the new *Jerusalem*, and with which the hands of Christ are said to be adorned. This may denote the preciousness of the members of gospel-churches, what worth and value they are of in the esteem of Christ; these precious sons of *Sion* are not only comparable to fine gold, for their lustre, splendor, worth, and duration; but to jewels and precious stones; *they shall be mine*, says Christ, (Mal. 3:17) *when I make up my jewels*: and may signify the beauty and glory of the churches of Christ, and the members of them; whose *cheeks are comely with rows of jewels*, and their *necks with chains of gold*; (Song. 1:10) as they are adorned with the graces of the Spirit, and arrayed with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the garments of his salvation; when they are as richly decked as the bridegroom. with his ornaments, and the bride with her jewels. The colour of the beryl is the colour of the sea, or a sea-green; and the word for it, *Tarshish*, is used for the sea itself; and may lead to think of the fluctuating state of the churches or Christ in this world; which is as a tempestuous sea, and they as ships upon it, *tossed with tempests*, and not comforted; Christ is their pilot, faith the cable, and hope the anchor, sure and steadfast; and through the skill, ability, and guidance of the pilot, they are brought at last, through many storms and tempests, to the desired haven.

3. The four wheels had *one likeness*, ver. 10. and chap. 1:16. Gospel-churches consist of one and the same sort of persons; who are enlightened by the Spirit of God to see their lost state by nature; are directed to Christ alone for salvation, and obtain like precious faith for nature, though not to the same degree; and whose experiences are similar: for *as face answers to face in water*, (Prov. 27:19) so do the hearts and experiences of God's people answer to each other: for though the Spirit of God may take a different course with some than with others; some have more of, and are held longer under, the terrors of the law; whilst others are drawn with the cords of love, almost at once; they may have different promises applied, and different providences may be sanctified to them; yet the sum and substance, and tendency of their experience are the same, to debase the creature, exalt Christ, and magnify the riches of God's grace. Gospel-churches have the same faith, the same doctrine of faith; for there is but one

faith delivered to the saints they have the same ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper; and the same officers, bishops and deacons; they have the same power and authority to choose their own officers, as the first church did *Matthias* in the room of *Judas*; and deacons, when they became necessary: they have the same power to receive and exclude members; they are independent of others, and *call no man master on earth*; they have the same form of government, under Christ their Head, Lord and Master, whom they own and profess to be their King, Lawgiver, and Saviour, and no other. They have pastors over them under Christ, whom they not only honour and esteem, but yield subjection to, when ruling well, according to the laws and institutions of Christ.

They are said to be *a wheel in the middle of a wheel*, ver. 10 and chap. 1:16; not inclusively, as if one wheel was included in the other: for then they would not be alike, but one would be lesser than another; but they were put in that cross and transverse way before described, so that they seemed but one wheel, one globe or sphere; that is, one catholic church, built on the same foundation of the apostles and prophets; and which grows up into an holy temple in the Lord, and is built as one habitation for God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

5. The rings, circles, and circumferences of these wheels deserve some notice: as for their rings, it is said, chap. 1:18; *they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four.*

(1.) These were very high, and so must in proportion be very large: and which may signify the visibility and extensiveness of the churches of Christ under the gospel-dispensation, especially in the latter day. The churches of Christ are like a city upon an high hill, which cannot be hid, but is seen at a great distance. They are built upon a rock, that is exceeding high; and in the latter day they will be exalted above the high mountains and hills, the kingdoms and states of this world; and will be so enlarged when the nation of the Jews, and the fulness of the Gentiles are brought in, that there will be want of room for the members to dwell in them, *Isai. 2:2.* and chap. 49:20.

(2.) They are said to be very dreadful, as the church militant is to her enemies, *terrible as an army with banners*; (Song. 6:4, 10) having Christ as a general at the head of it, with a large number of good soldiers of his under him, and accoutered with the whole armour of God, in rank and file, and colours flying; and as the church will be in her elevated state, when her slain witnesses are risen, and shall ascend to heaven; that is, come into a glorious and happy state in the sight of their enemies, and seven thousand men of name slain, and the remnant affrighted. Or the word may here be rendered *reverent*; they were both reverend and reverent; respectable, in high esteem, as the church will be in the latter day, even to great personages; *kings will be nursing fathers to her, and queens nursing mothers*; and *they will bow down towards her, and lid the dust of her feet*, *Isai. 49:23*, and reverent; or *there was fear*, or *they had fear in them*; the fear of God is in his churches; he is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints; and the true members thereof serve him with reverence and godly fear.

(3.) These rings were *fall of eyes round about*; the same is said of the wheels, that is, of the rings of them, ver. 12. This shews that the members of gospel-churches are such who have the

eyes of their under-standing enlightened by the Spirit of God, to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the demerit of it; to behold the preciousness, excellency, suitableness, and fulness of Christ, as a Saviour; to look to him for life and salvation, for righteousness and strength, and every supply of grace; and that they have an insight into, and knowledge of the truths of the gospel, which are unseen and unknown to natural and carnal men; being led into them by the Spirit of truth, and having that anointing which teacheth all things necessary to salvation: and they are full of eyes, to watch over themselves and others; over themselves, that they walk circumspectly, *not as fools, but as wise*, as becomes the gospel of Christ they profess; and over others, *looking diligently*, acting the part of a bishop or overseer, as every member of a church in this respect should: *lest any man fail of the grace of God*; come short of it, drop or deny any doctrine of grace: *lest any root of bitterness*, immorality, or heresy, springing up, trouble some of the members, *and many thereby be defiled* (Heb. 7:15) with bad principles, or with bad practices.

Fifthly, The motion of the wheels, which motion,

1. Was not retrograde; *they went on their four sides, they turned not as they went*, ver. 11, neither to the right, nor left: or *they returned not when they went*, chap. 1:17, they did not go back, but went straight on; true members of gospel churches; are such *she draw not back to perdition*, but go on believing; having put their *hand to the plough*, (Heb. 10:39; Luke 9:62) having made a profusion of Christ, and his gospel, they neither look back, nor *draw back*, or they would not *be fit for the kingdom of heaven*; they turn not to the right hand, nor the left; but walk on in Christ, and their profession of him, as they have received him, and in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, which he has appointed to be observed.

2. Their motion is the same with the cherubim, or living creatures: as the one moved, so the other did; the wheels *went by the cherubim*, by the *ides* of them, ver. 16,19. Ministers are, or should be, examples to the churches in purity or doctrine and conversation; and churches should *walk as they have them for an example*, and *be followers of them, as far as they are followers of Christ*; they are to go by their side, and keep pace with them in faith and practice; *when they, the cherubim, stood, these, the wheels stood*; when *they were lifted up, these lift up themselves also*, ver. 17; see chap. 1:19, 21. Churches observe the motions of the ministers, and act accordingly; they give the lead in worship, as before observed; when they lift up their hearts with their hands in prayer and praise, the members of churches follow, and join them; when they are it elevated frames of soul in their work, and are warm and lively in their ministrations, generally speaking, the churches are so likewise; but if they are dull and heavy, motionless and inactive, slothful in business, and not fervent in spirit, the members are so too; as ministers are, for the most part, the churches be.

3. The wheels followed the head, which guided and directed them: *to the place where the head looked, they followed it*, ver. 11. the head or face on each semicircle, the same with those of the Cherubim; and so may denote ministers, pastors, guides, and governors of the churches; whose faith they are to follow, considering the end of their conversation: or rather Christ, the head of the church, the Lamb, that is to be followed whithersoever he goes, and in whatsoever he directs; unless,

4. The Spirit of God is meant, since it is said in chap. 1:20. *Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went; truly gracious souls walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; they are led by him into all truth, as it is in Jesus; and they walk in all the paths of faith and duty, as they are influenced and guided by him in a right way, to the city of their habitation, to a land of uprightness; for,*

5. *The spirit of the living creatures was in them, ver. 17, that is, in the wheels, chap. 1:20, 21, the spirit of life which is in Christ, and from Christ, is in his ministers; and the same spirit that is in his ministers, is in the churches; and he is both a spirit of life, and a spirit of liberty, in the exercise of grace, and performance of duty; for there is but one spirit in all, though in a different measure; even as saints are by one spirit baptized into one body, the church, and are called in one hope of their calling (1 Cor. 12:13; Ephes. 4:4) to the same happiness and glory.*

Now these visions of *Ezekiel*, in this and the first chapters as they give a glorious and beautiful representation of the state of ministers and churches under the gospel-dispensation; they may be read with pleasure, delight, and profit, when spiritually understood; yet they are closed with a melancholy scene of things; the cherubim are represented as mounting up from the earth, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of *Israel* above them all, ready to take their flight, and depart, ver. 19, and chap. 11:22, 23, which may signify the removal of gospel-ministers from earth to heaven by death, and the breaking up of gospel-churches, and the departure of God from his professing people, of which we have already had some instances: and, without pretending to a spirit of prophecy, things will continue to go on in this way, worse and worse, till the kingdom of God will be taken from us, the candlestick be removed out of its place, the glory of God depart, and an *Ichabod* be wrote on his interest; which will be completed when the witnesses are slain: and then scarce a cherub will be seen, nor a wheel in motion; the dead bodies of the witnesses will lie unburied, none daring to shew a decent regard unto them. From what has been said, we may learn,

1. The nature of gospel-churches, the matter of which they consist, the form of them, the work that is done in them, and by them, and their state, condition, and circumstances, under the present dispensation. 2. The necessity there is of an harmony between ministers and churches it is highly requisite they should agree, and act in concert; the wheels should be by the cherubim, and move as they do; they should join and unite to promote the interest of religion or things will never go on happily and comfortably. 3. This may instruct and direct us to pray for the Spirit of God to be poured down upon both ministers and churches that ministers may have a larger measure of it, and that the spirit of the living creatures might be in the wheels; the same, or a like measure of the spirit that is in ministers, might be in the churches; and for this we should pray importunately and incessantly; for we shall never have happy times, or halcyon days, *until the Spirit be poured down upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest; then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field; and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever; and my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places. (Isai. 32:15-18)*

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE
A FIGURE OF THE CHURCH;
AND THE TWO PILLARS, JACHIN AND BOAZ,
TYPICAL OF CHRIST.

1 KINGS 7:21

And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz

THESE two pillars were set in the porch of the temple that was built by Solomon; and he is the person that is said to set them there; that is, they were set there by his order. Reference is had to the place of their standing, in various passages of Scripture, in an allusive way. The human body of our Lord Jesus Christ is called the temple, and that by himself; *destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* (John 2:19) The Jews who heard him say these words, understood them in a literal sense; as if he was speaking of the material temple that was built by Zerubbabel, and repaired by Herod. Therefore they said, forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? Whereas, the evangelist observes, he was speaking of the temple of his body, that true tabernacle which God pitched and not man: which was a greater and more perfect tabernacle than was built by Solomon, or by Zerubbabel, or repaired and ornamented by Herod. He, the Word of God, the eternal Logos, when made flesh, tabernacled and dwelt among us. Herein the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily; even all the perfections of the divine nature. The train of the divine perfections filled the temple of the human nature of Christ; according to the glorious vision which Isaiah had thereof. (Isa. 6:1)

Sometimes, in reference to this temple, particular believers are called the temple of God: *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.* (1 Cor. 3:16) It was known, or it might be known, from the inhabitation of the Spirit of God and then it is added, *if any man defile the temples of God,* by insinuating bad principles into them, or drawing them into evil practices, *him shall God destroy.* He will shew his resentment against such persons: for the temple of God is holy, therefore should not be defiled with bad principles or bad practices. Which temple, says the apostle, ye particular believers are: for that he afterwards observes in the same epistle; *Know ye not, that your body is the temple of the holy Ghost, which is in you?* which must refer to individuals. As also in another epistle of his to the same church, he says, *what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* (2 Cor. 6:16) That is, what agreement is there between those who are the true worshippers of God, and such as worship idols?

But at other times, and in other places, we may observe the whole church of God is called a temple, in allusion to the temple at Jerusalem. Thus, in that famous prophecy of the Messiah, Zechariah 6:12, it is said, *Behold the man whose name is the Branch* (which is a descriptive character of the Messiah), *and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory.* That is, he shall build the Church of God, and he shall have the glory of it, as the sole builder; and thus speaks our Lord himself. *Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* (Matt. 16:18) And here I shall take occasion to observe, that the temple of Jerusalem may very properly be considered as a figure and emblem of the church of God, on various accounts.

I. With respect to the several parts of it. It consisted particularly of these three: them was,

1. The great court in which stood the altar of burnt-offerings, and the laver, and where the people of Israel in common assembled to worship God.

2. There was the holy place, where stood the golden candlestick, the golden altar of incense, and the table of shew-bread; and into which None but the priests might enter and officiate. And,

3. There was the holy of holies, in which was the ark of the mercy-seat, and the cherubim; into which none but the high priest might enter, and that only once a year.

Now the first of these, the great court, was a figure and emblem of the outward and visible church of God, in which are both good and bad. To this the Holy Ghost refers, Revelation 11:2; where mention is made of the outward court, which was left out in the measuring of the temple; having respect unto such who were only outward court worshippers, who were not to be taken into the measure to which that prophecy has a reference. Thus in all ages, more or less, it has been the case of the outward visible church of Christ upon the earth; that there have been some good, and some bad among them. This was represented by our Lord in that parable of the field, in which good seed was sown; which good seed was emblematical of true believers in Christ, gracious souls, partakers of the grace of God in truth. Among these, tares were sown by the enemy, which grew up with the wheat; and both were suffered to continue until the harvest, the time of death, the end of the world, and universal judgment. So in the parable of the virgins, the kingdom of God, or a church state, is represented by ten virgins; five of whom were wise, and five were foolish. In Sion, in the outward visible church of God, there always were, and always will be more or fewer hypocrites; called *hypocrites in Zion*, (Isa. 33:14) as well as there are *the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold.*

The holy place was an emblem and figure of the invisible church of God; or such persons as are truly spiritual, believers in Christ, partakers of the grace of God in truth, who are a royal priesthood, and built up a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God. Inward court worshippers, who are made light in the Lord signified by the golden candlesticks in that place, and whose light so shines before men, that those who behold their good works, may glorify their Father who is in heaven. The prayers of these are set before the Lord, as incense; and the lifting up of their hands as the evening sacrifice. These sit down at the table with their Lord, and sup with him, and he with them: or, in other words, they have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

These are they that worship God in the Spirit rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

There was also the holy of holies; which was a figure and emblem of heaven itself, into which our great High Priest hath entered with his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us; where he appears in the presence of God for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them. Where stands the mercy-seat, the throne of grace; and to which there is a way open, even a new and living way through the veil, that is to say, Christ's flesh. In virtue of his blood, true believers have boldness to enter even into the holiest of all. That is, into heaven, and the church triumphant there, where none shall enter that defiles, or maketh an abomination, or a lie.

II. The temple built by Solomon, may be considered as a figure of the church of God, with respect to the situation of it. It was built upon an eminence, upon mount Moriah. (2 Chron. 3:1) The church of Christ is also built upon an hill, and upon a Rock, the Rock Christ Jesus: *Upon this Rock will I build my church.* (Matt. 16:18) Zion is well founded by the Lord of Hosts; for a good foundation the Lord hath laid in Zion: even a stone, a *tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation:* (Isa. 28:16) such a foundation as will always abide, will never give way, and upon which those who are laid are safe end secure to all eternity.

III. The temple was typical of Christ., in respect of the builder of it, which was Solomon, whose name signifies peace, or peaceable; and he was chosen to be the builder of the temple on that account. His father was rejected because he was a man of war, and a man of blood: but Solomon's reign being peaceable, he had leisure for that service; and being a man of peace, was a proper person for being engaged therein. And herein he was a type of Christ, the Prince of Peace; who is in his nature peaceable, and the author and giver of peace, spiritual and eternal. *A greater than Solomon* was concerned in building the church of God; and that not only on account of his being the Prince of Peace, but because in every thing he excelled him, even in those things in which Solomon excelled others, particularly in wisdom and riches. A greater than Solo on is the builder of the church of God; even he in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; (Col. 2:3) and whose riches are unsearchable. (Eph. 3:8)

IV. This temple was a figure of the church of God, as to the materials of it. The materials, we are told, were *costly stones:* (1 Kings 5:17) such as were of great worth, and were bought at a great price. Hence the antitype, the church of God, is said to have *its foundations laid with sapphires, its windows of agates, its gates of carbuncles, and all its borders of pleasant stones:* (Isa. 54:12) by which are meant the precious sons of Sion, comparable to gold, and all that is valuable. The stones of which the temple was built were hewn stones, ready prepared to be laid in the building: for there was not so much as a hammer or an axe, the noise of which was heard all the while the temple was building, as it is said in the preceding chapter. This denotes, that such as are laid in the spiritual building, are taken from nature's quarry, separated from the rest of mankind; are hewn by the Spirit of God, and so fitted for the spiritual building. And it suggests, that in this spiritual building, the church, there shall be no discord, no clamours, no jars; but all concord, harmony, peace, and love. The noise of an axe or a hammer ought not to be heard there.

Moreover, cedar wood was greatly made use of as a material in building that temple. As the temple was built of costly and precious stones, hewn and fitted for the building; so the wall was

wainscoted and floored with wood of cedar, fetched from mount Lebanon. A fragrant and durable wood; so a proper emblem of those who are the materials of the spiritual building, the church. Our Lord Jesus Christ, because of the excellency of his person and offices, is said to be *excellent as the cedars*: (Song 5:15) and his people also, because of the fragranciness and grace bestowed upon them, and because of their duration and perseverance in grace and holiness, are said to *grow as the cedar in Lebanon*. (Ps. 92:12)

Once more: That stately, famous building, the temple, where these two pillars were placed, mentioned in our text, was covered or overlaid with gold. *Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he wade a partition, by the chains of gold before the oracle; and he overlaid it with gold. And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house.* (1 Kings 6:21, 22) What a magnificent, splendid building must this be! a proper emblem and figure, therefore, of the church of God, and of true believers in Christ, who are the materials thereof; who stand in the presence of Christ, at his right hand, in gold of Ophir; whose clothing is of wrought gold, and who are all glorious within, ornamented with the graces of the blessed Spirit. But,

V. This temple was a figure of the church, with respect unto its *pillars*; which leads me to take a more particular notice of the passage which I have read unto you. There were other pillars in this building besides these two; but these were the principal ones; the most open to view; the most to be taken notice of, as they stood at the entrance into the court of the temple. *And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz.* The church of Christ itself is sometimes said to be a pillar. So the apostle tells Timothy, that he wrote unto him, that he might know how to behave himself in the house, or church, "of the living God," which is *the pillar and ground of the truth*. (1 Tim. 3:15) The pillar and ground of the truth; that both holds forth truth, and holds it fast. Some pillars had inscriptions upon them; and so held forth to view some fact, of which a declaration was made upon them. In this sense the church is the pillar of truth. It holds forth the truths of the gospel, by its ministers, and by its members. Other pillars are for support; and in this sense the church may be said to be the pillar and ground of the truth. The support thereof, which *keeps the faith of Jesus*; that is, the doctrine of Christ, and denies not his faith; but maintains and supports it to the uttermost.

Particular believers in Christ, are sometimes signified by pillars. *Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God.* (Rev. 3:12) Such are, in a sense, pillars in the temple of God; who have, through divine grace, a place and a name there, better than that of sons and daughters; and who are honourable members of the church of God. Such as come into the church in a right way, that come in by the door of the sheep-fold, which is Christ; they are honourable members of the church. He that comes in upon a true and rich experience of the grace of God; upon a profession of faith in Christ, and submission to his ordinances; who abides by the truths and ordinances of the gospel; forsakes not the assembly of the saints, but closely attends to the word, worship, and ordinances of God; and whose conversation is as becomes the gospel of Christ; such as they may be said to be pillars in the temple of God, or honourable members of his church. Such as are upright in heart; have the root of the matter in them; and a right spirit created in them; Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile: who are upright in conversation; walk as becomes the gospel of Christ, according to the rule of the divine word: these are, according to the measure of gifts bestowed upon them, in one way and another, pillars and supports of the cause of God; who have a natural concern

for the good of the interest of a Redeemer; and who exert themselves to the utmost for the maintenance of the same, either by their purses, as God hath given them ability, or by their conversation, or by their prayers. In one way or the other they may be said to be *pillars*; who maintain and support the truths of the gospel, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, according to the abilities which God hath given them. Besides, they support those that are feeble and tottering, by their conversation and prayers with them; and therefore, may in this sense, be said to be pillars. Like pillars also, they are steady and steadfast; not like children, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; but established in their principles, as well as constant in their practice. They stand fast in the faith, quit themselves like men, are strong; continue in evangelical doctrine, and in communion with the saints, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. It becomes those who have named the name of Christ, to be steadfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord their God. Such are pillars that shall never go out, as is said in the forementioned chapter. (Rev. 3:12)

There are some that get into a church of Christ, and go out again; of whom the apostle says, *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us.* (1 John 2:19) And even those brazen pillars, called Jachin and Boaz, went out of the material temple. That is, they were carried out from thence; for they were carried into Babylon, as we read in the last chapter of the book of Jeremiah. But such who are really pillars in the spiritual building, are more lasting than those brazen pillars. They shall never go out of the church of God: servants abide not always in the house, but sons abide for ever; those who are really and truly the children of God.

Ministers of the everlasting gospel are represented as pillars in the spiritual temple. Thus Wisdom is said to build her house, and hew out her seven pillars; (Prov. 9:1) which may be understood of the ministers of the word. So the Lord tells the prophet Jeremiah, that he would make him an iron pillar, and a brazen wall, against the people he had to do with. (Jer. 1:18) And some of the apostles are by Paul represented as pillars; as when speaking of Cephas, James, and John, he says, *Who seemed to be pillars*, Galatians 2:9. And indeed the apostles, or first ministers of the word, may with great propriety be called pillars; and as Jachin and Boaz were placed in the front of the court of the temple, at the entrance into it, so they are set first in the church of God. (1 Cor. 12:28) And these may be said to be pillars, for their strength; as they were strong in the grace of Christ Jesus, and good soldiers that endured hardness patiently for his name's sake.

Ministers, like pillars, are, or should be, steady and steadfast, as Peter and John were: who when called before the great counsel of the nation, and threatened what should be done to them, if they persisted to preach in the name of Christ, boldly answered, *Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye;* (Acts 4:19) and then went on in their ministry, and counted it all honour to suffer shame for the name of Jesus. Such was the great apostle of the Gentiles; who, though he knew that bonds and afflictions awaited him wherever he came, yet none of these things moved him. He stood firm, as a pillar: unmoved under all he met with from men, being set for the defence of the gospel. All such may be said to be pillars in the house of God.

They, like pillars, are for the support of others. For though ministers of the word have no dominion over the faith of men, to impose articles of their own making; yet they are helpers of their joy. They are often instruments of supporting the weak, and comforting the feeble-minded.

Now here are *two* of these pillars set at the front of the temple. In the book of Proverbs, before referred to, we read of seven pillars and reference may be had there to the fulness of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, being bestowed upon gospel ministers for their work. Or rather, it may signify that there always has been, and will be, a sufficient number of them, to the end of the world, for the support of the churches of Christ; according to that word, *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.* (Matt. 28:20) But here is mention made of two pillars; so the apostles were sent two by two, the seventy disciples two by two. So there were two olive trees; and the two witnesses that stood and prophesied in sackcloth, and will do so till the second coming of Christ.

But Jachin and Boaz may rather be considered as an emblem of *Christ*, and of the two natures in him. Christ Jesus our Lord went before the children of Israel in a pillar of a cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. In a pillar of cloud by day to protect them from the scorching heat of the sun; and in a pillar of fire by night, to direct them in the way. Of like use is he to his spiritual Israel, to screen them from the heat of Satan's temptations, and from the fury of wrathful persecutors; and to guide them in the path which they should go. But to return to the text. These pillars may be considered, as an emblem of the strength of Christ. As he is the mighty God, he bears up, and supports all things in the whole universe. By him all things consist. He upholds all things by the word of his power. The whole world would soon dissolve and fall into ruin, did he not support it. *The earth, and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it.* Psalm 75:3. As God-man, and Mediator, he bears up his church and people. He is the grand pillar that supports them. He bears them up under all their trials and exercises in this life: under all their temptations, afflictions, and desertions: under the weight of all their burdens. He is that bearer of burdens, whose strength shall never decay. He hath the government of the church upon his shoulder; and for which he is abundantly qualified. *His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold.* (Song 5:15)

The two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, stood in the porch of the temple, just as the people entered into it; and either these names were inscribed upon them, or rather were given them by Solomon under divine direction. They were also well known; so that whoever entered the temple, knew that these were the names of those pillars: which name served to encourage them that entered therein. The one signifies, *he shall establish*; and the other, *in him is strength*: suggesting, that the Lord would establish his true worshippers: and that they should have strength to perform the duties required of them.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the door of his spiritual temple; and whoever goes in and out there shall find pasture. There is encouragement from a consideration of what is in him; for he will establish his people; and in him they shall find spiritual strength. This leads me a little more particularly to consider these pillars, as they may have respect to our Lord Jesus Christ, the way into the church of God.

The name of the first signifies, *he shall establish*; that is, the Lord shall establish. Establish who? The church, signified by the temple; and all true believers, real members of a gospel church. The Lord will establish the church itself. This is often affirmed: *As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God. God will establish it for ever.* (Ps. 48:8)

Again. *Of Zion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her.* (Ps. 87:5) Now the church is well established upon Christ, the sure foundation: being built upon that Rock against which the gates of hell can never prevail: that sure foundation which God hath laid in Sion. Yet, sometimes, with respect to its outward state, it is very unsettled and unstable. *O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests and not comforted.* (Isa. 54:11) This is said of the church. Tossed about; either by the attacks of false teachers, or by the fury of persecutors. Tossed to and fro, afflicted and not comforted. It is removed, sometimes, from place to place. One while, it was in the land of Judea; then it was carried into the Gentile world, a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof, as our Lord foretold. (Matt. 21:43) And the visible church of Christ has been subject to a variety of removals. The candlestick, as was threatened to the Church at Ephesus, has been removed out of its place. But there is a time coming when the church shall be in a more stable condition; *when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established upon the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it.* (Isa. 2:2) This will be in the Philadelphian church state, to which the passage I have referred, and applied to particular persons, may have respect; *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.* (Rev. 3:12) Thenceforward, the church will no more be in that unsettled state it has been in. *Thine eye shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.* (Isa. 23:20) Now it is like a tabernacle that is removed from place to place; but then it shall be no more unpinned, no more taken down. Being fixed, it shall remain: and not a stake plucked up, or a cord broken. The Lord will establish her. This may be signified by Jachin.

Moreover, the Lord will establish also particular believers: all such as enter into a gospel church state in a right manner, that are true members thereof. The name of this pillar, and the inscription upon it, may serve to encourage them to believe, that he will establish them. In some sense they are in a stable, certain fixed state already. They that trust in the Lord are as mount Sion, which shall never be removed, but standeth fast for ever. Their place of defence is the munition of rocks. They are out of the reach of men and devils; and cannot be hurt by them. They are secure in the everlasting covenant of God's grace. They are safe in the arms of everlasting love, from which they can never be separated. They are engraven upon the palms of the Lord's hands and their walls are continually before him. They are, in this respect, in the most safe condition. And so they are as considered in Christ; for in Christ they are established. *He which establisheth us with you in Christ,* says the apostle. (2 Cor. 1:2) There is no stability but in Christ. There was none in the first Adam. There is none in ourselves; it is only in Christ. The Lord's People, as chosen in him to holiness and happiness, are stable. And they are united to him; for he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. They are stable, as they are built upon him the sure foundation; against which, all the temptations of Satan, the snares of the world, the corruptions of their own hearts, and the persecutions of the world, avail nothing. As they are regenerated by the Spirit of God, they are also in a stable condition. For the good work of grace being begun in them, it shall be performed until the day of Christ. Every grace of the Spirit of God in them is firm and stable; and cannot be removed. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1) Hope is an anchor, sure and steadfast; (Heb. 6:19) and every grace of the Spirit, has an abiding in them. Now remain and abide these three, faith, hope, and love. But these graces, though stable in themselves, as to the principle, are oftentimes very unstable as to their exercise. With respect to faith, many doubts arise in the minds of the Lord's people, as they did in Peter, to whom our Lord said, *O thou of little faith.* (Matt. 14:31) Hope is sometimes so low in those that are possessed of it, that they

say, as the church did, *My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord.* (Lam. 3:18) Love waxes cold; so that there is need of being established, with respect to the exercise of these graces. As to the doctrines of the gospel which the people of God have received, and that in a very comfortable way too; they may be like children tossed to and fro, and he carried away, for a season, by the error of the wicked: so have need to be established in the truth of the doctrines they have received. And it is the Lord's work to do this. It is *he that establisheth us with yon in Christ.* It is God that gives them that stable condition they have in Christ: that establishes their graces, and the exercise of them; and establishes them in the truth; and he does it by the gospel. *Now to him that is of power to establish you by my gospel,* (Rom. 16:25) says the apostle, who desired that he might come to the Romans, to impart unto them some spiritual gift, to the end that they might be established.

The name of the other pillar is *Boaz*; which signifies, *in him is strength.* This agrees with what our Lord says of himself; *I am Understanding, I have strength.* (Prov. 8:14) In him is everlasting strength. *Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.* (Isa. 26:4) Believers find it in him; they go to him for it, and say, *Surely, in the Lord have we righteousness and strength.* There must needs be strength in Christ, since he is the mighty God, whose hands have laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his fingers: who upholds all things by the word of his power, and governs the whole universe. For the kingdom is his, and he is the Governor among the nations.

There is strength in him, as Mediator. All power in heaven and in earth is given to him. The spirit of strength and fortitude, as well as of wisdom and the fear of God, rests upon him. He is the man of God's right hand, whom he hath made strong for himself. There is strength in him, adequate to the work, that he, as Mediator, engaged to perform. He engaged to redeem his people, and he is *mighty to save:* (Isa. 63:1) able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him. He is a match for all his and our enemies. He is stronger than the strong man armed; and able to deliver his people out of the hands of him that is stronger than they. He has overcome the world, and abolished death, the last enemy. In him there is strength also for his people, to bear them up under all the temptations and difficulties that attend them in this life. He hath strength to communicate unto them. *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength.* (Isa. 40:29) There is strength in him to enable them to bear the cross he lays upon them; and that patiently. He gives them strength to perform every duty of religion, to which they are unequal in themselves: for without him they can do nothing; but through his strengthening them, they can do all things. In him there is strength to enable them to resist every sin and temptation. They have no might of their own to resist the many enemies they are engaged with; and are ready to fear they shall perish by the hands of one or another of them: but the grace of Christ is sufficient for them, and they find it so. Their hands are made strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. In short, there is strength in him, to enable them to hold on their way to the end; to persevere in faith and holiness. He is the support of their lives, to strengthen them throughout their whole course, to do or suffer whatever he calls them to: and when flesh and heart fail, he will be the strength of their hearts, and their portion for ever. Thus he is their *Boaz*, in whom they have strength.

Upon the whole, we may observe, that happy are those persons who are within the walls where these pillars stand, *Jachin and Boaz.* *He (the Lord) shall establish, and in him is strength.* Happy are they that dwell in this house; not only because of the work and service in which they are

employed, praising the name of the Lord for all the great things he hath done for them: but because their strength is in him, and *they go from strength to strength*, from one degree of it to another, *until they appear before God in Sion*.

This may serve as an encouragement to all those within these walls, that have entered, at the right door, into a gospel church state. It may serve to encourage them to look to Christ for fresh supplies of grace and strength. *Trust in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength*, to go on in the performance of every religious duty, and act of religious worship. And this may teach the people of God, to give Christ the glory of all they have, are, and do. It is he that establisheth and strengthens them. It is owing to his grace and strength, that they do, and shall persevere in faith and holiness unto the end. He is their *Jachin* and their *Boaz*; or their strength in life and death; and will bring them safe to the everlasting enjoyment of himself, in glory.

THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH

IN THE LATTER DAY:

A SERMON,

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture,

in

GREAT EAST-CHEAP, Dec. 27, 1752.

Psalm 87:3

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God! Selah.

Some think this psalm was written by David, under a prophetic view of the temple to be built by his son Solomon; others, that it was composed by one that returned from the Babylonish captivity, for the comfort of those that wept at the laying of the foundation of the second temple: but let it be wrote by whom it will, or on whatsoever occasion; it is pretty evident that the subject-matter of it is the church of God in gospel-times, especially in the latter-day glory; when there will be abundance of converts in the places herein mentioned. The title of the Syriac version is "concerning the redemption of Jerusalem." It begins in a very abrupt manner, as the *Song of Songs* does, with a relative without an antecedent; *his foundation is in the holy mountains*: the foundation of the Lord which he has laid, who *loveth the gates of Zion*, and whose city is here spoken of, which is founded by him; or *its foundation*, the foundation of the city of God, the church, which comes to the same sense; for the church's foundation is the Lord's, being of his laying. [\[1\]](#) In allusion to the mountains of *Zion* and *Moriah*, on which the temple stood, a type of the church; or to the mountains round about Jerusalem, which also frequently signifies the church; this foundation is said to be *in the holy mountains*, or *mountains of holiness*, the purposes and decrees of God, those mountains of brass, Zechariah 6:1, particularly the decree of election, the *foundation of God* that *stands sure*, and is the source of all true holiness; likewise the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises, sure and immovable, and which provides both for internal and external holiness; and is especially Jesus Christ, the rock of ages, the sure foundation laid in *Zion*, the holy One of *Israel*, and the sanctification of his people.

It follows: *The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob*; he loves the church, which often goes by the name of *Zion*; and therefore he has chosen and founded it, and took up his rest and residence in it; and he loves her *gates*, or public ordinances, and them that attend them; the work done by them, their prayers and praises, and exercise of graces, and every act of religious worship: and though he loves *the dwellings of Jacob*, the private habitations of his

people, having fixed the bounds of them from eternity, and delighted in these habitable parts before they dwelt in them; though he loves the persons that dwelt there, and what is done in them, their closet and family devotion; yet he prefers public worship and ordinances to them, where he is more openly worshipped, and by more; and which makes more for his manifestative glory: hence follow the words first read, *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God*: which is not to be understood literally of the city of Jerusalem, though great and honorable things might be spoken of that; as that it was a magnificent city, compact together, full of stately buildings, the metropolis of *Judea*, and the seat of the kings of *Judah*, and above all, the city of the great God; where his temple stood, in which were many glorious things; where God was worshipped, and he granted his presence: and many glorious things have been said of it, and which have been fulfilled; as that the Messiah should come into the temple, and give it a greater glory than the second temple had, which he accordingly has done; here he preached his glorious doctrines, and wrought his glorious miracles; near this place he suffered, died, was buried, and rose again, and ascended to heaven; and here he poured forth his holy spirit in an extraordinary manner; and from hence went forth the word of the Lord, and doctrine of the gospel, throughout all the earth: but rather this is to be understood figuratively of the church of God, which is often in scripture compared to a city, and is a city of God's building, and where he dwells; the name of it is *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there (Ezek. 48:35); of which things may be said: as that it is the city of the king of kings, its foundation is Christ, its walls and bulwarks are salvation, its gates praise; here glorious ordinances are administered, and glorious truths are preached; and so the words may be rendered, as they are in the *Syriac* version, *Glorious things are spoken in thee, O city of God*. There are many glorious things which have been spoken of the church, which have been fulfilled already in the first times of the gospel, when there was an increase of it in *Judea*, and in the Gentile world; when the gospel was spread, when the apostles triumphed in every place; when Christ went forth in their ministry, conquering and to conquer; when paganism was demolished, and Christianity established throughout the *Roman* empire: and so likewise many glorious things spoken of the church were accomplished at the time of the *reformation* from popery; when gospel-light broke forth and spread itself throughout several nations of *Europe*; but my intention is to give an account of the glorious things spoken of it, which yet remain to be fulfilled.

In my two last anniversary sermons, at this time of the year, I have touched upon future things. In the former, [\[2\]](#) I took notice of the several revolutions of nights and mornings from early times to the end of the world, and showed you the dark side of the cloud, and what a dismal night we are now entering into. In the latter, [\[3\]](#) I pointed at those things which *Israel*, or the people of God, ought to do in the prospect of such times; and now I shall hold out unto you the bright side of the cloud, and give you in one view an account of the glorious things spoken of the church of God in the latter day; and which will be accomplished both in the spiritual reign, and in the personal reign of Christ; which two are very distinct things, and lie at some distance from each other, and ought to be carefully distinguished, and not confounded: by help of which distinction, we may better understand many prophecies of the Old Testament, which are to be ranged under these different heads, and to be referred to these distinct periods of time; which are too often huddled and jumbled together by those that speak and write of these things. And,

I shall begin with the *spiritual reign* of Christ; by which I mean a future period of time eminent for spiritually; for otherwise Christ now reigns, not only in heaven, at his Father's right hand where he must reign until all enemies are put under his feet, but also in the hearts of his people, by his spirit

and grace; into which he enters as the king of glory, causing the everlasting doors to open to him; where he implants his grace as a governing principle, sets up his throne, and dwells there by faith, and erects a kingdom, which lies in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost; and here he reigns in a spiritual manner, and so he has done in all ages, and now does: but this period of time I speak of, will be remarkable for his spiritual presence among his people; when he will *come down*, in the communications of his grace, *like rain upon the mowen grass, as showers that water the earth* (Ps. 72:6); when there will be a large and plentiful effusion of his spirit; when his people in general will be more spiritual in the temper of their souls, and in the frames of their mind; and more spiritual and savory in their discourses, and in the whole of their behavior and conversation, and will eminently worship God in spirit and in truth; not that they will arrive to a perfection of spiritually; though there will be a great deal of light and glory break out, yet there will be a mixture of darkness, obscurity, and imperfection; in which this state will differ from the personal reign of Christ in the new *Jerusalem*; of which it is said, *the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, or there shall be no night there* (Rev. 21:25); which of this state is differently expressed, *thy gates shall be open continually, they shall not be shut day or night* (Isa. 40:11): it will be only in the personal reign that the church's *sun shall no more go down, neither shall her moon withdraw itself*; when the Lord shall be here *everlasting light. And the days of her mourning shall be ended* (Isa. 40:20). In the spiritual reign there will be the ministry of the word for the conversion of sinners, and the administration of ordinances for the comfort and edification of saints; all which suppose an imperfect state: whereas in the personal reign there will be none of these things, nor any need of them, or use for them; the new *Jerusalem* church-state will have *no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it*; no need of the gospel, and gospel-ordinances to be administered as now, for the light and comfort of the saints; *for the glory of God will lighten it, and the lamb will be the light thereof* (Rev. 21:23). In the spiritual reign *the temple of God* will be opened in heaven, and the ark of the testimony will be *seen in it* (Rev. 11:19); public worship will be set up and restored to its primitive purity; but in the personal reign, or new *Jerusalem* church-state, no temple will be seen there; *for the Lord God almighty, and the Lamb are the temple in it* (Rev. 21:22). The spiritual reign of Christ will be on this earth as it now is; formed as now, as eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, procreation of children, carrying on trade and commerce, and attention to the several callings and duties of civil life; neither of which will have place in the personal reign: it is the present earth that will be *filled with the knowledge of the Lord*; the kingdoms of *this world*, that will become Christ's, when his *dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth* (Isa. 11:9; Rev. 11:15; Ps. 72:8), as now situated: whereas the seat of the personal reign will be *the new heaven, and new earth, in which no sea will be seen* (Rev. 21:1): for at the personal appearance of Christ, the earth and the heaven that now are, will flee away. This spiritual reign of Christ will take place upon the rising, and ascending, of the witnesses into heaven, and denotes a more pure, spiritual, and heavenly state of the church; it will be introduced upon the blowing of the seventh trumpet, *when the kingdoms of this world shall be subjected to Christ*, through the power of his spirit, and grace accompanying his word; when the four and twenty elders, the representatives of gospel-churches, shall give him thanks, *because he has taken to himself his great power and has reigned* (Rev. 11:15-17): this state is no other than the *Philadelphian* church-state; all that is said of that church perfectly agrees with this, and which will follow upon the *Sardian* church-state, in which we now are; so that we hope it is at hand: and whereas at the *Laodicean* church-state is between this and the personal reign of Christ; it appears that they are two distinct things, very different, and at some distance from each other. But to proceed, and take notice of the glorious things which shall be during this interval, or period of time, And,

1st, The destruction of antichrist is the grand leading event to the glories of this state. This is hinted at in the epistle to the church at *Philadelphia*, the emblem of the spiritual reign; it will be the last struggle of the beast that will cause the *hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try* the inhabitants of it (Rev. 3:19): when the seventh trumpet will be sounded, which will bring on the spiritual kingdom of Christ throughout the world, he will *destroy them which destroy the earth* (Rev. 11:18), meaning the Papists, who have destroyed the inhabitants of the earth with their false doctrines, superstitious worship, and with those bloody wars, murders, and massacres, they have been at the bottom of. And till this is done, the spiritual reign cannot, take place, especially in its full compass, and in all its branches; for so long as antichrist reigns, the church will be more or less in an afflicted state: the dates of the church's troubles, and of the reign of antichrist, are alike, and will expire together: the power given to the beast, is to continue forty two months; and so long the holy city, or church is to be trodden under foot; and so long the witnesses will prophesy in sackcloth, even one thousand two hundred and threescore days, which are equal to forty-two months; wherefore there can be no truly good and happy days, till these dates are ended.

The destruction of antichrist will be *by the spirit of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming* (2 Thess. 2:8); that is, by his coming is a spiritual way; or through the word of his mouth, his gospel, attended by his spirit and power; which will shine out with so much lustre, splendor, light and glory, as will chase away the darkness of popery, and enlighten the minds of people, to see into all the fopperies, absurdities, and wickedness of that religion, and cause them to cast it off; yea even to open the eyes of the kings and princes of the earth, to behold and loathe the abominations of the whore of *Rome*, they have committed fornication with; and fill them with wrath and indignation against her; as to hate her, make her bare and desolate, and burn her with fire (Rev. 17:16).

This work will be greatly effected by the pouring out the seven vials of God's wrath, or the inflicting the seven last plagues upon the antichristian states, upon the western and eastern antichrist, the Pope and Turk; who must be both removed to make way for the spiritual reign of Christ. These seven vials will be poured out, or those plagues inflicted by Angels; by whom we are to understand protestant kings, and princes, and generals of armies; and these will be given them by one of the first of the four beasts, or living creatures, the emblems of gospel-ministers; who having some notice of the time of antichrist's destruction being at hand, will stir up and animate the Christian princes and potentates to take this work in hand; and who are therefore said to go forth from the temple, the church, the place of divine and spiritual worship, and where they themselves are worshippers; and from thence they have orders to go forth and do their work (Rev. 15:1, 6, 7; 16:1).

The first *five* of these vials concern the western antichrist, and his dominions: between which, and the trumpets, there is a great correspondence, though they respect different times and persons. The *first* vial will be poured out upon the earth, and design those popish countries which are upon the continent, as *France* and *Germany*, especially the latter; and as the first trumpet brought the Goths into *Germany*, so the first vial will bring great distress upon the popish party in the empire, and issue in a reformation from popery. The *second* vial will be poured out upon the sea, and may intend the maritime powers belonging to the see of *Rome*, particularly *Spain* and *Portugal*; and as the second trumpet brought the Vandals into these places, so this vial will effect the same, and bring wars and desolations into them, and make a change in their religion. The *third* vial will be

poured out upon the *rivers*, and *fountains of water*, which may point to those places adjacent to *Rome*, as *Italy*, and *Savoy*; and as the third trumpet brought the Huns into those parts, so this vial will bring in large armies hither, which will cause much bloodshed, and a great revolution in church and state. The *fourth* vial will be poured out upon the sun, which must denote some person, or persons of great dignity and influence; and as the fourth trumpet brought destruction upon the emperor of Rome, the sun of the empire, and upon governors under him, signified by the moon and stars; this vial will bring on the ruin of the pope of *Rome*, the sun of the antichristian empire, with all his cardinals, bishops, priests, &c. The *fifth* vial will be poured out upon the soul of the beast, and will produce great darkness in his kingdom; though as of yet it will not be utterly destroyed, which is reserved for the seventh vial. Now these several vials, as they will be so many plagues on the western antichrist, and make up so many breaches and ruins upon his states and dominions, so they will be so many gradual steps to the advancement of the glory and kingdom of Christ, and issue in the reformation of these places from popery. The *sixth* vial will be poured out on the river *Euphrates*, which designs the Turkish empire, in the midst of which that river is; and as the sixth trumpet let loose the four angels, or the head of the Ottoman family into *Europe*, so this vial affects the same empire, and brings destruction on it, signified by the drying up the water of that river, *Babylon's* destruction is expressed by the drying up of her sea, Jeremiah 51:36, which will make way for the kings or kingdoms of the east: the kingdoms of *Persia* and *Tartary*, and others, to receive and embrace the Christian religion: This is the second or Turkish woe, which shall pass away; when the kingdoms of this world will become Christ's, and his dominion will be from sea to sea, from the Mediterranean sea to the Persian sea; and from the river *Euphrates* to the ends of the earth. The *seventh* vial will be poured out upon the air, the whole kingdom of Satan, in all the branches of it, who is the prince of the powers of the air; and this vial will clear the whole world of all the remains of Christ's enemies, Pagan, Papal, and Mohammedan, which the other vials left or did not reach;^[4] and will Christ's kingdom be in its full glory. Now the Heathens, Papists, Pagans, and Mohammedans, will *perish out of his land*, and these sorts of sinners will be *consumed out of the earth*, and such *wicked ones will be no more* (Ps. 10:18; 104:36).

It may be observed, that there is a great likeness between these vials and the plagues of *Egypt*; the noisome sore on men under the first vial, agrees with the plague of boils and blains on man and beast; the sea, rivers, and fountains of waters, being turned into blood, under the second and third vials, are the same with the plague, which in like manner affected the waters of *Egypt*: the beast's kingdom being full of darkness, under the fourth vial, much resembles the gross and thick darkness the Egyptians were in for some days; and under the fifth vial there is a manifest reference to the frogs that plagued *Pharaoh*, and his court; and the great hail-storm under the seventh vial, bears some resemblance to the plague of hail. And this observation may confirm the application of these vials or plagues, to the great city, which is spiritually called *Egypt* and *Sodom*: and it may be also observed, that as the plagues of *Egypt* were very quick one upon another, so it may be thought that those vials, when once they begin pouring, will soon be poured out; God will make a short work in righteousness, upon the enemies of his church: as yet I take it, none of them are poured out, though some great and learned men have so thought; as yet there have been no such devastations on the continent, as in *France* and *Germany*, as to produce the above effects; nor in the countries of *Spain* and *Portugal*; nor in *Italy* and *Savoy*, and the like places near *Rome*; nor in the seat of the beast, *Rome* itself; nor on the pope and his cardinals; the river *Euphrates* is not dried up; the Ottoman empire is yet in being; the Turkish woe is not passed away; and much less the world cleared of all the enemies of Christ and his church; no, before this work is done, the outer court must be given to

the Gentiles, and the witnesses must be slain. Had they begun to be poured out at the time of the Reformation, as some have thought, in all likelihood they would have been destroyed, and better times than we are now in, would have succeeded: but, however, this we may be assured of, that as the plagues in *Egypt* issued in the destruction of *Pharaoh*, and in the deliverance of the Israelites, so these vials will end in the ruin of antichrist, and in the salvation of the church of Christ. As soon as these things will take place, nay, as soon as you hear of those seven plagues, immediately you hear of persons on a sea of glass, triumphing over antichrist, having the harps of God, and singing the song of *Moses* and the Lamb (Rev. 15:1-3); and no sooner is it said, that Babylon is fallen, but voices are heard in heaven, ascribing salvation, glory, honor, and power to God, for his judgments on the great whore; declaring that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; that the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride made ready; and proclaiming them happy that are called to the marriage-supper of the lamb (Rev. 19:1, 2, 6, 7, 9); all which respect the spiritual reign of Christ, now introduced by the ruin of antichrist.

2^{ndly}, There will follow upon this a general spread of the gospel; for which, way will be made into the several nations of the world by the pouring out of the vials. The gospel had very great spread in the first times of it. The apostles having a commission to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; accordingly carried it not only into the several parts of *Judea*, *Galilee*, and *Samaria*, but into neighboring countries and islands, *Phoenicia*, *Cyprus*, and *Antioch*, and even into all the Gentile nations; the apostle *Paul* himself went from *Jerusalem* round about to *Illyricum*, preaching the gospel of Christ, which he says was come into all the world, and preached to every creature under heaven; and by one or other of the apostles it was carried into all the then known parts of the habitable world; [\[5\]](#) as it seems it was to be before the destruction of *Jerusalem*; for our Lord says, *the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come* (Matt. 24:14); the end of the world to the Jews, the end of their civil and church-state, when their temple should be destroyed, and not one stone left upon another. And ever since it has been preached in one place or another; and sometimes has had a greater spread, and sometimes a lesser; but now it is brought into a very narrow compass, and lies in a very few hands; there are but few persons that preach it in the purity of it; the times are now, or near at hand, which Dr. Owen seems to have had in view; of whom it is reported he should say, "the time is coming when a faithful minister would be *more precious than fine gold, even than the golden wedge of Ophir*;" meaning, they would be scarce and rare; referring to the passage in Isaiah 13:12, and few there are that receive the gospel in the power of it, cordially embrace it, and sincerely profess it, and walk according to it: it looks like the time our Lord speaks of when he should come, and would not be able to find faith, the doctrine of faith, on the earth (Luke 18:8). But though the gospel is now within such narrow limits, ere long it will have a free course, and run and be glorified. The *earth*, the inhabitants of it, will be *filled with* a spiritual and saving *knowledge* of God and Christ, communicated by it, and of the truth of it; and that not in a superficial way and manner, but even *as the waters cover the sea* (Isa. 11:9), which are very deep, and large, and spreading; and which knowledge will be communicated to a large number of persons. This will be, when the *angel*, not any particular minister, as *Luther*, or any other, but a set of gospel ministers in the latter day, so called from their office, *shall flee in the midst of heaven*; discharge their office with great readiness and swiftness, and in the most public manner, in the church of God; *having the everlasting gospel*; not a little dry morality, but the gospel of the grace of God, the good news of life and salvation by Jesus Christ; which consists of everlasting things, of everlasting love, an everlasting covenant, an everlasting Savior, and everlasting salvation; and which was ordained

before the world, as well as will continue to the end of it; *having* this not in their heads only, but in their hearts and in their mouths, and a commission to *preach it to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people* (Rev. 14:6). These will be very diligent and industrious, spare no pains, be indefatigable in their work; they will be *many*, and *will run to and fro*; and by this means *knowledge* will be *increased* (Dan. 12:4): this will be the time, even in the Philadelphian state, when there will be an *open door set*, which *no man can shut* (Rev. 3:8); an opportunity of preaching the gospel every where, and which will be taken and used; a wonderful *door of utterance* will be given to ministers of the word, who will open their mouth freely, and boldly, and with great success. The doctrines of the gospel are the *living waters*, so called for their refreshing and quickening nature, both to dead sinners and drooping saints, that at this time *shall go out of Jerusalem*, the church of God; *half of them towards the former sea*, or the eastern sea, as the *Targum*; the Persian sea, which lay east of *Jerusalem*, and so before it: *and half of them towards the hinder sea*, or the western sea, as the paraphrase; the Mediterranean sea, which lies to the west of *Jerusalem*, and so behind it; and both denoting the spread of the gospel in the latter day, east and west, for the conversion of the eastern nations in *China, Tartary, Persia, &c.*, and for the conversion of the western nations in *Europe; in summer and in winter shall it be* (Zech. 14:8). These waters will be ever flowing, these doctrines will be constantly preaching; nor will the ministry of the word be hindered by any heat of persecution, or by any coldness or indifference to it.

3^{rdly}, There will be large conversions every where, in the several parts of the world: in all popish countries, and antichristian states; even the ten kings, that have given their kingdoms to the beast, have been associates of antichrist, and reigned with hem, shall withdraw from him; they and their subjects shall revolt from him, and be converted, and embrace the pure gospel: as it will be the Christian princes and potentates that will pour out the seven vials on antichrist, they will carry the gospel with them wherever they go; or however, the ministers of it will follow closely at their heels, way being made by the former for them; whose ministry will meet with great success every where, and those that escape the judgments of God in these nations, will not only be *affrighted* at them, but will be truly converted by the gospel, and *give glory to the God of heaven* (Rev. 11:13). In the Mohammedan nations, the Turkish woe being past, and that empire being destroyed, and way made for the gospel to be carried into the eastern kingdoms, great and large conversions will be made by it; there is a most glaring prophecy of this in Isaiah 60:7, which the whole chapter concerns the spiritual and personal reign of Christ; *all the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory*. Now *Kedar* and *Nebaioth* were the sons of *Ishmael* (Gen. 25:13), who settled in *Arabia*, the country now possessed by the *Turks*; [6](#) so that this is a prophecy of the conversion of multitudes in those parts, whereby the interest of Christ will be increased, and his church glorified. Moreover, in all Pagan countries the gospel will make its way, and be successful, the *covering* and *veil* of blindness and ignorance, *cast and spread over all people and nations* (Isa. 25:7), will be removed by it; not only the darkness of Popery and Mohammedanism, but the gross darkness of Paganism shall flee away at the light and brightness of *Zion's* rising; the Gentiles shall come to it; the fulness and forces of them shall be brought into the church, being converted by the word; and not only vast multitudes of the common people, but great personages also; kings shall be enlightened by it; these shall come to Christ, fall down before him, and worship him; these shall come into his church, and become members of it; kings shall be *nursing fathers*, and queens *nursing mothers* to his people; they shall bring their

riches, honor, and glory into his house; and his saints shall *suck the breasts of kings* (Isa. 60:1, 2, 3, 5, 11, 16; 49:23; Ps. 72: 10, 11), be enriched, honored, and protected by them. This will be the time when *the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High* (Dan. 7:27); not that there will be any change or alteration in the form and order of civil government, which will be the same as now; there will be kings and queens then, as at this time, as these prophecies show; it will not be until the personal reign of Christ takes place, that all rule, authority, and power, will be put down (1 Cor. 15:24): civil magistracy, in the spiritual reign, will continue as it is; only it will change hands, it will be entirely in the hands of Christian kings and princes all the world over: and no doubt but it will be better exercised, be more orderly and regular; and that truth and righteousness will prevail every where. But I must not forget the conversion of the considerable body of people, the Jews, who have been preserved a distinct people for several hundred years, for this purpose; the conversion of these people will be sudden, and of them, altogether, a nation shall be born at once (Isa. 66:8). It looks as if their conversion would be like that of the apostle *Paul*; and he seems to hint that it will, when he says, that he in obtaining mercy, was *a pattern to them which should hereafter believe* (1 Tim. 1:16); meaning, perhaps, his own countrymen, that should believe in Christ in the latter day, whose conversion would be similar to his; that as his conversion was sudden, in the midst of all his ignorance, unbelief, and rebellion, and without the word, by the immediate power, and grace of God, so will their be in like manner; nor is it likely that their conversion should be by means of the word, since there is such an aversion in that people to the hearing of it; and a rare thing it is to see a Jew in a Christian assembly. But, however, all *Israel* shall be called, converted, and saved (Rom. 11:26). There is a famous prophecy of this in Hosea 3: 4, 5, in the first of these verses it is said, *the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince*; without any civil government of their own, the scepter having departed from them many hundred years ago; *and without a sacrifice*; daily or yearly, or on any occasion; they believing it to be unlawful to sacrifice any where but in their own land, and at Jerusalem, and on the altar of God there; *and without an image, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim*; without any manner of idols, or idol-worship; they being not addicted to idolatry, since their return from the Babylonish captivity: and now as all these things are exactly fulfilled in them, so will in like manner that which follows; *afterwards shall the children of Israel return*, by faith and repentance, from their evil way, from their impenitence and unbelief, and rejection of the Messiah; *and seek the Lord their God, and David their king*; the Messiah, the son of David, their king, as their own *Targum* paraphrases it; *and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter day*; in the spiritual reign of Christ; and it is hinted at in the Philadelphian state (Rev. 3:9), then will the children of *Israel appoint themselves one head*, which is Christ, whom they will own and acknowledge to be their head, lord and king; and *they shall come up out of the land*, or countries, where they are, to their own land, *and great shall be the day of Jezreel* (Hos. 1:11), and this will make a considerable part of the glory of Christ's spiritual reign.

4^{thly}, There will be at this time a large effusion of the spirit of God: the prophecy in *Joel*, quoted in *Acts* 2:17-20, was very applicable indeed to the case of the apostle at the day of Pentecost, but was not fully accomplished then; the Spirit was not poured upon *all flesh*; nor were those signs in heaven, in full extent of them, seen then, predicted in it; the pouring forth of the Spirit then was only a pledge and earnest of what will be in the latter days; some drops as it were, were only let down then; hereafter the Lord will *pour the water out of his buckets*, and *his seed shall be in many waters* (Num.24:7): it will be owing to this that the above events will have their accomplishment;

the destruction of antichrist will be *by the spirit of Christ's mouth*, which will blow a blast upon him; the success of the gospel every where, and the large conversions of men, must be attributed to the plentiful effusion of the spirit that will attend it; particularly the conversion of the Jews, will be owing entirely to the *spirit of grace and supplication* (Zech. 12:10) poured out upon them, when *they shall look on him whom they have pieced and mourn*, and it will be in consequences of the extraordinary pouring out of the spirit, that the following things will take place in this reign.

The light of the gospel, both in the preachers and professors of it, will be very great, clear, and distinct; *the light of the moon*, as in the present dispensation, to which may be compared, *shall be as the light of the sun*, to which that dispensation shall be like; *and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days* (Isa. 30:26); as if the light of seven days were collected together, and shone out at once; hyperbolical expressions, setting forth the exceeding greatness of gospel-light in those times: not only *the watchman*, ministers of the word, *shall see eye to eye* (Isa. 52:8), all truths clearly and distinctly; their ideas and sentiments shall be regular and uniform; there will be an entire harmony, and agreement between them; but even private Christians, common members, *shall all know* the Lord, and the things of the gospel in a very clear and comfortable manner, *even from the least of them, unto the greatest of them* (Jer. 31:34); when God shall *lay Zion's stones with fair colors, and her foundations with sapphires; made her windows of agates, and her gates of carbuncles, and all her borders of pleasant stones*; then *all her children shall be taught of God* (Isa. 54:11-13), to such a degree as they never were before, so clearly, fully and universally.

There will be great purity of gospel-worship and ordinances; *the temple of God will be opened in heaven*; the true worship of God will be restored, and observed according to the primitive pattern: *the ark of the testimony* (Rev. 11:19) will be seen in it; the ordinances of the gospel will be administered according to their original institution; there will be no disputes about the form of order of church-government; every thing relating to it will appear evident; the ordinances will be kept as they were delivered; nor will there be any doubts about the manner of performing them, or the subject to be admitted to them, or the ends to be answered by them; all these things will stand in a clear light; and there will be no objector to them, or any division about them; nor will they be ever corrupted any more.

Brotherly love, which is now waxen cold, will be in its height and glory, agreeable to the name of this state, *Philadelphia*, which signifies brotherly love; there will be no more contentions, animosities, and quarrels: *Ephraim shall not envy Judah*; on account of pre-eminence of office, gifts, and grace; *and Judah shall not envy Ephraim* (Isa. 11:13); by any haughty and over bearing carriage, or with wrangling debates, and opprobrious language; the two sticks of *Ephraim* and *Judah*, shall be one in the hand of the Lord; there will be perfect harmony and love, nothing to disturb, distress, and make uneasy, or tend to alienate the affections of one from another; there will be no *pricking briar, nor grieving thorn* (Ezek. 28:24) among them; they will be like the first Christians, *of one heart, and of one soul, being of one mind, and of one judgment*; all studying *to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*.

Holiness, which becomes the house of God for ever, will now adorn every member in it; nor will there be so much immorality in the world as at this present time; holiness will be as common as profaneness is now; *in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, holiness to the Lord*:—

yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts (Zech. 14:20, 21): Christ therefore takes his titles in writing to the church at *Philadelphia*, the emblem of the spiritual reign, suitable to its state; as truth and holiness shall them prevail, he addresses it thus, *these things saith he that is holy, he that is true* (Rev. 3:7); truth and holiness go together; truth influences the heart, and that the life and conversation.

There will be great peace and prosperity of all kinds, inward and outward, spiritual and temporal; in those *days* of the Messiah's spiritual reign, *shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth* (Ps. 72:7): as the saints will enjoy great peace of conscience and tranquility of mind, so they will have nothing to disturb them without; there will be no more persecution; there will none to *hurt* or *destroy in all* the Lord's *holy mountain* (Isa. 11:9); as there will be no discord among themselves, so no distress from any enemies; *violence shall no more be heard in their land*, nor *wasting and destruction within their border* (Isa. 60:18): O happy, halcyon days!—I go on to observe,

The glorious things which are spoken of, and will be done in the personal reign of Christ: Toward the close of the spiritual reign, things will be upon the decline; the Laodicean church-state will take place; there will be great coldness, and lukewarmness, in spiritual things, which will be very offensive to Christ; the Spirit of God will withdraw his gracious influences; and there will be little left but external gifts, and outward riches and honor, on which great stress will be laid; and there will be great boasting and bragging of them, as being *rich and increased with goods*, and in *need of nothing*; when, as to spiritual grace and the exercise of it, they will be *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked* (Rev. 3:15-18); and need the advice that Christ gives them, of applying to him for *gold, white raiment, and eye-salve*: a general sleepiness will seize professors of religion; the wise as well as foolish virgins will slumber and sleep, when the approach of the bridegroom is near; immorality and profaneness will again spread in the world; and it will be as the days of *Noah* and *Lot*; and in this condition will Christ find the world, and the church, when he comes a second time; which is what will introduce the glory of the following state.

1st, There will be a personal appearance of the Son of God, and a glorious one it will be: he will personally appear; *the Lord himself shall descend* (1 Thess. 4:16); not by his Spirit, or by the communication of his grace, or by his gracious presence, as before; but in person he will descend from third heaven, where he is in our nature, into the air, where he will be visible; *every eye shall see him*, when *he cometh with clouds* (Rev. 1:7); or in the clouds of heaven, which will be his chariot; he will descend on earth at the proper time; *and his feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives* (Zech. 14:4); on that spot of ground from whence he ascended to heaven. Job seems to have this descent of his in view, when he says, *he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth* (Job 19:25); which seems to respect not so much his first coming as his second; since it is connected with the resurrection of the dead.

This appearance of Christ will be a very glorious one; it is called the glorious appearing of the great God, and *our Savior Jesus Christ* (Titus 2:13); for he will appear under both characters to his people; when he appeared the first time, it was in the form of a servant; he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; but now he will come as King of kings, and Lord of lords: then he was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, to bear the sins, and work out the salvation of his people; but now he will appear without sin, to put them into the full possession of the salvation obtained for

them: *he will come in his own glory, and in his father's, and of the holy angels* (Luke 9:26); he will appear in the glory of deity, and all the perfections of it; who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and *the express image of his person* (Heb. 1:3); it will then be evident, that he is the *Lord God, omnipotent that reigneth*; and that he is omniscient, the searcher of the hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men (Rev. 19:6; 2:23); and he will be seen in all the glory of his human nature, and with that glory he has with the Father, as mediator: all which, in some sense, may be said to be his Father's; because his divine glory is the same with his Father's, and his human and mediatorial glory is what he has from him; and he will come with all that power and authority vested in him by his father as the judge of the world: he will be attended with his holy angels, as when on mount *Sinai*, and as when he ascended to heaven whom he will employ in one kind of service or another, and who will make a considerable figure in this apparatus: to which may be added, that all the saints will come along with Christ; the souls of all that have departed from the beginning of the world, in order to be re-united to their bodies, which will be raised; there will be *Adam*, and there will be *Abraham*, and all the ante-diluvian and post-diluvian saints, old and new testament-ones; when Christ will be glorified in them, and admired by them, and they shall appear with him in glory.

2^{dly}, There will be a resurrection of the bodies of the saints; *the dead in Christ*, who died in union with him, believers in him, and partakers of his grace, *shall rise first* (1 Thess. 4:16); they will have the dominion over the wicked in the morning of the resurrection, who will not rise until the end of that day; there will be a thousand years distance between the resurrection of the one and of the other; hence the *resurrection of the just* (Luke 14:14), as that is named in distinction from that of the unjust, it called the *first resurrection* (Rev. 20: 5, 6).

This resurrection will be a glorious one; it will not only be by the power of Christ, and in virtue of union with him, but in entire conformity to him, as by him will be the resurrection of the dead, and every one will rise in his order, and they that are his at his coming, and because they are his: so they will be *fashioned like unto his glorious body* (Phil. 3:21): though they are laid vile bodies in the grave, they will rise glorious ones; the body that is *sown in corruption*, will be *raised in incorruption*; and though *sown in dishonor*, will be *raised in glory*; being *sown in weakness*, it will be *raised in power*; and from a *natural body* will be *raised a spiritual one* (1 Cor. 15:42-44); and the righteous, in soul and body, *shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father* (Matt. 13:44).

3^{dly}, The next thing will be the change of living saints: this is the *mystery* the apostle says he would show the *Corinthians*; and perhaps he was the first man that was led into it, or however, the first that showed it to others; that *we shall not all sleep*, or die, *but we shall all be changed* (1 Cor. 15:51); even those that die: such as will be alive at the coming of Christ, shall undergo a change equivalent to death; their bodies shall be changed from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible ones; and their souls shall become at once perfectly pure and holy. I have sometimes thought, that that change which passes upon the hearts of the people of God at the instant of death, or will pass upon living saints at the time I speak of, when hearts so full of sinful lust, pollution, and wickedness, will be at once cleared of all, is a greater evidence and display of the power of God, than the change that passes upon their bodies, either at the resurrection, or at this time. This being done, these living saints, changed, shall be caught up together with the raised ones, to meet

the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:17); where it seems as if he and they should stop a while, until an after-event is accomplished.

4^{thly}, The precious dust of the saints being collected out of the earth, and their bodies raised and united to their souls, and living ones changed, and both taken up from hence, and with the Lord, the general conflagration will begin; *the heavens shall pass away with great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up*, with all the wicked in it; *for the heavens and the earth that now are, that is, the earth with its surrounding atmosphere, are kept in store, reserved unto fire, for the perdition of ungodly men* (2 Pet. 3:7, 10); when,

5^{thly}, There will succeed new heavens, and a new earth, which God has promised; and which, the apostle Peter says, saints look for according to his promise; and which the Apostle *John* had a vision of (2 Pet. 3:13). In this new earth Christ will descend and dwell; here the tabernacle of God will be with men; and he shall dwell with them (Rev. 21:1): this will be the seat of Christ's personal reign; here he will have his palace, and keep his court, and display his glory, and the greatness of his majesty; and here his people will dwell with him, who will now be all *righteous*, perfectly so, even righteousness itself; for in these new heavens and new earth will *dwell righteousness* (Isa. 60:21; 2 Pet. 3:12; Rev. 21:27); nothing shall enter into this glorious new *Jerusalem*-state, that makes an abomination or a lie; it will be perfectly an holy city, consisting wholly of holy persons; wherefore *blessed and holy is he that hath a part in the first resurrection* (Rev. 20:6): nor will there be any enemy to annoy the saints in this state; the wicked will be all burnt and destroyed at the general conflagration; the beast and false prophet before this will be cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. Satan will be bound by Christ, and cast into the bottomless pit, where he will remain till the thousand years are fulfilled: for so long will this state continue: so long Satan will be bound; so long the saints will live and reign with Christ (Rev. 20:1-6); this will be the day of the Lord, which is a thousand years, and which a thousand years will be as one day (2 Pet. 3:8). At the close of these years Satan will be loosed again, and the wicked dead will be raised; [\[7\]](#) which, with the whole posse of devils, will make the *Gog* and *Magog*-army, who shall be in the four quarters of the world, and go upon the breadth of the earth; and whose numbers shall be as the sand of the sea, being all the wicked that have been from the beginning of the world: a large army indeed, such an one as never was before, consisting of enraged devils, and of men raised with all that malice and wickedness they died in, with Satan at head of them; by whom they will be animated to make this last and feeble and foolish effort, for their recovery and liberty; in order to which they will compass the camp of the saints about, the beloved city; who will be in no manner of pain and uneasiness at the appearance of this seeming formidable army; being clothed with immortality, secured by the power of God, and Christ being in person with them; when fire shall come down from heaven and devour the wicked; the wrath of God shall seize them, distress and terrify them, divert them from their purpose, and throw them into the utmost consternation and confusion; and when they shall be dragged to the tribunal of Christ, and stand before him, small and great, and be judged according to their works, and cast into the lake of fire; where they will be in company with the devil, the beast, and false prophet, and be tormented with them for ever and ever (Rev. 20:7-15).

This will issue in the ultimate glory; when the saints shall be for ever with the Lord; shall see him as he is; enjoy uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; have the company of angels,

and be in possession of those *things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of*. But my intention being only to give you an account of the glorious things that shall be in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ; here I stop, here I end, and close all with a word or two.

All this shows and proves, that the church and people of God are the objects of his love; that he *loves the gates of Zion indeed*; the church is his *Hephzibah*, in whom he delights, and to whom he is married; and therefore has he said these things of her; and therefore will he make them good: and if the saints have an interest in the love of God, they need not care what the world say or think of them, or what they can do unto them; though they are with them the off-scouring of all things, they are precious in the sight of God.

It is evident from hence, that the church of Christ is lasting and durable, and cannot be destroyed; *its foundation is in the holy mountains*; it is built on a rock the gates of hell cannot prevail against; its walls, in the spiritual reign, are salvation, and its gates praise; and what a description have we of it, of its wall and foundation, of its security and glory in the personal reign, under the name of the *new Jerusalem*. It will continue through the age, and come into every state it is said it should, and will endure to all eternity.

Seeing such glorious things are spoken of, and that by the Lord, we need not doubt, but should believe, there will be a performance of them; and should be looking for them, and at the worst should lift up our heads with joy, since our redemption draws near.

Happy are those that belong to this city, who are *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*; whose citizenship is in heaven, and they have a right to enter in through the gates into the holy city, the new *Jerusalem*; but miserable will those be, that will be without, *for without are dogs*: and then *he that is unjust*, will be *unjust still*; and *he that is filthy*, will be *filthy still*; and *he that is righteous*, will be *righteous still*, and *he that is holy*, will be *holy still* (Rev. 22:11).

ENDNOTES

[1] The Jewish writers connected these words with the title of the psalm, and make sense to this; the *foundation* or argument of it, the psalm is *concerning the holy mountains of Zion and Jerusalem*. So *Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech*: the *Targum* joins them together thus; "by the sons of *Korah* is said a song that is founded by the mouth of the fathers that were of old."

[2] Entitled, The Watchman's Answer to the Question, What of the Night? On Isaiah 21:11, 12.

[3] Called, The Practical Improvement of the Watchman's Answer. On 1 Chronicles 12:32.

[4] See more of these vials in my Exposition on the 15th and 16th chapters of the Revelation; and Bedford's notes on Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part 3, p. 41, 42.

[5] Vid. Fabricii Lux Evangelelii, p. 83.

[6] The Targum paraphrases these words, "all the sheep of the Arabians shall be gathered unto thee," &c., as it does the beginning of the preceding verse; "the multitude of the Arabians shall cover thee round about."

[7] As I do not suppose that the earth, at the conflagration, will be annihilated, or be destroyed, as to the substance of it; only purified by fire, refined and cleared of all noxious qualities, and therefore called a new earth; (so considering the omnipotence of God) there can be no difficulty about the repositories of the ashes of the wicked, or the place from whence they will be raised, any more than about the place where the dust of Adam, and of all from the beginning of the world, is laid up.

Attendance In Places
OF
RELIGIOUS WORSHIP
WHERE THE DIVINE NAME IS RECORDED,
ENCOURAGED.

Sermon I,

Preached *October 9, 1757*, at the Opening of a New Place for Worship, in *Carter-lane St. Olave's-street, Southwark.*

EXODUS 20:24

In all places, where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

THIS chapter begins with an account of the giving of the law of the Decalogue, or ten commands, on mount *Sinai*, to the children of *Israel*. A very compendious system of morality this, and was peculiarly calculated for that people; as the preface to it shows, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; Thou shalt have no other God, &c.* and was admirably adapted to their tempers, dispositions, and circumstances; and exceedingly well suited to correct their minds and manners; and to guide and direct them in matters of religion, and in their duty to God and man: not but that all of it, that is of a moral nature, is binding upon the Gentiles, and especially ought to be regarded by us Christians, who profess ourselves to be the followers of Jesus; since most of the precepts of it have been recited and urged by him, (Matt. 19:17-19) and the whole by him reduced to these two heads, love to God, and love to our neighbour; saying, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment: and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* (Matt. 22:37-40) And the apostle *Paul*, a disciple of his, and one that had the mind of Christ, having mentioned the several laws of the second table, observes; that *if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.—Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law:* (Rom. 13:8-10) and elsewhere he says, *all the law is fulfilled in one word;* (Gal. 5:14) even this *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* And the rather this law should be attended to by us, since our blessed Redeemer and Saviour came not *to destroy it, but to fulfill it,* (Matt. 5:17) by his subjection to it, both to the precept and penalty of it; whereby, though he has delivered us from the curse and condemnation of it, yet he has not exempted us from obedience to it; so that we are *not*

without law to God, though freed from obligation to punishment for the transgression of it, through the satisfaction of our surety; but are *under the law to Christ*, (1 Cor. 9:21) as lie is head, king, and lawgiver in his church. And it is with pleasure we can behold the law fulfilled for us by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and held forth in his hand, as king of saints, as a rule of walk and conversation unto us: in which view of it, every believer may say of it, as the apostle did, *I delight in the law of God, after the inward man*. (Rom. 7:22) The delivery of this law, indeed, was attended with very terrifying circumstances: such as a dark, thick, tempestuous cloud, fire, and smoke; thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes; which not only made the children of *Israel* to tremble, and to stand at a distance; but *Moses* himself said, *I exceedingly fear and quake*. (Heb. 12:21) These were emblems of the dreadful things uttered by the law, against the transgressors of it; and of the terrible consequences of their transgressions; and of the terrors raised by it in the consciences of awakened sinners; wherefore the apostle says, *Tell me ye that desire to be under the law*; (Gal. 4:21) that is, as a covenant of works, *do ye not hear the law?* the voice and language of it, its menaces and curses, what it saith to them who are under it, *that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*. (Rom. 3:19) It accuses of breaches and violations of it; it effectually supports its charges it convicts of guilt, and confounds the sinner; and says enough to the silencing of all objections; so that nothing can be said why judgment should not proceed, and the sentence be pronounced and executed. To them who *are of the works of the law*; who seek for justification, salvation, and eternal life, by obedience to it; it says, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them*. (Gal. 3:10) In short, it is a cutting and killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death. Hence a Mediator was found necessary, and desired by the people of *Israel*, at the time the law was given; *They said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die*, ver. 19. This office *Moses* undertook, at their request, and *drew near unto the thick darkness*, where God was, ver. 21, and became a Mediator between God and them; and has the name of one given him. Hence the law is said to be *ordained by angels, in the hand of a Mediator*; (Gal. 3:19) that is, *Moses*, who was a type of Christ, the Mediator between God and man; by whom we have access to him, with boldness and confidence, through his being the fulfilling *end of the law for righteousness*, (Rom. 10:4) by obeying the precept, and bearing the penalty of it.

Now, though this law, as to the manner of its delivery was so terrible; yet, as to the matter of it, it was *holy, just, and good*; a transcript of the divine nature, and a revelation of the will of God; and it was an high favour; and a peculiar privilege to be indulged with it: hence, says *Moses*, *What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law that I set before you this day?* (Deut. 4:8) And the psalmist *David* also takes notice of this as an instance of the distinguishing goodness of God to the people of *Israel*; *he sheweth his word unto Jacob; his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them; praise ye the Lord*. (Ps. 147:19, 20) And the apostle *Paul* reckons, among many special privileges of the Jewish nation, that *to them pertained the covenant, the giving of the law, and the service of God*. (Rom. 9:4) Wherefore, since Jehovah condescended to speak with them from heaven, and favoured them with a divine revelation; they were laid under obligation to serve and worship him, in the manner he should direct them, as well as in places where they should do it. *You have seen*, says he, ver. 22, 23. *that I have talked with you from heaven: ye shall not make with me gods of silver: neither shall you make unto you gods of gold*; and then directs them to make an altar, to offer on it sacrifice unto him, ver. 24. *an altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, thy sheep and thine oxen*;

which altar was a type of Christ, who is that *altar* we christians, or believers in Christ, *have*; have a right unto, to use it, and partake of it; *whereof they have no right to eat, that serve the tabernacle*, (Heb. 8:10) or keep up the Jewish forms of worship, now abolished: that altar, that sanctifies every spiritual gift, presented on it by faith, and which renders every spiritual sacrifice of prayer or praise acceptable to God. (Matt. 23:19; Isai. 56:7) Also the sacrifices offered up on the altar of earth, were typical of better; even of the sacrifice of Christ, which is of a sweet smelling savour to God; thereby sin being made an end of, and reconciliation and atonement made for it. Now, the Lord, to encourage the people of Israel to worship him in his own way, and where he would have them, promises his presence with them, and his blessing on them, in the words I have read to you; *In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*. As yet no particular places were appointed for worship ; and, therefore, he says, *where I record*, or am about to record, or shall record. The tabernacle was not now erected, nor orders given for it, which afterwards were *Let them make a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them*. (Exod. 25:8) Nor as yet was the ark of the testimony made, over which was the mercy-seat; on which were the cherubim; between which Jehovah took up his residence; nor were any place or places, pointed at as yet, where the tabernacle, or the things in it, when made should he set up: and, though after this, the Lord did signify there was a place he should choose to put his name in, and cause it to dwell there; and where, and where only, they should come and offer their sacrifices, and keep their passover, and other feasts; yet he did not presently express this by name; eventually, and in the issue, it appeared to be the city of *Jerusalem*; though before that, the tabernacle and the ark in it, were at other places, as *Gilgal, Shiloh, &c.* but this was a fixed and stable place for it: here *Solomon*, by divine direction, built a magnificent temple, where the worship of God was continued some hundreds of years: this was destroyed by the Chaldeans, which occasioned an intermission of service for some time; and then it was rebuilt by *Zerubbabel*, which continued till the coming of Christ, and was a little time after demolished by the Romans; and ever since, the worship of God is not limited and restrained to any certain place; neither at *Jerusalem*, nor any other particular place, are men obliged to *worship the Father*; but they may worship him any where, so be it they *worship him in spirit and in truth*. (Gal. 4:21, 23, 24) Under the gospel-dispensation, men may *lift up holy hands every where, without wrath or doubting*; (1 Tim. 2:8) they may pray and preach, and administer the ordinances of Christ, wherever they can find a place proper and convenient; the only description of places, and the only direction to us, where we should meet and worship, is, *where God records his name*: And, in this light and view of things, I shall consider the above words, by observing,

I. What those places are which God has a regard unto; and where his people have encouragement to serve and worship him ; and these are, *where he records his name*.

II. The regard he has to such places, and the encouragement he gives to persons that worship him lie promises his presence and his blessing; *I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*.

I. The place, or places where the people of God are directed to worship him, and he shews a regard unto, are where his name is recorded. Under this head I shall shew, what is meant by *the name of the Lord*; what by *recording his name*; and point at the places where this may be done.

First, What may be intended by the *name of the Lord*; which admits of various significations. 1. By it is sometimes meant the Lord himself; as, when it is said, *The name of the God of Jacob defend thee*; (Ps. 20:1) that is, God himself who is *Jacob's God*; for who else is the defence of his people?

He is a wall of fire round about them; he is their place of defence; which is the munition of rocks; and being so, they may sing unto God their strength, and say unto him, as *David* did, *God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.* (Ps. 59:17) Again, when it is said, *The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.* (Prov. 18:10) The meaning is, the Lord himself is a strong tower; and such the Psalmist often calls him, saying, he is *my salvation and my high tower, a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.* (Ps. 18:1 and 61:3) Hither do the saints betake themselves, in times of distress and danger; and here they remain safe until the *calamities be overpast.* So the name of Christ signifies Christ himself; *In his name shall the Gentiles trust;* (Matt. 12:17-21) that is, in himself; in his person for acceptance; in his righteousness for justification; in his blood for pardon; and in his fulness for all supply. Nor is any other the proper object of trust and confidence; not any creature or creature-act: *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.* (Jer. 17:7)

2. The name of the Lord sometimes intends his perfections; as, when it is said of Christ, the angel of God's presence; the angel that went before the Israelites, and guided and guarded them through the wilderness, to the land of *Canaan, Beware of him, and obey his voice :—for my name is in him;* (Exod. 23:21) The nature and perfections of God: the whole fulness of the Godhead dwells in him; every perfection of Deity; all that the Father hath, he has; he is *the express image of his person;* and so like him, having the whole divine nature in him, that he who sees the one sees the other. And, as these are in him, as God, as a divine person; so they are displayed in him as a mediator; in whom God has *proclaimed his name;* that is, his perfections of mercy, grace, goodness, justice, and holiness particularly; since it follows, *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty;* (Exod. 33 and 34:5-7) for these divine perfections are more especially glorified in our redemption and salvation by Christ; where *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* (Ps. 85:10) Once more, where it is said, *O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!* (Ps. 8:1) The sense is; "What a glorious display of thy perfections is made in the earth, through the preaching of the gospel! whereby, in the first times of it, to which this passage belongs, was given *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face, or person, of Jesus Christ?*" (2 Cor. 4:6) that is, of the glorious perfections of God, as they are set forth in the person of Christ, and in the work of redemption: and so in the latter day, by the same means, will *the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.* (Hab. 2:14)

3. By *the name of the Lord* may be meant, *any or every* name of the Lord, by which he is revealed, manifested, and made known to the sons of men. The first name of his we meet with, is that of *Elohim; In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth;* (Gen. 1:1) which name has the signification of worship and adoration in it; being derived from a root which signifies *to worship;* God being the sole object of religions worship; and to which the apostle may be thought to have some respect, when he explains Deity, by that which *is worshipped;* for, speaking of antichrist, he says, *who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped.* (2 Thess. 2:4) And the word *Elohim* being of the plural number, may with propriety enough be rendered, *the adorable ones;* and very well he thought to denote a plurality; which, according to divine revelation, is a Trinity of persons, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; which three are one; and who manifestly appear in the creation of all things: The Father, who created all things by Jesus Christ; and the Word, *who spake, and it was done; who commanded, and*

it stood fast; who said, Let such and such a thing be, and it was: and the Spirit of God, who garnished the heavens, and *moved upon the face of the waters*; and brought the confused and indigested chaos into the beautiful order the earth since was: So true is that of the Psalmist, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath, or spirit, of his mouth.* (Ps. 33:6) The next name by which God made himself known, is that of *God Almighty*; of which he himself says; *I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty*; (Exod. 6:3) referring, no doubt in the first place, and particularly to his appearance to *Abraham*, when ninety years of age; to whom he said, *I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.* (Gen. 17:1) A name that well agrees with him; as is clear by his making all things out of nothing; by upholding, and maintaining in Being the things he has made; by the redemption and preservation of his people; and by fulfilling his purposes, prophecies and promises. And there is no name or title by which he makes himself known, that is more suited to encourage the faith and hope of his children, in times of difficulty and danger; since his *hand is not shortened, that it cannot save.* (Isai. 59:1) Another name following this, by which the divine Being has thought fit to manifest himself, is that of *Jehovah*; which it was not his pleasure to make himself known by to the above Patriarchs; for, he says, *But by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.* (Exod. 6:3) This is expressive of his existence; of him as the Being of beings; of his immutability and eternity; and is referred to, when *Moses*, having asked of God, what he should say to the children of *Israel*, should they inquire of him who sent him to them, saying, *What is his name?* He is bid to say, *I am that I am, hath sent me to you;* (Exod. 3:13, 14) or, "I am that I was; and I am that I shall be;" or, as *John* well deciphers it, *which is, and which was, and which is to come;* (Rev. 1:4) taking in all time and tenses, past, present. and future. And this being a name peculiar to the most high God, and yet given to Christ, *Jehovah our righteousness*, is no inconsiderable proof of his proper and supreme Deity. Another name of God is, *The Lord of hosts*; and by which he is frequently called; *The portion of Jacob is not like unto them, the idols of the Gentiles, the Lord of hosts is his name;* (Jer. 10:16) *The Lord of Sabaoth*; (James 5:4) and *James* retains the *Hebrew* word untranslated, and our version of him; which is not to be pronounced and understood, as it often wrongly is, *of the Lord of Sabbath*; but of the Lord of *hosts, or armies*, both above and below; and not only of the sun, moon, and stars, sometimes called *the host of heaven*; but of the angels; the heavenly militia; that multitude of the heavenly host; part of which attended at our Lord's incarnation; these are at his beck, will, and command, as well as all the hosts and armies of men on earth; *for, he doth according to his will, in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* (Dan. 4:35) The name of *the Lord God of Israel*, is frequently given him in the prophetic writings, especially of *Jeremiah*, who often prefaces his prophecies with it; and is very properly given him; since he chose the people of *Israel*, above all people, to be his special people; and distinguished them from others, by many peculiar favours; he avouched them to be *his people*; and they avouched him to be *their God*; this was his Old Testament name and title; and was almost out of date, as one observes; when *Zechariah*, the father of *John Baptist*, used it, who is the last that did; saying, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people;* (Luke 1:68) for, quickly after, another name of his took place; which is, his New-Testament name and title; *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (2 Cor. 1:3; Ephes. 1:3,17 and 3:14; 1 Peter 1:3) used by the apostles *Paul* and *Peter*. God is *the God* of Christ, as Christ is man; the human nature of Christ is a creature of God, *the true tabernacle, which God pitched and not man*; and which he anointed, filled, and adorned with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, *without measure*; and Christ, as such, loved him, as his God, and obeyed his commands, from a law of love in his heart; him he hoped in from his mother's womb;

and in him he believed, and had the strongest confidence in him, that he was near him, would help him, stand by him, and justify him; to him he prayed most fervently and frequently; sometimes a whole night together; and gave him thanks and praise for divers things, particularly for hiding the mysteries of grace from the *wise and prudent*, and revealing them *to babes*; and was in all things obedient to his God, throughout the whole course of his life, even unto death. God is the *Father* of Christ, as Christ is a divine person; and in such sense his Father, as he is to no other; and Christ is in such sense his Son, and in such a class of filiation and sonship, as none others are, angels, or men; angels are the sons of God by creation, saints by adoption: but *to which of them*, one or another, *said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* (Heb. 1:5) Christ is his own proper, natural Son; of the same nature with him; the Son of himself; *the Son of the Father, in truth and love*; (2 John 3) and not in an improper, figurative, and metaphorical sense; as magistrates, by office, are called the sons of God.

Christ himself may be signified by the name of *the Lord*; in and by whom he is so clearly made known and revealed to men; and in whom his name, his nature, and perfections are, as before observed; and to whom belong all the same glorious names; as *the true God, God Almighty, Jehovah, the Lord of hosts*, and *the holy One of Israel*; and who, besides these, has various precious and excellent names, worthy to be recorded. The first of these we meet with is *Shiloh*, in the famous prophecy in *Jacob, The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come*; (Gen. 49:10) who is the true Messiah; which name, whether it has the signification of *prosperous* or *peaceable*, it agrees with Christ; in whose hands the pleasure and will of God, respecting the salvation of men, *prospered*; and who succeeded in all his conflicts with sin, Satan, and the world, and got the victory over them: and he is the prince of *peace*; the *man*, the *peace*; with whom the covenant of peace was made; on whom the chastisement of our peace was laid, and who has made peace by the blood of his cross. His name *Immanuel*, given him before his birth, when prophesied of, to be born of a virgin, is a very precious one; which is, by interpretation, *God with us*; (Matt. 1:23) "God in our nature, God manifest in the flesh;" and through which, being made, he dwelt among men; which is a most wonderful instance of condescending grace. Another name with which it is said he should be called is, *the Lord our righteousness*, (Jer. 23:6) because as a surety, he undertook to bring in everlasting righteousness; and, therefore, it became him to fulfill all righteousness and for this purpose, *he came in the likeness of sinful flesh*, to obey the law in our nature, and *condemn sin in the flesh*, by the sacrifice of himself, that the righteousness of the law might be completely fulfilled in us; and he is become *the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believes*; and to whom he is also made *righteousness*, and they made the righteousness of God in him and, not to forget that delightful name of *Jesus*, given to him because he *saves* his people from their sins; nor *Messiah*, which signifies *Christ*, or *anointed*; he being anointed as prophet, priest, and king, with *the oil of gladness*, the holy Ghost, and his grace, *above his fellows*; and, from whom the saints receive the unction, that anointing, which teaches all things, and are denominated *christians*. To this name of Christ the church seems to allude, when she says, *Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.* (Song 1:3)

5. The name of the Lord sometimes designs the gospel; as, when Christ says to his divine Father, *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world*; (John 17:6) that is, his mind and will, which he revealed unto his disciples, having lain in his bosom, and being fully acquainted with it; the mysteries of his love and grace, which lay hid in his heart; the several doctrines of grace and truth, which relate to the great design of God in man's salvation, and came

from God by him; for, this he afterwards explains, by saying, *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me*; (John 17:8) namely, *the words of eternal life*, or the doctrines respecting the everlasting welfare and salvation of men so the Lord said to *Annanius*, concerning the apostle *Paul*, *he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the children of Israel*; (Acts 9:15) which was no other, than to carry the gospel, and spread it, not only in *Judea*, but in the Gentile world; and abide by it, and continue preaching it; and bear a testimony to it, in the face of all opposition, from men of every rank, and of every nation. Now, from all this we may learn. in some measure what we are to understand by the *name* of the Lord; which may be taken in the most comprehensive sense; as to include himself, his nature, and perfections, and every appellation by which he is manifested and known; his son, his person, offices, and grace, and all things relating to him; the gospel, the various doctrines of it: all which, as they serve to celebrate the praise and glory of God, they are to be recorded and remembered in every place, where the worship of God is set up; which leads me to observe,

Secondly, What is meant by the Lord's *recording his name*, or causing it to be remembered; for so the words may be rendered, *Where I make mention of my name*, or *where I cause to remember my name*; or, *you to remember it*; that is, cause it to be remembered, or refresh the memories of men with it: which is done by appointing and setting up memorials of it.

1st, Under the legal dispensation, this was done by ordering the *ark*, *mercy-seat*, and *cherubim*, to be made, and to be placed first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple. These were symbols of the divine presence; here the *Shekinah*, or the divine Majesty, took up its abode: from hence God communed with men, and gave them intimations of his mind and will; by which they were put in mind of him, and directed where to apply to him, in every time of need; and so possessed were the Israelites of this notion, that God was where these were, that they would sometimes take the ark with them when they went to battle; promising themselves thereby protection, safety, and victory. And these were each of them, the ark and the mercy-seat, memorials of Christ, and served to put such as had knowledge of the Messiah, true faith in him, and expectation of his coming, in mind of him.

The *ark* was a type of Christ, in the matter, form, and use of it; it was made of Shittim wood, and overlaid with pure gold, denoting the incorruption, purity, glory, excellency, and duration of Christ; its principle use was, to contain in it the testimony of the will of God, the two tables of stone, with the law of the ten commandments on them; which were renewed by the Lord, after they were broken by falling out of the hands of *Moses*, as he came down from the mount, when the people had sinned, and transgressed this law. The putting of that into the ark, signified the law being not only in the hands, but in the heart of Christ; his voluntary subjection to it; his perfect fulfillment of it, whereby it was magnified and made honorable; all its demands being answered by him, its precepts obeyed, and its sanction yielded to; and in whom it is preserved and continued, in all its perfection and lustre, and remains in full force, to answer the purposes for which it was given.

The *mercy-seat* is also a type of Christ, and a memorial of him; bringing him to remembrance, and refreshing the minds of true believers in him; leading them to some delightful views of the grace and mercy of God, as displayed in him. The same word which the Greek interpreters render the Hebrew word by, for the mercy-seat, is used by the apostle *Paul* concerning Christ, when he says of

him, *whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation*, (Rom. 3:25) "a mercy seat." This was over the ark, in which the law was, a cover to it; and of the same length and breadth with it; shewing that Christ's obedience and propitiatory sacrifice, are commensurate to the law, and its requirements, and a covering of all the sins of God's people, for whom this sacrifice is offered, which are transgressions of the law, and through which God is gracious and merciful to sinners; for though he has *proclaimed his name, a God gracious and merciful*, it is only in Christ; the special mercy of God is only communicated through Christ; there is no mercy to be expected but by him; the poor publican was in the right, when he prayed, *God be merciful, or be propitious, or shew mercy through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, to me a sinner*. (Luke 18:13) The stores of mercy are laid up in Christ; it is *for him*, for his sake, and with him, that he keeps his *mercy*, his covenant-grace and mercy, *for evermore*: (Ps. 89:28) he is *the throne of grace*, or the mercy-seat, to which the saints should have recourse in all their *times of need*; and where, and where only, they may expect to *find grace and obtain mercy*; (Heb. 4:16) yea, it is to this mercy-seat, to *the mercy of one Lord Jesus Christ*, and *for it.*, and to the mercy of God, displayed in him, they are to *look for, and unto eternal life*. (Jude 21)

Moreover the *altar*, and the sacrifices offered on it, were typical of Christ, and memorials of him, and the means of recording the name of the Lord, and causing it to be remembered; the altar was a type of Christ, as before observed; both the altar of burnt offering, and the altar of incense; the one served to put believers in mind of the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ for sin; and the dolorous sufferings he underwent on that account, under a sense of the wrath of God, and to deliver, his people from it, by bearing it in their room and stead, when he became a whole burnt-offering for them; and the other was of use, to observe unto them the intercession of Christ, founded on his propitiatory sacrifice; through whose much incense, or all prevailing mediation, the prayers of the saints become acceptable unto God, and the blessings of grace are brought down upon them, and applied to them. The various sacrifices offered at the Jewish altar, were typical of the sacrifice of Christ; and were designed to put the sacrificers in mind of it, and to lead their faith to it, without which theirs were unacceptable to God. The lambs of the daily sacrifice, in the morning and evening, were remembrancers of Christ the Lamb of God, who *taketh*, continually takes away the sins of men, committed by them. So the slaying of the passover-lamb, the burning of the red heifer, with all other sacrifices, whether offered every day, every month, or every year; they all pointed at Christ, and his sacrifice, whereby he has *put away sin, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified*: and now, by appointing and continuing these, Jehovah caused his name to be remembered; whose perfections were displayed and glorified in the sacrifice of his Son; to which the faith of his people were by these directed.

2dly, Under the gospel-dispensation, God records his name by the ministry of the word, and by the administration of ordinances.

1. By the word, and by the ministers of it whose descriptive character is, *that make mention of the Lord*; (Isai. 62:6) or cause him to be remembered, or are his remembrancers which is much the same phrase that is here used: a principal part of their business is, to *admonish*; to be the monitors of men; to put them *in mind*, as the word used signifies; (1 Thess. 5:12) to put them in mind of their privileges and duties; to put them in mind of the grace of God, and the blessings of it of Christ, his person, offices, and grace, and of the several doctrines of the everlasting gospel, for their comfort and edification. So the apostle *Peter* determined, whilst he was *in this tabernacle*, in the body, in

the present state of things, so long as he remained in the world, to *stir up* the saints, *by putting* them *in remembrance of these things, though they knew* them, and were *established* in them; (2 Peter 1:12, 13) and then may the ministers of the gospel be said to record the name of the Lord, and the Lord to record it, by them; or cause it to be remembered, when,

(1.) They put those in mind, to whom they minister, of the love, grace, and mercy of God, displayed in salvation by Jesus Christ; when, as God has proclaimed his name, "a God gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin;" they also publish and proclaim the same grace and mercy of his, as it is shewn forth in the several parts and branches of salvation; or, in other words, when they ascribe salvation, both in whole and in part, to the free grace and sovereign mercy of God in Christ. For instance, when they declare, that God's choice of men to holiness here, and happiness hereafter, is wholly owing to his everlasting love, and sovereign will and pleasure; when they assert there is such an act in God; and that this is eternal; that it passed before men had done either good or evil, and had no respect to either; that the moving cause of it, is not the faith, or holiness, or obedience, and good works of men; nor the foresight of any, or either of them; that it does not stand upon the works of man, but upon the will of God; and therefore truly called the *election of grace* and which the apostle most clearly evinces, by arguing in such a strong and nervous manner about it; *if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of work's, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.* (Rom. 11:5, 6) Likewise, when they attribute the mission of Christ into this world, in order to obtain salvation for men, purely to the good-will, grace, and mercy of God, as the scriptures do; which assure us, that it is owing to *the tender mercy of our God*, his bowels of compassion to sinful, miserable creatures, that *the day-spring from on high*, the Messiah, the Son of righteousness, whose rising and coming here, made the glorious gospel-day, *has visited us*; (Luke 1:78) by the beamings-forth of his love and grace, in the assumption of our nature; by sending forth the light of truth abroad in the world; and dispelling the darkness of error, ignorance, and infidelity; the design of whose appearance was not merely to deliver a system of doctrines, and to recommend them by his own example, but to suffer and die for us; and, by so doing, redeem us from sin and death, and everlasting ruin and, his coming on such an errand, is entirely the fruit and effect of divine love; *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, and sent him into the world, to be the propitiation, Saviour, and Redeemer; and *in this the love of God is manifested to us; herein is love*; (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10) this is a full proof and demonstration of it; and it appears the more illustrious and free, when it is observed, the persons that God gave his Son for, into the hands of justice, and death, and Christ died for, are represented, not only as without strength, but as ungodly, sinners, and enemies in their minds, by wicked works. Now, when the love, grace, and mercy of God, in this instance, are published, then is the name of the Lord proclaimed and recorded, as a God gracious and merciful. Also, when the blessings of justification, and pardon of sin, are referred to the same source and origin, spring and fountain, even the unmerited grace of God in Christ; for, though upon the account of the righteousness of Christ, and the imputation of it, God is *just*, whilst he is the *justifier of him that believes in Jesus*; and as justification proceeds upon, and *through the redemption that is in Christ*; yet this hinders not but that is *freely* by the *grace* of God; (Rom. 3:24-26) for it is grace that provided this righteousness, accepts of it, and imputes it; and it is the free gift of God to man; and so is faith itself, which receives it; ungodly men are justified by it; and this is imputed, without works, unto them and then is the grace of God, in this article, exalted and magnified, when it is roundly declared, for which there is the greatest authority, that *by the deeds of the law, no man is, or can be justified*; but that justification is *by faith in Christ's righteousness*,

without the works of it. And so pardon of sin, though through the blood of Christ, which was shed for it, it is an act of justice in God to forgive it: and he is *just* and *faithful* in doing it on that account; yet it is *according to the riches of his grace, and the multitude of his tender mercies*, (1 John 1:9; Ephes. 1:7; Ps. 51:1) that he forgives sin, even for Christ's sake, and then is the name of the Lord recorded, when forgiveness of sin is preached in the name of Christ; and the name of God is published and proclaimed, *a God forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin*, freely and fully, on his account. In short, this is done, when salvation is asserted to be not according to men's works, but according to the purpose and grace of God; when it is affirmed, that it is *not by works of righteousness the best men have done*, and in the best manner, they are saved; but by the abundant mercy of God, through Christ; that it is by grace alone that salvation is, and not by works, lest any should boast; and that it is *through faith; and that not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God*. In a word; the *name of God is recorded*, when not the merits of men, but the mercy of God, is magnified; when not free-will, but free grace, is preached; when salvation is said to be, *not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that sheweth mercy*; when regeneration is ascribed, not to the might and power of man, but to the Spirit of the Lord of hosts; when men are taught to attribute all they have, and are, and do, to the grace of God; and to say with the apostle, *by the grace of God, I am what I am*; (1 Cor. 15:10) and when it is the drift of the ministry, and the concern of those in it, to display the riches of divine grace, and the glory of it; which is the ultimate end of God, in the predestination, redemption, and salvation of men.

(2) Then do ministers of the word record, make mention of, and cause to be remembered, the name of the Lord; and God does it by them, when they preach Christ, and him crucified, as God's alone way of salvation. This was the course the first ministers of the gospel steered; they preached not themselves; as they did not seek themselves, so neither did they exalt themselves and others; they did not preach up the purity of human nature, the power of man's free-will, the sufficiency of good works to justify before God, and to render acceptable in his sight; but *Christ Jesus the Lord*, (2 Cor. 4:5) as the only redeemer and saviour of lost sinners. Particularly, this was the resolution and determination of the great apostle of the Gentiles: for so he says, writing to the *Corinthians*, *I determined to know*, that is, to make known, *nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*; (1 Cor. 2:2) meaning, in the great affair and business of salvation; and this determination he abode by, notwithstanding all the opposition made unto him, and contempt that was cast on him for it: *We preach*, says he, *Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness*. (1 Cor. 1:23) Thus did he, and other preachers of the gospel, record the name of the Lord to good purpose wherever they came; and so do all such who make mention in their ministry of the glorious person of Christ, as *God over all blessed for ever, as the true God and eternal life; as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; whose glory is the glory of the only-begotten of the Father*; being in the glorious form, and having all the glorious perfections of deity in him. When they describe him as the God-man, as *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands, and altogether lovely* in his person and offices; when they speak of him, and direct unto him as *the only mediator between God and man; in whom the saints are blessed with all spiritual blessings*; through whom they have a participation of all grace here, and have both a right unto, and meetness for, eternal glory hereafter; who is now the way of access to the father, and of acceptance with him; and by whom all the sacrifices of prayer and praise are to be offered to God, and become acceptable to him; as well as he will be the medium of all that glory that shall he enjoyed hereafter: then also do they *record the name of the Lord*, and he by them, when they declare *there is no other name given among men whereby they must be saved, than the*

name of Christ; that there is salvation in none but him; that it is in vain to hope for it in the multitude of hills and mountains, or from men's works, be they ever so many; even though they were piled up as mountains aiming at heaven, and seeking to reach it: and when this is the subject of their ministry, the faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom, says the apostle, I am chief. (1 Tim. 1:15) When also they make mention of the righteousness of Christ, and him only, as the matter of a sinner's justification before God; when they preach, that through Christ and his righteousness believers are justified from all things they could not be by the law of Moses, and obedience to it: and then may they be said to turn many to righteousness; (Dan. 7:3) or to justify many, that is, by guiding and directing them alone to Christ for righteousness: likewise when they speak well of the precious blood of Christ, and direct souls to deal with it, for the remission of their sins and shew that both justification and sanctification are through it; that peace and reconciliation are made by it; and a way is opened by means of it, into the holy of holies: moreover, when they exalt the sacrifice of Christ, and observe that all others, let them be of what nature they will among men, yet are insufficient to atone for sin; even thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil; yea, though the first-born should he given for transgression, and the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul; and that Christ's sacrifice alone has taken away sin: made an end of it, and made reconciliation for it; and that Christ, the Lamb of God, is only to be looked unto as the sin-bearing, and sin-atonement Saviour: To which may he added, that this is the case, when the advocacy of Christ is preached up; or he is represented as the advocate with the Father; who appears in the presence of God and ever lives to make intercession for his people; introduces their persons into the presence of his Father; presents their petitions, and pleads for the blessing's of grace to be applied to them they want; and the supplies of grace to be granted them they stand in need of. To say no more, then do faithful dispensers of the word record the name of the Lord, and he by them, when they preach the pure gospel of Christ free, unmixed, and unadulterated; when they do not corrupt the word, but sincerely preach it, as in the sight of God and Christ; when their ministry is not yea and nay, but all of a piece; consistent with itself, and with the word of God; when the trumpet does not give an uncertain sound; when only the joyful sound is heard; peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation, are clearly, openly, without reserve or disguise, published and proclaimed.

2. Under the gospel-dispensation God records his name, by appointing ordinances, and by the administration of them, as memorials of his love and grace; and particularly the ordinance of the Lord's-supper; and where that is truly administered, and carefully attended to, and the design of it answered, there the name of the Lord is caused to be remembered; and the memories of men are sweetly and comfortably refreshed with it. This ordinance is a commemorative ordinance, causing to remember, or bringing to remembrance. The design of it is to put in mind of the love of God in Christ; of the love of God in the gift of his Son, and of the love of Christ in the gift of himself; and it is hard to say which is the greatest instance of love, for God to give his Son, his only begotten Son, or for Christ to give himself, his soul and body, and both in union with his divine person; to lay down his life, to shed his blood, to offer himself a sacrifice unto God for us. The ordinance of the supper brings to our remembrance the love of the Father in providing his Son a lamb for a burnt-offering; in sending him into this world to be a Saviour of his people; in not sparing him, but delivering him up into the hands of justice and death for us all; and all this, when and while we were sinners. It refreshes our memories with the love in of Christ, in giving himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God, of a sweet-smelling savour. It is not a reiteration of the sacrifice, an offering up again the body and blood of Christ; but a commemoration of it, and of the love of Christ in it:

Hereby we perceive his love to us. It is very plain and evident that he laid down his life for us; it leads us to observe it has such an instance of love that is not to be found among men. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* (John 15:13) But Christ has shewn greater love than this, by laying down his life for his enemies. Now, the elements or symbols in the Lord's-supper, the bread and wine, are memorials of what Christ has done and suffered for his people; of his body being bruised and broken for them; of his blood being shed, and his soul poured out unto death on their account: and of his being *stricken and smitten for their transgressions, and wounded for their sins;* and of his bearing them and the punishment due unto them: and when the bread is eaten and the wine drank; they are both to be done by our Lord's direction, in remembrance of him, and of the above things, and of his love in all: and then is his name recorded, when his *love is remembered more than wine;* (Song 1:3) when saints call upon their souls, and all within them, to bless his holy name, and *not forget his benefits;* (Ps. 103:1-4) especially the redemption of their lives from destruction by him. Now,

Thirdly, The places which God has a regard to, and where his people should meet and worship him, are where his name is recorded: This appears from what has been said. They are such where his free grace is set forth, magnified and exalted in the salvation of men; where Christ crucified is preached, and the ordinances are truly and faithfully administered: and when this is the case, it matters not what or where they are. Under the former dispensation there were particular places for worship, namely, wherever the tabernacle and ark were, and especially the city of *Jerusalem*, where the temple was built. But now we are not obliged to go to *Shiloh*, or *Gilgal*, or *Jerusalem*. The only descriptive character which points out a place to us, and directs us where to go and worship, is *where the Lord records his name;* or his ministers record it, by faithfully preaching his gospel, and administering his ordinances: and these are not limited and restrained to any place. It matters not whether the edifice we worship in, is greater or smaller, built in a less or more pompous manner; nor what names it is called by; whether a meeting-house, church or chapel; a conventicle, or a cathedral: the only point is, is the name of the Lord recorded there? For we find under the gospel dispensation, the word has been used to be preached indifferently any where. Thus we may observe at one time, that our Lord *sat* upon a *mountain*, and delivered those excellent discourses contained in the *fifth, sixth, and seventh* chapters of *Matthew*. At another time he *sat* in a *ship*, and taught the multitude as they *stood* on the shore. And elsewhere we read of him preaching in a private house; as well as he sometimes went into the temple, the then public place of worship; and *sat* and *taught* there. (Matt. 5:1 and 13:3; Mark 2:1, 2; John 8:2) And so his apostles and disciples not only preached in the synagogues of the Jews as they had opportunity, but in other places not used before for religious worship. The apostle *Paul* disputed and discoursed in the school of *Tyrannus*, and continued this practice for the space of two years there; so that all *Asia* had the opportunity of hearing the word of the Lord: And he also was two other whole years in his own hired house at *Rome*, *preaching the kingdom of God, and the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.* (Acts 19:9 and 28: 30, 31) I should now have entered on the *second* general head, but the consideration of that must be left to the afternoon

Attendance In Places
OF
RELIGIOUS WORSHIP
WHERE THE DIVINE NAME IS RECORDED,
ENCOURAGED.

Sermon II,

Preached *October 9, 1757*, at the Opening of a New Place for Worship, in *Carter-lane St. Olave's-street, Southwark.*

EXODUS 20:24

In all places, where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

Two things have been observed in these words, and proposed to be treated of:

I. The place, or places, God has a regard unto; and where his people should meet and worship him; and that is, where he *records his name.*

II. The regard he has to such place, or places; and the encouragement he gives his people to meet and worship him there; expressed by his presence with them and blessing on them, *I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*

The first of these heads has been discoursed on this morning; under which has been shewn, what is meant; by *the name of the Lord*; which takes in his Being. his Nature, his Perfections, and Attributes, and every title and appellation, by which he is made known unto men. And also his Son, in whom his name is; and all his characters; and likewise his gospel; which is a most glorious revelation of himself, and of his mind and will; so that it includes every thing relating to his essence and glory; to his Son in whom and to his gospel, and the doctrines of it, by which, he is declared and manifested; especially in his grace and mercy to the children of men. Moreover, it has been inquired into, what is intended by *recording* his name, or causing it to be mentioned, or remembered. And it has been observed, that this was done by the Lord, under the Old-Testament-dispensation, by appointing *memorials* of it; such as the Ark, and Mercy-seat, the Altar, and the Sacrifices offered on it: and under the New-Testament-dispensation, by the ministry of the word, and the ministers of it; whose business it is, to *make mention of the name of the Lord*, and put men in mind of him; to publish and proclaim his free grace, good will, and favour, in the election,

redemption, justification, and salvation of men; and to preach Christ and him crucified; to make mention of his person, as God-man; of his offices, as Mediator and Saviour; and of his blood righteousness, sacrifice, and intercession and purely, faithfully, constantly, and consistently, to dispense the doctrines and mysteries of grace, they are stewards of: likewise they *record the name of the Lord*, and he by them, through a faithful administration of his ordinances, especially the ordinance of the Lord's supper; which is designed to commemorate the grace of God, and the love of Christ until his second coming. And now, where the riches of the grace of God are displayed; Christ, in his person and offices, is exalted; his word is faithfully preached; and his ordinances truly and rightly administered; these are the places where the Lord may be said to record his name, and where his people should meet together to worship him.

And, as we have now opened a *new* place of worship, we enter upon it in this way, by *recording the name of the Lord*, in the manner before described; namely, by preaching the doctrines of the grace of God, and of free and full salvation alone, by Jesus Christ; and by the administration of gospel-ordinances, as they have been delivered to us. To do these from the to the, is our present view, and what, by divine assistance, we shall endeavour to pursue, in the course of our worship and ministrations here. What doctrines may be taught in this place, after I am gone, is not for me to know; but, as for my own part, I am at a point; I am determined, and have been long ago, what to make the subject of my ministry. It is now upwards of forty years since I entered into the work of the ministry; and the first sermon I ever preached, was from those words of the apostle, *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*; (1 Cor. 2:2) and, through the grace of God, I have been enabled, in some good measure, to abide by the same resolution hitherto, as many of you here are my witnesses; and I hope, through divine assistance, I ever shall, as long as I am in this tabernacle, and engaged in such work. I am not afraid of the reproaches of men; I have been inured these, from my youth upwards; *none* of these *things move me*. But I hope you will pardon this digression; I return to my subject, and proceed to consider,

II. The regard which God has to such place, or places, where *his name is recorded*; and the encouragement he gives his people, to meet and worship him there; namely, the promise of his presence and blessing: *I will come unto thee, and bless thee*.

First, The Lord here promises his presence with his people, assembled together in his name, and where his name is recorded, and they meet to worship him, to celebrate his name, to make mention of it, and put one another in remembrance of it; *I will come unto thee*; that is, in such place, or places, where this is done. Under this head I shall endeavor to show, in what sense the Lord may be said to *come* unto his people, when gathered together for religious worship; under what considerations he comes unto them; and when it may be known that he is come unto them, and is in the midst of them; as well as the wonderfulness of this grace and favour; which will appear, by observing the contrast between the *I*, the person who says he will come; and the *thee*, or persons to whom he comes.

1. What is meant by his *coming* to his people. And this is to be understood not locally, of any change of place; or of his removing from place to place, which he is incapable of, being omnipresent. The Jews call God *Makom*, "place;" because he is every where, and fills up all places; *the heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool*; and neither of them can contain him; he fills both with his presence, and is not circumscribed by either: so that he cannot with propriety, be said

to come or go from one place to another: when he is said to descend or come down from heaven to earth, it is not by local motion, but by some display and effects of his power, or of his grace and goodness. Thus; when he said *Let us go down*; and it is said, he *came down, to see the city and tower the children of men were building*, (Gen. 11:5, 7) this was done in a way of wrath and judgment; by shewing his power, and by confounding their language, and scattering them abroad upon the face of the whole earth; and when the Lord is said (Exod. 29:42 and 33:9) to descend, and stand at the door of the tabernacle, to meet his people there, it is to be understood of displays of his grace, discoveries of his love, and intimations of his favor; and of his mind and will; and which is greatly the sense of the expression here for, it is not to be taken either in a corporal sense, as if any bodily shape was assumed by the Lord, and he appeared in it. Indeed, this is the sense of all those passages, which speak of, and foretell the coming of Christ, and contain the promise of it: such as, *your God will come, even God with a recompence; he will come, and save you*; and again, *Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand*; (Isai. 35:4 and 40:10) but these only belong to the second person in the Trinity, the Son of God, and his incarnation; to his coming into the world, by the assumption of human nature; to the *Word being made flesh, and so dwelling among men*; but cannot be said of *Jehovah*, the Father, who is the person speaking in our text, and who never appeared in any corporal form; for Christ expressly says, *Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape*. (John 5:37) Nor is this coming of the Lord to his people, to be understood now of any visible token of his presence, as in former times; as in a *cloud*, or by *fire*, or any other way. Thus he came to *Moses* in a thick cloud; and descended on mount *Sinai* in fire. (Exod. 19:9, 18) These were indications of his being come, and of his being present. So he went before the children of *Israel*, as they travelled through the wilderness, *in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night*. (Exod. 13:21) When these were seen, it was known the Lord was there; when the tabernacle was set up, a *cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle*. (Exod. 40:34) The cloud was a visible symbol of the presence of the Lord in it: and the same may be observed of the temple of *Solomon* at the dedication of it by him: *the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord*: (1 Kings 8:10, 11) and it was the cloud, as is plain, that was the visible token of that glory, or of the glorious presence of the Lord there. Sometimes God gave intimations of his presence with his people, and of his approbation of them, and their sacrifices, by sending down *fire* upon them and which is thought by some, to be the way and manner, in which he expressed his acceptance of *Abel's* sacrifice. However, in this way he did signify his acceptance of others: it is said, *And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people; and there came fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burn-offerings, and the fat; which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces*, (Lev. 9:23, 24) in reverence of the divine Being, who was present by this symbol; and they shouted for joy, and in thankfulness, for his declaring his approbation and acceptance of their sacrifices. And in like manner, the Lord shewed himself to be present, and to be the only Lord God, by causing fire to fall down and consume the sacrifice, the wood, stones, and dust, and lick up the water in the trench, when *Baal* could do nothing to make it manifest that he heard his prophets, or was present with them. (1 Kings 18:38, 39) But nothing of this kind is now to be expected, under the gospel-dispensation; the Lord's coming to his people, is only in a spiritual manner; by his Spirit and grace, and the communications of it; by his Spirit teaching, and instructing, enlightening, comforting, quickening them, and applying his word with power; and blessing that and his ordinances to them; in like manner as Christ promised his presence to his disciples; *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you*; (John 14:8) meaning, that though they should be deprived of his bodily presence, yet they should

have his spiritual presence with them, especially when administering his ordinances; and in this sense it is to be understood in a following verse; where he promises his presence to all that love him, and keep his commandments, and his father's also; saying, *We will come unto him, and make our abode with him*; (John 14:23) which cannot design the return of his bodily presence to his disciples, at his resurrection; but the gracious and spiritual presence of him, and his divine Father, with his people, in all ages; particularly, while they are employed in his worship, and are observing his commands and ordinances: and it is in this sense we may understand the expression in this passage; especially as it may be applied to gospel-times.

2. It may be inquired, under what considerations God may be said to come unto his people, in this gracious and spiritual manner, whilst worshipping him. He comes unto them, as into his own house and habitation; and that as the master, owner, and proprietor of it; his church and people are *built up, an habitation* for him, through *the spirit*; believers are the *lively stones*, of which the *spiritual* house consists; and these being laid on the foundation, Christ, *grow up unto an holy temple in the Lord*; (Ephes. 2:21, 22) and for his use; and whither he comes; and of which he says, *This is my rest; here will I dwell, for I have desired it*; (Ps. 132:14) and from this the forward, that God takes up his abode and residence here, the name of such a place, city, and church, is, *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there: (Ezek. 48:35) he comes unto them, as unto his family; as the father of it, who cares and provides for it. He is their father by adopting grace; and has taken them into this relation in the everlasting covenant, to which he predestinated them, according to the good pleasure of his will; in which he says of them, and to them, *I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*; (2 Cor. 6:18) and which grace he makes known unto them by the spirit of adoption, sent unto them: in consequence of this, he will not *leave* them *comfortless*, or *orphans*, as is Christ's word concerning them; (John 14:18) but *will come* unto them, in a spiritual way, as he promises; and shew his paternal love to them, and care of them, bringing food in his hands for them; asking one and another of them, *Children, have ye any meat?* (John 21:5) and puts it into their hands and mouths, and blesses *Zion's* provisions, the word and ordinances, to them, and *satisfies his poor with bread*; with the bread of the gospel; with *the bread of life*, Christ Jesus. He comes unto them as to his flock, and as the shepherd of it: it being under his peculiar watch and care, and he the proprietor of it: his own the sheep are, the sheep of his hand, and the sheep of his pasture: to these he comes; and he looks well to this his flock; and inspects narrowly and carefully into their state, case, and condition: he comes to search and seek out those that are straying, and scattered in the dark and cloudy day; to look up that which is lost and driven away, and restore them, and *lead them into green pastures, and beside the still waters*; to bind up broken hearts, and broken bones, and strengthen the sick, and heal all their spiritual maladies, and do all the offices of a good shepherd to them; by feeding them in a good pasture, and making them to lie down in a good fold; (Ezek. 34:12-16) He conies unto them, as to his friends, and pays kind visits; he makes *a feast of fat things* for them, in his holy mountain; he *brings them into his banqueting house*; he sits down at table with them; he *sups with them, and they with him*; whom he welcomes to the entertainment he makes for them; saying, *Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved*. (Song 1:12 and 2:4 and 5:1) To observe no more; he comes unto his people met together for worship, as his special favorites; for whom he has a peculiar respect, and admits to peculiar nearness to himself, and to peculiar enjoyments; whom he remembers with the favour he bears to his chosen ones; having *loved them with an everlasting love*, and distinguished them by the blessings of his grace, bestowed upon them; to those he loves, he shews his covenant; the blessings and promises of it, and their interest in them; discloses the secrets of his heart's love unto them, and

sheds it abroad in them; makes known more fully to them the great salvation, and restores unto them the joys of it: indulges them with near and intimate communion with himself; find *manifests himself to them*, as he does not unto the world: by all which it appears, they are the delight of his soul, and the darling of his heart; the favorites of heaven, and friends of God.

3. It may be asked, how it may be known when God is come unto his people, in a spiritual manner, in public service and worship? In answer to which, it may be said, that it may be in some measure known, when the ministers of the word are assisted by him, both in praying and preaching; when they manifestly *pray with the spirit, and with the understanding*, and have their hearts enlarged in prayer and are directed to suitable petitions for those they represent; and have much freedom in their own souls, and much nearness to God, and familiarity with him; and when they have in their ministrations to the people, presence of mind, liberty of expression, a door of utterance, and fulness of matter; when they are brought forth *in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*; and they are not straitened in themselves; but find a pleasure in their work, and have their own hearts affected and warmed; which may not only be felt by themselves, but be discerned by others. Also the presence of God may be observed, when the word preached by them is owned for conviction and conversion; when under it men are pricked to the heart, and set a seeking after the right way of salvation; as the three thousand under *Peter's* sermon, on the day of Pentecost; and as those in *Cornelius's* house, on whom the Spirit of the Lord fell, while the same apostle was preaching; when the Spirit of God effectually convinces men, by means of the word, of sin and the evil nature of it; lays open all the sinfulness of their hearts, and brings to their remembrance the iniquities of their lives; and they are told, as the woman of *Samaria* was by Christ, all that ever they did; and then being *convinced and judged of all*, and *the secrets of their hearts made manifest*, as if the minister had privately been acquainted with their lives and characters, they *fall down on their faces*, and *worship God, report that God is in ministers, and with his people, of a truth*. (1 Cor. 14:24, 25) Likewise this appears to be the case, when the gospel is not only the means of faith, by which it comes, as it does by hearing the word; for when the hand of the Lord, or his power, goes along with his ministers, and accompanies his word, then men believe; but, when it is increased thereby; when the word is food for faith; when there are in souls a desire after the sincere milk of the word; an appetite for it; a gust and relish of it; when it is found under the ministry of it, and is eaten by faith, and is the joy and rejoicing of the heart; when it is not only received by faith, in the love of it, but is mixed with it, and digested by it; and so becomes very nourishing, strengthening and edifying. Moreover, this may be discerned, that God is come unto, and is present with his people, at such times, when their affections are moved and raised, and their minds enlightened, and judgments informed and established in the truth of the gospel; when these two go together, raised affections, and instructed minds; for it is dangerous to have them separated: when the word is like fire, and at once both warms the heart and illuminates the mind; and when, at the same time, the *hearts* of God's people *burn within* them; as did the hearts of the two disciples, that travelled with Christ to *Emmaus*, while he *talked with them by the way*, and *opened to them the scriptures*; (Luke 24:34) the eyes of their understandings are enlightened, and the veil is removed from them, and they behold *wondrous things out of the law*, (Ps. 119:18) or doctrine of the gospel; when the Lord opens their understandings, that they may understand the scriptures, as Christ did his disciples'; and the Spirit of the Lord *leads them into all truth as it is in Jesus*; and applies it powerfully and comfortably to them, and they are established and confirmed therein; and then, ere they are aware, their affections are caught, and these rise up, *like pillars of smoke perfumed with frankincense*, and their souls are *like the chariots of Amminadib*; (Song 3:6 and 6:12) are on the full speed upwards;

and God-ward. Again; then may the presence of God be perceived by his people, in public worship, whilst attending the word and ordinances; when the promises of the gospel are opened and applied; when a word that is sent unto *Jacob*, lights on *Israel*; when a word is spoken in season to weary souls, and it suiteth to their case and circumstances, and is so understood and observed; and which gives peculiar pleasure and delight, and yields *a joy unspeakable, and full of glory; for a word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.* (Prov. 25:11) And so it appears very sensibly, when the love of God is again manifested; when the experiences of the saints are renewed and confirmed; when fresh light is thrown upon the work of grace on their hearts, and the evidence of it is clear; and in Jehovah's *light they see light*, and are satisfied of the truth of grace in them; when the desires of their souls are drawn out after God, and their hearts pant after him, *as the hart pants after the water-brook*; and after the name of Christ and the remembrance of it: and they are indulged with intimate communion and fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and have some fresh pledges and tokens of their love to them. And now, it is this which makes the house of God delightful, the *tabernacles* of the Lord *amiable* and lovely; a *day* in his *courts better than a thousand* elsewhere ; yea, to be more eligible be *a door-keeper in the house of God*, than to *dwell in the tents of sin and wickedness*: it is the presence of God and Christ; the discoveries of the love of Father, Son, and Spirit; the rich displays of divine grace, and those interviews which believers have with God; and the sweet fellowship they have with him and one another, that makes Wisdom's *ways ways of pleasantness, and all her paths paths of peace*; (Ps. 84:10 and Prov. 3:17) yea, amidst such spiritual and ravishing enjoyments as these, of a place of religious worship, it may be truly said, *this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* (Gen. 28:17)

4. The wonderfulness of enjoying such a favour, as to have God come to his people, and be with them in a spiritual manner in places where they meet to worship him, will appear by considering the contrast between the great Jehovah, who promises to come unto them, and does; and the persons he comes unto, and who enjoy his gracious presence. The one is, *the Creator of the ends of the earth*; the maker and former of all things visible and invisible; the earth, the sea, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, and all that in them are; the angels of heaven, men on earth, the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, and the cattle on a thousand hills; with whom, and before whom, and in comparison of him, all the nations of the world are *as a drop of a bucket, as the small dust of the balance; nay, are as nothing; yea, less than nothing, and vanity.* And, on the other hand, those he comes unto and pays them a visit, and graciously converses with, are creatures of his; dust, earth, and worms: it is marvellous he should cast an eye upon them; with whom it is a condescension, a humbling of himself, to look upon things in heaven; it is amazing he should care for them in a providential way, support them in their beings, follow them with his goodness and mercy, and bestow upon them daily the bounties of his providence with respect to which, it is with wonder said, *What is man that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?* (Job 7:17, 18) But how must the wonder rise and increase, when it is observed, that this great and glorious Being, that has given being to all worlds, and creatures in them, vouchsafes to come unto such poor nothings, in a way of special grace and kindness; and communes with them in a spiritual manner, and tells them how he loves them, and has loved them, with an everlasting love; unbosoms himself to them, and communicates the riches of his grace, and assures them of their right and title to everlasting glory and happiness! Moreover, he who promises to come, and does come, to his people worshipping at his footstool, is the *possessor of heaven and earth*; (Gen. 14:22) as he has made them both, he has a right to each; the one he has reserved to he an habitation for himself: the other he has given to the

children of men; the one he has made his throne to sit on; the other his footstool to tread on; and both are his property, and at his dispose, with all things in them: the riches of both worlds are his; and yet these riches are nothing to the perfections of his nature he is possessed of. And now, this *high and holy one*, that *inhabits eternity*, and *dwells in the high and holy place*, (Isai. 57:15) and not in temples made with hands, is graciously pleased to come unto poor frail mortals, that dwell in earthly tabernacles, in cottages of clay, which have their foundations in the dust, and visit *beggars upon the dunghill*; from whence he takes them, and sets them with *princes*, that they may inherit *the throne of glory*; (1 Sam. 2:8) as well as takes up his abode with *such that are of an humble and contrite spirit*; to *revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones*. He who condescends to come unto his people, and he seen in the midst of them, is the King of kings, and Lord of lords; the Lord of the whole universe, whose the kingdom of nature and providence is, and who is the governor among the nations; that presides over all kings and princes, and over all kingdoms and states; *who sits enthroned in the highest heavens, and does what he pleases in heaven and earth*; and orders all things after his sovereign pleasure; and whose will cannot be resisted, or his power controlled, or his hand stayed; or he be called to an account for any thing done by him; nor does he, nor will he, *give any account of his matters* to the sons of men; but all are, and must be, accountable to him; kings and governors; those in the highest, as well as in the lowest class of life. Now, it is this great and universal Monarch, that vouchsafes to descend from heaven, in the displays of his love and grace, and shew himself among the *poor of this world*, though *rich in faith*, and *heirs of the kingdom*; (James 2:5) to come and make known himself, his Son and gospel, and open the treasures of his grace, to persons who, in the esteem of men, are *things that are not*, and are reckoned by them *the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things*. (1 Cor. 1:28 and 4:13) It would seem strange, and be very surprising, and be thought an instance of wonderful condescension, should an earthly king go in a public manner, in his royal robes, and with his attendants, to the cottage of a poor peasant; there enter, sit down, eat and drink. and freely converse with him for an hour or two; and yet, this is not to be mentioned with this wondrous favour of *the King eternal, immortal, the blessed and only potentate*, shewing himself in the assemblies of his saints, sitting down at table with them, and communing with them from above the mercy-seat; where they behold the King in his beauty, being held forth in the galleries of the ordinances; and sometimes in so glorious a manner, that they with wonder and rapture say, *how glorious was the king of Israel to-day?* (2 Sam. 6:20)

Once more; he who promises to come, and does come, and is among his people, while worshipping him, is a holy, just, and righteous Being; a *God of purer eyes than to behold iniquity* with any approbation or pleasure, or so as not to correct or punish for it; *who is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; glorious, as in all the perfections of his nature, so more especially in his holiness; being perfectly pure, unspotted, and untarnished, just and true, and without any iniquity at all: and yet, the persons he deigns to come unto, and take up his residence among, are sinful men; such as have sinned in *Adam*, and are made sinners by his disobedience; who are *conceived, shapen, and born in sin*; and are by nature, corrupt, depraved, polluted, and guilty creatures, and so *children of wrath, as others*; who have in the past lived according to the course of this world, in sin and wickedness, *servicing divers lusts and pleasures*: and though now called by grace, yet have sin dwelling in them, and are frequently guilty of transgressing the law of God, in thought, word, or deed; and are often revolting and backsliding from God, and doing those things which might justly provoke the eyes of his glory; and yet he is pleased to *come unto them, and take up his dwelling with them*. Now, there is nothing that can account for all this, but his being the God of all grace; a

God gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth; a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, as he has proclaimed himself; it can be ascribed to nothing else but to his free, rich, sovereign grace; not to any deserts of men, or on account of any service done by them; which when done in the best manner, is unprofitable, with respect to him. It is all marvellous loving-kindness; it may well be wondered at, for it cannot be accounted for in any other way, but on the foot of free and unmerited grace.

Solomon, at the dedication of his temple, said, but will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him; how much less the house that I have built? (1 Kings 8:27) It is wonderful that such an infinite and incomprehensible Being should dwell on earth; it is more wonderful, that he should dwell with men on earth; it is more wonderful still, that he should dwell with sinful men here. But yet, since he has said he will come unto his people, where his name is recorded, it may be expected and believed he will; for he is a faithful God, a covenant-keeping God, true to every word of promise made by him; he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail; he cannot deny himself, nor will he alter any thing that is gone out of his lips: Christ has promised, that where his people, though ever so few, are gathered together in his name, and where his ministers preach in his name, and ordinances are administered in his name, and in the name of his Father, and of the blessed Spirit, he will be with them, even unto the end of the world: (Matt. 18:20 and 28:19, 20) And he has not only promised for himself, but for his divine father also, that such as keep his commandments, from a principle of love to him, they will come unto them, and make their abode with them; (John 14:23) and this being promised, may be most surely depended upon. If the Lord says, he will come, nothing shall hinder his coming: not Satan; he may hinder, as he sometimes has hindered the ministers of the gospel from coming to the churches, and ministering to them, for their comfort and edification as he hindered the apostle Paul, and others, from going to Thessalonica; as he affirms, Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again, but Satan hindered us; (1 Thess. 2:18) but, when God says he will come, and is resolved to come, and pay a gracious visit to his people, Satan, and all his principalities and powers, cannot hinder: if any thing, the sins of God's people are most likely to hinder his coming to them; as they sometimes are the cause of his departure from them, and of their not having sensible communion with him; your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you. (Isai. 59:2) But when it is his pleasure to come among his people, and indulge them with his gracious presence, even these shall not hinder; he will come leaping on the mountains, skipping on the hills, (Song 2:8) of all their sins and transgressions, revoltings and backslidings, indolence, negligence, and unbelief. So much for the first instance of God's regard to places where his name is recorded, and the first argument used, to encourage his people to meet and worship him there. I proceed,

Secondly, To consider the other instance and argument made use of, the promise of blessing them; and I will bless thee. God, when he comes unto his people, and pays them a visit, he does not come empty-handed; he brings a blessing, or blessings, along with him. And,

1. His very coming to them, his presence itself, is a blessing; a wish for this, is the sum and substance of the blessing of the high-priest, pronounced over the children of Israel, and on their account; *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* (Num. 6:24-26) It is the presence of God, the displays of his grace and power, the shine of his face, and the light

of his countenance, that fill every petition; and, indeed, a greater blessing than these cannot be enjoyed. Nothing is more desirable to a gracious soul, than the presence of God; be he where he will, or come and go where he will; this is what he is importunate for, that it might be with him; as *Moses* said, *if thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.* (Exod. 33:14) It signifies nothing where such a man is, or what he has, if he has not the presence of God; this is better to him than life, and all the enjoyments of it; whilst others are saying, *who will shew us any good?* Any good, any temporal good; any of the good things of this life will satisfy a worldly mind, but not a gracious heart; such will say, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us;* and, when this favour is granted, and enjoyed, they will add, with praise and thankfulness, *thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the the that their corn and wine increased.* (Ps. 4:6, 7) No temporal mercy can so delight the heart of a good man, as the presence of God, and communion with him; his absence is darkness, and death, his presence is light, and life; it is night when he withdraws himself, and that causes weeping; it is morning when he appears again, and that brings joy; this was the experience of the Psalmist; *for his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* (Ps. 30:5) This might be exemplified in the case of *Mary Magdalene*, weeping at the sepulcher of Christ, when her Lord was taken away from her, and she knew not where he was laid; and of the disciples sorrowing, during the the of Christ's lying there; but, when he was risen again, and appeared to them, the one, exulting, said, *Rabboni*, which is to say, master; "O my dear Master, is it thou?" and of the other, it is said, *Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord;* (John 20:13, 16, 20) nothing more desirable, nothing more delightful, than the presence of God and Christ; nothing so much like heaven as this; this perfectly and everlastingly enjoyed, is heaven; *In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* (Ps. 16:11) Wherefore, it is no wonder that this should be *the one thing*, that should be uppermost on the hearts of God's people, when they are worshipping in his sanctuary; that they may see his face, *behold his beauty*, and have a view of his *power* and his *glory*; (Ps. 27:4 and 58:2) as they have sometimes seen them there with inexpressible pleasure and satisfaction: and when they are thus favoured, they are blessed indeed! This is an antidote against all fears; they have nothing to be afraid of from all their enemies, men or devils, the rage of the one, or the reproaches of the other; or the severest persecutions; nor indeed, any affliction, trial, or exercise; *nay, though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death*, since God is with them; as he is, when they pass even through fire and water; wherefore since he says to them, *Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God;* (Isai. 41:10) they may say in return, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?* (Ps. 27:1) And particularly, there is no need to fear any enemy, within or without, whilst worshipping him, since he is present: for, *if God be with us, and for us, who shall, or can he against us?* (Rom. 8:31)

2. The Lord blesses his people with fresh supplies of grace: what they have received, though it is much, and very abundant, yet not sufficient; as they are called to fresh duty and service, they want more grace; particularly to assist them in the duties of religion; in acts of public worship; in waiting upon God, and serving him in his sanctuary: to do this aright they have need to have grace in their hearts, and that in exercise, and a fresh supply of it; that they may worship him *in spirit and in truth; in righteousness and holiness; acceptably, with reverence and godly fear;* and they may expect a supply of it from him. *My God*, says the apostle, *shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Jesus Christ.* (Phil. 4:19) The people of God are full of wants: they have many indigencies; they always stand in need of more grace; and never do they need more than

when they are engaged in the public exercises of religion; to keep their hearts from wandering from God, and intent upon his word; to enable them to receive it in love, and mix it with faith: and in all, to seek the glory of God and they may hope to have it, since God, their covenant-God and Father, is the *God of all grace*; and is *able to make all grace to abound towards them*; that they *having all sufficiency* of it, *may abound in every good work*; (2 Cor. 9:8) whether performed in a more public, or in a more private way: and he has promised to give more grace to the humble dependents on him, and worshippers of him. Christ the mediator is *full of Grace*; all fulness of it is laid up in him, to be distributed to his people, whenever they want it; and as they have already received from thence, *and grace for grace*, (John 1:14, 16) or an abundance of it, they may have more by application to him for it: for he is *a sun and shield*; *he will give grace*; (Ps. 84:11) more grace to them that seek unto him: and there are the means of grace, the word and ordinances, which are the *golden pipes*; through which the *golden oil* (Zech. 4:12) of grace is communicated from Christ unto his saints; and there is the *throne of grace*, which they may *come boldly* to at all times, that they *may obtain mercy, and find grace to help them in the of need*; (Heb. 4:16) and to have a full supply of grace at such a time; as every time we worship God is, is a blessing indeed!

3. The Lord blesses his people when he comes unto them, while they are waiting upon him, and worshipping him, with peace: it is said *the Lord will bless his people with peace*; (Ps. 29:11) as if this was the one and only blessing he blesses them with; or, at least, the chief and principal one: and, indeed, it is a very comprehensive blessing; it includes all prosperity, temporal and spiritual; and all kind of peace, outward and inward; especially peace of conscience, tranquility and serenity of mind; that *peace of God* which he is the author and giver of, *that passeth all understanding* (Phil. 4:7) of natural and unconverted men, who know not the way of peace; are strangers to, and intermeddle not with the joy those have that believe in Christ. This peace is from God; whence he is called *the God of peace*; (Heb. 13:20) who is not only at peace with his people through the blood of Christ, but gives peace unto them; and indeed, he only can give it; wherefore it is asked of him: and if ever it is had, it must come from him. This is a frequent prayer of the apostles for the churches, *Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*. (Rom. 1:7) It is to no purpose to apply for it, or expect it elsewhere; and if he gives it, none can take it away; nor even disturb it, unless he suffers it: *when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?* (Job 34:29) In vain, do Satan, or the world, or any other enemy, seek to hinder the one, or make the other. This peace is through Christ; who is not only the prince of peace, *the man, the peace*, who is our peace, and has made peace by the blood of his cross; but gives it to his followers; even such peace as the world cannot give, nor take away; and which he continues with them amidst all their tribulations in this world: it flows from him, and from God through him: through his precious blood, which speaks better things than that of *Abel*; which speaks pardon, and so peace, to guilty souls; and by removing guilt, settles and secures peace; and through his righteousness, by which being justified, souls come to have, peace with God through Christ; and are in no fearful apprehensions of present or future wrath; and through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ; in the view of which they joy in God, through him, by whom they have received the atonement of all their sins and transgressions; the consequence of which must be peace and joy.

And this great blessing, in which the comfort and happiness of the spiritual life consists, is enjoyed in a way of believing: the more faith, the more conscience-peace, and spiritual joy: it is assured as being what God has promised, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee*; (Isai. 26:3) and it is a prayer of faith; and when so made, it may be

expected it will be answered, *the God of hope fill you with all joy, and peace in believing;* (Rom. 15:13) and it is the experience of the saints, that the more faith is in exercise, in religious duties, in prayer, in hearing of the word, or in attendance on any ordinance; the more spiritual peace is enjoyed: And which blessing the believer is often favoured with, in public worship; in performing the duties of the house of God; and in observing his commands and ordinances: for though there is no reward *for* keeping them, yet *in keeping of them there is a great reward;* (Ps. 19:11) and this reward is peace of mind; and a sufficient one it is; and which all the Lord's people are blessed with, more or less, that keep close to him in his own ways, and pay a proper and constant regard to his institutions and appointments. *Great peace have they which love thy law,* or doctrine; the doctrine of faith; the doctrine of the gospel; and shew their love by a close and constant attention to it, and to the ordinances of it; *nothing shall offend them;* (Ps. 119:165) disturb their peace, and interrupt their joy; they shall walk comfortably in the light of God's countenance; go on their way rejoicing in Christ; feeling in their breasts a joy unspeakable, and full of glory; and so by good experience, they find the truth of this, that *wisdom's paths are paths of peace.* (Prov. 3:17)

4. Another blessing God blesses his people with, who meet and worship him in places where his name is recorded, is the free and full forgiveness of their sins: This. is only of God: none can forgive sin but him, against whom it is committed; whose law is transgressed, and whose justice is affronted: Were there any that could, they would be such as were like him, at least in this respect; whereas there are none. *Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage!* (Micah 7:18) There is none like him for it; and this he does of his rich grace and mercy; and for the sake of Christ, his blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction: Hence the apostle exhorts the saints to *forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake,* saith he, *hath forgiven you:* (Ephes. 4:32) and though this is done at once, and for all sins together; yet as every fresh commission of sin occasions fresh guilt to rise in the conscience, there is need of a renewed application of pardoning grace and mercy; which believers are sometimes favoured with, through the public ministration of the word; where the name of the Lord is recorded, and the blessings of his grace are published; and this among the rest. Thus when the prophet *Isaiah* was cast down under a sense of the pollution and guilt of sin; when in a visionary way he was in the temple of the Lord; one of the *seraphim*, an emblem of gospel ministers, took a *live coal from the altar*, expressive of the expiating blood, and atoning sacrifice of Christ, and *touched his lips* with it, saying, *thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged;* (Isai. 6:5-7) signifying in a declarative way, according to the tenor of the everlasting gospel, and the doctrine of pardon in it, that his iniquity, of which he was truly sensible, was forgiven for the sake of the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God; and in this way, and at such seasons, namely, under the ministry of the word, is the pardon of sin sometimes applied and sealed to the consciences of God's people; and a special blessing this is: *blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered:* (Ps. 32:1) This is a chief and principal blessing in the covenant of grace; it stands first in the article of redemption; yea, redemption by the blood of Christ, is made chiefly to consist of it; that is explained by it; *in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace:* (Ephes. 1:7) the doctrine of it, is a main and principal one, in the ministration of the gospel; one of the first ordered to be preached and published in it; and is of the utmost importance; and it is among the first-rate blessings we are to call upon our souls to be thankful and bless God for. On this much of the peace, the comfort of the people of God depend; when he would have them comforted, it is by telling them that their *iniquity is pardoned;* and when he would have them be of good cheer, it is by assuring them their *sins are forgiven;* without which they cannot: but this will

make the bones that are broken to rejoice; and will cure every soul-sickness and malady: for when this grace is applied, *the inhabitant shall not say I am sick*; the reason is, *the people that dwell therein, shall be forgiven their iniquity*; (Isai. 33:24) though storms and tempests may arise in the conscience of a sinner, through guilt fastened on it, yet let but a word of pardon by Christ be spoken, all is hush and quiet; there is immediately a calm: and without this blessing, and a sense of it, a man cannot stand before God, and serve him in his sanctuary with pleasure; but let his conscience be sprinkled and purged by the blood of Christ, and that be applied to him for pardon; and then he will serve the living God freely and cheerfully: and, indeed no one can look into eternity with comfort, and think of a future state with any satisfaction, unless he has a good hope through grace, of an interest in this blessing; but when he sees that God has in love to his soul, cast all his sins behind his back; and in his mercy to him, has thrown them into the depths of the sea; so that when they are sought for they shall not be found, being all freely and fully pardoned; then, though upon the brink of eternity, and just launching into another world, he can sing and say, *O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and that is taken away by Christ; The strength of sin is the law, and that is fulfilled by him: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory over sin, law, hell and death, through our Lord Jesus Christ, (1 Cor. 15:55-57) his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice.*

5. The Lord also blesses his people with a justifying righteousness, and with fresh views of their interest in it, whilst they are serving him in places where he records his name, by the ministration of the gospel; for therein is this *righteousness revealed from faith to faith*; (Rom. 1:7) from one degree of it to another, until they arrive to a full assurance of its being theirs: and they are happy indeed, who receive this blessing from the Lord; even *righteousness from the God of their salvation*; they are truly blessed, thrice happy persons that are favoured with this grace, and indulged with a lively sense of it: *David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works*; (Rom. 4:6) but it is not easy to give after him the whole description of that happiness: such have acceptance with God; God is well pleased with Christ, and with all his people in him, being clothed with his pure and perfect righteousness; with which righteousness he is well pleased; because by it the law is magnified and made honourable; his justice is satisfied; and all his perfections reconciled and honoured in the justification of his people by it; and not only are their persons *accepted with God in the beloved, through the righteousness of Christ*, and for the sake of it; but their services and duties; their sacrifices of prayer and praise also. Moreover, such have great peace in themselves, much quietness and ease of mind; for, *the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever*; (Isai. 32:17) not of the righteousness of man, which is impure and imperfect, and cannot justify before God; and therefore, can never lay any solid foundation for peace; but of the righteousness of Christ, by which those that are justified, have peace with God, and in themselves; for, *the kingdom of God, in them, is righteousness and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*; (Rom. 14:17) that is, these are the fruits and effects of the righteousness of Christ, being received by faith, and so making a part of that kingdom of grace, in the heart of a believer, which can never be moved: to which may be added, that such who have an interest in this righteousness, are secured from condemnation and wrath; *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ*, and are justified by his righteousness; for his blood-shed, sufferings, and death, which are a principal part of this righteousness, are their security from condemnation; so that they shall never enter into it, but shall *pass from death to life*; and they may assure themselves, that as they are justified by the blood of Christ, they shall be saved from wrath, through him: to say no more; they must needs be blessed and happy, since they are hereby entitled to eternal life. Hence

justification by Christ's righteousness, is called, the *justification of life*; (Rom. 5:18) for, being justified through it, they are *made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life*, (Titus 3:7) and shall most assuredly enter into it; for, this righteousness will answer for them in a time to come, and give them admission into the kingdom of heaven; which a man's own righteousness, be it what it will, will leave him short of.

6. Such as serve the Lord, and worship him in a spiritual manner, where *his name is recorded*, are blessed by him with eternal life itself; for, *there the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore*; (Ps. 133:3) they are here blessed with an enlarged view of it; *life and immortality*, or an immortal life, *being more clearly brought to light by the gospel*, (2 Tim. 1:10) and the ministration of it: that presenting to faith the best account that is given of the unseen glories, and invisible realities of another world; and here, under the gospel-ministry, saints are sometimes indulged as with a sight of the *King in his beauty*; so with a prospect of the good *land that is very far off*; (Isai. 33:17) their hope of possessing it is more and more encouraged, and their faith of it increased: and are, indeed, made to rejoice in the believing views, and hope of the glory of God, they have some glimpse of; yea, *he that believes hath eternal life*, in some sense, already; he has it in promise, and in faith and hope; and he has the earnest and pledge of it, yea, the beginning of it, which is grace in him, and the knowledge of God in Christ; for, *this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*; (John 17:3) which spiritual and experimental knowledge, unto which life eternal is annexed, is increased yet more and more, by means of the word and ordinances, the memorials of the name of God in his house; these are appointed for that purpose, and continued for that end; *till we all come in, or into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*; (Ephes. 4:13) and this is no small encouragement to attend upon them: and when all this is considered, in how many instances, and by how many ways, God blesses his people, that meet and worship him, where he records his name: it will clearly appear what a regard he has to such places, and what inducements there are to his people to attend them.

This will be more evident, if it be observed, that these blessings are blessings indeed; true and real ones; such as *Jabez* prayed for when he said, *O, that thou wouldst bless me indeed*; (1 Chron. 4:10) or, "in blessing, bless me;" some blessings have only an appearance of blessings; are rather imaginary than real; at least they are not to be mentioned with these; as the outward blessings of life, temporal good things; for they sometimes are turned into curses, and are curses to wicked men; but these are covenant-blessings, the sure mercies of *David*, which come from a covenant-God, through Christ the mediator of the covenant; and in a way of covenant-grace, which makes them sure to all the spiritual seed of Christ: these are spiritual blessings, are of a spiritual nature, in distinction from corporal ones, from *blessings of the basket, and of the store*; are suited to spiritual men, and make for the welfare of the spirit amid soul of man; amid are brought down, and brought near, revealed, and applied by the holy Spirit of God, who takes them, and shews believers their interest in them: these are solid and substantial blessings; in comparison of which, temporal ones are things which are not, that have no solidity and substance in them, mere nonentities; but the blessings of grace, which saints are made to inherit now, are substance; and that glory they shall possess hereafter, is a better and more enduring substance; than any thing enjoyed here. In a word; the blessings God blesses his people with, who are found true and spiritual worshippers of him, where he records his name, are unchangeable, irreversible, and for ever; he never repents of them, nor revokes them; when God gives commandment to bless his people, and does bless them, they are

blessed; and it is not in the power of men or devils to reverse such a commandment, or such blessings; they come from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning; and they are like him, invariable and unalterable; what *Isaac* said to *Esau* concerning *Jacob*, is applicable to these blessings; *I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed.* (Gen. 27:33) And, it may be strongly argued from hence, that if a poor, frail, weak, and dying man, would not make any alteration in a blessing he had conferred on his son, though earnestly solicited to it; much less will that God, who is the immutable *Jehovah*, the everlasting *I Am*, make any change in, or reverse the blessings he has bestowed on his people: no, whatever he does in this way, is for ever; there is an inseparable connection between the blessings of grace, and eternal glory; to whom he gives the one he gives the other; *whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he just tied, them he also glorified.* (Rom. 8:30)

To conclude: We see how strong are the reasons, how forcible the arguments, how great the encouragement, to engage us to attend the house and ordinances of God; for, if his presence and blessing are not sufficient, what will be? The Lord, to encourage the people of *Israel* to wait at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, promised to meet them there, and commune with them: and Christ, to encourage his ministers and churches to attend to his word and ordinances, promised his presence with them, *to the end of the world; than which nothing greater could be suggested to them: and, since God is to be met with in public places of worship; his grace is there displayed and communicated; Christ is to be found, and with him life, and righteousness, and salvation, and the love and favour of God to be obtained and enjoyed; this may induce us to a constant attendance in them; Blessed is the man, says wisdom, or Christ, that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors; for whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.* (Prov. 3:34, 35) But then it should be observed, that the places where attendance is to be given, in a religious way, are *where the name of the Lord is recorded; there only his presence and blessing are to be expected; not where there is no mention of him; where the free grace of God, in the salvation of men, is not set forth; where the name of Christ is not spoken of, but studiously concealed, and but only occasionally, or now and then taken notice of under some low epithet or another; but, instead thereof, man's free-will is exalted; the power and purity of human nature cried up; justification and salvation are attributed to the works of men, and only a moral scheme is advanced and enforced; in such places, the presence and blessing of God are not to be met with; and, indeed, they are here rarely thought of, or sought for: but, if the name of God is recorded in a place, in the sense in which it has been explained, it matters not what the place is, or is called, as has been observed; since Jehovah dwelleth not in temples made with hands, (Acts 12:24) at least is not limited and restrained unto them: nor does he regard the form and manner in which they are built; he dwells in a more stately temple than any that can be erected on earth; the heaven is his throne, and the earth his footstool; and, therefore, he may well say, where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? (Isai. 66:1) Since there is none built, or can be built equal to the glory of his Majesty; therefore our great concern should be, to worship him in a spiritual manner, with our whole spirits, in the exercise of spiritual graces, and under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God, and to give unto him the glory due unto his name, even to each divine person; to the Father, who has chosen us to holiness and happiness; to the Son, who has redeemed us by his precious blood; and to the Spirit, who has regenerated and sanctified us, and is the earnest of our future glory.*

A

Discourse On
SINGING OF PSALMS
As A Part Of Divine Worship

Preached The 25th Of December, 1733 To A Society Of Young Men, Who Carry On An Exercise Of Prayer On Lord's-Day Mornings, At A Meeting-House On Horslydown, Southwark.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:15 (Latter Part)

I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

On this day in the last year, you were pleased to call me to preach to you from the former part of this verse; which led me to discourse concerning the work and duty of prayer, which, at your request, was published to the worldly and now, at your fresh instances, I am desired to insist upon the latter part of it, which regards the duty of singing; and, since the text and context were opened so far as was necessary, in my former discourse, I shall immediately attend to the consideration of the subject before me, which I shall handle in the following method:

- I. I shall endeavor to show you what is singing, and the nature of it, as an ordinance of God.
- II. Prove that it is an ordinance not confined to the Old Testament dispensation.
- III. Inquire into the subject matter of singing, or what that is which is to be sung.
- IV. Point out to you the persons who are to sing. And
- V. Observe the manner in which this ordinance should be performed.

I. I am to show you what is singing, or what is the common idea we have, or can have of it. Singing may be considered either in a proper, or in an improper sense; when it is used improperly, 'tis ascribed to inanimate creatures: So the heavens, the earth (Isa. 44:23; 49:13; 1 Chron. 16:33; Ps. 65:13), mountains, forests, the trees of the wood, the pastures clothed with flocks, and the valleys covered with corn, are said to ring and shout for *joy*, or are exhorted to it: And it is also in this improper sense that the heart is said to sing; as when Job says (Job 29:13), I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy; that is, greatly to rejoice; singing for joy being put there for great joy, which is the cause of it. Singing, taken in a strict and proper sense, and as a natural act, is an act of the

tongue, or voice; though not every action of the tongue, or sound of the voice, is to be called singing. Speech is an action of the tongue; but all kind of speaking, or saying, is not singing. Singing is speaking musically, or with the modulation of the voice: There two sounds, speaking, or saying, and singing, have not the same idea. When I am told, as it is commonly expressed, that such an one said grace before and after meat; I readily understand, that he asked a blessing of God upon his food before eating, and returned thanks for it afterwards, according to the common use of speech in prayer to God, and in conversation with men: But if it should be told me, that he sung grace before or after meat, I should not be able to form any other idea of it in my mind, but that he expressed all this in a tonical, musical way, with a modulation of the voice. Likewise it is not any clamor of the tongue; or every sound of the voice, that is to be accounted singing, but an harmonious, melodious and musical sound of it; otherwise; why should the tuneful and warbling notes and strains of birds be called singing, any more than the grunting of a hog, the braying of an ass, the neighing of a horse, the barking of a dog, or the roaring of a lion.

Let us now consider this action of the tongue, or voice, as performed religiously, and we shall find, that singing of God's praise is speaking out his praise musically; or it is an expression of it, with the modulation of the voice; and so is an ordinance distinct from prayer, praise, giving of thanks, and inward spiritual joy.

It is distinct from prayer, as is evident from my text; otherwise the Apostle must be guilty of a most wretched tautology; which is by no means to be admitted of. The Apostle *James* mentions prayer, and singing of psalms, as two distinct things; to which he advises different persons, or persons under different circumstances; when he says (Jam. 5:13), Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

Nor ought it to be objected to us, that we sometimes sing petitions, or what is prayer-wise, since praying, or making petitions, is different from singing them: However, those who are of a different mind from us about singing, should not object this, since the only way of singing, or at least, the most principal one, they pretend to make use of, is in prayer, and that is praising God in prayer. But,

Singing of God's praise is distinct from praising him; though we do praise him in singing, yet all praising of God is not singing; singing is one way in which we praise God; but there are many ways in which we praise him, when we cannot be said to sing: As for instance, we praise God when we give thanks unto him for mercies spiritual or temporal; when we speak well of his adorable perfections and glorious works, either in public or private; and we are capable of praising him by our lives and actions, as well as by our tongues; in neither of which senses can we be said to sing. If all praising is singing, I should be glad to know what singing of praise is. For, that it is different from giving of thanks, appears from the institution of the Lord's-supper; in which giving of thanks, and singing an hymn, or psalm, as in the margin of your bibles, or a song of praise to God, are mentioned as very distinct things but of this more hereafter: I shall now only just observe, that the Apostle *Paul*, in his epistle to the *Ephesians* (Eph. 5:19, 20), when he exhorts them to sing *psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*, afterwards mentions *giving of thanks to God* in the name of Christ, as another duty incumbent on them.

Nor is inward spiritual joy, or heart rejoicing, singing of God's praise. True spiritual joy is wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost, and takes its life from views of the person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and atonement of Christ; and is increased by the shedding abroad of the love of God in the heart, and by discoveries of covenant interest in the Father and in the Son. Now, when the soul is in such a comfortable situation, 'tis in the most agreeable frame to sing the praises of God; hence says *James, is any merry?* Εὐθυμεῖ τις, is any of a good mind, or in a good frame of soul? *let him sing psalms:* Not that these are the only persons that are to sing psalms, or this the only time, any more than that afflicted persons are the only ones that are to pray, and the time of affliction the only time of prayer: But as affliction more especially calls for prayer, so spiritual joy and rejoicing, for singing of psalms; but then this spiritual joy is not singing, but the cause or reason of it, and what eminently fits a person for it.

Though there is such a thing as mental prayer, there is no such thing as mental singing, for singing in the heart without the voice; speaking or preaching without a tongue, or voice, are nor greater contradictions, or rather impossibilities, than singing without a tongue or voice is; such an hypothesis is suited for no scheme but *Quakerism:* And we may as well have our silent meetings, dumb preaching, and mute prayer, as silent singing. *Singing and making melody in the heart,* is no other than singing with or from the heart, or heartily, or, as it is expressed in a parallel place, *with grace in the heart, i.e.* either with gratitude and thankfulness, or with grace in exercise; together with the voice.

Singing of God's praises is a vocal action, and should be performed in a social way, in concert with others; *with the voice together shall they sing* (Isa. 52:8), and not only with the voice, but with the modulation of it: It is not any noise of the tongue or voice, but an harmonious, melodious, joyful one (Ps. 95:1, 2). O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation: Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. But,

II. I shall endeavor to prove, that this ordinance of singing does not belong to the ceremonial law or was confined to the Old Testament dispensation, but is a part of natural religion, and moral worship, perpetually binding on all mankind, and so to be performed by believers in a spiritual and evangelic manner, under the gospel dispensation. And,

1. It will appear, from the practice of the Heathens, that it was a part of natural and moral worship, who, though greatly in the dark, both about the object and manner of worship, yet, by the dim light of nature, groped after the knowledge of both, if haply they might find them; and as by this dim light they were directed to pray to a superior Being when in distress, as *Jonah's* mariners did; so, by the same light, they were directed to sing praises to him when they received mercies, prayer and singing, being alike parts of natural religion and moral worship. So that though the *Gentiles* had no positive laws nor scheme of revelation to guide them in the worship of God, yet, in some instances, did, by *nature, the things contained in the law; which shew the work of the law written on their hearts.* I will just produce some few instances respecting the present case. *Clemens Alexandrinus* intimates, that one part of the religious worship of the *Egyptians*, consisted of hymns to their gods; his words are these; "First a singer goes before, bringing forth some one thing of the symbols of music; and they say, that he ought to take two books out of those of *Hermes*, the one containing the hymns of the gods, the other, the method of a royal life." And a little after, he adds; "There are ten

things which are suitable to the honor of their gods, and contain the *Egyptian* religion as sacrifices, first fruits, hymns, prayers, shows, feasts, and such like things." This is confirmed by *Porphyry*, who says that the *Egyptians* devote "the day to the worship of their gods; in which, three or four times, viz. morning and evening, noon and sun-setting, they sing hymns unto them: The same *Porphyry* says, concerning the *Indians*, that "they spend the greatest part of the day and night in prayers and hymns to the gods:" And moreover, that when they commit their bodies to the flames, that they may, in the purest manner, separate the soul from the body, they sing an hymn, and die". And, in another place, explaining that symbol of *Pythagoras*, "That drink offerings are to be poured out to the gods, by the ear of the cups; by this, says he, is intimated, that we ought to honor the gods, and sing hymns to them with music, for this goes through the ears."

Very remarkable is a passage of *Arrianus*, the stoic philosopher; "If, says he, we are intelligent creatures, what else should we do, both in public and private, than to sing an hymn to the Deity, to speak well of him, and give thanks unto him? Should we nor, whether digging or plowing, or eating, sing an hymn to God? Great is God, who has given us there instruments, by which we till the earth. Great is God, that has given us hands, a faculty of swallowing, and a belly; that we secretly grow and increase, and that, whilst we sleep, we breath; each of these things ought to be taken notice of in an hymn: But the greatest and most divine hymn we ought to sing is, that he has given us a reasonable faculty of using these things in a right way: What shall I say, since many of you are blind? ought not some one to fill up this place, and give our an hymn to God for you all? — If I was a nightingale, I would do as a nightingale; and is a swan, as a swan; but since I am a rational creature, I ought to praise God; this is my work; this I will do; nor will I desert the station to the utmost of my power; and I exhort you to the self same song." And, in another place he says, "This is my work whilst I live, to sing an hymn to God; both by myself, and before one or many." Much of this language would well become the mouth of a Christian. It is observed concerning the *muses*, that they were chiefly employed about the hymns and worship of the gods, and that Come of them had their names from thence, as *Mespomene*, *Terpsichore*, and *Polymnia*; and that *Homer* got so much credit, admiration, and applause as he did, was owing, among other things, to the hymns which he composed for the gods; and there is still extant, among his works, an hymn to *Apollo*. Moreover, formerly rewards were proposed in the *Pythian* games, for such who best sung an hymn to the God. And *Julian* the emperor, takes notice of many excellent hymns of the gods, which he advises to learn, as being of great use in the knowledge of things sacred; most of which, he says, were composed by the gods; some few by men inspired by a divine spirit. From there, and other instances which might be produced, we may conclude, that the *Gentiles* wore obliged, by the law of nature, to this part of worship, and, by the light of nature, were directed to it; and consequently that it is a part of natural religion and moral worship. Moreover,

2. It is evident, that the people of God sung songs of praise to him before the law was given by Moses. When the Lord so remarkably appeared for the children of *Israel*, by delivering them out of the hands of the *Egyptians*, and carrying them safely through the *Red Sea*, though their enemies were drowned in it; *Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song, unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea, etc. Miriam* and the *Israelitish* women, sung the time. This is the first long the scriptures make mention of; though, the *Jews* say, *Adam* sung one before. Now, by what law did the *Israelites* sing this song? it could nor be by the *Levitical* law; for that system of laws was not as yet given to that people and when that body of laws was delivered to them, we do nor find that

singing of God's praises was any part of it; it is not to be met with in the whole body of *Jewish* laws, given out by *Moses*; why then should it be reckoned of ceremonious institution, or a part of worship peculiar to the Old Testament? Nor was it by any positive law, or according to any part of external revelation God had made to the sons of men, the children of *Israel sung*; for no such positive law was extant, or any such revelation made, as we know of. It remains then, that in doing this, they acted according to the dictates of their consciences, and the examples which might have been before them, by which they were influenced, as to cry to the Lord when in distress, so to sing his praises when they were delivered.

3. It may easily be observed, that when psalmody was in the most flourishing condition among the *Israelites*; under the direction and influence of *David* their king, the sweet *Psalmist of Israel*, it was not confined to that people; but all nations of the earth were called upon, and exhorted to sing the praises of God, even by the *Psalmist* himself; Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands, Hebrews all the earth, sing forth the honor his name; make his praise glorious. Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. O sing unto the Lord a new song ; sing unto the Lord all the earth, sing unto the Lord; bless his name, shew forth his salvation from day to day (Ps. 66:1,2; 67:3, 4; 96:1, 2). Now if singing was not a part of moral worship, but of a ceremonious kind, and peculiar to the Old Testament dispensation, the nations of the earth would have had no concern in it; it would not have been obligatory upon them, but proper only to the *Israelites*, to whom alone *pertaineth the giving of the law and the service of God*.

4. Nothing is more manifest, than that when ceremonial worship was in its greatest glory, and legal sacrifices in highest esteem, that singing of psalms and spiritual songs was preferred unto them, as being more acceptable to God; I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving, says *David*; This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock, that hath horns and hoofs (Psalm 69:30, 31). Now can any other reason of this difference be given, than that the sacrifice of an ox or bullock was of ceremonial. institution; whereas, praising God was a part of moral worship, which might be performed in a spiritual and evangelic manner.

5. When the ceremonial law, with all its instituted rites, was abolished, this duty of singing, remained in full force. The Apostle *Paul*, in his epistles written to the churches at *Ephesus* and *Colosse*, declares in the one, that the *middle wall of partition*, between *Jew* and *Gentile*, was *broken down*: Meaning the ceremonial law, and that which was the cause of enmity between both; even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, was abolished (Eph. 2:14, 15). And in the other; says, Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or the new moon, or of the sabbath day,, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ (Colossians 2:16, 17); and yet, in both (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), exhorts them to sing *psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*. Now it is not reasonable to suppose, that the same Apostle, in the same epistles, written to the same persons, should declare them disengaged from some things, and under obligation to regard others, if there equally belonged to the ceremonial law, and were alike peculiar to the Old Testament dispensation.

6. This practice of singing the praises of God, has been performed by creatures who were never subject to the ceremonial law; by whom I mean not the *Gentiles*, who have been already taken notice of, but the angels, who, though subject to the moral law, so far as their nature and condition

will admit of; yet, in no one instance, were ever concerned in ceremonial service. Now these holy and spiritual beings were very early employed in this divine and heavenly work of singing; there *morning stars*, so called for their brightness and glory, sang together; these Sons of God, by creation, shouted for joy, when the foundations of the earth were fastened, and the corner stone thereof laid (Job 38:6,7): As they did also when the corner stone of man's redemption was laid in the incarnation of the Son of God; at which time there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men (Luke 2:14); who likewise will join with the saints in Hallelujahs and songs of praise to God, throughout an endless eternity. For,

7. We may say of this duty what the Apostle says of *charity* (1 Cor. 13:8, 11) that it *never faileth*, though *prophecies*, *tongues*, and *knowledge* shall. For, when all ordinances, whether of a moral nature, or of positive institution, shall cease, such as prayer, preaching, baptism, the Lord's-supper, and the like; this will continue, and be in its greatest glory and perfection. This will be the employment of saints when raised out of their dusty beds, on the resurrection morn, in the power and virtue of the resurrection of their risen Lord. Thy dead men shall live, together with, or as my dead body, shall they arise: Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead (Isa. 26:19): These having their souls and bodies reunited, shall come to the *Zion* above, *with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads*: These shall stand upon the mount with the Lamb, and *sing in the height* of it, even that *new song* which no one can learn, but those who are *redeemed from the earth*, But I proceed,

III. To consider the subject matter of singing, or what that is which is to be sung. The direction of the Apostle *Paul* in this case, is certainly to be regarded, who, in two distinct epistles (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), exhorts to the singing of *psalms*, *hymns*, and *spiritual songs*; and what these are, it will be proper to inquire. And,

1. By *psalms*, is meant the book of *psalms*, composed by *David*, *Asaph*, *Heman*, and others, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God; which is the only sense in which this word is used throughout the whole New Testament: Nor is there any reason to believe, that the Apostle *Paul* designs any other in the above mentioned places; or the Apostle *James*, when he says (Jam. 5:13), *Is any merry? let him sing psalms*. Those who are of a different mind, ought to shew in what other sense this word is used, and where, and what those psalms are we are to sing, if not the psalms of *David*, *etc.* since it is certain, there are psalms which are to be sung under the New Testament dispensation.

2. By *hymns*, we are to understand, not such as are composed by good men, without the inspiration of the Spirit of God. I observe indeed, from ancient writers, and from ecclesiastical history, that such compositions were made use of very early, even from the times of the Apostles; and I deny not but that they may now be useful; though a great deal of care should be taken that they be agreeable to the sacred writings, and the analogy of faith, and that they be expressed, as much as can be, in scripture language; yet, after all, I must confess, that I cannot but judge them, in a good measure, unnecessary, since we are so well provided with a book of psalms and scriptural songs, indited by the Spirit of God, and suitable on all occasions: However, I cannot think that such composure's are designed by the Apostle; nor can I believe that he would place such between psalms and spiritual songs, made by men inspired by the Holy Ghost, and put them upon a level with them, and to be sung equally with them, to the edification of the churches; therefore, I take

hymns to be but another name for the book of psalms; for the running title of that book may as well be, the book of hymns, as of psalms; and so it is rendered by *Ainsworth*, who also particularly calls the 145th psalm, *an hymn of David*: So the psalm which our Lord sung with his disciples, after the supper, is called an *hymn*, as the psalms of *David* in general, are called, by *Philo the Jew*, $\sigma\upsilon\mu\upsilon\epsilon\iota$ *hymns*, as they are also songs and hymns by *Josephus*.

By *spiritual songs*, may be meant the psalms of *David*, *Asaph*, etc. the titles of some of which, are, *songs*, as sometimes a *psalm and song*, a *song and psalm*, a *song of degrees*, and the like; together with all other scriptural songs, written by men inspired by God, and are called *spiritual*, because the author of them is the Spirit of God, the writers of them men moved and acted by the same Spirit; the subject matter of them spiritual, designed for spiritual edification, and opposed to all profane, loose and wanton songs.

These three words, *psalms*, *hymns*, and *songs*, answer to תהלים מזמורים , and שירים , the titles of *David's psalms*; and are, by the *Septuagint*, rendered by the *Greek* words the Apostle uses. I shall not trouble you with observing to you how these three are distinguished by learned men, one from another, but only observe, what has been remarked by others before me; that whereas the Apostle, in his exhortations to singing, directs to the titles of *David's psalms*, it is highly reasonable to conclude, that it was his intention that we should sing them: But, inasmuch as there are some queries, scruples, and objections about the singing of them, it will be proper to attempt a satisfactory answer to them.

(1.) It is inquired, whether the book of psalms was originally written in verse or metre? The reason of this enquiry is, that if it should appear that it was not originally written in *Hebrew* metre, then there is no reason why it should be translated into metre in another language, and so consequently not to be sung in the manner we do. To which, I answer, That the book of psalms, with some other writings of the Old Testament, were originally written in metre, is universally allowed by the Jews, and does also appear from the different accentuation of them, from that of other books. *Josephus*; a learned Jew, says, "That *David* being free from war, and enjoying a profound peace, composed songs and hymns to God, of various metre; some trimetre, i.e. consisting of three feet, and others pentametre, i.e. of five feet." *David's psalms* seem to be of the *Lyric* kind; hence *Jerom*, who, of all the fathers, best understood the *Hebrew* language, calls "*David*, our *Simonides*, *Pindar*, *Alcaeus*, *Flaccus*, *Catullus*, and *Serentis*," who were all of them *Lyric* poets. And in another place, he says, "If it should seem incredulous to any that the *Hebrews* have metre, or that the *Psalms* or the *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, or almost all the scriptural songs are composed after the manner of our *Flaccus*, and the *Greek Pindar*, and *Alcaeus*, and *Sappho*; let him read *Philo*, *Josephus*, *Eusebius Caesariensis*, and he'll find, by their testimonies, that what I say is true." The learned *Gomarus*, in his *Lyra*, has given out of the *Psalms*, and other poetical books of the scriptures, several hundred of instances of verse of the *Iambic*, *Trochaic*, *Dactylic*, *Anapaestic*, *Choriambic*, *Jonic*, *Antispastic*, and *Paeonic* kind, which he has compared with a like number out of *Pindar* and *Sophocles*. The *Jews* indeed have now lost the knowledge of the sacred poetry, and have been, for many hundred of years, unacquainted with it; though *R. Benjamin Tudelensis* says, that there lived in his time, at *Bagdad*, one *R. Eleazar*, and his brethren, who knew how to sing the songs as the singers did, when the temple was standing. But be this as it will, there's reason enough to conclude, that the book of *Psalms* was originally written in verse; and therefore it is lawful to be translated into verse, in order to be sung in the churches of Christ.

(2.) It is queried, whether the book of *Psalms* is suitable to the present gospel dispensation, and proper to be sung in gospel churches. I answer, Nothing is more suitable to the gospel state, or more proper to be sang in the churches of Christ; since it is so full of prophecies concerning the person, offices, grace and kingdom of the Messiah; concerning his sufferings, and death, his resurrection, ascension and session at the right hand of God; which are now more clearly understood, and are capable of being sung by believers, in a more evangelic manner than when they were first composed: Besides, this book is full of exceeding great and precious promises, as the ground of the faith and hope of God's people; is a large fund of experience, a rich mine of gospel grace and truth, and is abundantly suited to every case, state and condition, the church of Christ, or a particular believer, is in at any time. A little care and prudence used in the choice of proper psalms, on particular occasions, would fully discover the truth of this.

(3.) It is objected, that persons often meet with things which are nor, and which they cannot make their own case; yea, sometimes with what is shocking and startling to a Christian mind; such as imprecations and curses, on enemies or wicked men. And it is asked, Should persons sing cases not their own, and such things as there now mentioned; would they not be guilty of lying to God, and of want of that charity to men which is so much recommended under the gospel dispensation? To which, I reply, That as to singing cases not our own, this is no more lying to God than reading them is, singing being but a flower way of pronounciation in a musical manner; therefore, if this ought to deter persons from singing, it should also from reading: Besides, in public worship, we sing not as single persons, but in conjunction with, and as parts of the community, and body of the people; so that what may not be suitable to one, may be so to another, and in both, the end of praise be answered. Moreover, when we sing the cases of others, and which we cannot make our own, we sing them as such, and not as our own sense and experience; which yet may be very useful to us, either by way of example, or advice, or comfort, or instruction, or admonition, and the like: And if this should not be the case, yet there are two other principal ends of singing, *viz.* the praise and glory of God, and the edification of others, which may be attained this way and, after all, the same objection will lie against public prayer, as much as against public singing; since no prayer put up by the minister, in public, at least, not all the petitions in it, any more than every psalm or hymn, sung in public, are suitable to the cases of all persons present; yet this has not been thought a sufficient argument against public prayer, or to deter persons from joining in it. As for imprecations and curses on wicked men, though the scriptural instances of them are no examples to us to do the like; because these were made by men under the inspiration of the Spirit of God; yet they were prophetic hints of ruin and destruction to wicked men, and as such should be considered, and may be sung by us, and that to the glory of God and some instruction to our selves; for herein we may observe the justice and holiness of God, the vile nature of sin, the indignation of God against it, and the just abhorrence and detestation, that sin and sinners are had in with God, and should be had in with all good men.

(4.) It is said, that if we must sing the psalms of *David*, and others, then we must sing by a form; and if we may sing by a form, why not pray by one? I answer, the case is different; the ordinance of prayer may be performed without, a form, bur not the ordinance of singing: The Spirit of God is promised as a Spirit of grace and supplication, but nor as a spirit of poetry. And suppose a person had a gift of delivering out an extempore psalm or hymn, that psalm or hymn would be a form to the rest that joined with him; unless we suppose a whole congregation to have such a gift, and every one sing his own psalm or hymn; but then that, namely, joining voices together, which is the

beauty, glory, and harmony of this ordinance, would be mere jargon, confusion, and discord. Besides, we have a book of psalms, but we have not a prayer book: Had we a book of prayers, composed by men inspired by the Spirit of God, as we have a book of psalms made by such, we should think our selves under equal obligation to pray by a form, as we now do to sing by one. Add to this, that the psalms of *David* were composed on purpose to be sung by a form, in the very express words of them, as they accordingly were. *David*, when he had wrote them, sent them to *Asaph*, and his brethren, or to the chief musician, the master of the song, who had the management of it, or some such person, to be made use of in public; for thus it is written, (1 Chron. 16:7), Then on that day *David* delivered first this psalm, to thank the Lord, into the hands of *Asaph* and his brethren. And we may observe, that some hundreds of years after, the psalms of *David* and *Asaph* were sung in the express words of them, by the order of king *Hezekiah*; for so it is said (2 Chron. 29:30) Moreover, *Hezekiah*, the king and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord, with the words of *David* and of *Asaph*, *the seer*; and they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped. Hence also, when the people of God were exhorted to sing his praise, they were bid not to make, but take a psalm ready made to their hands (Ps. 81:1,2); Sing aloud unto God our strength ; make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob; take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp, with the psaltery. Which leads me,

(5.) To consider another objection made against singing the psalms of *David*. The singing of there was formerly attended with. the use of musical instruments; such as the harp, timbrel, cymbals, and the like: If then they are to be sung now, why not with these instruments, as heretofore? and if these are disused, why should not singing it self? I reply, That the use of musical instruments was not essential to singing; therefore, tho' these are laid aside, that continues. The Old Testament dispensation was a showy, gaudy, and pompous one, suited to the then infant state of the church; there were many ceremonious rites which attended the worship of God, even that part of it which was of a moral nature; which ceremonious rites, though now abolished, the worship being of a moral nature, remains in full force: As for instance; it was usual to burn incense at the time of prayer; now the use of incense, which was typical of the acceptance of the prayers of the saints, through the mediation of Christ, is laid aside; but the duty of prayer, being of a moral nature, continues: So the use of musical instruments, which attended the work of singing the praises of God, and was typical of inward spiritual melody, is at an end, when singing, being equally of a moral nature with prayer, is still obligatory. It is now sufficient, if, when we sing vocally, at the same time we make melody in our hearts to the Lord. I close this with an observation of an ancient writer; "Barely to sing, says he, is not fit for babes, but to sing with inanimate instruments, with cymbals, and with dancing; wherefore, in the churches (i. e. under the gospel dispensation) the use of such instruments, and others, fit for babes, is taken away, and bare or plain singing remains." I proceed,

IV. To point out to you the persons who are to sing, and who ought to be found in the performance of this duty, I shall take no notice of a private person's singing by himself, alone, or of the family discharge of this duty, or of its being done in concert, between two or more persons; no doubt but it is lawful for a single person to sing the praises of God alone, at home, in his own house, in his closet, when he thinks proper; and it may very laudably be performed in Christian families, where they are able to carry it on with decency and good order; yea, any two, or more persons, may join together in this part of divine service, as *Paul* and *Silas* did in prison (Acts 16:25), who, at midnight, prayed and sang praises unto God; which is an instance of singing vocally, and in

concert, and was attended with some miraculous operations; with which all gospel ordinances were at first confirmed, and which brought on, and issued in the conversion of the jailor. But what I shall chiefly attend to, will be to prove that gospel churches, or the churches of Christ, under the gospel dispensation, ought to sing the praises of God vocally; and this I shall do from the following considerations.

1. From the prophecies of the Old Testament, which declare, that the churches, in gospel times, should sing; and in which they are called upon, exhorted, and encouraged to do it. In many of the psalms, which respect the times of the Messiah, and the gathering of the *Gentiles* to him under the gospel dispensation, such as the 47th, 68th, and 95th, the people of God are frequently invited to sing praise unto him, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. Likewise, in the prophecies of *Isaiah* (Isa. 52:7, 8, 9; 35:1, 2, 6, 10; 26:1; 54:1) it is declared, that not *only the watchmen*, gospel ministers, such whose feet are beautiful on the mountains, who bring good tidings, and publish peace and salvation, *shall lift up the voice*, and that *with the voice together shall they sing*; but also the churches under their care, and such souls they are made useful to, are called upon *to break forth into joy, and sing together*; yea, it is promised, that the *Gentile* church, under the name of *the wilderness, and solitary place, shall be glad and rejoice, even with joy and singing*; that even *the tongue of the dumb shall sing, and the ransomed of the Lord return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads*.

Moreover, that *in that day*, meaning the gospel day, *shall this song be sung in the land of Judah*, in the gospel church: *We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks*. To add no more; how expressly is the *Gentile* church exhorted and encouraged to this work, in another part of these prophecies? where it is said, *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing; and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wise, saith the Lord*. Blessed be God, these predictions are, in a great measure, fulfilled; gospel churches among the *Gentiles*, as well as in the land of *Judea*, have lift up their voices, and sung the praises of God according to these prophecies; which is, at once, a confirmation of the authority of the scriptures, and of the truth of this ordinance. But,

2. I prove it to be a duty incumbent on gospel churches, under the New Testament dispensation, from express precepts and directions given to them concerning it. It is not only prophesied of in the Old Testament, but it is also commanded in the New, that they should sing. The church at *Ephesus* was a gospel church, as was also that at *Colosse*; and they are both expressly enjoined as such, by the Apostle *Paul*, who in this, as in their things, had the mind of Christ to *sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs* (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Besides, if singing was not a duty belonging to New Testament churches, why should any directions about it be given to them? such as to sing with *grace* in their hearts, with the *spirit*, and with the *understanding*; and to do it in such a manner, so as *to speak* to themselves, and to *teach* and *admonish* one another (1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

3. That New Testament churches should sing, will more fully appear from New Testament instances and examples. There are not only prophecies and precepts, but also precedents in favor of this practice; and the first instance of this kind I shall mention, is, that of Christ and his Apostles, who sung an hymn, as a church, at the close of the Lord's supper; of this the evangelist assures us; When they had sung an hymn, says he, they went out unto the mount of olives (Matthew 26:30):

Our ears are continually dinned, by those who are of a different mind from us, with an old translation, in which, they say, the words are rendered, *When they had given thanks*. But, First, This work was done already; *he, i.e. Christ, took the cup, and gave thanks*.

Secondly, A different word from that is here used, and which, in its first and primary sense, signifies to sing an hymn, or song, to the honor of God. And,

Thirdly, This old translation must be a false one, since it fixes such a character of rudeness and arrogance upon the Apostles, as is unbecoming the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus; what, they give thanks! What business had they to give thanks? Had they done so, they had took upon them an office, and thrust themselves into a province that did not belong to them. Who should give thanks but Christ, the master of the feast, who was then in person present at his own table? No, they sung an hymn in concert, with their Lord at the head of them; which hymn was either one of Christ's composing on that special occasion, or rather was a part of the *Hallel* the Jews sung at the Passover, which began with the 113th, and ended with the 118th psalm; the first part of which they sung before they sat down to eat, and the other after they had eaten, and after they had drunk the fourth and last cup; which last part seems to have been postponed the eating of the Lord's supper, as containing in it several verses suitable to that ordinance, especially the closing part, which is this: I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord. O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord. We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord. God is the Lord which hath shewed us Light. Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee; thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. For my own part, it would be agreeable to me, if this was always sung at the celebration of this ordinance. But to return to my argument. This hymn, or psalm, was sung by Christ and his Apostles, at a church; which, though one of the least of the churches, yet the purest that ever was on earth; where Christ sung, according to his promise made long before, when he said (Ps. 22:22), I will declare thy name unto my brethren: In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee; which the author of the epistle to the Hebrews; cites in this manner; *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, and in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee*, ὁμνήσω σε; *will I sing a hymn unto thee*; which he accordingly did sing in the midst of the congregation, the church, among his brethren, the Apostles, at the institution of the supper; and is an example we ought to follow at the administration of that ordinance. The church at *Corinth*, in the times of the Apostles, sung psalms: There were, indeed, some disorders among them, in the performance of this, as well as other parts of public worship, which the Apostle *Paul* endeavors to rectify in his epistle to them; How is it then, brethren? says he, when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation; let all things be done to edifying(1 Cor. 14:26) where he does not blame them for those things, provided care was taken to avoid confusion, and that the edification of each other was regarded: And what he says in my text, with respect to himself and his own conduct in the discharge of both the duties of prayer and singing, is designed as an example and an instruction to this church.

The book of *Revelation* is a representation of the slate and condition, service and sufferings of the churches of Christ on earth, in the several periods of time, until his second coming; in which we

have frequently an account of their being concerned in this work of singing (Rev. 5:9, 10; 14:1, 3; 15:3; 19:1-7); either the Lamb's new song or the song of *Moses*, or both; and which is represented as their employment, more or less, until the end of time. Now, since we have prophesy, precept, and precedent, for the practice of singing in New Testament churches, none should scruple the performance of it. But, before I dismiss this part of my subject, it will be necessary to give an answer to the two following queries.

(1.) Whether women should sing in public, or in the churches? The reason of this query is, because the Apostle says (1 Cor. 14:34, 35), Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. From whence it is inferred, that if women are to be silent, and not speak in the church, then they are not to sing or speak to themselves and others, in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. To which I answer, that it is evident the Apostle is to be understood of such kind of speaking in public, as carries in it authority over the man, which singing does not; so he explains himself in another place, Let the women learn in silence, in all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence (1 Tim. 2:11, 12). It is certain, that all kind of speaking in the church, is not forbidden to women; otherwise it would not be lawful for them to give an account of the work of God upon their souls, by word of mouth; nor could they be witnesses for or against any member of the church chargeable with any iniquity. In these and such like cases, they have, no doubt, a right, and should have the liberty of speaking in the church: As for singing of psalms, though, as an ancient writer observes, "The Apostle commands women to be silent in the church; yet they are capable of performing this service well, which is agreeable to every age, and fit for both sexes." And indeed, if this is a part of moral worship, as, I think, I have sufficiently proved it is, it must be a duty belonging to them, and binding on them: Besides, it has been practiced by them in all ages of the church. *Miriam*, and the *Israelitish* women, sung, as well as *Moses* and the children of *Israel*, at the *Red Sea*; as did also *Debora* with *Barak*; and not to take notice, of the singing women in the temple service, there is a prophecy of gospel times, in which it is said (Jer. 31:8-12), that a great company of the blind and lame, with the woman with child, and her that travaileth with child, should come and sing in the height of Zion; and indeed, what else is *the woman's prophesying* (1 Cor. 11:5), which the Apostle does not object to, though he does to her doing it with her *head uncovered*, any other than her singing of psalms? as is well judged by a learned writer, since prophesy is explained by the same Apostle, by singing as well as by praying and preaching in another place (1 Cor. 14:15, 24, 26).

(2.) It is a case of conscience with some, whether they should sing in a mixed multitude, or in the presence of unbelievers, they joining with them. The solution of which, I would attempt in the following manner; let it be observed, that singing, as a part of moral worship, is binding on all men, without exception, believers and unbelievers; the former, indeed, are the only persons who are capable of performing it in a spiritual and evangelic manner; but the latter may have a sense of God's goodness upon their minds, and be able to praise him for their temporal mercies, though they cannot do it in faith, nor without sin; nor indeed, can they perform a natural or civil action, any more than a moral one, without sin; for the *plowing of the wicked is sin* (Prov. 21:4). But it does not from hence follow, that a man must not plow, or perform any civil action, because he sins in it. And so likewise it ought not to be concluded, that a man should not pray, or sing psalms, or perform any other moral action, because he cannot do it in a spiritual way; for it is better for him to do it in the

best way he can, than not at all. But, supposing that it is not the duty of unbelievers to sing psalms, it will be very difficult to know who are such in public assemblies; and if such should join with you, why should this affect you that are believers? Will this sin of theirs be ever laid to your charge, or you be accountable for it? Should you neglect your duty because they are not in theirs? Must your mouths be stopped because theirs are open? Should you not rather blush and take shame to your selves? When you see them so forward to what you judge is not their duty, and you your selves so backward to it. Besides, it has been the practice of the saints, in all ages, to sing in mixed assemblies. There was a mixed multitude which came up with the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, in whose presence *Moses* and the children of *Israel* sung at the *Red Sea*, and who, very probably, joined with them in the song, since they had a share in the common deliverance. The psalmist *David*, declared it as his resolution, and, no doubt but it was his practice, when he had opportunity, to sing the praises of God among the *Heathens*. Therefore, says he, will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the Heathen, and sing praises unto thy name. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people, I will sing unto thee among the nations (Ps. 18:49; 57:9). The church, in *Solomon's* song, is represented, not only as taking her part in the song in the midst of, but as joining with the daughters of *Jerusalem*, though they were ignorant of Christ her beloved. It is evident, that the church at *Corinth* sung psalms in the presence of unbelievers, as well as performed other parts of public worship; which was one reason that made the Apostle so desirous of rectifying the irregularities in this, as in the rest; that so unbelievers, who came in among them, might be convinced and obliged to own, that God was in them of a truth. Moreover, inasmuch as unbelievers are admitted to public prayers, and to join with you in them, why not to public singing? especially, since some ends of this ordinance cannot be answered without their presence; which are to *declare the Lord's doings among the people*, and make known his *wonders and his glory among the Heathen*: (Ps. 9:11; 96:3) To add no more, this ordinance has been an ordinance for conversion; I have known it to be so, and so have others besides me; and a good reason this is why it should be continued publicly in our churches, and unbelievers be admitted to an attendance on it.

V. I come now to consider the manner in which this ordinance should be performed, which I shall do very briefly, and shall chiefly regard what is expressed in my text, in which the Apostle is desirous that he might, and determines to, *sing with the Spirit, and with the understanding also*.

1. *With the Spirit*. By which may be meant, either the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, by which the Apostle was capable of delivering out a psalm or hymn extempore, and that in an unknown tongue; though he was determined to make use of this gift in such a way, as to be understood by others, that so they might receive some profit and edification by it; or else, by *the Spirit*, may be designed the Spirit of God, who is absolutely necessary to the spiritual performance of this duty. Believers, in the discharge of this work, stand in great need of him to excite their attention, assist their meditations, enlighten their understandings, raise their affections, strengthen their faith, and make a comfortable application of what is sung to themselves; or, by singing with *the Spirit*, may be meant, singing with his own spirit; and indeed, believers should be *servant in spirit*, whilst they are serving the Lord in any ordinance: As God is a Spirit, he must be worshipped in spirit, or with our spirits, that is, with our hearts engaged in the work we are concerned in; and then may we be said to *sing with the spirit*, when we *sing with grace in our hearts*, or in the lively exercise of faith, and hope, and love; for to the due performance of this ordinance in a spiritual way, is required a large measure of grace, a good deal of spiritual light, knowledge, experience and judgment, for we should sing,

2. *With the understanding* also, i.e. either in a language that is to be understood, or with the understanding of what is sung (Ps. 47:7), *sing ye praises with understanding*; or to the understanding of others; for one end of this duty is, to *teach* and *admonish* others as well as our selves; and, perhaps, the Apostle may have some regard here to one of the titles of *David's psalms*, viz. בשכיל, *maschil*, which signifies a psalm, giving instruction, or causing to understand. Unless we sing in all these senses with understanding, we sing with little advantage, either to our selves or others. In a word, besides our mutual edification, we should have in our view the glory of God; we are to *sing unto the Lord*, not to our selves, or to raise our natural affections, or to gain applause from others, by the fineness of our voice, and exact conformity to the tune; but to the glory of Father, Son and Spirit, who are that one God, who condescends to inhabit the praises of *Israel*. Having now considered the several things I proposed, relating to the ordinance of singing, I shall subjoin a short account of the faith and practice of the saints in the three first centuries of Christianity, with respect either to singing alone, or in the family, or in the churches; which added to the scriptural account of this duty, may serve the more to confirm us in the practice of it. If the *Therapeutae*, a sect of religious persons mentioned by *Philo the Jew*, who was contemporary with the Apostles, were Christians, as *Eusebius* thinks, then we have a proof, besides the scripture ones, of the Christians' singing of psalms and hymns in the times of the Apostles; for of there *Philo* says, "That they not only gave themselves up to a contemplative life, but composed longs and hymns to God, in various kinds of metre and verse, and which they wrote as was necessary in graver rhyme, and which they not only composed but sung" tho' perhaps, he may intend the *Essenes*, of whom *Porphyry* says, that "They kept the seventh day of the week in hymns to God, and in rest."

There are some, indeed, who think they were neither, but a sect of *Jewish* philosophers: However this be, 'tis certain, That there is now extant an epistle of *Pliny* to *Trajan* the emperor; in which he tells him, that one part of the charge against the Christians was, "That they used to meet together at a flared time, before it was light, and sing a hymn among themselves, to Christ, as to a god". *Tertullian* refers to this letter, and expresses the charge in it thus; "That they had their meetings before it was day, to sing to Christ and to God. *Eusebius* cites the same, and observes, that "Pliny declared that he found nothing impious in them, nothing done by them contrary to the laws, except that rising early together, they sung an hymn to Christ after the manner of a god." Now this letter was written in the latter end of the first century, or at the beginning of the second, and, as some think, whilst the Apostle *John* was yet living. *Justin Martyr*, Anno 150 in his epistle to *Zena* and *Serenus*, if it will be allowed to be genuine, speaks of the singing of psalms, hymns, and songs; and directs to the use of psalmody, in such a manner, as not to grieve our neighbors.

Athenogenes, a martyr, in the second century, as he was going to the fire, delivered an hymn to those that stood by, in which he celebrated the Deity of the blessed Spirit. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, Anno 190, or 200, speaking of a good man, says, "His whole life is a continual holy day, his sacrifices are prayer and praise, the scriptures are read before eating of food; and, whilst eating, psalms and hymns are sung; and, at night, before he goes to bed prayer is performed again. And, in another place, he observes, that "a man's love, friendship, and good will to God, should be shewn by thanksgiving and singing of psalms," and he himself composed an hymn to Christ, which is still extant at the end of his *Paedagogue*.

Tertullian, who lived about the same time, has many things in his writings, which shew that singing of psalms, both publicly and privately, was practiced in his day; in one place, he says, "After

washing of hands, and lighting up of candles, meaning at their Christian meetings, and love feasts, every one might come forth, and sing to God, either out of the holy scriptures, Or what was of their own composing." And elsewhere, among the arguments he makes use of to prevail on Christians to marry among themselves, this is one; "psalms and hymns," says he, "are harmoniously sung between the happy pair; and they provoke each other to sing the better to their God." And in another place, he speaks of the reading of the scriptures, singing of psalms, preaching, sermons, and of prayer. as the several parts of public worship. And to add no more, in another book he makes this to be one part of the happiness of a chaste and continent man, that, "If he prays to the Lord, he is near to heaven; if he studies the scriptures, he is wholly there; if he sings a psalm, he pleases himself."

Origen, Anno 226, or 230 speaking of the need of the Spirit of God in prayer, adds, "Even as no man can sing a psalm or hymn to the Father in Christ, in good rhyme, proper verse and metre, and in concert, except the Spirit, who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, first searches, and, as much as can be, comprehends the deep things of the mind, with songs of praise and hymns".

Cyprian, Anno 246 exhorted *Donatus* to the practice of singing of psalms, in an epistle to him, "Let a psalm, says he, be sung at a feast, kept with moderation; and that thou mayest have a retentive memory, let thy voice be melodious. Begin this work after the usual manner." *Nepos*, an *Egyptian* bishop, Anno 260 is greatly commended by *Eusebius*, not only for his faithfulness, labor, and diligence in the scriptures, but for his psalmody; which was very grateful to many of the brethren at that present time. I might go on to produce testimonies, proving psalmody to be in use in the church in the times of *Constantine*, not far from the third century, which, as *Eusebius*, who was on the spot, relates, was performed with a very decent and agreeable modulation of the voice. As also, in the churches at *Alexandria* and *Milan*, when *Athanasius* was bishop of the one, and *Ambrose* of the other, who both lived in the fourth century. I might also observe, what spiritual delight and comfort the great *Austin* found in attending on this ordinance; but I choose to go no further than the three first centuries, which were the purest and most incorrupt ages of Christianity.

Paulus Samosatenus, who denied the divinity of Christ, is the only person I have met with in this period of time, that objected to the psalms and songs sung in the churches, which he condemned as novel compositions; and yet provided women to sing in the church concerning himself: His reason for it seems to be, because the divinity of Christ was in an excellent manner let forth in the old songs and psalms; as appears from a passage in *Eusebius*, mentioned to confront *Artemon* and *Theodotus*, who had represented Christ's divinity as a novel doctrine. "The psalms and songs of the brethren, says *Eusebius*, which were written by the faithful, from the beginning, set forth the praises of Christ as the word of God, ascribing divinity to him." From the whole it may be concluded, that this ordinance of singing of psalms, as it was used by Christ and his Apostles, so it was continued in the ages next to them; and though it has been dragged through the sinks of popery, yet it ought not to be rejected on that account: Had our reformers treated the ordinances of Christ in such a manner, because they found them corrupted, we should have had no ordinance now in being: Let us rather do all we can to clear this of every degree of superstition, and restore it to its native simplicity and spirituality.

A
DECLARATION
of the
FAITH AND PRACTICE
OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,
IN CARTER LANE, SOUTHWARK,
UNDER THE PASTORAL CARE OF Dr. JOHN GILL,

Read and assented to at the Admission of Members.

HAVING been enabled, through divine grace, to give up ourselves to the Lord, and likewise to one another by the will of God, we account it a duty incumbent upon us, to make a declaration of our faith and practice, to the honour of Christ, and the glory of his name; knowing, that as *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, so with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;* (Rom. 10:10) a which declaration is as follows, namely,

I. We believe, That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, are (2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:21) the word of God, and the only (John 5:39; Acts 17:11; 2 Peter 1:19, 20) rule of faith and practice.

II. We believe, That there is but one (Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Jer. 10:10) only living and true God: that there are (1 John 5:7; Matthew 28:19) three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who are equal in nature, power, and glory; and that the Son ((John 10:30; Phil. 2:6; Rom. 9:5; 1 John 5:20) and the Holy Ghost (Acts 5:3, 4; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 2 Cor. 3:17, 18) are as truly and properly God as the Father. These three divine persons are distinguished from each other, by peculiar relative properties: The distinguishing character and relative property of the first person is *begetting*; he has begotten a Son of the same nature with him, and who is the express image of his person; (Ps. 2:7; Heb. 1:3) and therefore is with great propriety called *the Father*: The distinguishing character and relative property of the second person is that he is *begotten*; and he is called the only begotten of the Father, and his own proper Son; (John 1:14; Rom. 8:3, 32) not a Son by creation, as angels and men are, nor by adoption, as saints are, nor by office, as civil magistrates; but by nature, by the Father's eternal generation (Ps. 2:7) of him in the divine nature; and therefore he is truly called *the Son*: The distinguishing character and relative property of the third person is to be *breathed* by the Father and the Son, and to proceed from both, (Job 33:4; Ps. 33:6; John 15:26 and 20:26 and 20:22; Gal. 4:6) and is very Properly called *the Spirit*, or breath of

both. These three distinct divine persons, we profess to reverence, serve, and worship as the one true God. (1 John 5:7; Matthew 4:10)

III. We believe, That before the world began God did elect (Eph. 1:4; 1 Thess. 1:4 and 5:9; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:5; 1 John 3:1; Gal. 4:4, 5; John 1:12) a certain number of men unto everlasting salvation whom he did predestinate to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ of his own free grace, and according to the good pleasure of his will; and that in pursuance of this gracious design, he did contrive and make a covenant (2 Sam. 23:5; Ps. 89:2, 28, 34; Isa. 42:6) of grace and peace with his son Jesus Christ, on the behalf of those persons; wherein a Saviour (Ps. 89:19; Isa. 49:6) was appointed, and all spiritual (2 Sam. 23:5; Isa. 55:3; Eph. 1:3) blessings provided for them; as also that their (Deut. 33:3; John 6:37, 39 and 10:28, 29; Jude 1) persons, with all their grace (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3; Col. 3:3, 4) and glory, were put into the hands of Christ, and made his care and charge.

IV. We believe, That God created the first man, *Adam*, after his image, and in his likeness, an upright, holy, and innocent creature, capable of serving and glorifying him: (Gen. 1:26, 27; Eccl. 7:29; Ps. 8:5) but he sinning, all his posterity sinned in him, and came short of the glory of God; (Rom. 5:12 and 3:23) the guilt of whose sin is imputed; (Rom. 5:12, 14, 18, 19; 1 Cor. 15:22; Eph. 2:3) and a corrupt nature derived to all his offspring descending from him by ordinary and natural generation: (Job 14:4; Ps. 51:5; John 3:6; Ezek. 16:4-6) that they are by their first birth carnal and unclean; averse to all that is good, incapable of doing any, and prone to every (Rom. 8:7, 8 and 3:10-12; Gem 6:5) sin: and are also by nature children of wrath, and under a sentence of condemnation; (Eph. 2:3; Rom. 5:12, 18) and so are subject, not only to a corporal death, (Gen. 2:7; Rom. 5:12, 14; Heb. 9:27) and involved in a moral one, commonly called spiritual; (Matthew 8:21; Luke 15:24, 32; John 5:25; Eph. 3:1) but are also liable to an eternal death, (Rom. 5:18 and 6:23; Eph. 2:3) as considered in the first *Adam*, fallen and sinners; from all which there is no deliverance, but by Christ, the second *Adam*. (Rom. 6:23 and 7:24, 25 and 8:2; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:45, 47)

V. We believe, That the Lord Jesus Christ, being set up from (Prov. 8:22, 23; Heb. 12:24) everlasting as the Mediator of the covenant, and he having engaged to be the (Ps. 49:6-8; Heb. 7:22) Surety of his people, did In al. 4:4; Heb. 2:14, 16, 17) human nature, and not before, neither in whole, nor in part; his human soul being a creature, existed not from eternity, but was created and formed in his body by him that forms the spirit of man within him, when that was conceived in the womb of the virgin; and so his human nature consists of a true body and a reasonable soul: both which, together and at once the Son of God assumed into union with his divine person, when made of a woman, and not before; in which nature he really suffered, and died (Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:3; Eph. 5:2; 1 Peter 3:18) as the substitute of his people, in their room and stead; whereby he made all that satisfaction (Rom. 8:3, 4 and 10:4; Isa. 42:21; Rom. 8:1, 33, 34) for heir sins, which the law and justice of God could require; as well as made way for all those blessings (1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:7) which are needful for them both for time and eternity.

VI. We believe, That eternal Redemption which Christ has obtained by the shedding of his blood (Matthew 20:28; John 10:11, 15; Rev. 5:9; Rom. 8:30) is special and particular: that is to say, that it was only intentionally designed for the elect of God, and sheep of Christ, who only share the special and peculiar blessings of it.

VII. We believe, That the justification of God's elect, is only by the righteousness (Rom. 3:28 and 4:6 and 5:16-19) of Christ imputed to them, without the consideration of any works of righteousness done by them; and that the full and free pardon of all their sins and transgressions, past, present, and to come, is only through the blood of Christ, (Rom. 3:25; Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:13; 1 John 1:7, 9) according to the riches of his grace.

VIII. We believe, That the work of regeneration, conversion, sanctification, and faith, is not an act of (John 1:13; Rom. 9:16 and 8:7) man's free will and power, but of the mighty, efficacious, and irresistible grace (Phil. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3; Eph. 1:19; Isa. 43:13) of God.

IX. We believe, that all those, who are chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and sanctified by the Spirit, shall certainly and finally (Matthew 24:24; John 6:39, 40 and 10:28, 29; Matthew 16:18; Ps. 125:1, 2; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24; Heb. 2:13; Rom. 8:30) persevere; so that not one of them shall ever perish, but shall have everlasting life.

X. We believe, That there will be a resurrection of the dead; (Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29; Dan. 12:2) both of the just and unjust; and that Christ will come a second time to judge (Heb. 9:28; Acts 17:31; 2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 1 Thess. 4:15-17) both quick and dead; when he will take vengeance on the wicked, and introduce his own people into his kingdom and glory, where they shall be for ever with him.

XI. We believe, That Baptism (Matthew 28:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26) and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Christ, to be continued until his second coming; and that the former is absolutely requisite to the latter; that is to say, that those (Acts 2:41 and 9:18, 26) only are to be admitted into the communion of the church, and to participate of all ordinances in it, (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12, 36, 37 and 16:31-34 and 8:8) who upon profession of their faith, have been baptized, (Matthew 3:6, 16; John 3:23; Acts 8:38, 39; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12) by immersion, in the name of the Father, (Matthew 28:19) and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

XII. We also believe, That singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs vocally, (Matthew 26:30; Acts 16:25; 1 Cor. 14:15, 26; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16) is an ordinance of the Gospel, to be performed by believers; but that as to time, place, and manner, every one ought to be left to their (James 5:13) liberty in using it.

Now all, and each of these doctrines and ordinances, we look upon ourselves under the greatest obligation to embrace, maintain, and defend; believing it to be our duty (Phil. 1:27; Jude 3) to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.

And whereas we are very sensible, that our conversation, both in the world and in the church, ought to be as becometh the Gospel of Christ; (Phil. 1:27) we judge it our incumbent duty, to (Col. 4:5) walk in wisdom towards them that are without, to exercise a conscience (Acts 24:16) void of offence towards God and men, by living (Titus 2:12) soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

And as to our regards to each other, in our church-communion; we esteem it our duty to (Eph. 4:1-3; Rom. 12:9, 10, 16; Phil. 2:2, 3) walk with, each other in all humility and brotherly love; to watch

(Lev. 19:17; Phil. 2:4) over each other's conversation; to stir up one (Heb. 10:24, 25) another to love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as we have opportunity, to worship God according to his revealed will; and, when the case requires, to warn, (1 Thess. 5:14; Rom. 15:14; Lev. 19:17; Matthew 18:15-17) rebuke, and admonish one another, according to the rules of the Gospel.

Moreover, we think ourselves obliged (Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26) to sympathize with each other, in all conditions, both inward and outward, which God, in his providence, may bring its into; as also to (Rom. 15:1; Eph. 4:12; Col. 3:13) bear with one another's weaknesses, failings and infirmities; and particularly to pray for one another, (Eph. 6:18, 19; 2 Thess. 3:1) and that the Gospel, and the ordinances thereof, might be blessed to the edification and comfort of each others souls, and for the gathering in of others to Christ, besides those who are already gathered.

All which duties we desire to be found in the performance of, through the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit whilst we both admire and adore the grace, which has given us a place, and a name in God's house, better than that of sons and daughters. (Isa. 56:5)

A
DISSERTATION
CONCERNING
THE RISE AND PROGRESS
OF
POPERY

What is generally meant and understood by Popery, is well known. As for the name it matters not from whence and from whom it is, nor when it began to be in use, nor in what sense the word *papa* is used in heathen and ecclesiastical writers. By the latter it was given to Christian bishops in common; as to *Cyprian, Athanasius, Austin, Epiphanius*, and others; until the bishops of *Rome* assumed it as peculiar to themselves: but it is not the name, but the thing we are inquiring after; and as things are before they have a name, so Popery was in being before it bore this name. It did not begin at *Rome*, nor was it always confined there; nor did it cease at the Reformation in the reformed churches; some of its unholy relics continued with them, and still do, and even in Geneva itself. It is commonly believed by Protestants, that the Pope of *Rome* is Antichrist; and the Roman church, its hierarchy, doctrines and practices, Antichristian; and by Protestant writers and interpreters, for the most part, it is supposed that the same Antichrist is meant in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10. to whom the description agrees; as, *the man of sin, the son, of perdition, who exalts himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped; sitting in the temple of God, shewing himself to be God*. Now this same man of sin, was then in being in the apostles time, though not arrived to his manhood; to deny this, would be just such good sense as to deny that an infant exists because it is not grown up to man's estate. Antichrist was not then revealed, but was to be revealed in his proper time, when that which hindered his being revealed was taken away, even the Roman empire: he was in being, though he lay hid and concealed till an opportunity offered to show himself. The mystery of iniquity, which is one of the names of mystical *Babylon*, or the Antichristian whore of *Rome*. Revelation 17:5 began to work already, when the apostle wrote the above prophecy, and gave the above description of Antichrist; and so the apostle John says, that the spirit of antichrist, which *should come*, even now already, is it in the world, (1 John 4:3). Antichrist was not only in embryo in the times of the apostles, but was arrived to some bigness, so as to be active and operative. Now Popery may be considered in a twofold respect; both as an hierarchy, and usurped jurisdiction, and tyrannical domination over others; and as a system of Antichristian doctrines and practices: and in both views it will appear, that what is now so called, had a very early beginning.

Popery may be considered as an Antichristian hierarchy, a tyrannical jurisdiction over other churches, gradually obtained by usurpation; and though such an affectation of preeminence and dominion was forbidden, and condemned by Christ, (Matt. 20:26, 27; 13:8, 11) and by his apostles,

and even by Peter, whom the pope of *Rome* claims as his predecessor, (2 Cor. 1:24; 1 Pet. 5:3), yet this *Diotrephesian* spirit, or love of preeminence, appeared even in the apostolic age, (3 John 9) and though the office of bishop or overseer, and of presbyter or elder, and of pastor, is one and the same, and equal, according to the scripture account, (Acts 20:27) and there were but two officers in the church, bishops and deacons, (Phil. 1:1), yet we soon hear of the superiority of bishops to presbyters, and of the subjection of presbyters to bishops, as well as of deacons to both, and of the people to them all; as appears from the epistles of *Ignatius*, in the second century; and in the third and following, we read of a great variety of offices, together with others since added, which make the present Antichristian hierarchy; as will be observed hereafter.

The bishops of *Rome* very early discovered a domineering spirit over other bishops and churches; they grasped at power and exercised it, though they met with rebuffs in it. In the second century there was a controversy about keeping Easter. The Asian churches observed it on the 14th day of the new moon, let it fall on what day of the week it might; but the church of *Rome*, with other churches, observed it on the Lord's day following. Victor then bishop of *Rome*, being a fierce, and blustering bishop, threatened at least to excommunicate, if he did not excommunicate, the said churches, for not observing Easter at the same time that he did. *Eusebius* says,^[1] that he attempted to do it; from which *Iren—ns* ^[2] of France, endeavoured to dissuade him, though he was of the same mind with him, with respect to the observance of Easter; but *Socrates* the historian says,^[3] he did send them an excommunication; which was an instance of tyrannical jurisdiction exercised over other churches. In the middle of the third century there was a dispute about rebaptizing heretics who repented and came over to the church: the African churches and bishops, as *Cyprian* and others, were for rebaptizing them, and did; but Stephen, bishop of *Rome*, violently opposed the baptism of them, and cut off all the churches in Africa for the practice of it; which is another instance of the power the bishop of *Rome* thus early usurped over other churches: though indeed it was highly resented by the eastern churches,^[4] and displays his imperious and imposing temper, as if he wanted to make himself a bishop of bishops.^[5]

In the beginning of the third century, in *Tertullian's* time, the bishop of *Rome* had the titles of *Pontifex Maximus*, and of *Episcopus Episcoporum*.^[6] Julius I in the fourth century, took upon him to reprove some eastern bishops for deposing others, and ordered the restitution of them; though they despised his reproofs, and even deposed him for first communing with *Athanasius* and others.^[7] *Platina* says,^[8] that he reproved them for calling a council at Antioch, without the leave of the bishop of *Rome*; which he urged, could not be done without his authority, seeing the church of *Rome* had the preeminence over the rest of the churches: but the same author says, they confuted his claim with a sneer. *Adolphus Lampe*, in his Ecclesiastical History,^[9] observes, that it is thought that Mark, sitting in the Roman chair, A. D. 335 first arrogated to himself the title of universal bishop: and indeed if the letters of *Athanasius* and the Egyptian bishops to him,^[10] and his to them, are genuine, they both gave the title to him, and he took it to himself; their letter to him runs thus, " To the reverend Mark, pope of the holy Roman and apostolic See, and of the universal church." And his to them begins thus, "To the venerable brethren *Athanasius*, and all the bishops in Egypt, Mark, the bishop of the holy Roman and apostolic See, and of the universal church." And in the former, the see of *Rome* is called the *mother* and head of all churches.

Though historians generally agree, that the title of universal bishop was given by *Phocas* to *Boniface* III in the year 606, at the beginning of the seventh century, yet an anonymous writer,^[11]

in an essay an scripture prophecy, p.104 published in 1724, quotes from *Sigonius Deoccid Imper.* p.106, and 314, two passages, showing, that *Valentinian*, the third emperor of the west, in A. D. 445 and *Marcion*, emperor of the east, in A. D. 450 assigned something like an universal power to pope Leo I which was more than a century and a half before the times of *Phocas*. The title of universal bishop might not be established by authority of the emperor until his time, yet pretensions were made to it, and it was claimed by the bishops of *Rome* before, and in some instances given. And though pope Gregory I in the sixth century, a little before the time of *Phocas*, condemned *John* of *Constantinople* as antichrist, for taking upon him the title of Oecumenical bishop, because it entrenched upon his own power and authority; yet this humble pope, who called himself *servus servorum*, asserted, that the apostolic see, meaning the see of *Rome*, was the head of all the churches; and vehemently inveighed against the emperor, for taking it to himself.[\[12\]](#) And it is certain that this pope claimed a jurisdiction over the churches in Britain, since he appointed his legate, *Augustine* the monk, metropolitan over the whole island;[\[13\]](#) who endeavoured to bring the British bishops and churches to a conformity to the Roman church, and the rites of it, and to acknowledge the pope's authority. This was before the time of pope *Boniface* the third, who obtained of the emperor the title of universal bishop.

The primacy of the church of *Rome* to other churches, with respect to rank and order, which made way for primacy of power, was very early asserted, claimed, and allowed. Several sayings of the ancient writers much contributed to it: from the grandeur and magnificence of the city of *Rome*, being the metropolis of the empire, an argument was very early used to a superior regard to the church in it. *Iren—us*,[\[14\]](#) who lived in the second century, observes, that "to this church (the Roman church) every church should convene (or join in communion;) that is, those everywhere who are believers; *propter potentiorem principalitatem*; in which always by them who are, everywhere is preserved that tradition which is from the apostles." And *Cyprian*,[\[15\]](#) in the middle of the third century, calls it the chair of Peter, and the principal church, from whence the sacerdotal unity arises. *Jerom*,[\[16\]](#) in the fourth century, writing to pope *Damasus*, calls him *his blessedness*, and the chair of *Rome*, the chair of Peter: and *Optatus*,[\[17\]](#) in the same century, says, the Roman church is the episcopal chair, first conferred on Peter, in which he sat the head of all the apostles, and the chair of Peter: and earlier in this century the council of *Nice* was held, the sixth canon of which gave equal power to the bishop of *Rome*, over the bishops of his province, as the bishop of *Alexandria* had by custom; and by the third canon of the council at *Constantinople*, A. D. 381, 382, the bishop of *Constantinople* had the prerogative of honor after the bishop of *Rome*, because *Constantinople* was *New Rome*:[\[18\]](#) and this was confirmed by *Justinian* the emperor, in the sixth century, who ordained, that the pope of *Rome* should have the first seat, and after him the archbishop of *Constantinople*. And what served to strengthen the primacy of the church of *Rome*, and increase its power, and which the bishops of it failed not to avail themselves of, was the bringing of causes in difference between other bishops and their churches to them, either to have their advice or to be decided by them: and indeed this was done by the order of *Constantine* himself, who enjoined, that the causes of contending bishops should be brought to the bishop of *Rome* and his colleagues, and there decided:[\[19\]](#) and this was advised to by some eminent doctors of the church, particularly *Ambrose*, who calls the Roman church the head of the whole Roman world or empire:[\[20\]](#) and advised *Theophilus*, that what was committed to him by the synod at *Capna*, should be referred by him to the priest of the Roman church (the pontiff).[\[21\]](#) And it is no wonder that *Leo I* in the fifth century, should require such respect and obedience to himself, who claimed the apostolical and episcopal dignity of Peter;[\[22\]](#) and subjection to the see of *Rome*, as to

the blessed apostle Peter:[\[23\]](#) yea, he required of *Theodosius* the emperor himself, that the writings of the bishop of *Constantinople* might be sent to him; testifying that he embraced the true doctrine, and condemned those that dissented from it.[\[24\]](#) In his epistle to the bishop of Thessalonica,[\[25\]](#) he asserts his care of all the churches, and the see of *Rome* to be the apostolic see; and ordered him, that all matters of difference should be brought to him to decide, according to the pleasure of God. He ordered the African heretics who repented, to send the account of their repentance and faith to him, that it might appear they were catholic.[\[26\]](#) He also assumed a power of calling general councils:[\[27\]](#) and termed Peter's seat, or the see of *Rome*, universal;[\[28\]](#) and Peter the *Praesul* of the see of *Rome*, and the primate of all bishops.[\[29\]](#) In the beginning of the fifth century, during the sixth council at *Carthage*, which lasted six years, the popes *Zozimus*, *Boniface I* and *Caelestinus I* strove with all their might and main to get some sort of primacy and monarchy over the other bishops, though they failed in their attempt.[\[30\]](#)

The care of the church of Christ at first, with respect both to things temporal and spiritual, lay wholly and entirely in the hands of the apostles; but finding the temporal affairs of the church too burdensome to them, they directed it to choose a sort of officers called Deacons, to take care of them, Acts 4:1-6 and so there were two offices, and two only, as before observed, in the primitive apostolic churches, (Phil. 1:1) but they were soon increased, by distinguishing bishops and presbyters, making the latter to be a distinct office from and subservient to the former: and afterwards offices became numerous; and before the bishop of *Rome* had the title of universal bishop by authority; and were the same which now constitute the hierarchy of the church of *Rome*, very few excepted; for even in the third century the following orders are ascribed to *Caius* bishop of *Rome*, as of his appointment, and as degrees to a bishoprick; first a door-keeper, then a reader, then an exorcist, an acolyte, a subdeacon, a deacon, and a presbyter, and then a bishop:[\[31\]](#) nor is it improbable that such orders and offices obtained as early, since *Cyprian*, in the same century makes mention of an acolyte often,[\[32\]](#) and of readers; of *Aurelius* a reader, and of *Saturnus* a reader,[\[33\]](#) and of *Optatus* a subdeacon, and of exorcists:[\[34\]](#) and *Cornelius* bishop of *Rome*, who lived about the same time *Cyprian* did, writing to *Fabius* bishop of *Antioch*, concerning *Novatus*, says, That in the catholic church were but one bishop, forty-four presbyters, seven deacons, and as many subdeacons, forty-two acolytes, exorcists and readers, with door-keepers, fifty-two.[\[35\]](#) All these are mentioned together, excepting acolytes, by *Epiphanius* in the fourth century.[\[36\]](#) And *Eusebius* [\[37\]](#) observes, that in the persecution under *Dioclesian*, the prisons were filled with bishops, presbyters, deacons, readers and exorcists: that in the council of *Nice* there were bishops, presbyters, deacons and acolytes. And *Jerom*[\[38\]](#) in the same century speaks of a reader, an acolyte, and a psalm singer: and likewise *Ambrose*,[\[39\]](#) speaking of the qualifications for different offices, one, he says, is fit to read distinctly; another is more agreeable for singing psalms; another for exorcising evil spirits; and another to take the care of the vestry: all which, he says, the priest should look after, and what every one is fit for, appoint him to that office. *Sozomen*[\[40\]](#) speaks of an archdeacon in the church of *Alexandria*, whose office it was to read the Holy Bible; and *Optatus* calls *Caecilianus* an archdeacon:[\[41\]](#) and in Persia, *Sozomen* says,[\[42\]](#) *Simeon* was archbishop of *Selucia* and *Clesiphon*, famous cities in it; and there were patriarchs appointed over provinces by the synod at *Constantinople*, as *Socrates* relates;[\[43\]](#) and both he[\[44\]](#) and *Sozomen*[\[45\]](#) make mention of Peter, an archpresbyter of *Alexandria*, and of Timothy an archdeacon there, in the fifth century; so that long before Popery arrived to its height, there was much the same popish hierarchy as now: that of Cardinals seems to be the only exception, yet there were of the name, though not of the same office and dignity.

In the fourth century, monkery, celibacy and virginity came much into vogue; the monastic life was much commended in this age by *Basil* and his father, as may be seen in his works. The first of these Monks, *Anchorites* and *Eremites*, is said to be one Paul of *Thebes*, as *Jerom* relates;[\[46\]](#) and their disciples, in less than half an age, were so multiplied, that the deserts of *Egypt* and *Arabia* were full of them. These indeed were men of more strict and religious lives than those of later ages, who go by the name of monks. Even before the time of *Constantine*, and in it, there were societies of virgins, professing perpetual virginity, which he had a great regard unto;[\[47\]](#) and such *Helena* found at or near *Jerusalem*, in whose company she took great pleasure, and ministered unto them.[\[48\]](#) *Arius* is said to infect with the poison of his doctrine seven hundred virgins professing virginity.[\[49\]](#) And *Ambrose* says, the virgins came to *Milan* from various parts, even from the furthest parts of *Mauritania*, to be consecrated and veiled:[\[50\]](#) so early were monasteries and nunneries set up, at least the foundation of such institutions were so early laid, and the forms, rules, rites and ceremonies of them prescribed, which now make so great a figure in Popery.

Popery may be considered as a system of Antichristian doctrines and practices, some of the principal of which the apostle Paul has prophetically given notice of in a few words, 1 Timothy 4:1-3. *Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgivings of them which believe and know the truth.* All which are notorious doctrines and practices of the Papists, and are here plainly pointed at; and which, with others, are a branch of the mystery of iniquity which began to work in the times of the apostles, and more manifestly appeared soon after their departure. Very remarkable are the words of *Hegesippus*, an ancient historian,[\[51\]](#) testifying, that "till the times of *Trajan* (A. D. 100.) the church continued a virgin pure and incorrupt; —but after the sacred company of the apostles ended their lives by various kinds of death,—then the conspiracy of impious error began to take place, through the deceit of false teachers." For this branch of popery, or mystery of iniquity, takes its rise from the heresies of false teachers of the first ages, and from unguarded expressions and errors of those who have been called fathers of the church; and who, in other points, were counted sound and orthodox; and which, by degrees, grew up to that enormous mass of Antichristian doctrines which are the peculiars of popery; and, to begin with those the apostle foretold in the above quoted passage.

Worshipping of angels and praying to saints departed; which are meant by the doctrines of devils, or demons, as Mr. Mede thinks, such as the heathens reckoned a sort of mediators between God and men; as the papists esteem angels to be mediators of intercession, though not of redemption; and therefore invoke them to intercede for them; and the papists are they who are meant in Revelation 9:20, said to worship devils, and idols of gold and silver, &c. And this doctrine of worshipping demons or angels, was embraced by a few, even in the times of the apostles; for the apostle Paul warns the Colossians, that no *man* *beguiled them in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels* (Col. 2:18). This was a tenet of *Simon Magus*, the father of heresies, who held, that the world was made by angels: and this is ascribed to him by *Tertullian*.[\[52\]](#) And *Theodoret* reckons it as the notion of *Caspocrates*, *Epiphanes*, *Prodicus*, and the *Caiani*;[\[53\]](#) and in his exposition of Colossians 2:18 he says, that this evil notion continued long in *Phrygia* and *Pisidia* wherefore the synod which met at *Laodicea*, the metropolis of *Phrygia*, forbade by a law to

pray to angels; and he says, that to his time might be seen among the people of those countries, and those that bordered upon them, the oratories of *St. Michael*.

In the latter end of the second century lived the heretics *Angelica*, so called because they worshipped angels, as says *Isidore*.^[54] *Origen*, who lived about the same time, and in the beginning of the third century, gives a form of prayer to angels: "Come, O angel, receive one in word converted from his former error, from the doctrine of devils, from iniquity, speaking highly; and receiving him as a good physician, cherish and instruct him; he is a little one, he is born today, an old man growing young again; and receive, retribution to him, the baptism of the second regeneration; and call to thee other companions of thy ministry, that all ye equally may instruct in the faith, who were sometimes deceived."^[55] *Austin* in the fourth century, and beginning of the fifth, seems to favour the same: quoting *Philippians* 4:6 he observes,^[56] requests are not to be understood "as made known to God, who knows them before they were made, but as made known by us to God through patience; or perhaps also, they are made known by angels, who are with God, that they might in some sort offer them to God; and consult concerning them, and that they might know what was to be fulfilled; he commanding, as they ought to know, and bring it to us, either openly or secretly;" for which he quotes, *Tobit* 12:12. *The angel said to the man, When thou and Sarah prayest, I offer up your prayer in the sight of the love of God.*

Praying to saints was used as early; so *Origen* directs a prayer to *Job*, in this manner; "O blessed *Job*, living for ever with God, abiding in the presence of the king and lord; pray for us miserable ones, that also the terrible majesty of God may protect us in all tribulations and deliver us from all the oppressions of the wicked one, and number us with the just, and write us with them who are saved, and make us rest with them in his kingdom, where we may perpetually magnify him with the saints."^[57] And elsewhere,^[58] "I think, says he, that all the fathers who died before us, fight with us and help us by their prayers;" and which he confirms by a Doctor of the church senior to him. *Cyprian*, in the third century, hints the same, when he says,^[59] "If any of us go first from hence, through the celerity of time divine worthiness, let our love persevere with God for our brethren and sisters; and let not our prayer for the mercy of the father cease." So *Basil*, in the fourth century, in his homily on the forty martyrs, has these words; "Here is help prepared for Christians, namely, the church of Martyrs, the army of the triumphants, the chorus of those that praise God: often have ye used means, often have ye labored to find one praying for you: there are forty sending forth one voice of prayer; where two or three are met together, &c. but where there are forty, who can doubt of the presence of God; he who is pressed with any trouble, let him flee to them; he that rejoices, let him recur to them; the one to be delivered from evils, the other to continue in prosperity." In the same century there are instances of *Nazianzen* praying to *Cyprian*, and to *Basil* dead,^[60] and particularly to the virgin *Mary* very early was prayer made, and her intercession implored. *Iranus*,^[61] in the second century, calls the virgin *Mary* the advocate of the virgin *Eve*, which at best is an unguarded expression. *Athanasius*, in the fourth century puts up a prayer to her in this manner,^[62] "Hear, O daughter of *David* and *Abraham*; incline thine ear to our prayers, and do not forget thy people and us, who are of the family and house of thy father;—unto thee we cry, remember us most holy virgin, who hast remained a virgin from the birth, and reward us for those speeches with great gifts from the riches of thy grace—gift thou art full of—Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee! intercede for us, dame, mistress, queen, and mother of God." And *Nazianzen* makes mention of one *Justina*, a virgin, in the times of *Cyprian*, who was delivered from a temptation by applying to the virgin *Mary*.^[63] *Epiphanius*^[64] speaks of some who made a God of

her, and of some in Arabia who offered cakes to her, and celebrated sacred things in her name: and in the fifth century, *Petrus Gnaph—us*, or the fuller, bishop of Antioch, ordered that the mother of God should be named in every prayer.[\[65\]](#)

Another tenet, and which is a popish one, the apostle Paul foretold would be broached in future time, is forbidding to marry, (1 Tim. 4:3) so antichrist, as described by the prophet Daniel, is said not to regard the desire of women, (Dan. 11:37). This was a tenet of the ancient heretics; this branch of the mystery of iniquity soon began to operate among them, and was held by them; by the *Ebionites*, who, as *Epiphanius* says,[\[66\]](#) magnified virginity, and by the *Saturnalians*, who said to marry and beget children was of the devil;[\[67\]](#) and that matrimony was a doctrine of the devil;[\[68\]](#) and by the *Severians*, who said, that a woman is the work of Satan[\[69\]](#) and by the *Marcionites*, who condemned marriage as an evil and unchaste business; and from these sprung the *Encretites*, at the head of whom was *Tatian*, who, as those before called marriages, corruptions and fornications:[\[70\]](#) and if the canons ascribed to the apostles are theirs, persons holding such a tenet were in their days, since the 51st canon runs thus; "If any bishop, presbyter, or deacon, or whole of the sacerdotal list, abstain from marriage, flesh and wine, not for exercise, but through abomination of them, forgetting that all things are very good, and that God made man male and female; but blaspheming, accuses the workmanship of God, either let him be so corrected (amended or set right); or be deposed, and cast out of the church; and so if a layman." The notion of celibacy, and in disfavor of marriage, began to obtain early among those who were counted orthodox. *Dionysius*, bishop of *Athens*, supposed to be the same as in Acts 17:34, is said to write an epistle to the *Gnossians*, still extant,[\[71\]](#) in which he admonishes *Pinytus*, their bishop, not to impose as necessary the yoke of chastity or continence upon the brethren; but to consider the infirmity which is in most men; which supposes that such a yoke was attempted to be laid. *Athenagoras*, in the second century, seems to speak too highly of celibacy; "you will find many of us, says he,[\[72\]](#) of both sexes, who are become old and are unmarried in hope of having more communion with God." And a little after, he speaks severely against second marriages, condemning them as adultery, and as a transgression of the law of God. In the third century, not only second marriages were spoken against by *Tertullian*, *Origen*, and *Cyprian*, but marriage itself was slightly spoken of, and continence, celibacy and virginity were highly extolled. *Tertullian* says,[\[73\]](#) "he preferred continence and virginity to marriage, though not forbid; but gave the preference to a fuller holiness." *Origen* calls virginity the work of perfection[\[74\]](#) and *Cyprian* commends chastity (or the single life) as a state of angelic quality,[\[75\]](#) and "virginity, he says,[\[76\]](#) equals itself to angels; yea, if ye diligently examine it, it exceeds, while it strives with the flesh it carries off a victory against nature, which angels have not and again,[\[77\]](#) though marriage is good and instituted by God, yet continence is better, and virginity more excellent, which neither necessity nor command compel to, but the choice of perfection persuades to it." I have observed already how the monastic life, celibacy and virginity, were in great vogue in the fourth century; in the former part of which the council of *Nice* was held, in which it was moved by some bishops, that those who were married before they were in holy orders, should not cohabit with their wives; upon which *Paphnutius*, a confessor, rose up and vehemently opposed it, as putting an heavy burden upon them; alleging, that all had not such strict continence, that marriage was honourable, and that to make such a rule might be an occasion of scandal to them and to their wives; and that it was sufficient to observe the *ancient tradition* of the church, that those who came into holy orders unmarried, should not marry afterwards; but that those who were married before, should not be separated from their wives; to which the synod assented:[\[78\]](#) but then it should be observed, that it had been an *ancient tradition* that men in holy orders should not marry, if not

married before they came into them. *Athanasius*, in the same century, says^[79] many things in praise of virginity and continence, "O virginity, never failing opulence: O virginity, a never fading crown. O virginity, the temple of God and the dwelling place of the holy Spirit. O virginity, a precious pearl, to many inconspicuous, and found by a few only. O continence, hated by many, but known and respected by the worthy ones: O continence, which makes death and hell to flee, and which is possessed by immortality; O continence, the joy of the prophets, and the boast of the apostles: O continence, the life of angels, and the crown of saints; blessed is he that retaineth thee." *Jerom* has many things in his writings, too numerous to transcribe, in favour of virginity and celibacy, and to the discouragement of marriage. And *Austin*,^[80] though he in some places speaks well of marriage, yet he was of the mind, that virgins devoted to holiness have more merit with God than believers who are married; opposing *Jovinian*, who denied it. It is easy to observe, how much these notions got ground, and monkery obtained, and was established in the fifth and sixth centuries before the man of sin was at his height.

Another popish tenet, foretold by the apostle Paul as a part of the apostasy which would hereafter come upon, is abstaining from meats, (1 Tim. 4:3) and observing fasts, such as the *Quadragesima* or Lent, &c. and which quickly took place: the above mentioned ancient heretics, the *Saturnalians*, *Ebionites*, *Gnostics*, *Marcionites*, and *Encretites*, who were against marriage, were also for abstinence from meats; as appears from *Iren—us*, *Clemens*, *Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Eusebius*, *Epiphanius*, and *Theodoret*, in the places before referred to. The *Gnostics* observed the fourth and fifth days of the week as fast days; and who knew, as *Clemens* of *Alexandria* says,^[81] the enigmatical meaning of them, the one being called the day of *Mercury*; and the other the day of *Venus*; and the *Montanists* are said to be the first that instituted laws concerning fasting, and who laid the foundation for many Antichristian practices. *Quadragesima*, or Lent, and fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, very early obtained in the church. The former was differently observed by the ancients. *Iren—us*, in the second century, says,^[82] there was a dispute about Easter day, and of the manner of the fast itself, that is, which was before it; some thought they must fast one day, others two, others more, some forty hours, reckoning a night and day for a day, and this difference was not in this present age, but long before. *Socrates* relates,^[83] that the fast before Easter was differently kept; they at *Rome* fasted three weeks before it, excepting the sabbath, (Saturday) and the Lord's day; and they in *Illyria* and in all *Greece* and in *Alexandria*, fasted six weeks before it; and that, they called *Quadragesima*. Others began the fast seven weeks before Easter, and fasted three weeks only, and but five days in a week, nevertheless they called this *Quadragesima* but, says the historian, to me it seems wonderful that they should disagree about the number of days, and yet call it by the same name: and to the same purpose *Sozomen* says,^[84] "that *Quadragesima*, in which in the people fast, some count it six weeks, as the *Illyrians* and the western nations, all *Lybia* and *Egypt*, with *Palestine*; some seven, as at *Constantinople*, and in all the provinces round about unto *Phoenicia*; some, out of these six or seven weeks, fast three weeks by intervals; others only three weeks together before the feast; some only two, as the *Montanists*." And *Socrates* the historian relates,^[85] that "the ancients were not only found to differ about the number of days on which they fasted, but about the food also they abstained from; some abstained from animals entirely, others of animals only eat fish, some with fishes eat fowl also, because they are of the water, according to *Moses*; some abstained from fruits of trees, and from eggs; some eat bread only, and others not that." And *Epiphanius* observes,^[86] that the customs of the church were various, "some abstained from all flesh, beasts, fowls and fishes, and from eggs and cheese; some from beasts only, but ate fowls and the rest; some abstained from fowls and used eggs and fishes; others did not eat

eggs; and others fishes only; some abstained from fishes, but ate cheese; others did not make use of cheese; others, moreover, abstained from bread; and others abstained from the hard fruits of trees, and from nuts, and from things boiled." Wednesdays and Fridays were kept as fast days in *Tertullian's* time, by the Catholics, whom he calls *Psychici*,[\[87\]](#) he being himself then a *Montanist*. And *Origen*[\[88\]](#) speaks of those days, and of Lent, as solemn fasts in his time. The canons, commonly called the *canons of the apostles*, were, according to bishop *Beveridge*,[\[89\]](#) collected before the end of the third century, and in them is one which runs thus, can. 60. "If any bishop, or presbyter, or deacon, or reader, or singer, does not fast on the holy *Quadragesima* of Easter, nor on the fourth day (of the week,) nor on the preparation (to the sabbath, Saturday, which preparation was on Friday,) except he is hindered through bodily weakness, let him be deposed; if a layman, let him be separated." In the fourth century, *Jerom* speaks of keeping Lent as an apostolical tradition; "We fast one *Quadragesima*, according to the tradition of the apostles, in the whole year, at the time agreeable to us; they (the *Montanists*) make three *Quadragesimas* in a year, as if three Saviours suffered."[\[90\]](#) And in another place,[\[91\]](#) he says, "The Lord himself, the true *Jonah*, being sent to preach the gospel, fasted forty days, and leaving us an inheritance of fasting, prepared our souls for the eating of his body under this number." And elsewhere[\[92\]](#) he observes, "should any say, if it is not lawful to observe days and months, and times and years, we must be guilty of a like crime in observing the fourth day of the week, the preparation, and the Lord's day, and the fast of *Quadragesima*, and the feast of Easter, and the joy of Pentecost:" To which he makes answer. *Austin* likewise not only mentions the fast of forty days, but thus reasons for it:[\[93\]](#) "The *Quadragesima* of fasts has indeed authority both in the ancient books (the old testament,) from the fastings of Moses and Elias; and out of the gospel, because the Lord fasted so many days showing that the gospel does not dissent from the law and the prophets." And a little after, "In what part of the year could the observation of the *Quadragesima* be fixed more fitly, than near and contiguous to the passion of the Lord?" *Ambrose*, in the same century, has these words, "It is good at all times to fast, but it is better to fast with Christ in *Quadragesima* (or Lent); for this *Quadragesima* the Lord has consecrated to us by his own fasting." And in another place, "The Lord has so ordained, that as in his passion, and the fasts of *Quadragesima*, we should sorrow; so in his resurrection, and in the feasts of *Quinquagesima*, (or Pentecost,) we should rejoice."[\[94\]](#)

Popish festivals were observed very early, long before the Pope of *Rome* arrived to the height of his ambition. The feast of Easter was kept in the second century, as the controversy between *Anicetus* and *Polycarp*, and between *Victor* and the Asiatic churches, shows; yea in the fifth century, if *Polycrates*[\[95\]](#) is to be credited, who says, that, "Philip the apostle who died at *Herapolis*, and John at *Ephesus*, *Polycarp* bishop of *Smyrna*, *Thraseas* of *Eumenia*, *Sagaris*, who died at *Laodicea*, *Papyrius* and *Melito*, all kept Easter on the 14th day of the month; and the bishops of *Rome*, before *Victor*; as well as he, kept it on the Lord's day following; so *Anicetus*, *Pius*, *Hyginus*, *Telesphorus*, *Xytus* and *Soter*." And so did *Iren—us* in France; and thus it continued to be observed by the order of *Constantine*.[\[96\]](#) The vigils of the Passover, or Easter-eve, were very calmly observed; *Eusebius*[\[97\]](#) makes mention thereof as in the times of *Narcissus*, patriarch of Jerusalem, in the second century; and *Tertullian*[\[98\]](#) speaks of the whole night preceding Easter day, as very solemn; and *Austin*, in the fourth century, mentions Easter-eve[\[99\]](#) as solemn likewise. Pentecost was observed as early as Easter, and is spoken of along with it by *Tertullian*,[\[100\]](#) by *Origen*,[\[101\]](#) and by *Jerom*;[\[102\]](#) and *Ambrose* says,[\[103\]](#) "Let us rejoice on this holy day as at Easter; on both days there is the same and the like solemnity; at Easter all the Gentiles used to be baptized, and at Pentecost the apostles were baptized," that is, with the holy Ghost.

Christmas-day, or Christ's birth-day, was celebrated in the second century, on the 8th of the calends of January; as appears from the paschal epistle of *Theophilus*.^[104] In the times of *Dioclesian*, and before the council at Nice, *Anthimas*, bishop of *Nicomedia*, with some thousands, were burnt, by fire being set to the place where they were assembled to keep the feast of Christ's birthday.^[105] *Basil*, in the fourth century, has a sermon upon it, in which he calls it *Theophania*, the appearance of God, and says, "Let us celebrate time solemnities of a saved world, the birth-day of mankind." *Ambrose* has several sermons upon it; and in one of them, sermon ten says, "the vulgar used to call the Lord's birth-day the new sun: and so *Chrysostom* in the fifth century."

The feast of the Annunciation of the virgin Mary was observed by time ancients. *Gregory* of *Neoc—sarca*, called *Thaumaturgus*, in the third century, has three sermons on the annunciation, and calls it a festival. It is unmentioned by^[106] *Athanasius* in the fourth century, concerning which he says, "This is one of the feasts of the Lord, and is quite venerable; so that according to the order of things which are preached in the gospel of Christ, it ought to be accounted an holy day, since in it we treat concerning the descent of the Son of God from heaven." Feasts kept in memory of the martyrs, we read of still more early. *Origen*, in the latter end of the second century, says,^[107] "We do memory to the saints, our parents and friends, who die in the faith;—we celebrate the religious with the priests, calling together the faithful with the clergy, inviting the needy and the poor, the fatherless and the widow, filling them with food, that our festivals may be done to the memory of rest to the deceased, whose memory we celebrate." So *Tertullian*, in the beginning of the third century affirms,^[108] "We make oblations for the dead, and for their anniversary birth-days." And *Cyprian*, in the middle of it, says of some dead,^[109] "The days on which they depart are registered by us, that we may celebrate their memories among the memories of the martyrs." And even in a synod^[110] in his time, notice is taken "of sacrifices and offerings made for persons after death." In the fourth century it was usual in all churches to observe them. *Eusebius*^[111] relates, that by the order of *Constantine*, governors of provinces, and those under them, not only observed the Lord's day, but honored the feast days of the martyrs; also the ecclesiastical festivities. *Sozomen* reports,^[112] that the *Alexandrians* kept with pomp a feast on the day that Peter their bishop was martyred; and *Theodoret*,^[113] that the church at *Antioch* kept an annual feast to the honour of the martyrs *Juventinus* and *Maximinus*. *Ambrose* has a sermon for the saints throughout the year, and makes mention of the feasts of the apostles Peter and Paul;^[114] and in one place he says,^[115] "We forget the birth-days of the dead, but the day on which they die we renew with great solemnity;" and again, "Whose life we know not, their deaths we celebrate." And *Jerom* observes,^[116] that according to the variety of countries, different times are appointed in honor of the martyrs.

In the fourth century the relics of the martyrs came much in vogue. *Sozomen*^[117] makes mention of the relics of many saints and martyrs being found, and removed, and laid up with great honour and veneration. And so *Ambrose*,^[118] of the bodies of St. *Gervasius* and *Protesius*, in a letter to his sister *Marcellina*, in which he gives an account of the finding and translation of them, and miracles done; and concludes, "Let us lay up the holy relics, and carry them into temples worthy of them, and celebrate the whole day with true devotion." In the sixth century, part of the wood of the cross on which Christ was crucified was found, and the relics of the martyr *Sergius*, as *Evagrius* relates.^[119] And in the fourth and following centuries, temples were dedicated to the saints, and images placed in them, with wax candles and lamps burning.

The popish notions of a *Limbus patrum*, of purgatory and praying for the dead, were embraced long before the pope of Rome was declared an universal bishop. *Clemens* of *Alexandria* in the second century, had a notion, that before Christ came none were saved, but those that lived piously were in hell; and Christ, when he came went thither, and preached to them, and so did his apostles; and thereby they were converted and saved;[\[120\]](#) and of the place of the saints after death, *Tertullian* seems to have such a notion, that they were not in heavenly bliss; "the bosom of Abraham, he says,[\[121\]](#) is not celestial, yet higher than hell; and in the mean while affords refreshment to the souls of the righteous, until the consummation of all things at the resurrection." And a little after he says, "The bosom of Abraham is some temporal receptacle of believing souls." Purgatory was the opinion of *Origen* in the third century; he was the first, as *Theophilus Gale* says,[\[122\]](#) that introduced purgatory from the *Platonic* school at *Alexandria* into the church of God, and gave a great advance to the whole system of papism or antichristianism. "I think, says he,[\[123\]](#) the saints, when they depart out of this life, remain in some place the divine scripture calls paradise; and as in some place of learning, an *auditorium*, if I may so say, or a school of souls, in which they may be taught of all those things they have seen on earth." And in some places he gives plain hints of purgatory; "it is certain, says he,[\[124\]](#) there remains a fire, which is prepared for sinners, and we shall come to that fire, in which the fire will prove every one's work, what it is; and as I think we must all come to the fire, even if any one is a Paul or a Peter, yet he must come to the fire; but such shall hear, *though thou passest through the fire, the flame shall not burn thee*; but if any one, like me, is a sinner, he shall come indeed to the fire, as Peter and Paul, but he shall not so pass through as Peter and Paul." In another place he says,[\[125\]](#) "Whose sin is such that it is neither forgiven in the present world, nor in that to come; he passes on in his uncleanness one and another week, and at the beginning of the third week he is purged from his uncleanness." And in another work of his,[\[126\]](#) he has these words, "To every one of these who have need of punishment by this fire, and together also of healing, it burns, but does not burn them out, who have no matter to be consumed by fire; but it burns and burns them out, who build on a building of actions, words and thoughts, figuratively called *wood, hay, and stubble*." And he has various hints of this kind in other parts of his writings. *Lactantius* in the fourth century, says,[\[127\]](#) "When God shall judge the righteous, he shall also try them by fire: them whose sins, either in weight or in number, have prevailed, they shall be touched by the fire, and shall be burnt; but those whose righteousness and virtue are in full maturity; they shall nor perceive the fire." And a little after, "Let no one think, that souls are immediately judged; after death they are all detained in one common prison, until the time comes, that the great judge shall make trial of the merits of men." *Jerom* expresses his faith in this point, thus;[\[128\]](#) "As we believe the eternal torments of the devil, and of all deniers and ungodly persons; so we believe a moderate sentence of the judge, mixed with clemency, on sinners and ungodly persons, and yet Christians, whose works are to be proved and purged by fire." *Epiphanius*, in the same century, delivers the faith of Christians in this manner,[\[129\]](#) "We believe that Christ came to give pardon to these who of old knew him, and did not stray from his deity, thought for errors were detained in hell; to them who were then in the world, by repentance; to them that were in hell, by mercy and salvation." And he was of opinion, that prayers made for the dead profited them, though they did not cut off all fault.[\[130\]](#) And of the same opinion was *Austin*,[\[131\]](#) who says, "It is not to be denied, that the souls of the dead are relieved by the piety of the living; since for them the sacrifice of the mediator is offered, or alms are made in the church; but these are profitable to them, who when they lived merited, that they might be profitable to them afterwards." More of this may be read in another tract[\[132\]](#) of his. Elsewhere he says,[\[133\]](#) "In the old saints the Holy Spirit, was not so, as he is now in believers because when they went out of the world, they were in hell, and it

is incongruous that he who goes from hence, having the Spirit of God, should be held in hell." And he seems in one place,[\[134\]](#) to grant a purgatory; "That some such thing is done after this life, is not incredible; and whether it is so may be enquired; that some believers are either found or hid by a certain purgatory-fire, how much the more or less they have loved perishing goods, so much the slower or sooner they are saved." *Gregory Nyssene* says of children dying in infancy,[\[135\]](#) "What shall we think of such, who so die? shall the soul see the judge? shall it be presented with others before the tribunal? shall it undergo the judgment of those who have lived? shall it receive a reward according to merit? or be purged with fire according to the words of the gospel? or be refreshed with the new of blessing?" *Boetius*, in the sixth century, is express for purgatory; his words are, "Are there no punishments after you leave the body dead? The answer is, yea and great ones truly; some are exercised, I think, with a severe punishment, and others with a mild purgatory."[\[136\]](#) *Gregory* I defended the opinion of purgatory in the same century.

The popish notion of transubstantiation had its rise from the old heretics, and was cherished and strengthened by the unguarded expressions and erroneous sentiments of the ancient fathers, even before the man of sin arrived to his manhood. *Mark*, the heretic, in the second century, would have it thought that he changed the wine into blood by invocation upon it,[\[137\]](#) just as a popish priest would be thought by pronouncing some words to change the bread into the body, and the wine into the blood of Christ. *Iren—us*,[\[138\]](#) in the same century, has an expression which has too favourable an aspect on this very absurd notion; "when the cup mixed, and the bread broken, perceive the word of God, they become the Eucharist of the blood and body of Christ." In the third century, the phrases of offering the sacrifice of Christ, and of sanctifying the cup by the priest, were used; as by *Tertullian*,[\[139\]](#) who calls the administration of the supper, offering the sacrifice; and by *Cyprian*,[\[140\]](#) who speaks of the Lord's sacrifice being celebrated by a lawful sanctification, and of the priest's sanctifying the cup; and says, that "the priest officiates in the room of Christ, and imitates that which Christ did, and then offers up a true and full sacrifice in the church to God the Father." In the fourth century several unguarded expressions were used, as by *Athanasius*,[\[141\]](#) that there was nothing of the flesh and blood of Christ to be found in the world, but what was daily spiritually made by the hands of priests upon the altar; and by *Nazianzen*,[\[142\]](#) who speaks of some defiling the altars with blood, which have their name from time most pure and *unbloody sacrifice*: and *Ambrose* speaks often of celebrating mass and offering the sacrifice; and he composed some prayers preparatory to it, and he produces examples to prove, that "not that in which nature has formed, but which the blessing hath consecrated, and the greater is the force of blessing than of nature, because nature itself is changed by the blessing." And after many instances of the miracles in Egypt, he observes,[\[143\]](#) that, "if human blessing could do so much, what shall we say of the divine consecration itself, where the words of the Lord the Saviour operate?" And a little after, he has these words "*this is my body*"; before the blessing of the heavenly words the species is named, after the consecration the body of Christ is signified, he calls it his own blood. Before the consecration another thing is said, after the consecration it is called blood. *Cyril of Jerusalem* says,[\[144\]](#) "The bread and the wine of the Eucharist, before the holy invocation of the Trinity are mere bread and wine; but when the invocation is made, the bread becomes the body of Christ, and the wine the blood of Christ." *Gregory Nyssene* says,[\[145\]](#) "The bread is made the body of Christ by sanctification; the bread a little before was common bread, but when the mystery has made it holy, it is *made* and called the body of Christ; so the mystical oil; so the wine, though of small worth before the blessing, after the sanctification of the Spirit, both of them work differently." A mind elsewhere,[\[146\]](#) he says, "I rightly believe that the bread sanctified by the word of God,

μεταποιεῖται, is *transmuted* into the body of God the Word; for bread was that body, potentially it was sanctified by the indwelling of the Word, which tabernacled in the flesh; thence therefore the bread transmuted in that body, passes into a divine power, by the same now also become equal.— The bread is immediately transmuted by the Word into the body, as it is said by the Word, *This is my body.*" *Chrysostom*, in the fifth century, seems to strengthen the doctrine of transubstantiation, when he says, [\[147\]](#) "Do you see the bread? Do you see the wine? do they go as the rest of the food into the privy? God forbid, that thou shouldst so think for as if wax put to the fire is assimilated to it, nothing of the substance remains; so likewise here think that the mysteries are consumed in the substance of the body." In the sixth century, *Gregory I* says, it appears that they called the Lord's supper a *viaticum*; and even in the fourth century, it used to be given to dying persons as such. *Honoratus of Verceil*, gave it to *St. Ambrose* who as soon as he received it died, carrying with him the good *viaticum*, as *Paulinus* in his life relates. And *Ambrose* himself says, [\[148\]](#) that in his time, travelers and sailors used to carry it with them. Yea, even in the third century, it used to be sent to those who were hindered by sickness from partaking of it; there is even an instance of its being sent by a boy, and put into the mouth of a dying man, upon which he expired. [\[149\]](#)

The first instance of corruption in baptism, as to the form of it, and also as to the mode of it, was made by *Mark*, the heretic, and his followers; who made a mixture of oil and water, and poured it on the head. [\[150\]](#) And the next instance is in *Novatus*, who received baptism on a sick bed by perfusion (as the *Clinici* also did,) if he might be said to receive it, as *Cornelius*, the then bishop of *Rome* observes; [\[151\]](#) and when he recovered, and got to be made a presbyter, all the clergy and many of the people, judged it was not lawful, that such an one, who was baptized in that manner, should be admitted among the clergy; nor could such an one be a presbyter, according to the 10th canon of the council of *Neo—sarea*. An innovation with respect to the subjects began to be made in the third century, in the *African* churches, and prevailed much in the fourth, through the zeal of *Austin* in favour of original sin, and for the salvation of infants, which he thought could not be saved without it. This use of chrism, exorcism, signing with the sign of the cross, and other corruptions early introduced, have been observed in some former treatises of mine. [\[152\]](#) Thus we see that the principal things of which the popish hierarchy consists, and the chief principles and practices which are now reckoned popish ones, were held and maintained before the popes of *Rome* arrived to the full power they had long been aiming at; and which together make up what we call Popery.

THE COROLLARY

From all this is, That since it can be no objection to the doctrine of invocation of angels and saints departed, being called a popish doctrine; nor to time prohibition of marriage, and abstaining from meats, and keeping divers fasts and festivals, being called parts of popery; nor to the doctrines of purgatory and transubstantiation being popish ones, though they were severally broached and embraced ages before the pope of *Rome* was declared universal Bishop; it can be no objection to Infant Baptism being called a part and branch of popery, though it was introduced into the churches in the third and fourth centuries, and so before the Roman antichrist arrived to his highest pitch of grandeur; it being a tenet held by the Papists, as founded upon the tradition of the church; and being no more agreeable to the word of God, than the other above tenets held by them are. Truth indeed is most ancient; but error follows closely at its heels, and is nearly as ancient; so that high pretensions

to antiquity in matters of faith and worship, are no otherwise to be regarded, but as they have the concurrent evidence and testimony of the sacred scriptures; they only can be trusted to with safety.

BAPTISM: A DIVINE COMMANDMENT TO BE OBSERVED

Being A Sermon Preached At Barbican, October 9, 1765 At The Baptism Of The Reverend

Mr. Robert Carmichael, Minister Of The Gospel In Edinburgh.

The Preface

The following discourse was not designed for the press; had it, the subject of it would have been a little more enlarged upon; and, perhaps, might have appeared in a little better dress; but as the publication of it is become necessary, I chose to let it go just as it was delivered, as nearly in the very words and expressions, as my memory could assist me; the sense, I am sure, is no where departed from; that it might not be said, that any thing that was spoken is concealed, changed, or altered. The warmest solicitations of my friends would never have prevailed upon me to have made it public, being unwilling to renew the controversy about baptism unnecessarily; and being determined only to write in self-defense, when attacked, or whenever the controversy is renewed by others; for I am very sensible, that the argument on both sides is greatly exhausted, and scarce any thing new can be expected, that is serious and pertinent: but the rude attack upon the sermon in two letters in a news-paper, determined me at once to send it out into the world, as being a sufficient confutation of itself, without any remarks at all, of the lies and falsehoods, calumnies, cavils and impertinencies, with which the letters abound; whereby it will appear to every reader, how fairly that writer charges me *with railing against my brethren, and the whole Christian world*; and how injuriously he represents me, as treating all that differ from me as *fools, unlearned, ignorant of the scriptures, and unclean*. It is hard we cannot practice what we believe, and speak in vindication of our practice, without being abused, vilified and insulted in a public news-paper; is this treating us as *brethren*, as the writer of the letters, in a canting way, affects to call us? And how does this answer to the false character of *Candidus*, he assumes? I shall not let myself down so low, nor do I think it fitting and decent to go into, and carry on a religious controversy in a newspaper, and especially with so worthless a writer, and without a name. This base and cowardly way of writing, is like the Indians' manner of fighting; who set up an hideous yell, pop off their guns behind bushes and hedges, and then run away and hide themselves in the thickets. However, if the publication of this discourse should be of any service to relieve or strengthen the minds of any, with respect to their duty in the observance of the ordinance of baptism, I am content to bear the indignities of men, and shall reckon it an over-balance to all their reproaches and insults. *J. G.*

Baptism A Divine Commandment

Being about to administer the Ordinance of Baptism, before we enter upon the administration of it, I shall drop a few words on the occasion, from a passage of scripture you will find in

1 JOHN 5:3

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.

What I shall say in the following discourse, will much depend upon the sense of the word *commandments*; by which are meant, not the ten commandments, or the commandments of the moral law delivered by Moses to the children *of Israel*; which, though they are the commands of God, and to be observed by Christians under the present dispensation; since we are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ (1 Cor. 9:21); and are to be kept from a principle of love to God, for the end of the commandment is charity, or love, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned (1 Tim. 1:5); yet these commands are not easy of observation, through the weakness of the flesh, or corruption of nature; nor can they be perfectly kept by any of *Adam's* fallen race; for there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not (Eccl. 7:20); and he that offends in one point is guilty of all (Jam. 2:10); and is exposed to the curse and condemnation of the law, which runs in this tenor, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them (Gal. 3:10); hence this law in general is called a fiery law, the letter which kills, and the ministration of condemnation and death, which make it terrible to offenders; however, it may be delighted in by believers in Christ after the inward man: nor are the commandments of the ceremonial law intended, which being many and numerous, were burdensome; especially to carnal men, who were frequently ready to say concerning them, *What a weariness is it?* One of its precepts, circumcision, is called a *yoke, which*, says the apostle Peter, neither our fathers nor we were able to bear (Acts 15:10); because it bound persons to keep the whole law, which they could not do; and the whole is said to be a *yoke of bondage* (Gal. 5:1), and consequently its commandments grievous; besides this law was abrogated before the apostle *John* wrote this epistle, and its commandments were not to be kept; Christ had *abolished this law of commandments contained in ordinances*; and there is now a *disannulling* of the whole of it, because of its *weakness* and *unprofitableness* (Eph. 2:15; Heb. 7:18); rather the commandments of faith and love the apostle speaks of in chapter 3:23 may be designed; And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment: there were exhortations, injunctions and commands of Christ to his disciples, which were to be kept by them, and were not grievous. *Ye believe in God*, says he (John 14:1), *believe also in me*; and again, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you (John 8:34); but inasmuch as Christ, as lawgiver in his church, has appointed some special and peculiar laws and ordinances to be observed, and which he calls *his* commandments, he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me (John 14:21); very agreeably to our text; and after he had given his apostles a commission to preach and baptize, he adds, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you (Matthew 28:20); and whereas, among these commandments and ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper are the chief and principal, I choose to understand the text of them; [\[1\]](#) and since we are about to administer the first of these at this time, I shall confine my discourse chiefly to that, and shall attempt the following things.

I. To shew that baptism, water-baptism, is a command of God and Christ, or a divine command.

II. That being a divine command, it ought to be kept and observed.

III. The encouragement to keep it; it is the love of God, and it is a commandment not grievous.

I. The ordinance of water-baptism is a divine command. *John*, the forerunner of our Lord, was the first administrator of it, and from thence was called the *Baptist*; and he did not administer it of his own mind and will, but had a mission and commission from God to do it; *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John*; and he was sent by him, not to preach the gospel only, but to baptize; for so he himself says, he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, etc. (John 1:6, 33). Hence Christ put this question to the chief priests and elders of the Jews, the baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or of men? (Matthew 21:25, 26), this brought them into such a dilemma, that they knew not what answer to give, and chose to give none; our Lord's design by the question was to shew that *John's* baptism was of divine institution, and not human; wherefore he charges the Pharisees and Lawyers with rejecting the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him (Luke 7:30), that is, of *John*; and he elsewhere (Matthew 3:15), speaks of his baptism as a part of righteousness to be fulfilled, and was fulfilled by him. Now *John's* baptism and Christ's were, as to the substance of them, the same; *John's baptism* was allowed of and approved of by Christ, as appears from his submission to it; and the ordinance was confirmed by the order he gave to his apostles to administer it: one of *John's* disciples said to his master, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him (John 3:26); though, as is said afterwards, Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples (John 4:2); that is, they baptized by his orders; and which were renewed after his resurrection from the dead, saying, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc. (Matthew 28:19), and which orders were obeyed by his apostles, as many instances in the *Acts of the Apostles* shew; and that it was water baptism they administered, according to Christ's instructions and directions.

In matters of worship there ought to be a command for what is done; as this ordinance of baptism is a solemn act of worship, being performed *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost*. God is a jealous God, and especially with respect to the worship of him; nor should any thing be introduced into it but what he has commanded; and careful should we be hereof, lest he should say unto us, *who hath required this at your hands?* (Isa. 1:12), it is not enough that such and such things are not forbidden; for on this footing a thousand fooleries may be brought into the worship of God, which will be relented by him. When *Nadab* and *Abihu* offered strange fire to the Lord, which he commanded not, fire came down from heaven and destroyed them: we should have a precept for what we do, and that not from men, but from God; lest we incur the charge of worshipping God in vain, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matthew 15:9), and involve ourselves in the guilt of superstition, and will-worship.

Wherefore, the baptism of infants must be wrong; since there is no command of God and Christ for it; if there was any, it might be expected in the New Testament, and in that only; it is absurd to send us to the Old Testament for a command to observe a New Testament-ordinance; it is a groin

absurdity to send us so far back as to the 17th chapter of *Genesis*^[2] for a warrant for the ordinance of baptism; we might as well be lent to the first chapter of that book; for there is no more relating to that ordinance in the one than in the other. Was there a like precept for the baptism of infants under the New Testament, as there was for the circumcision of infants under the Old Testament, there could be no objection to it; but it is an absurdity of absurdities to affirm, that baptism comes in the room of circumcision; since baptism was in force and use long before circumcision was abolished; circumcision was not abolished until the death of Christ, when that, with other ceremonies, had an end in him; but baptism was administered many years before to multitudes, by *John*, by the order of Christ, and by his apostles; now where is the good sense of saying, and with what propriety can it be laid, that one thing succeeds another, as baptism circumcision, when the one, said to succeed, was in use and force long before the other teared, it is pretended it succeeded?

If there is any precept for Infant-baptism, it must be in the New Testament; there only it can be expected, but there it cannot be found; not in Matthew 19:14, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; which is no precept, but a permission, or grant, that little children might come, or be brought unto him; but for what? not for baptism; but for that for which they were brought, and which is mentioned by the evangelist in the preceding verse, *that he should put his hands on them, and pray*, or give them his blessing; as it reams it was usual in those times, and with those people, as formerly, to bring their children to persons venerable for religion and piety, to be blessed by them in this way; and such an one they might take Jesus to be, though they might not know he was the Messiah. Two other evangelists say, they were brought unto him *that he should touch them*; as he sometimes touched diseased persons when he healed them; and these children might be diseased, and brought to him to be cured of their diseases; however, not to be baptized by thrill, for he baptized none; they would rather have brought them to the disciples, had it been for such a purpose; and had it been the practice of the apostles to baptize infants, they would not have refused them; and our Lord's entire silence about Infant-baptism at this time, when there was so fair an opportunity to speak of it, and enjoin it, had it been his will, has no favorable aspect on that practice. The reason given by thus for the permission of infants to come to him, *for of such is the kingdom of heaven*, is figurative and metaphorical; and not to be understood of the infants themselves, but of such as they; of such who are comparable to them for their humble deportment, and harmless lives; or to use our Lord's words elsewhere, such who are *converted, and become at little children* (Matthew 18:2).^[3] Nor is a command for Infant-baptism contained in the commission to baptize (Matthew 28:19), Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost.

It is argued, that "since all nations are to be baptized, and infants are a part of them, then, according to the command of Christ, they are to be baptized." But it should be observed, that the commission is indeed to *teach* all nations, but not to *baptize* all nations; the antecedent to the relative *them*, is not *all nations*; the words *παντα τα εθνη*, *all nations*, are of the neuter gender; but *αυτουσ*, *them*, is of the masculine, and do not agree; the antecedent is *μαθητασ*, *disciples*, which is understood, and supposed, and contained in the word *μαθητευσατε*, *teach*, or *make disciples*; and the sense is, teach all nations, and baptize them that are taught, or are made disciples by teaching. If the above argument proves any thing, it would prove too much; and what proves too much, proves nothing: it would prove, that not only the infants of Christians, but the infants of Turks, Jews, and Pagans, should be baptized, since they are part of all nations; yea, that every individual person in the world

should be baptized, heathens, as well as Christians, and even the molt profligate and abandoned of mankind, since they are part of all nations.[\[4\]](#)

And as there is no precept for the baptism of infants, so no precedent for it in the word of God. Though there was no clear and express command for it, which yet we think is necessary, and is required in such a case; yet, if there was a precedent of any one infant being baptized, we should think ourselves obliged to pay a regard unto it; but among the many thousands baptized by *John*, by Christ, or, however, by his order, and by his apostles, not one single instance of an infant being baptized can be found. We read, indeed, of households being baptized; from whence it is argued, that there might be, and it is probable there were, infants in them, who might be baptized; but it lies upon those who are of a different mind, to prove there were any in those households. To put us upon proving a negative, that there were none there, is unfair. However, as far as a negative can be proved, we are capable of it.[\[5\]](#) There are but three families usually observed, if so many; *Lydia's*, the Jailor's, and that of *Stephanas*, if not the fame with the Jailor's, as some think. As for *Lydia's* household, or those in her house, they were *brethren*; whom, afterwards, the apostles went to see, and whom they *comforted*; and so not infants. As for the Jailor's household, they were such as were capable of hearing the word preached to them, and of believing it; for it is said, *he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house* (Acts 16:40, 34): and if any man can find any other in his house, besides *all* that were in it, he must be reckoned a very sagacious person. As for the household of *Stephanas*, (if different from the Jailor's) it is said, that *they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints* (1 Cor. 1:16; 16:15): and whether this be understood of the ministry of the word to the saints, or of the ministration of their substance to the poor, they must be adult persons, and not infants. Seeing then there is neither precept nor precedent for Infant-baptism in the word of God, of which I defy the whole world to give one tingle precedent, we cannot but condemn it as unscriptural, and unwarrantable.[\[6\]](#) I proceed,

II. To shew that the ordinance of water-baptism, being a divine command, it ought to be kept, and observed, as directed to in the word of God.

First, I shall shew, by whom it is to be kept and observed. 1. By sensible, repenting sinners. *John's* baptism was called *the baptism of repentance* (Mark 1:4); because repentance was previous to it; and the very first persons that were baptized by him, were such who were sensible of their sins, repented of them, and ingenuously confessed them; for it is said, *they were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins*; and whereas others applied to him for baptism, of whom he had no good opinion, he required of them, that they would first bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and not to think with themselves, we have Abraham to our father (Matthew 3:6-9); since such a plea would be of no avail with him; and the very first persons that were baptized after our Lord had given to his apostles the commission to baptize, were penitent ones; for under the first sermon after this, three thousand were pricked in their heart, and cried out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* To whom the apostle *Peter* gave this instruction and direction: Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38); and accordingly, on their repentance, they were baptized. 2. This command is to be kept and observed by believers in Christ; *he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved* (Mark 16:16). Faith goes before baptism, and is a pre-requisite to it; as the various instances of baptism recorded in the scriptures shew. *Philip* went down to *Samaria*, and preached Christ there to the inhabitants of it; and when they believed Philip, preaching the things

concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women (Acts 8:12).

The same minister of the word was bid to join himself to the chariot of an Eunuch, returning from *Jerusalem*, where he had been to worship, and whom he found reading a prophecy in *Isaiah*; and said unto him, *Understandest thou what thou readest?* To which he answered, *How can I, except some man should guide me?* And being taken up into the chariot with him: from that scripture, *Philip* preached Jesus to him, his word, and ordinances, as the sequel shews; for when they came to a certain water, the Eunuch laid, *See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?* And *Philip* said, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.* Otherwise not, it seems; for notwithstanding his religion and devotion, without faith in Christ, he had no right to that ordinance; He answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:36, 37); upon which profession of his faith, he was baptized. The apostle *Paul* preached the gospel at *Corinth* with success; and it is observed by the historian, that many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized (Acts 18:8). First they heard the word, then they believed in Christ, the sum and substance of the word, and upon the profession of their faith, were baptized. 3. The ordinance of water-baptism is to be attended to, and observed by such who are the disciples of Christ; it is said that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (John 4:1). First made them disciples, and then baptized them; that is, ordered his apostles to baptize them; with which his commission to them agrees, *Teach all nations, baptizing them*; make disciples, and baptize them that are so made. Now, what is it to be disciples of Christ? Such may be said to be so, who have learned to know Christ, and believe in him; who are taught to deny sinful self, righteous self, and civil self, for his sake, and to take up the cross and follow him, in the exercise of grace and in the discharge of duty: and, 4. Such as have received the Spirit of God, are proper persons to observe the ordinance of baptism, and submit unto it: Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the holy Ghost as well as we? (Acts 10:47); as a Spirit of illumination and conviction, as a Spirit of sanctification, faith and consolation, and as a Spirit of adoption.

2dly, Next let us consider in what manner the ordinance of baptism is to be kept and observed: and,

1. It should be kept in faith; for *without faith it is impossible to please God; and whatsoever is not of faith, is sin* (Heb. 11:6; Rom. 14:23).

2. In love, and from a principle of love to Christ, and which is the end of every commandment, and of this; *If ye love me, says Christ's, keep my commandments* (John 14:15 3). It should be kept as it was at first delivered and observed: the manner in which it is to be performed and submitted to, is immersion, or covering the whole body in water; and which agrees with the primary sense of the word βαπτίζω, which signifies to *dip* or *plunge*, as all learned men know;^[7] and he must be a novice in the Greek language, that will take upon him to contradict what has been ingenuously owned by so many men of learning. Had our translators thought fit to have translated the word, which they have not in those places where the ordinance of baptism is made mention of, for reasons easily to be guessed at, but have adopted the Greek word *baptize* in all such places; had they truly translated it, the eyes of the people would have been opened, and the controversy at once would have been at an end, with respect to this part of it, the mode of baptism; however we have proof sufficient that it was performed, and ought to be performed by immersion, as appears,

1. By the places where it was administered, as the river *Jordan*, where *John* baptized many, and where our Lord himself was baptized; and *AEnon*, near *Salim*, which he chose for this reason, *because there was much water there* (Matthew 3:6, 13); now if the ordinance was administered in any other way than by immersion, what need was there to make choice of rivers and places abounding with water to baptize in?

2. By the instances of persons baptized, and the circumstances attending their baptism, as that of our Lord, of whom it is said, When he was baptized, he went up straightway out of the water (Matthew 3:16); which manifestly implies that he had been in it, of which there would have been no need, had the ordinance been administered to him in any other way than by immersion; as by sprinkling or pouring a little water on his head, as the painter ridiculously describes it. The baptism of the Eunuch is another instance proving baptism by immersion; when he and *Philip* were come to a certain water, and it was agreed to baptize him, it is said, they went down both into the waters both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip (Acts 8:38, 39). The circumstances of *going down into* the water, and *coming up out of* it, manifestly shew in what manner the Eunuch was baptized, namely, by immersion; for what reason can be given why they should go *into* the water, had it been performed in any other way?

3. [8] The end of baptism, which is to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, cannot be answered any other way than by immersion; that it is an emblem of the burial and resurrection of Christ, and of the burial and resurrection of believers in him, is clear from Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12 *buried with him by baptism*, and in *baptism*. Now only an immersion or covering of the whole body in water, and not pouring or sprinkling a little water on the face, can be a representation of a burial; will any man in his senses say, that a corpse is buried, when only a little dust or earth is sprinkled or poured on its face?

4. The figurative baptisms, or the allusions made to baptism in scripture, shew in what manner it was administered; the passage of the Israelites under the cloud, and through the sea, is called a being *baptized in the cloud and in the sea* (1 Cor. 10:1, 2); and with great propriety may it be called a baptism, as that is by immersion; for the waters standing up as a wall on each side of them, through which, and the cloud over their heads, under which they passed, they were like persons immersed in water: [9] likewise the overwhelming sufferings of Christ are fitly called a baptism, in allusion to baptism by immersion. [10] I have a baptism to be baptized with, says he; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished? (Luke 12:50); and which sufferings of Christ, in prophetic language, agreeable to baptism by immersion, are thus described; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me (Ps. 119:1, 2). Once more; the extraordinary donation of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, is called a being *baptized with the holy Ghost* (Acts 1:5); the emblem of which was a rushing mighty wind, which filled all the house where they were sitting (Acts 2:2); so that they were as if immersed into it, and covered with it, and therefore very properly called *a baptism*, in allusion to baptism by immersion. I go on,

III. To observe the encouragement, motives, and reasons given to keep this ordinance, as well as others,

1. The apostle says, *this is the love of God*; that is, this shews love to God; it is a plain case, that a man loves God, when he keeps his commandments; this is an evidence, that he loves not in word, and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth. Others may say that they love God and Christ; but this is the man that truly loves them, even he that *hath my commandments*, says Christ (John 14:21), *and keepeth them; he it is that loveth me*: and it is a clear care, that such a man has a sense of the love of God and Christ; the love of the Father is in him; and the love of Christ constrains him to observe his ordinances, and keep his commands; and such may expect greater manifestations of the love of God and Christ unto them; for of such that keep the commandments of Christ, he says, I will love him, and manifest myself to him; — and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him (John 14:23); which is no small inducement and encouragement to an observation of the ordinances and commands of Christ, and among the rest this of baptism.

2. Another encouraging motive and reason is, the commandments of God and Christ are not grievous, hard and difficult to be performed. The Lord's supper is not; nor is baptism. What is baptism in water, to the baptism of sufferings Christ endured for us? And yet how desirous was he of accomplishing it? (Luke 12:50). And therefore why should we think it an hardship, or be backward to comply with his will, in submitting to the ordinance of water-baptism? When *Naaman* was bid by *Elisha* to dip himself in *Jordan*, and be clean; which he relented as too little and trifling a thing, and thought he might as well have stayed in his own land, and dipped himself in one of the rivers of *Syria*; one of his servants took upon him to allay and repress the heat of his passion and resentment, by observing, that if the prophet had bid him do some great thing, which was hard and difficult to be performed, he would have gone about it readily; how much rather then, he argued, should he attend to the direction of the prophet, when he only bid him *wash in Jordan, and be clean?* (2 Kings 5:13). There are many that will go into baths, and plunge themselves in them for pleasure or profit, to refresh their bodies, or cure them of disorders; but if plunging in water is directed to, as an ordinance of God, then it is a grievous thing; and, indeed, no ordinance is grateful to a carnal mind; but to believers in Christ, *wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and her paths of peace*. Christ's yoke, if it may be called so, is easy, and his burden light. Now to close with a few words:

1. Let none despise this command of God, the ordinance of baptism; remember it is a command of his; be it at your peril if you do; it is hard kicking against the pricks; it is dangerous to treat with contempt any of the commands of God, and ordinances of Christ; *beware*, lest that should come upon you, and be fulfilled in you, *behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish*. (Acts 8:40, 41).

2. Let such who see it their duty to be baptized, not tarry, but immediately submit unto it; let them make haste, and delay not, to keep this command; remembering the motives, and encouragement to it.

3. Let those that yield obedience to it, do it in the name and strength of Christ; in the faith of him, from love to him, and with a view to his glory.

ENDNOTES:

1^[1] Let the commandments be what they may, which are chiefly intended in the text; yet since water-baptism is a commandment of God, and allowed to be such, and the rest of the commandments mentioned are not denied to be, nor excluded from being the commandments of God; there can be no impropriety in treating on the commandment of baptism particularly and singly from this passage of scripture; and it might have escaped, one would have thought, a sneer, though it has not, of a scurrilous writer, in a late newspaper, referred to in the preface.

1^[2] That we are ever referred to this chap. or, for a proof of Infant-baptism, is denied, and pronounced a willful, is representation, by the above mentioned writer, in his second letter in the newspaper. This man must have read very little in the controversy, to be ignorant of this. The very last writer that wrote in the controversy, that I know of, calls the covenant made with *Abraham* in that chapter “the grand turning point, on which the issue of the controversy very much depends; and that if *Abraham’s* covenant, which included his infant-children, and gave them a sight to circumcision, was not the covenant of grace; then he freely confesses, that the *main ground*, on which they assert the *right of infants to baptism*, is taken away; and consequently, the principal arguments in support of the doctrine, are overturned.” Bostwick’s Fair and Rational Vindication of the Right of Infants to the Ordinance of Baptism, etc. p. 19.

1^[3] The above letter-writer, in the news-paper, observes, “that the *kingdom of heaven* signifies either the kingdom, or church of Christ here, or the kingdom of glory above. If the former, they are declared, by Christ himself, real subjects of his among men; if the latter, if members of the invisible church, why not of the visible?” But, in fact, they themselves are not intended, only such as they; such who are comparable to them for meekness and humility; for freedom from malice, pride, and ambition. But admitting that the words are to be understood of infants literally, the kingdom of heaven cannot design the kingdom, or church of Christ under the gospel dispensation, which is not national, but congregational; consisting of men gathered out of the world, by the grace of God, and who make a public profession of Christ, which infants are not capable of, and so cannot be real subjects of it; and if they were, they mull have an equal right to the Lord’s supper, as to baptism, of which they are equally capable. The kingdom of glory then being recant, it is asked, if members of the invisible church, why not of the visible? They may be, when it appears that they are of the invisible church, which only can be manifest by the grace of God bestowed on them; and it is time enough to talk of their baptism when that is evident; and when it is clear they have both a right unto, and meetness for the kingdom of heaven.

1^[4] But our letter-writer says, “When the apostles received their commission, they could not understand it otherwise than to baptize the *parents* that embraced the faith of Christ; through their preaching, and all their *children* with them, as was the manner of the ministers of God in preceding ages, by circumcision;” but if they so understood it, and could not other ways understand it, it is strange they should not practice according to it, and baptize children with their parents; of which we have no one instance. By the *ministers of God in preceding ages*, I suppose, he means the priests and prophets, under the Old Testament-dispensation; but these were not the operators of circumcision, which was done by parents and others: and surely it cannot be said, it was the usual manner of ministers to baptize parents, and their children with them in those ages; and it is pretty unaccountable how they should baptize them by circumcision, as is affirmed; this is something unheard of before, and monstrously ridiculous and absurd.

1^[5] The above writer affirms, that my manner of “proving the negative, was *by barely asserting* there were no children in any of the families, mentioned in the scriptures, as baptized.” The falsity of which appears by the following descriptive, characters given of the patrons in the several, families, and the reasonings upon them.

1^[6] In his turn, the writer in the news-paper, “defies me to produce one scripture precept, or precedent, for delaying the *baptism of children of* Christian parents; or for baptizing adult persons, born of such parents. On this the controversy hinges.” It is ridiculous to talk of a precept for delaying that which was not in being; and of a precedent for delaying that which had never been practiced. If a warrant is required for baptizing adult persons, believers, it is ready at hand (Mark 16:16), and precedents enough: and we know of no precept to baptize any other, let them be born of whom they may; and as for precedents of the baptism of adult persons, born of Christian parents, it cannot be expected, nor reasonably required of us; since the Acts of the Apostles only give an account of the planting of the first churches; and of the baptism of those of which they first consisted; and not of those that in a course of years were added to them. Wherefore, to demand instances of persons, born of Christian parents, and brought up by them, as baptized in adult age, which would require length of time, is unreasonable; and if the controversy hinges on this, it ought to be at an end, and given up by them.

1^[7] The letter-writer makes me to say, “All the world acknowledge βαπτίζω, signifies to dip or plunge, and never to sprinkle or pour water on any thing,” which is a false representation of my words, and of the manner in which they were delivered; however, this I affirm, that in all the Greek Lexicons I ever saw, and I have seen a pretty many, I do not pretend to have seen all that have been published; yet in what my small library furnishes me with, the word is always rendered in the first and primary sense by *mergo, immergo, to dip or plunge into*; and in a secondary and consequential sense, by *abluo, lavo, to wash*, because what is dipped is washed; and never by *persundo* or *aspergo, to pour or sprinkle*; as the Lexicon published by *Constantine, Budaeus, etc.* those of *Hadrian, Junius, Plantinus, Scapula, Sebreveius, and Stockins*, besides a great number of critics that might be mentioned; and if this writer can produce any one Lexicographer of any note, that renders the word to *pour or sprinkle*, let him name him. This *ignorant scribbler* puts the following questions, “Did the Jews plunge their whole bodies in water always before they did eat? Did they dip their pots, brazen vessels and beds?” He does not suffer me to answer the questions, but answers for me, “He knows the contrary.” But if I may be allowed to answer for myself, I must say, by the testimonies of the Jews themselves, and of others, I know they did; that is, when they came to the market, having touched the common people, or their clothes, immersed themselves in water; so says *Maimonides* in *Misn. Chagigah. c. e. sect. 7*. “If the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people they were defiled, and needed immersion, and were obliged to it.” And *Scaliger* observes, *de Emend. Temp. 1. 6. p. 271*. “That the more superstitious part of the Jews, every day before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body; hence the Pharisee’s admiration at Christ (Luke 11:38).” According to the law of *Moses* (Lev. 11:32), unclean vessels were washed by putting or dipping them into water; and according to the traditions of the Rabbins, to which our Lord refers (Mark 7:4), not only brazen vessels and tables, but even beds, bolsters and pillows unclean, in a ceremonial sense, were washed by immersion in water. So the Jews say in their *Misnah*, or book of traditions, “A bed that is wholly defiled, a man dips it part by part.” *Celim, c. 26. sect. 14*. See also *Mikvaot, c. 7. sect. 7*.

1^[8] The above letter-writer asks, “How often must I be told, that the particle *εἰς* and *ἐκ* are in hundreds of places in the New Testament rendered *unto* and *from*?” be it so; it follows not, that they mull be so rendered here. Greek particles or prepositions have different significations, according to the words and circumstances with which they are used; nor is it as proper or a more just reading of the words, “they went down *unto* the water and came up from it;” it is neither proper nor just; for before this, they are expressly said to come to a certain water, to the waterside; wherefore when they went down, they went not *unto* it, if they were there before, but *into* it; as it must be allowed the preposition sometimes, at least, signifies; and circumstances require that it should be so rendered here, let it signify what it may elsewhere; and this determines the sense of the other preposition, that it tour and ought to be rendered out of; for as they went down into the water, when they came up, it must be out of it. What he means by the strange question that follows, “What will he make of Christ’s going *into a mountain*?” I cannot devise, unless he thinks the translation of Luke 6:12 is wrong, or nonsense, or both; but has this wiseacre never heard or read of a cave in a mountain, into which men may go, and properly be said to go into the mountain; and such an one it is highly probable our Lord went into, to pray alone; such as the cave in mount Horeb, into which *Elijab* went. But his tip-top translation of all is that of John’s baptizing in *Jordan*, which he supposes might be rendered, by baptizing the people *with the river Jordan*. This is the man that reproaches me with very freely finding fault with the translators; my complaint is only of a non-translation, not of a wrong one; but this man finds fault with the translation as wrong, or however thinks it may be corrected or mended, and that in more places than one.

1^[9] The letter-writer I have often referred to, affirms, that “the learned world universally maintain, that the Israelites were no other ways *baptized in the sea*, than by being sprinkled with the spray of the tolling waves, agitated by the wind that blew as they passed through the channel.” Who the learned world be, that maintain this whimsical notion, I own, I am quite ignorant of, having never yet met with any learned man that ever asserted it. It is a mere conceit and a wild imagination, and contrary to the sacred scriptures, which represent the waves of the feat through which the Israelites passed, not as agitated and tossed about, but as standing unmoved, as a wall on each side of them, whatever was the care in that part where the Egyptians were; *The floods*, says the inspired writer, *stood uprights as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea* (Ex. 15:8). And if there was a continual spray of the tossing waves, as the Israelites passed through the channel, how could they pass through the sea on *dry ground*? As they are said to do (Ex. 14:16, 22, 29). What this man scoffs at, the celebrated *Grotius*, who is universally allowed to be a man of learning and sense, expresses in a note on 1 Corinthians 10:2 “*were baptized*, that is, as if they were baptized; for there was some likeness in it; the cloud was over their heads, and so water is over them that are baptized; the sea encompassed the sides of them, and so water those that are baptized.”

1^[10] The same writer is pleased to represent this explanation of the baptism of the Spirit as ridiculous; but some of greater learning than he can pretend to, have so explained it, as particularly Dr. *Casaubon*, famous for his great knowledge of the Greek language; though perhaps this *very illiberal* man will call the learned doctor a dunce for what he says; his words on Acts 1:5 are these, “though I do not disapprove of the word *baptize* being retained here, that the antithesis may be full; yet I am of opinion that regard is had in this place to its proper signification, for βαπτίζειν is to immerse, so as to *tinge* or *dip*; and in this sense the apostles were truly said to be baptized; for the house in which this was done was filled with the holy Ghost, so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it as into a pool.” In confirmation of which, he makes mention on Acts 2:2 of an

observation in a Greek commentary on it, “the wind filled the whole house, filling it like a pool; since it was promised to them (the apostles) that they should be *baptized, with the Holy Ghost.*” It seems to be the same commentary, *Erasmus*, on the place, says went under the name of *Chrysostom*, in which are these words, as he gives them, “the whole house was so filled with fire, though invisible, as a pool is filled with water.” — Our scribbler, in order to expose the notion of dipping, as used in the baptism of the spirit, and fire, condescends, for once, to read *dip*, instead of *baptize*; “*John* said I indeed dip you *with* water, but one, mightier than I, cometh, he shall *dip* you *with* the holy Ghost, and *with* fire.” But not only the word *baptize* should be read *dip*, but the preposition “should be rendered *in*; *in* water; and *in* the holy Ghost; and *in* fire; and the phrase *of dipping in* fire, is no unusual one, both in Jewish and Greek authors; as I have shewn in my Exposition of the place, and of Acts 2:3.

BAPTISM:
A PUBLIC ORDINANCE
of Divine Worship

As the first covenant, or testament, had ordinances of divine service, which are shaken, removed, and abolished; so the New Testament, or gospel dispensation, has ordinances of divine worship, which cannot be shaken, but will remain until the second coming of Christ: these, as Austin says,^[1] are few; and easy to be observed, and of a very expressive signification. Among which, baptism must be reckoned one, and is proper to be treated of in the first place; for though it is not a church ordinance, it is an ordinance of God, and a part and branch of public worship. When I say it is not a church ordinance, I mean it is not an ordinance administered in the church, but out of it, and in order to admission into it, and communion with it; it is preparatory to it, and a qualification for it; it does not make a person a member of a church, or admit him into a visible church; persons must first be baptized, and then added to the church, as the three thousand converts were; a church has nothing to do with the baptism of any, but to be satisfied they are baptized before they are admitted into communion with it. Admission to baptism lies solely in the breast of the administrator, who is the only judge of qualifications for it, and has the sole power of receiving to it, and of rejecting from it; if not satisfied, he may reject a person thought fit by a church, and admit a person to baptism not thought fit by a church; but a disagreement is not desirable nor advisable: the orderly, regular, scriptural rule of proceeding seems to be this: a person inclined to submit to baptism, and to join in communion with a church, should first apply to an administrator; and upon giving him satisfaction, be baptized by him; and then should propose to the church for communion; when he would be able to answer all proper questions: if asked, to give a reason of the hope that is in him, he is ready to do it; if a testimony of his life and conversation is required, if none present can give it, he can direct where it is to be had; and if the question is put to him, whether he is a baptized person or not, he can answer in the affirmative, and give proof of it, and so the way is clear for his admission into church fellowship. So Saul, when converted, was immediately baptized by Ananias, without any previous knowledge and consent of the church; and, it was many days after this that he proposed to join himself to the disciples, and was received (Acts 9:18,19,23,26-28), and as it is water baptism which is meant, I shall,

I. First, prove that this is peculiar to the gospel dispensation, is a standing ordinance in it, and will be continued to the second coming of Christ. This is opposed to the sentiments of such who say baptism was in use before the times of John, of Christ and his apostles; and of such who restrain water baptism to the interval between the beginning of John's ministry and the death of Christ, when they supposed this, with other external rites, ceased; and of such, as the Socinians,^[2] who think that only the first converts to Christianity in a nation are to be baptized, and their children, but not their after posterity. There were indeed various washings, bathings, or baptisms, under the legal dispensation, for the purification of persons and things unclean, by the ceremonial law; which had a doctrine in them, called the doctrine of baptists, which taught the cleansing of sin by the blood of Christ; but there was nothing similar in them to the ordinance of water baptism, but immersion

only. The Jews pretend, their ancestors were received into covenant by baptism, or dipping, as well as by circumcision and sacrifice; and that proselytes from heathenism were received the same way; and this is greedily grasped at by the advocates for infant baptism; who fancy that John, Christ, and his apostles, took up this custom as they found it, and continued it; and which they imagine accounts for the silence about it in the New Testament, and why there is neither precept for it, nor example of it; but surely if it was in such common use as pretended, though no new precept had been given, there would have been precedents enough of it; but no proof is to be given of any such practice obtaining in those times, neither from the Old nor New Testament; nor from the apocryphal books written by Jews between them; nor from Josephus and Philo the Jew, who wrote a little after the times of John and Christ; nor from the Jewish Misnah, or book of traditions: only from later writings of theirs, too late for the proof of it before those times. [\[3\]](#) John was the first administrator of the ordinance of baptism, and therefore is called "the Baptist" (Matthew 3:1), by way of emphasis; whereas, had it been in common use, there must have been many baptizers before him, who had a like claim to this title; and why should the people be so alarmed with it, as to come from all parts to see it administered, and to hear it preached, when, had it been in frequent use, they must have often seen it? and why should the Jewish Sanhedrim send priests and Levites from Jerusalem to John, to know who he was, whether the Messiah, or his forerunner Elias, or that prophet spoken of and expected? and when he confessed, and denied that he was neither of them, they say to him, "Why baptizest thou then?" by which thing and which they expected it appears it was a new thing, and which they expected when the Messiah came, but not before; and that then it would be performed by some great personage, one or other of the before mentioned; whereas, had it been performed by an ordinary teacher, common Rabbi or doctor, priest or Levite, in ages immemorial, there could have been no room for such a question; and had this been the case, there would have been no difficulty with the Jews to answer the question of our Lord; "The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or of men?" they could have answered, It was a tradition of theirs, a custom in use among them time out of mind, had this been the known case; nor would they have been subject to any dilemma: but John's baptism was not a device of men; but the "counsel of God", according to his will and wise determination (Luke 7:30). John had a mission and commission from God, he was a man sent of God, and sent to baptize (John 1:6,33), and his baptism was water baptism, this he affirms, and the places he made use of for that purpose show it, and none will deny it.

Now his baptism, and that of Christ and his apostles, were the same. Christ was baptized by John, and his baptism was surely Christian baptism; of this no one can doubt (Matthew 3:13-17), and his disciples also were baptized by him; for by whom else could they be baptized? not by Christ himself, for he baptized none (John 4:2). And it is observable, that the baptism of John, and the baptism of Christ and his apostles, were at the same time; they were contemporary, and did not the one succeed the other: now it is not reasonable to suppose there should be two sorts of baptism administered at the same time; but one and the same by both (John 3:22,23,26; 4:1,2). The baptism of John, and that which was practiced by the apostles of Christ, even after his death and resurrection from the dead, agreed,

1. In the subjects thereof. Those whom John baptized were sensible penitent sinners, who were convinced of their sins, and made an ingenuous confession of them; and of whom he required "fruits meet for repentance", and which showed it to be genuine; and hence his baptism is called, "the baptism of repentance", because he required it previous to it (Matthew 3:6-8; Mark 1:4). So the

apostles of Christ exhorted men to repent, to profess their repentance, and give evidence of it, previous to their baptism (Acts 2:38). John said to the people that came to his baptism, "That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus", upon which they were baptized in his name (Acts 19:4,5), faith in Christ was made a prerequisite to baptism by Christ and his apostles (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:36,37).

2. In the way and manner of the administration of both. John's baptism was by immersion, as the places chosen by him for it show; and the baptism of Christ by him is a proof of it (Matthew 3:6,16; John 3:23), and in like manner was baptism performed by the apostles, as of the eunuch by Philip (Acts 8:38,39).

3. In the form of their administration. John was sent of God to baptize; and in whose name should he baptize, but in the name of the one true God, who sent him, even in the name of God, Father, Son, and Spirit? The doctrine of the Trinity was known to John, as it was to the Jews in common; it is said of John's hearers and disciples, that they were "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5). The same form is used of the baptism of those baptized by the apostles of Christ (Acts 8:16; 10:48), which is only a part of the form put for the whole, and is sufficiently expressive of Christian baptism, which is to be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19).

4. In the end and use of baptism, John's baptism, and so the apostles was, upon repentance for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Acts 8:38), not that either repentance or baptism procure the pardon of sin; that is only obtained by the blood of Christ; but baptism is a means of leading to the blood of Christ; and repentance gives encouragement to hope for it, through it. Now since there is such an agreement between the baptism of John, as administered before the death of Christ; and between the baptism of the apostles, after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; it is a plain case, it was not limited to the interval of time from the beginning of John's ministry to the death of Christ; but was afterwards continued; which further appears from the commission of Christ (Matthew 28:19), "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them"; and though water is not expressed, it is always implied, when the act of baptizing is ascribed to men; for it is peculiar to Christ to baptize with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5), nor did he give to his apostles, nor to any man, or set of men, a commission and power to baptize with the Spirit: besides, an increase of the graces of the Spirit, and a large donation of his gifts, are promised to persons after baptism, and as distinct from it (Acts 2:38). The apostles, doubtless, understood the commission of their Lord and Master to baptize in water, since they practiced it upon it; such was the baptism administered by Philip, who, having taught the eunuch the doctrine of it, when they came to a "certain water", he said to him, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" that is, in water; and when Philip had observed unto him the grand requisite of it, even faith in Christ, which he at once professed; and the chariot in which they rode being ordered to stand, theft went down both into the water, and he baptized him; this was most certainly water baptism; and so was that which Peter ordered to be administered to Cornelius and his friends, upon their receiving of the Holy Ghost, and so a baptism different from that; "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?" (Acts 8:36,38,39; 10:47,48). And this was designed to be continued unto the end of the world, to the second coming of Christ; as the ordinance of the supper is to be kept to that time, the ordinance of water baptism is to be continued as long; hence says Christ, to encourage his ministers to preach

his gospel, and to baptize in his name; "Lo, I am with you always", in the ministry of the word, and in the administration of baptism, "even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19,20).

II. Secondly, I shall next consider the author of it; and show, that it is not a device of men, but an ordinance of God; it is a solemn part of divine worship, being performed in the name of the Three divine Persons in Deity, Father, Son, and Spirit, and by their authority; in which the name of God is invoked, faith in him expressed, and a man gives up himself to God, obliges himself to yield obedience to him, expecting all good things from him. Now for an act of religious worship there must be a command of God. God is a jealous God, and will not suffer anything to be admitted into the worship of him, but what is according to his word and will; if not commanded by him, he may justly say, "Who hath required this at your hands?" and will resent it: a command from men is not sufficient; no man on earth is to be called master; one is our Master in heaven, and him only we are to obey: if the commandments of men are taught for doctrines, in vain is the Lord worshipped; what is done according to them is superstition and will worship. Indeed, as it is now commonly practiced, it is a mere invention of men, the whole of it corrupted and changed; instead of rational spiritual men the subjects of it, infants, who have neither the use of reason, nor the exercise of grace, are admitted to it; and instead of immersion in water, and immersion out of it, a very expressive emblem of the sufferings of Christ, his death, burial, and resurrection from the dead; sprinkling a few drops of water on the face is introduced; with a number of foolish rites and ceremonies used by the papists, and some of their usages are retained by some Protestants; as sponsors, or sureties for infants, and the signing them with the sign of the cross. In short, the face of the ordinance is so altered, that if the apostles were to rise from the dead, and see it as now performed, they would neither know nor own it to be the ordinance commanded them by Christ, and practiced by them. But as it is administered according to the pattern, and as first delivered, it appears to be of an heavenly original; the "counsel of God", a wise appointment of his, and in which all the Three Persons have a concern; they all appeared at the baptism of Christ, and gave a sanction to the ordinance by their presence; the Father by a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!" as in his person, so in this act of his, in submitting to the ordinance of baptism; the Son in human nature, yielding obedience to it; and the Spirit descending on him as a dove; and it is ordered to be administered in the name of all three, Father, Son, and Spirit. Which, among other things, is expressive of divine authority, under which it is performed. Christ received from God the Father honor and glory, as at his transfiguration, so at his baptism, by the voice from heaven, owning his relation to him, as his Son, and expressing his well pleasedness in him, as obedient to his will; the Son of God, in human nature, not only left an example of it, that we should tread in his steps; though he himself baptized none, yet he countenanced it in his disciples, and gave them orders to do it; which orders were repeated, and a fresh commission given for the same after his resurrection from the dead: and the Spirit of God showed his approbation of it, by his descent on Christ at his baptism; and his authority for it is to be seen in the administration of it in his name, as in the name of the other Two Persons; so that it is to be regarded, not as an institution of men, but as an ordinance of God; as a part of righteousness to be fulfilled, a branch of the righteous will of God, to be observed in obedience to it.

III. Thirdly, the subjects of baptism are next to be inquired into; or who they are to whom it is to be administered, and according to the scripture instances and examples, they are such who,

1. Are enlightened by the Spirit of God to see their lost state by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and Christ as the only Saviour of sinners; who look to him and are saved; and such only can see to the end of the ordinance, which is to represent the sufferings and death, burial and resurrection of Christ; hence baptism was by the ancients; called φωτισμοσ, "illumination"; and baptized persons φωτιζομενοι, "enlightened" ones; and the Syriac and Ethiopic, versions of Hebrews 6:4 translate the word "enlightened" by baptized; an emblem of this was the falling off from the eyes of Saul, as it had been scales; signifying his former blindness, and ignorance, and unbelief, now removed; upon which he arose and was baptized (Acts 9:18).

2. Penitent persons; such who having seen the evil nature of sin, repent of it, and acknowledge it; such were the first who were baptized by John that we read of; they were "baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matthew 3:6), being made sensible of them, they ingenuously confessed them; and such were the first who were baptized after Christ had renewed the commission to his disciples, upon his resurrection, to teach and: baptize; such as were pricked to the heart, were exhorted to profess repentance and give evidence of it, and then be baptized, as they were (Acts 2:37,38,41), and it is pity that these first examples of baptism were not strictly followed.

3. Faith in Christ is a prerequisite to baptism (Mark 16:16), this is clear from the case of the eunuch, desiring baptism, to whom Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest"; by which it seems, that if he did not believe, he had no right to the ordinance; but if he did, he had; upon which he professed his faith in Christ; and upon that profession was baptized (Acts 8:36), and the various instances of baptism recorded in scripture, confirm the same; as of the inhabitants of Samaria, who, upon believing in Christ, "were baptized, both men and women"; so the Corinthians, "hearing" the word preached by the apostle Paul, "believed" in Christ, whom he preached, "and were baptized", upon their faith in him (Acts 8:12; 18:8), and without faith it is impossible to please God in any ordinance or part of worship; and what is not of faith is sin; and without it no one can see to the end of the ordinance of baptism, as before observed.

4. Such who are taught and made disciples by teaching, are the proper subjects of baptism, agreeable both to the practice of Christ and his commission; it is said, "that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John" (John 4:1), he first made them disciples, and then baptized them, that is, ordered his apostles to baptize them; and so runs his commission to them, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them", that is, those that are taught, and so made disciples; and they are the disciples of Christ, who have learnt to know him, and are taught to deny sinful, righteous, and civil self, for his sake, and to take up the cross and follow him.

5. Such who have received the Spirit of God, as a Spirit of illumination and conviction, of sanctification and faith, as the persons before described may well be thought to have, should be admitted to baptism (Acts 10:47; see Gal. 3:2), from all which it appears, that such who are ignorant of divine things, impenitent, unbelievers, not disciples and followers of Christ, and who are destitute of the Spirit, are not proper subjects of baptism, let their pretences to birthright be what they may; and so not the infants of any, be they born of whom they may; and to whom the above characters, descriptive of the subjects of baptism, do by no means belong: with respect to their first birth, though born of believing parents, they are carnal and corrupt, and children of wrath, as others; "That which is born of the flesh is flesh"; and they must be born again, or they cannot see, possess, and enjoy the kingdom of God, or have a right to be admitted into the church of God

now, nor will they enter into the kingdom of God, into heaven hereafter, unless born again; their first and carnal birth neither entitles them to the kingdom of God on earth, nor to the kingdom of God in heaven, be it taken in either sense; for the baptism of such there is neither precept nor precedent in the word of God.

(1.) First, there is no precept for it; not the words of Christ in Matthew 19:14, "But Jesus said, Suffer little children", etc. For,

a. Let the words be said to or of whom they may, they are not in the form of a precept, but of a permission or grant, and signify not what was enjoined as necessary, but what was allowed of, or which might be; "Suffer little children", etc.

b. These children do not appear to be newborn babes. The words used by the evangelists, neither *παιδια* nor *βρεφη*, do not always signify such; but are sometimes used of such who are capable of going alone, and of being instructed, and of understanding the scriptures, and even of one of twelve years of age (Matthew 18:2; 2 Tim. 3:15; Mark 5:39,42). Nor is it probable that children just born should be had abroad; besides, these were such as Christ called unto him (Luke 18:16), and were capable of coming to him of themselves, as is supposed in the words themselves; nor is their being brought unto him, nor his taking them in his arms, any objection to this, since the same are said of such who could walk of themselves (Matthew 12:22 17:16; Mark 9:36).

c. It cannot be said whose children these were; whether they belonged to those who brought them, or to others; and whether the children of believers, and of baptized persons, or not; and if of unbelievers, and of unbaptized persons, the Paedobaptists themselves will not allow such children to be baptized.

d. It is certain they were not brought to Christ to be baptized by him, but for other purposes; the evangelist Matthew (Matthew 19:13,15), says, they were brought to him that he "should put his hands upon them, and pray", as he did, that is, for a blessing on them; as it was usual with the Jews to do (Gen. 48:14,15). The evangelists Mark and Luke say, they were brought to him, "that he would touch them", as he did when he healed persons of diseases; and probably these children were diseased, and were brought to him to be cured; however, they were not brought to be baptized by Christ; for Christ baptized none at all, adult or infants; had they that brought them this in view, they would have brought them to the disciples of Christ, and not to Christ, whom they might have seen administering the ordinance of baptism, but not Christ: however, it is certain they were not baptized by Christ, since he never baptized any.

e. This passage rather concludes against Paedobaptism than for it, and shows that this practice had not obtained among the Jews, and had not been used by John, by Christ, and his disciples; for then the apostles would scarcely have forbid the bringing of these children, since they might readily suppose they were brought to be baptized; but knowing of no such usage in the nation, whether of them that did or did not believe in Christ, they forbade them; and Christ's silence about this matter, when he had such an opportunity of speaking of it to his disciples, and enjoining it, had it been his will, does not look very favorably upon this practice.

f. The reason given for suffering little children to come to Christ, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven", is to be understood in a figurative and metaphorical sense; of such who are comparable to children for modesty, meekness, and humility, and for freedom from rancor, malice, ambition, and pride (see Matthew 18:2); and which sense is given into by Origen,^[4] among the ancients, and by Calvin and Brugensis, among the moderns. Nor does the commission in Matthew 28:19 contain in it any precept for infant baptism; "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them", etc. For,

(a.) The baptism of all nations is not here commanded; but the baptism only of such who are taught; for the antecedent to the relative "them", cannot be "all nations"; since the words *παντα τα εθνη*, "all nations", are of the neuter gender; whereas *αυτουσ*, "them", is of the masculine; but *μαθηταν*, disciples, is supposed and understood in the word *μαθητευσατε*, "teach", or "make disciples"; now the command is, that such who are first taught or made disciples by teaching under the ministry of the word, by the Spirit of God succeeding it, should be baptized.

(b.) If infants, as a part of all nations, and because they are such, are to be baptized, then the infants of Heathens, Turks, and Jews, ought to be baptized, since they are a part, and a large part, of all nations; as well as the children of Christians, or believers, which are but a small part; yea, every individual person in the world ought to be baptized, all adult persons, heathens as well as Christians; even the most profligate and abandoned of mankind, since they are a part of all nations.

(c.) Disciples of Christ, and such who have learned to know Christ, and the way of salvation by him, and to know themselves, and their need of him, are characters that cannot agree with infants; and if disciples and learners are the same, as is said, they must be learners or they cannot be disciples; and they cannot be learners of Christ unless they have learnt something of him; and according to this notion of disciples and learners, they ought to learn something of him before they are baptized in his name; but what can an infant be taught to learn of Christ? to prove infants disciples that text is usually brought (Acts 15:10), which falls greatly short of proving it; for infants are not designed in that place, nor included in the character; for though the Judaizing teachers would have had the Gentiles, and their infants too, circumcised; yet it was not circumcision, the thing itself, which is meant by the intolerable yoke; for that was what the Jewish fathers, and their children, were able to bear, and had bore in ages past; but it was the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other rites of Moses, to salvation; and obliged to the keeping of the whole law, and was in tolerable; and which doctrine could not be imposed upon infants, but upon adult persons only.

(d.) These two acts, teaching, or making disciples, and baptizing, are not to be confounded, but are two distinct acts, and the one is previous and absolutely necessary to the other: Men must first be made disciples, and then baptized; so Jerom^[5] long ago understood the commission; on which he observes, "First they teach all nations, then dip those that are taught in water; for it cannot be that the body should receive the sacrament of baptism, unless the soul has before received the truth of faith." And so says Athanasius,^[6] "Wherefore the Saviour does not simply command to baptize; but first says, teach, and then baptize thus, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"; that faith might come of teaching, and baptism be perfected."

(2.) Secondly, there is no precedent for the baptism of infants in the word of God. Among the vast numbers who flocked to John's baptism from all parts, we read of no infants that were brought with them for that purpose, or that were baptized by him. And though more were baptized by Christ than

by John, that is, the apostles of Christ, at his order, yet no mention of any infant baptized by them; and though three thousand persons were baptized at once, yet not an infant among them: and in all the accounts of baptism in the Acts of the Apostles in different parts of the world, not a single instance of infant baptism is given. There is, indeed, mention made of households, or families, baptized; and which the "paedobaptists" endeavor to avail themselves of; but they ought to be sure there were infants in these families, and that they were baptized, or else they must baptize them on a very precarious foundation; since there are families who have no infants in them, and how can they be sure there were any in these the scriptures speak of? and it lies upon them to prove there were infants in them, and that these infants were baptized; or the allegation of these instances is to no purpose. We are able to prove there are many things in the account of these families, which are inconsistent with infants, and which make it at least probable there were none in them, and which also make it certain that those who were baptized were adult persons and believers in Christ. There are but three families, if so many, who are usually instanced in: the first is that of Lydia and her household (Acts 16:14,15), but in what state of life she was is not certain, whether single or married, whether maid widow or wife; and if married, whether she then had any children, or ever had any; and if she had, and they living, whether they were infants or adult; and if infants, it does not seem probable that she should bring them along with her from her native place, Thyatira to Philippi, where she seems to have been upon business, and so had hired a house during her stay there; wherefore her household seems to have consisted of menial servants she brought along with her, to assist her in her business: and certain it is, that those the apostles found in her house, when they entered into it, after they came out of prison, were such as are called "brethren", and were capable of being "comforted" by them; which supposes them to have been in some distress and trouble, and needed comfort. The second instance is of the jailor and his household, which consisted of adult persons, and of such only; for the apostles spoke the word of the Lord to "all" that were in his house, which they were capable of hearing, and it seems of understanding; for not only he "rejoiced" at the good news of salvation by Christ, but "all" in his house hearing it, rejoiced likewise; which joy of theirs was the joy of faith; for he and they were believers in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; for it is expressly said, that he "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house"; so that they were not only hearers of the word, but rejoiced at it, and believed in it, and in God the Saviour, revealed in it to them (Acts 16:32-34), all which shows them to be adult persons, and not infants. The third instance, if distinct from the household of the jailor, which some take to be the same, is that of Stephanus; but be it a different one, it is certain it consisted of adult persons, believers in Christ, and very useful in the service of religion; they were the first fruits of Achaia, the first converts in those parts, and who "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints" (1 Cor. 16:15), which, whether understood of the ministry of the word to the saints, which they gave themselves up unto; or of the ministration of their substance to the poor, which they cheerfully communicated, they must be adult persons, and not infants. There being then neither precept nor precedent in the word of God for infant baptism, it may be justly condemned as unscriptural and unwarrantable.

(3.) Thirdly, nor is infant baptism to be concluded from any things or passages recorded either in the Old or in the New Testament. Baptism being an ordinance peculiar to the New Testament, it cannot be expected there should be any directions about the observance of it in the Old Testament; and whatever may be gathered relative to it, from typical and figurative baptisms, under the former dispensation, there is nothing from thence in favor of infant baptism, and to countenance that; and yet we are often referred thereunto for the original and foundation of it, but to no purpose.

a. It is not fact, as has been asserted,^[7] that the "infants of believers" have, with their parents, been taken into covenant with God in the former ages of the church, if by it is meant the covenant of grace; the first covenant made with man, was that of works, made with Adam, and which indeed included all his posterity, to whom he stood as a federal head, as no one ever since did to his natural offspring; in whom they all sinned, were condemned, and died; which surely cannot be pleaded in favor of the infants of believers! after the fall, the covenant of grace, and the way of life and salvation by Christ, were revealed to Adam and Eve, personally, as interested therein; but not to their natural seed and posterity, and as interested therein; for then all mankind must be taken into the covenant of grace, and so nothing peculiar to the infants of believers; of which not the least syllable is mentioned throughout the whole age of the church, reaching from Adam to Noah. The next covenant we read of, is that made with Noah, which was not made with him and his immediate offspring only; nor were any taken into it as infants of believers, nor had they any sacrament or rite as a token of it, and of God being their God in a peculiar relation. Surely this will not be said of Ham, one of the immediate sons of Noah. That covenant was made with Noah, and with all mankind to the end of the world, and even with every living creature, the beasts of the field, promising security from an universal deluge, as long as the world should stand; and so had nothing in it peculiar to the infants of believers. The next covenant is that made with Abraham and his seed, on which great stress is laid (Gen. 17:10-14), and this is said^[8] to be "the grand turning point on which the issue of the controversy very much depends; and that if Abraham's covenant, which included his infant children, and gave them a right to circumcision, was not the covenant of grace; then it is confessed, that the "main ground" is taken away, on which "the right of infants to baptism" is asserted; and consequently the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are overturned." Now that this covenant was not the pure covenant of grace, in distinction from the covenant of works, but rather a covenant of works, will soon be proved; and if so, then the main ground of infant's baptism is taken away, and its principal arguments in support of it overturned: and that it is not the covenant of grace is clear,

(a.) From its being never so called, nor by any name which shows it to be such; but "the covenant of circumcision" (Acts 7:8). Now nothing is more opposite to one another than circumcision and grace; circumcision is a work of the law, which they that sought to be justified by fell from grace (Gal. 5:2-4). Nor can this covenant be the same we are now under, which is a new covenant, or a new administration of the covenant of grace, since it is abolished, and no more in being and force.

(b.) It appears to be a covenant of works, and not of grace; since it was to be kept by men, under a severe penalty. Abraham was to keep it, and his seed after him; something was to be done by them, their flesh to be circumcised, and a penalty was annexed, in case of disobedience or neglect; such a soul was to be cut off from his people: all which shows it to be, not a covenant of grace, but of works.

(c.) It is plain, it was a covenant that might be broken; of the uncircumcised it is said, "He hath broken my covenant" (Gen. 17:14), whereas the covenant of grace cannot be broken; God will not break it, and men cannot; it is ordered in all things, and sure, and is more immovable than hills and mountains (Ps. 89:34).

(d.) It is certain it had things in it of a civil and temporal nature; as a multiplication of Abraham's natural seed, and a race of kings from him; a promise of his being the Father of many nations, and a

possession of the land of Canaan by his seed: things that can have no place in the pure covenant of grace and have nothing to do with that, any more than the change of his name from Abram to Abraham.

(e.) There were some persons included in it, who cannot be thought to belong to the covenant of grace; as Ishmael, not in the same covenant with Isaac, and a profane Esau: and on the other hand, there were some who were living when this covenant of circumcision was made, and yet were left out of it; who nevertheless, undoubtedly, were in the covenant of grace; as Shem, Arphaxad, Melchizedek, Lot, and others; wherefore this can never be the pure covenant of grace.

(f.) Nor is this covenant the same with what is referred to in Galatians 3:17 said to be "confirmed of God in Christ", which could not be disannulled by the law four hundred and thirty years after; the distance of time between them does not agree, but falls short of the apostle's date twenty four years; and therefore must not refer to the covenant of circumcision, but to some other covenant and time of making it; even to an exhibition and manifestation of the covenant of grace to Abraham, about the time of his call out of Chaldea (Gen. 12:3).

(g.) The covenant of grace was made with Christ, as the federal head of the elect in him, and that from everlasting, and who is the only head of that covenant, and of the covenant ones: if the covenant of grace was made with Abraham, as the head of his natural and spiritual seed, Jews and Gentiles; there must be two heads of the covenant of grace, contrary to the nature of such a covenant, and the whole current of scripture; yea, the covenant of grace, as it concerns the spiritual seed of Abraham, and spiritual blessings for them; it, and the promises of it, were made to Christ (Gal. 3:16). No mere man is capable of covenanting with God; the covenant of grace is not made with any single man; and much less with him on the behalf of others: whenever we read of it as made with a particular person or persons, it is always to be understood of the manifestation and application of it, and of its blessings and promises to them.

(h.) Allowing Abraham's covenant to be a peculiar one, and of a mixed kind, containing promises of temporal things to him, and his natural seed, and of spiritual things to his spiritual seed; or rather, that there was at the same time when the covenant of circumcision was given to Abraham and his natural seed, a fresh manifestation of the covenant of grace made with him and his spiritual seed in Christ. That the temporal blessings of it belonged to his natural seed, is no question; but that the spiritual blessings belong to all Abraham's seed, after the flesh, and to all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, must be denied: if the covenant of grace was made with all Abraham's seed according to the flesh, then it was made with his more immediate offspring, with a mocking, persecuting Ishmael, and with a profane Esau, and with all his remote posterity; with them who believed not, and whose carcasses fell in the wilderness; with the ten tribes who revolted from the pure worship of God; with the Jews in Isaiah's time, a seed of evildoers, whose rulers are called the rulers of Sodom, and the people the people of Gomorrah; with the scribes and Pharisees, that wicked and adulterous generation in the times of Christ: but what serious, thoughtful man, who knows anything of the covenant of grace, can admit of this? (see Rom. 9:6,7). It is only a remnant, according to the election of grace, who are in this covenant; and if all the natural seed of Abraham are not in this covenant, it can scarcely be thought that all the natural seed of believing Gentiles are; it is only some of the one and some of the other, who are in the covenant of grace; and this cannot be known until they believe, when they appear to be Abraham's spiritual seed; and it must be right

to put off their claim to any supposed privilege arising from covenant interest, until it is plain they have one; if all the natural seed of Abraham, as such, and all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, as such, are in the covenant of grace; since all they that are in it, and none but they are in it, who are the chosen of God, the redeemed of the Lamb, and will be called by grace, and sanctified, and persevere in faith and holiness, and be eternally glorified; then the natural seed of Abraham, and of believing Gentiles, must be all chosen to grace and glory, and be redeemed by the blood of Christ from sin, law, hell, and death; they must all have new hearts and spirits given them, and the fear of God put into their hearts; must be effectually called, their sins forgiven them, their persons justified by the righteousness of Christ, and they persevere in grace to the end, and be for ever glorified; (see Jer. 31:33,34; 32:40; Ezek. 36:25-27; Rom. 8:30). But who will venture to assert all this of the one, or of the other? And after all,

(i.) If their covenant interest could be ascertained, that gives no right to an ordinance, without a positive order and direction from God. It gave no right to circumcision formerly; for on the one hand there were persons living when that ordinance was appointed, who had an undoubted interest in the covenant of grace; as Shem, Arphaxad, Lot, and others, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, and they had no right to use it: on the other hand, there have been many of whom it cannot be said they were in the covenant of grace, and yet were obliged to it. And so covenant interest gives no right to baptism; could it be proved, as it cannot, that all the infant seed of believers, as such, are in the covenant of grace, it would give them no right to baptism, without a command for it; the reason is, because a person may be in covenant, and as yet not have the prerequisite to an ordinance, even faith in Christ, and a profession of it, which are necessary both to baptism and the Lord's Supper; and if covenant interest gives a right to the one, it would to the other.

(j.) Notwithstanding all this attention made about Abraham's covenant (Gen. 17:1-14), it was not made with him and his infant seed; but with him and his adult offspring; it was they in all after ages to the coming of Christ, whether believers or unbelievers, who were enjoined to circumcise their infant seed, and not all of them, only their males: it was not made with Abraham's infant seed, who could not circumcise themselves, but their parents were by this covenant obliged to circumcise them; yea, others, who were not Abraham's natural seed, were obliged to it; "He that is eight days old shalt be circumcised among you, which is NOT OF THY SEED" (Gen. 17:12). Which leads on to observe,

b. That nothing can be concluded from the circumcision of Jewish infants, to the baptism of the infants of believing Gentiles: had there been a like command for the baptism of the infants of believing Gentiles, under the New Testament, as there was for the circumcision of Jewish infants under the Old, the thing would not have admitted of any dispute; but nothing of this kind appears. For,

(a.) It is not clear that even Jewish infants were admitted into covenant by the rite of circumcision; from whence it is pleaded, that the infants of believers are admitted into it by baptism; for Abraham's female seed were taken into the covenant made with him, as well as his male seed, but not by any "visible rite" or ceremony; nor were his male seed admitted by any such rite; not by circumcision, for they were not to be circumcised until the eighth day; to have circumcised them sooner would have been criminal; and that they were in covenant from their birth, I presume, will

not be denied; as it was a national covenant, so early they were in it; the Israelites, with their infants at Horeb, had not been circumcised; nor were they when they entered into covenant with the Lord their God (Deut.29:10-15).

(b.) Circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace under the former dispensation; nor is baptism a seal of it under the present: had circumcision been a seal of it, the covenant of grace must have been without one from Adam to Abraham: it is called a sign or token, but not a seal; it was a sign or mark in the flesh of Abraham's natural seed, a typical sign of the pollution of human nature, and of the inward circumcision of the heart; but no seal, confirming any spiritual blessing of the covenant of grace to those who had this mark or sign; it is indeed called, "a seal of the righteousness of faith" (Rom. 4:11), but not a seal to Abraham's natural seed of their interest in that righteousness, but only to Abraham himself; it was a seal to him, a confirming sign, assuring him, that the righteousness of faith, which he had before he was circumcised, should come upon the uncircumcised believing Gentiles; and therefore it was continued on his natural offspring, until that righteousness was preached unto, received by, and imputed to believing Gentiles.

(c.) Nor did baptism succeed circumcision; there is no agreement between the one and the other; not in the subjects, to whom they were administered; the use of the one and the other is not the same; and the manner of administering them different; baptism being administered to Jews and Gentiles, to male and female, and to adult persons only: not so circumcision; the use of circumcision was to distinguish the natural seed of Abraham from others; baptism is the badge of the spiritual seed of Christ, and the answer of a good conscience towards God; and represents the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ; the one is by blood, the other by water; and ordinances so much differing in their subjects, use, and administration; the one can never be thought to come in the room and place of the other. Besides, baptism was in use and force before circumcision was abolished, which was not until the death of Christ; whereas, the doctrine of baptism was preached, and the ordinance itself administered, some years before that; now that which was in force before another is out of date, can never with any propriety be said to succeed, or come in the room of that other. Besides, if this was the case, as circumcision gave a right to the Passover, so would baptism to the Lord's Supper; which yet is not admitted. Now as there is nothing to be gathered out of the Old Testament to countenance infant baptism, so neither are there any passages in the New, which can be supported in favor of it.

i. Not the text in Acts 2:39. "The promise is unto you and to your children", etc. It is pretended, that this refers to the covenant made with Abraham, and to a covenant promise made to him, giving his infant children a right to the ordinance of circumcision; and is urged as a reason with the Jews, why they and their children ought to be baptized; and with the Gentiles, why they and theirs should be also, when called into a church state. But,

(i.) There is not the least mention made in the text of Abraham's covenant, or of any promise made to him, giving his infant seed a right to circumcision, and still less to baptism; nor is there the least syllable of infant baptism, nor any hint of it, from whence it can be concluded; nor by "children" are infants designed, but the posterity of the Jews, who are frequently so called in scripture, though grown up; and unless it be so understood in many places, strange interpretations must be given of them; wherefore the argument from hence for "paedobaptism" is given up by some learned men, as Dr. Hammond and others, as inconclusive.

(ii.) The promise here, be it what it may, is not observed as giving a right or claim to any ordinance; but as an encouraging motive to persons in distress, under a sense of sin, to repent of it, and declare their repentance, and yield a voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism; when they might hope that remission of sins would be applied to them, and they should receive a larger measure of the grace of the Spirit; wherefore repentance and baptism are urged in order to the enjoyment of the promise; and consequently must be understood of adult persons, who only are capable of repentance, and of a voluntary subjection to baptism.

(iii.) The promise is no other than the promise of life and salvation by Christ, and of remission of sins by his blood, and of an increase of grace from his Spirit; and whereas the persons addressed had imprecated the guilt of the blood of Christ, they had shed upon their posterity, as well as on themselves, which distressed them; they are told, for their relief, that the same promise would be made good to their posterity also, provided they did as they were directed to do; and even to all the Jews afar off, in distant countries and future ages, who should look on Christ and mourn, repent and believe, and be baptized: and seeing the Gentiles are sometimes described as those "afar of", the promise may be thought to reach to them who should be called by grace, repent, believe, and be baptized also; but no mention is made of their children; and had they been mentioned, the limiting clause, "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call", plainly points at and describes the persons intended, whether Jews or Gentiles, effectually called by grace, who are encouraged by the motive in the promise to profess repentance, and submit to baptism; which can only be understood of adult persons, and not of infants.

ii. Nor Romans 11:16, etc. "If the first fruits be holy", etc. For, (i.) By the first fruits, and lump, and by the root and branches, are not meant Abraham and his posterity, or natural seed, as such; but the first among the Jews who believed in Christ, and laid the first foundation of a gospel church state, and were first incorporated into it; Who being holy, were a pledge of the future conversion and holiness of that people in the latter day.

(ii.) Nor by the good olive tree, after mentioned, is meant the Jewish church state; which was abolished by Christ, with all the peculiar ordinances of it; and the believing Gentiles were never engrafted into it; the axe has been laid to the root of that old Jewish stock, and it is entirely cut down, and no engrafture is made upon it. But,

(iii.) By it is meant the gospel church state, in its first foundation, consisting of Jews that believed, out of which were left the Jews who believed not in Christ, and who are the branches broken off; into which church state the Gentiles were received and engrafted; which engrafture, or coalition, was first made at Antioch, when and hereafter the Gentiles partook of the root and fatness of the olive tree, enjoyed the same privileges, communicated in the same ordinances, and were satisfied with the goodness and fatness of the house of God; and this gospel church may be truly called, by the converted Jews in the latter day, their "own olive tree", into which they will be engrafted; since the first gospel church was set up at Jerusalem, and gathered out of the Jews; and so in other places, the first gospel churches consisted of Jews, the first fruits of those converted ones. From the whole it appears, that there is not the least syllable about baptism, much less of infant baptism, in the passage; nor can anything be concluded from hence in favor of it.

iii. Nor from 1 Corinthians 7:14 "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy"; which is by some understood of a federal holiness, giving a claim to covenant privileges, and so to baptism. But,

(i.) It should be told what these covenant privileges are; since, as we have seen, covenant interest gives no right to any ordinance, without divine direction; nor is baptism a seal of the covenant: it should be told what this covenant holiness is, whether imaginary or real; by some it is called "reputed", and is distinguished from internal holiness, which is rejected from being the sense of the text; but such holiness can never qualify persons for a New Testament ordinance; nor as the covenant of grace any such holiness belonging to it; that provides, by way of promise, real holiness, signified by putting the laws of God in the heart, by giving new hearts and new spirits, and by cleansing from all impurity, and designs real, internal holiness, shown in an holy conversation; and such who appear to have that, have an undoubted right to the ordinance of baptism, since they have received the Spirit as a Spirit of sanctification (Acts 10:47). But this cannot be meant in the text, seeing,

(ii.) It is such a holiness as heathens may have; unbelieving husbands and wives are said to have it, in virtue of their relation to believing wives and husbands, and which is prior to the holiness of their children, and on which theirs depends; but surely such will not be allowed to have federal holiness, and yet it must be of the same kind with their children; if the holiness of the children is a federal holiness, that of the unbelieving parent must be so too, from whence is the holiness of the children.

(iii.) If children, by virtue of this holiness, have claim to baptism, then much more their unbelieving parents, since they are sanctified before them, by their believing yoke fellows, and are as near to them as their children; and if the holiness of the one gives a right to baptism, why not the holiness of the other? and yet the one are baptized, and the other not, though sanctified, and whose holiness is the more near; for the holiness spoken of, be it what it may, is derived from both parents, believing and unbelieving; yea, the holiness of the children depends upon the sanctification of the unbelieving parent; for if the unbeliever is not sanctified, the children are unclean, and not holy. But,

(iv.) These words are to be understood of matrimonial holiness, even of the very act of marriage, which, in the language of the Jews, is frequently expressed by being sanctified; the word קדש to "sanctify", is used in innumerable places in the Jewish writings, [91](#), to "espouse"; and in the same sense the apostle uses the word ἀγαζω here, and the words may be rendered, "the unbelieving husband is espoused", or married, "to the wife"; or rather, "has been espoused", for it relates to the act of marriage past, as valid; "and the unbelieving wife has been espoused to the husband"; the preposition εν, translated "by", should be rendered "to", as it is in the very next verse; "God hath called us εν ειρηνη, to peace"; the apostle's inference from it is, "else were your children unclean", illegitimate, if their parents were not lawfully espoused and married to each other; "but now are they holy", a holy and legitimate seed, as in Ezra 9:2 (see Mal. 2:15), and no other sense can be put upon the words, than of a legitimate marriage and offspring; nothing else will suit with the case proposed to the apostle, and with his answer to it, and reasoning about it; and which sense has been allowed by many learned interpreters, ancient and modern; as Jerome, Ambrose, Erasmus,

Camerarius, Musculus, and others. There are some objections made to the practice of adult baptism, which are of little force, and to which an answer may easily be returned.

i. That though it may be allowed that adult persons, such as repent and believe, are the subjects of baptism, yet it is nowhere said, that they are the only ones: but if no others can be named as baptized, and the descriptive characters given in scripture of baptized persons are such as can "only" agree with adult, and not with infants; then it may be reasonably concluded, that the former "only" are the proper subjects of baptism.

ii. It is objected to our practice of baptizing the adult offspring of Christians, that no scriptural instance of such a practice can be given; and it is demanded of us to give an instance agreeable to our practice; since the first persons baptized were such as were converted either from Judaism or from heathenism, and about the baptism of such adult, they say, there is no controversy. But our practice is not at all concerned with the parents of the persons baptized by us, whether they be Christians, Jews, Turks, or Pagans; but with the persons themselves, whether they are believers in Christ or not; if they are the adult offspring of Christians, yet unbaptized, it is no objection to us: and if they are not, it is no bar in the way of admitting them to baptism, if they themselves are believers; many, and it may be the greater part of such baptized by us are the adult offspring of those who, without breach of charity, cannot be considered as Christians. As for the first persons that were baptized, they were neither proselytes from Judaism nor from Heathenism; but the offspring of Christians, of such that believed in the Messiah; the saints before the coming of Christ, and at his coming, were as good Christians as any that have lived since; so that those good men who lived before Abraham, as far back as to the first man, and those that lived after him, even to the coming of Christ, Eusebius^[10] observes, that if any should affirm them to be Christians, though not in name, yet in reality, he would not say amiss. Judaism, at the time of Christ's coming, was the same with Christianity, and not in opposition to it; so that there was no such thing as conversion from Judaism to Christianity. Zachariah and Elizabeth, whose offspring John the first baptizer was, and Mary, the mother of our Lord, who was baptized by John, when adult, were as good Christians, and as strong believers in Jesus, as the Messiah, as soon as born, and even when in the womb of the Virgin, as have been since; and these surely must be allowed to be the adult offspring of Christians; such were the apostles of Christ, and the first followers of him, who were the adult offspring of such who believed in the Messiah, and embraced him upon the first notice of him, and cannot be said to be converted from Judaism to Christianity; Judaism not existing until the opposition to Jesus being the Messiah became general and national; after that, indeed, those of the Jewish nation who believed in Christ, may be said to be proselytes from Judaism to Christianity, as the apostle Paul and others: and so converts made by the preaching of the gospel among the Gentiles, were proselytes from heathenism to Christianity; but then it is unreasonable to demand of us instances of the adult offspring of such being baptized, and added to the churches; since the scripture history of the first churches contained in the Acts of the Apostles, only gives an account of the first planting of these churches, and of the baptism of those of which they first consisted; but not of the additions of members to them in later times; wherefore to give instances of those who were born of them, and brought up by them, as baptized in adult years, cannot reasonably be required of us: but on the other hand, if infant children were admitted to baptism in these times, upon the faith and baptism of their parents, and their becoming Christians; it is strange, exceeding strange, that among the many thousands baptized in Jerusalem, Samaria, Corinth, and other places, that there should be no one instance of any of them bringing their children with them to be

baptized, and claiming the privilege of baptism for them upon their own faith; nor of their doing this in any short time after. This is a case that required no length of time, and yet not a single instance can be produced.

iii. It is objected, that no time can be assigned when infants were cast out of covenant, or cut off from the seal of it. If by the covenant is meant the covenant of grace, it should be first proved that they are in it, as the natural seed of believers, which cannot be done; and when that is, it is time enough to talk of their being cast out, when and how. If by it is meant Abraham's covenant, the covenant of circumcision, the answer is the cutting off was when circumcision ceased to be an ordinance of God, which was at the death of Christ: if by it is meant the national covenant of the Jews, the ejection of Jewish parents, with their children, was when God wrote a "Loammi" upon that people, as a body politic and ecclesiastic; when he broke his covenant with them, signified by breaking his two staves, beauty and bands.

iv. A clamorous outcry is made against us, as abridging the privileges of infants, by denying baptism to them; making them to be lesser under the gospel dispensation than under the law, and the gospel dispensation less glorious. But as to the gospel dispensation, it is the more glorious for infants being left out of its church state; that is, for its being not national and carnal, as before; but congregational and spiritual; consisting not of infants, without understanding, but of rational and spiritual men, believers in Christ; and these not of a single country, as Judea, but in all parts of the world: and as for infants, their privileges now are many and better, who are eased from the painful rite of circumcision; it is a rich mercy, and a glorious privilege of the gospel, that the believing Jews and their children are delivered from it; and that the Gentiles and theirs are not obliged to it; which would have bound them over to fulfil the whole law: to which may be added, that being born of Christian parents, and having a Christian education, and of having opportunities of hearing the gospel, as they grow up; and that not in one country only, but in many; are greater privileges than the Jewish children had under the former dispensation.

v. It is objected, that there are no more express commands in scripture for keeping the first day of the week as a sabbath; nor for women partaking of the Lord's Supper, and other things, than for the baptism of infants. As for the first, though there is no express precept for the observance of it, yet there are precedents of its being observed for religious services (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1,2), and though we have no example of infant baptism, yet if there were scriptural precedents of it, we should think ourselves obliged to follow them. As for women's right to partake of the Lord's Supper, we have sufficient proof of it; since these were baptized as well as men; and having a right to one ordinance, had to another, and were members of the first church, communicated with it, and women, as well as

men, were added to it (Acts 8:12; 1:14; 5:1,14) we have a precept for it: "Let a man", ανθρωποσ, a word of the common gender, and signifies both man and woman, "examine him or herself, and so let him or her eat" (1 Cor. 11:29; see Gal. 3:28); and we have also examples of it in Mary the mother of our Lord, and other women, who, with the disciples, constituted the gospel church at Jerusalem; and as they continued with one accord in the apostles' doctrine and in prayer, so in fellowship and in breaking of bread; let the same proof be given of the baptism of infants, and it will be admitted.

vi. Antiquity is urged in favor of infant baptism; it is pretended that this is a tradition of the church received from the apostles; though of this no other proof is given, but the testimony of Origen, none before that; and this is taken, not from any of his genuine Greek writings, only from some Latin translations, confessedly interpolated, and so corrupted, that it is owned, one is at a loss to find Origen in Origen. No mention is made of this practice in the first two centuries, no instance given of it until the third, when Tertullian is the first who spoke of it, and at the same time spoke against it.^[11] And could it be carried up higher, it would be of no force, unless it could be proved from the sacred scriptures, to which only we appeal, and by which the thing in debate is to be judged and determined. We know that innovations and corruptions very early obtained, and even in the times of the apostles; and what is pretended to be near those times, is the more to be suspected as the traditions of the false apostles;^[12] the antiquity of a custom is no proof of the truth and genuineness of it;^[13] "The customs the people are vain" (Jer. 10:3). I proceed to consider,

IV. Fourthly, the way and manner of baptizing; and to prove, that it is by immersion, plunging the body in water, and covering it with it. Custom, and the common use of writing in this controversy, have so far prevailed, that for the most part immersion is usually called the "mode" of baptism; whereas it is properly baptism itself; to say that immersion or dipping is the mode of baptism, is the same thing as to say, that dipping is the mode of dipping; for as Sir John Floyer^[14] observes "Immersion is no circumstance, but "the very act of baptism", used by our Saviour and his disciples, in the institution of baptism." And Calvin expressly says,^[15] "The word "baptizing" signifies to plunge; and it is certain, that the rite of plunging was used by the ancient churches." And as for sprinkling, that cannot, with any propriety, be called a mode of baptism; it would be just such, good sense as to say, sprinkling is the mode of dipping, since baptism and dipping are the same; hence the learned Selden,^[16] who in the former part of his life, might have seen infants dipped in fonts, but lived to see immersion much disused, had reason to say, "In England, of late years, I ever thought the parson "baptized his own fingers" rather than the child," because he dipped the one, and sprinkled the other. That baptism is immersion, or the dipping of a person in water, and covering him with it is to be proved,

1. From the proper and primary signification of the word βαπτίζω, "baptize", which in its first and primary sense, signifies to "dip or plunge into"; and so it is rendered by our best lexicographers, "mergo", "immergo", "dip or plunge into." And in a secondary and consequential sense, "abluo, lavo", "wash", because what is dipped is washed, there being no proper washing but by dipping; but never "perfuno or aspergo", "pour or sprinkle"; so the lexicon published by Constantine, Budaeus, etc. and those of Hadrian Junius, Plantinus, Scapula, Stephens, Schrevelius, Stockius, and others; besides a great number of critics; as Beza, Casanbon, Witsius, etc. which might be produced. By whose united testimonies the thing is out of question. Had our translators, instead of adopting the Greek word baptize in all places where the ordinance of baptism is made mention of, truly translated it, and not have left it untranslated, as they have, the controversy about the manner of baptizing would have been at an end, or rather have been prevented; had they used the word dip, instead of baptize, as they should have done, there would have been no room for a question about it.

2. That baptism was performed by immersion, appears by the places chosen for the administration of it; as the river Jordan by John, where he baptized many, and where our Lord himself was baptized by him (Matthew 3:6,13,16), but why should he choose the river to baptize in, and baptize

in it, if he did not administer the ordinance by immersion? had it been done any other way, there was no occasion for any confluence of water, much less a river; [\[17\]](#) a basin of water would have sufficed. John also, it is said, "was baptizing in Aenon, near Salim, because there was much water" (John 3:23), which was convenient for baptism, for which this reason is given; and not for convenience for drink for men and their cattle, which is not expressed nor implied; from whence we may gather, as Calvin on the text does, "That baptism was performed by John and Christ, by plunging the whole body under water;" and so Piscator, Aretius, Grotius, and others on the same passage.

3. That this was the way in which it was anciently administered, is clear from various instances of baptism recorded in scripture, and the circumstances attending them; as that of our Lord, of whom it is said, "That when he was baptized he went up straightway out of the water", which supposes he had been in it; and so Piscator infers from his going up out of it, that therefore he went down into it, and was baptized in the river itself; of which going down there would have been no need, had the ordinance been administered to him in another way, as by sprinkling or pouring a little water on his head, he and John standing in the midst of the river, as the painter and engraver ridiculously describe it: and certain it is, he was then baptized in Jordan; the evangelist Mark says "into Jordan" (Mark 1:9), not at the banks of Jordan, but into the waters of it; for which reason he went into it, and when baptized, "came up out" of it, not "from" it, but "out" of it; $\alpha\pi\omicron$ and $\epsilon\xi$, signifying the same, as in Luke 4:35,41. So the preposition is used in the Septuagint version of Psalm 40:2 $\epsilon\xi$ and $\alpha\pi\omicron$ are "aequipollent", as several lexicographers from Xenophon observe. The baptism of the eunuch is another instance of baptism by immersion; when he and Philip were "come unto a certain water", to the water side, which destroys a little piece of criticism, as if their going into the water, after expressed, was no other than going to the brink of the water, to the water side, whereas they were come to that before; and baptism being agreed upon, "they went down both into the water", both Philip and the eunuch, "and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water", etc. Now we do not reason merely from the circumstances of "going down into, and coming up out of the water"; we know that persons may go down into water, and come up out of it, and never be immersed in it; but when it is expressly said, upon these persons going down into the water, that Philip baptized, or dipped, the eunuch; and when this was done, that both came up out of it, these circumstances strongly corroborate, without the explanation of the word "baptized", that it was performed by immersion; for these circumstances cannot agree with any other way of administering it but that; for a man can hardly be thought to be in his senses who can imagine that Philip went down with the eunuch into the water to sprinkle or pour a little water on him, and then gravely come out of it; hence, as the above learned commentator, Calvin, on the text says, "Here we plainly see what was the manner of baptizing with the ancients, for they plunged the whole body into the water; now custom obtaining, that the minister only sprinkles the body or the head." So Barnabas, [\[18\]](#) an apostolic writer of the first century, and who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as a companion of the apostle Paul, describes baptism by going down into and by coming up out of the water; "We descend," says he, "into the water full of sin and filth; and we ascend, bringing forth fruit in the heart, having fear and hope in Jesus, through the Spirit."

4. The end of baptism, which is to represent the burial of Christ, cannot be answered in any other way than by immersion, or covering the body in water; that baptism is an emblem of the burial of Christ, is clear from Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12. It would be endless to quote the great number, even of "paedobaptist" writers, who ingenuously acknowledge that the allusion in these

passages, is to the ancient rite of by immersion: as none but such who are dead are buried, so none but such who are dead to sin, and to the law by the body of Christ, or who profess to be so, are to be buried in and by baptism, or to be baptized; and as none can be properly said to be buried, unless under ground, and covered with earth; so none can be said to be baptized, but such who are put under water, and covered with it; and nothing short of this can be a representation of the burial of Christ, and of ours with him; not sprinkling, or pouring a little water on the face; for a corpse cannot be said to be buried when only a little earth or dust is sprinkled or poured on it.

5. This may be concluded from the various figurative and typical baptisms spoken of in scripture. As,

(1.) From the waters of the flood, which Tertullian calls [\[19\]](#) the baptism of the world, and of which the apostle Peter makes baptism the antitype (1 Pet. 3:20,21). The ark in which Noah and his family were saved by water, was God's ordinance; it was made according to the pattern he gave to Noah, as baptism is; and as that was the object of the scorn of men, so is the ordinance of baptism, rightly administered; and as it represented a burial, when Noah and his family were shut up in it, so baptism; and when the fountains of the great deep were broken up below, and the windows of heaven were opened above, the ark, with those in it, were as it were covered with and immersed in water; and so was a figure of baptism by immersion: and as there were none but adult persons in the ark, who were saved by water in it, so none but adult persons are the proper subjects of water baptism; and though there were few who were in the ark, it was attended with a salutary effect to them, they were saved by water; so such who truly believe in Christ, and are baptized, shall be saved, and that "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ", which was typified by the coming of Noah and his family out of the ark; to which baptism, as the antitype, corresponds, being an emblem of the same (Rom. 6:4,5; Col. 2:12).

(2.) From the passage of the Israelites under the cloud and through the sea, when "they were said to be baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. 10:1,2). There are various things in this account which agree with baptism; this was following Moses, who directed them into the sea, and went before them; so baptism is a following Christ, who has set an example to tread in his steps; and as the Israelites were baptized into Moses, so believers are baptized into Christ, and put him on; and this passage of theirs was after their coming out of Egypt, and at the beginning of their journey through the wilderness to Canaan; so baptism is administered to believers, at their first coming out of darkness and bondage worse than Egyptian, and when they first enter on their Christian pilgrimage; and as joy followed upon the former, "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel", etc. so it often follows upon the latter; the eunuch, after baptism, went on his way rejoicing: but chiefly this passage was a figure of baptism by immersion; as the Israelites were "under the cloud", and so under water, and covered with it, as persons baptized by immersion are; "and passed through the sea", that standing up as a wall on both sides them, with the cloud over them; thus surrounded they were as persons immersed in water, and so said to be baptized; and thus Grotius remarks upon the passage.

(3.) From the various washings, bathings, or baptisms of the Jews; called "various", because of the different persons and things washed or dipped, as the same Grotius observes; and not because of different sorts of washing, for there is but one way of washing, and that is by dipping; what has a little water only sprinkled or poured on it, cannot be said to be washed; the Jews had their

sprinklings, which were distinct from washings or bathings, which were always performed by immersion; it is a rule, with them, that "wherever in the law washing of the flesh, or of the clothes, is mentioned, it means nothing else than הכילת כל הגוף "the dipping of the whole body" in a laver--for if any man dips himself all over except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness."[\[20\]](#) according to them.

(4.) From the sufferings of Christ being called a baptism; "I have a baptism to be baptized with", etc. (Luke 12:50), not water baptism, nor the baptism of the Spirit, with both which he had been baptized; but the baptism of his sufferings, yet to come, he was desirous of; these are called so in allusion to baptism, as it is an immersion; and is expressive of the abundance of them, sometimes signified by deep waters, and floods of waters; and Christ is represented as plunged into them, covered and overwhelmed with them (Ps. 62:7; 69:1,2).

(5.) From the extraordinary donation of the Holy Spirit, and his gifts unto, and his descent upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, which is called "baptizing" (Acts 1:5; 2:1,2), expressive of the very great abundance of them, in allusion to baptism or dipping, in a proper sense, as the learned Casaubon[\[21\]](#) observes; *"Regard is had in this place to the proper signification of the word βαπτίζειν, to immerse or dip; and in this sense the apostles are truly said to be baptized, for the house in which this was done, was filled with the Holy Ghost; so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it, as into some pool." All which typical and figurative baptisms, serve to strengthen the proper sense of the word, as it signifies an immersion and dipping the body into, and covering it in water, which only can support the figure used. Nor is this sense of the word to be set aside or weakened by the use of it in Mark 7:4 and Luke 11:38 in the former, it is said, "Except they wash, βαπτίζονται, baptize, or dip themselves, they eat not"; and in it mention is made of βαπτισμών, "washings or dippings" of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables or beds; and in the latter, the Pharisee is said to marvel at Christ, that he had not first εβαπτισθη, "washed, or dipped, before dinner"; all which agrees with the superstitious traditions of the elders, here referred to, which enjoined dipping in all the cases and instances spoken of, and so serve but the more to confirm the sense of the word contended for; for the Pharisees, upon touching the common people or their clothes, as they returned from market, or from any court of judicature, were obliged to immerse themselves in water before they eat; and so the Samaritan Jews:[\[22\]](#) "If the Pharisees, says Maimonides,[\[23\]](#) touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled all one as if they had touched a profluvius person, and needed immersion," or were obliged to it: and Scaliger,[\[24\]](#) from the Jews observes, "That the more superstitious part of them, everyday, before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body; hence the Pharisees admiration at Christ" (Luke 11:38). And not only cups and pots, and brazen vessels were washed by dipping, or putting them into water, in which way unclean vessels were washed according to the law (Lev. 11:32), but even beds, pillows, and bolsters, unclean in a ceremonial sense, were washed in this way, according to the traditions of the elders referred to; for they say,[\[25\]](#) "A bed that is wholly defiled, if a man "dips" it part by part, it is pure." Again,[\[26\]](#) "If he "dips the bed" in it (a pool of water) though its feet are plunged into the thick clay (at the bottom of the pool) it is clean." And as for pillows and bolsters, thus they say,[\[27\]](#) "A pillow or a bolster of skin, when a man lifts up the mouth of them out of the water, the water which is in them will be drawn; what must be done? He must "dip" them, and lift them up by their fringes." Thus, according to these traditions, the various things mentioned were washed by immersion; and instead of weakening, strengthen the sense of the word pleaded for.

The objections against baptism, as immersion, taken from some instances of baptism recorded in scripture, are of no force; as that of the three thousand, in Acts 2, not with respect to their number; it may be observed, that though these were added to the church in one and the same day, it does not follow, that they were baptized in one day; but be it that they were, there were twelve apostles to administer the ordinance, and it was but two hundred and fifty persons apiece; and besides, there were seventy disciples, administrators of it; and supposing them employed, it will reduce the number to six or seven and thirty persons each: and the difference between dipping and sprinkling is very inconsiderable, since the same form of words is used in the one way as in the other; and therefore it might be done in one day, and in a small part of it too.^[28] Nor with respect to convenience for the administration of it; as water and places of it sufficient to baptize in: here can be no objection, when it is observed, what number of private baths were in Jerusalem for ceremonial uncleanness; the many pools in the city, and the various apartments and things in the temple fit for such a use; as the dipping room for the high priest, the molten sea for the common priests, and the ten brazen lavers, each of which held forty baths of water sufficient for the immersion of the whole body; all which they might be allowed the use of, as they were of the temple; they "having favor with all the people": not with respect to clothes, and change of garments; it was only everyone's providing and bringing change of raiment for himself. Another instance objected to is, that of the baptism of Saul (Acts 9:18), supposed to be done in the house where he was: but that does not necessarily follow, but rather the contrary; since he "arose" from the place where he was, in order to be baptized; and admitting it was done in the house, it is highly probable there was a bath in the house, in which it might be performed; since it was the house of a Jew, with whom it was usual to have baths to wash their whole bodies in on certain occasions; and had it been performed by sprinkling or pouring a little water on him, he needed not to have rose for that purpose. Besides, he was not only bid to arise and be baptized, which would sound very oddly if rendered, "be sprinkled" or "poured" (Acts 22:16), but he himself says, that he, with others, were "buried by" or "in baptism" (Rom. 6:4). Another instance is that of the jailer and his household (Acts 16:33), in which account there is nothing that makes it improbable that it was done by immersion; for it seems to be a clear case, that the jailer, upon his conversion, took the apostles out of prison into his own house, where they preached to him and his family (Acts 16:32), and after this they went out of his house, and he and his were baptized, very probably in the river without the city, where the oratory was (Acts 16:13), for it is certain, that after the baptism of him and his family, he brought the apostles into his house again, and set meat before them (Acts 16:33,34). Upon the whole, these instances produced, fail of showing the improbability of baptism by immersion; which must appear clear and manifest to every attentive reader of his Bible, notwithstanding all that has been opposed unto it. The next thing to be considered is,

V. Fifthly, the form in which this ordinance is to be administered; which is "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19), which contains in it a proof of a Trinity of Persons in the unity of the divine essence, of the Deity of each Person, and of their equality to, and distinction from each other; and shows, that this ordinance is performed under the authority of all Three; in which a person submitting to it, expresses his faith in them, and invocation of them, and gives up himself to them; obliging himself to yield obedience to what they require of him, as well as putting himself under their care and protection. This form is sometimes a little varied and otherwise expressed; as sometimes only "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16), which is a part of the form for the whole; and includes in it the substance of it, and of Christian baptism; and everything relating to the person and offices of Christ, and his relation to

and connection with the other Two persons. Cornelius and his family were ordered to be baptized, "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48), that is, in the name of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; for κυριου, Lord, in the New Testament, answers to Jehovah in the Old. The form of baptism in Matthew 28:19 is in the name of "the Father", etc. which single name denotes the one Deity, power, and substance of Father, Son, and Spirit; the equal dignity, co-eternal kingdom, and government in the Three perfect Persons; as it is expressed in the synodical epistle of the general council at Constantinople. [\[29\]](#)

VI. Sixthly, the ends and uses for which baptism is appointed, and which are answered by it.

1. One end of it, and a principal one, as has been frequently hinted, is, to represent the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ; which is plainly and fully suggested in Romans 6:4,5 and Colossians 2:12 his sufferings are represented by going into the water, and being overwhelmed in it, his burial by a short continuance under it, and being covered with it, and his resurrection by an immersion out of it.

2. It was practiced both by John and by the apostles of Christ, for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38), not that that is the procuring and meritorious cause of it, which only is the blood of Christ; but they who submit unto it, may, by means of it, be led, directed, and encouraged to expect it from Christ. And so,

3. In like manner it is for the washing away of sin, and cleansing from it; "Arise, and be baptized, and wash thy sins" (Acts 22:16), this only is really done the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; baptism neither washes away original nor actual sin, it has no such virtue in it; [\[30\]](#) but it is a means of directing to Christ the Lamb of God, who, by his atoning blood and sacrifice, has purged and continues to take away the sins of men.

4. A salutary or saving use and effect is ascribed unto it; "The like figure whereunto, baptism, doth also now save us"; should it be asked how, and by what means? the answer follows, "By the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:21), that is, by leading the faith of the person baptized to Christ, as delivered for his offences, and as risen again for his justification.

5. In the same passage it is said to be of this use, and to serve this purpose, "The answer of a good conscience towards God"; a man who believes baptism to be an ordinance of God, and submits to it as such, discharges a good conscience, the consequence of which is joy and peace; for though "for" keeping the commands of God there is no reward, yet there is "in" keeping them; and this is their reward, the testimony of a good conscience: for great peace have they which love God and keep his commandments.

6. Yielding obedience to this ordinance of Christ, is an evidence of love to God and Christ (1 John 5:3), and such who from a principle of love to Christ keep his commandments, may expect, according to his promise, to have fresh manifestations of his and his Father's love, and to have communion with Father, Son, and Spirit (John 14:15,21,23). This is an end to be had in view, in obedience to it, and a very encouraging one.

The
Ancient Mode Of Baptizing,
BY IMMERSION, PLUNGING, OR DIPPING
INTO WATER;
Maintained And Vindicated;

Against the Cavils and Exceptions of the Author of a late Pamphlet, entitled, The manner of Baptizing with Water cleared up from the Word of God and right Reason, etc.

Together with some remarks upon the Author's REASONS for the Practice of a FREE or mix Communion in Churches.

CHAPTER 1.

Some Remarks upon the Title of the Book, and the Author's method of writing.

The controversy about baptism, both with respect to its mode of administration, and proper subjects, has been of late so diligently searched into, and thoroughly discussed, that it may well seem needless to trouble the world with any further writings upon that subject, it being in a great measure only *actum agere*, to do the same thing over again, which has been well done already; but those of a different persuasion from us, being continually thrusting their *crambe millies cocta* upon us, and repeating the same things over and over again, though they have been sufficiently answered already, makes it necessary for us, in the defense of truth, and for the honor of Christ in his ordinance, to reply. A late anonymous author has thought fit to let the world know what a talent he has in that part of the controversy, which concerns the mode of administering this ordinance, by publishing a tract, whose title page runs thus, *The Manner of baptizing with Water, cleared up from the Word of God, and right Reason, in a plain free Debate upon that subject, between Mr.. J.P. and Mr.. B. W. June 6th, 1726. Published for instruction in righteousness.* How he has acquitted himself in the management thereof, and what improvements and discoveries he has made beyond others, is our present business to consider. It seems our author has not thought fit to say any thing concerning the subjects of baptism, but has confined himself to the mode of administration of it; whether it was because he did not care to engage in that part of the controversy, or whether he thought that it has been sufficiently handled already, and this not so, is what I do not pretend to determine; therefore seeing he has not thought proper to take notice of it, I shall not think my-self concerned to say any thing about it. From the title page we are given to expect, that *the manner of baptizing with water* shall be *cleared up* to us; for it seems we were all in the dark before about it,

or at least, there were such mists and fogs beclouding our apprehensions concerning this ordinance, that there was no seeing *clearly* into it, until the publication of this treatise, by which the author fancies these are dissipated, and the affair let in a *clear* light; but I hope to make it appear, before I have done, that instead of giving more light, he has *darkened counsel by words without knowledge*. The title also promises that this shall be cleared up *from the word of God, and right reason*. By the *word of God*, I suppose he means the written word of God, the scriptures of truth, which indeed are the only rule of our faith and practice; and from whence, under the conduct of the blessed Spirit, all our light in faith and worship springs; but what he means by *right reason*, needs explaining, and is not so easy to determine. If he means a just and strong way of reasoning, one might justly expect to find somewhat of it in this his performance; but the case being otherwise, I shall not, at present, farther inquire what else he designed by it; but only observe to him, that we ought to believe and act in matters of faith and worship, upon the sole credit and authority of the great God, as he has revealed his mind and will in the sacred writings.

The method which our author has taken, in order to set this matter in a clear light, is dialogue-wise, or in the form of a conference between two persons, or to use his own words, *in a plain free debate*. What moved him to take this method does not indeed much concern me to know, but yet I cannot forbear thinking, one reason might be, that he might have the opportunity of making his antagonist speak what he himself pleased; for it would have betrayed his weakness yet more, to have produced such arguments and objections which he was not, in his own way, able to solve: though at the same time it is an instance of his disingenuity, not fairly to propose those arguments which are made use of, nor give them their full weight and force, which he ought to have done in handling a controversy honestly and faithfully; as well as making his friend speak such weak and ridiculous things as never were, at least publicly, made use of in this controversy. Had he had a mind to have made a trial of his skill and his talents and abilities this way, why did not he take out the arguments of some such writers as *Tombs, Danvers, Keach, Stennet, or Gale*, and fairly propose them in their own words, and give an answer to them? But this would not have answered his design, which seems to be, exposing to ridicule and contempt the ordinance of baptism, by plunging or dipping; and would, moreover, have been a task too difficult and laborious for him. Perhaps he also thought, this method best to conceal himself from being known to be the author of it; but if it is truth he is in search of, and bearing a testimony to, why should he be ashamed of it? why did not he put his name to his book? This is such a poor, mean, and cowardly way of writing, as manifestly betrays either shame or fear to appear publicly in the cause he has espoused; if he thinks he is fighting *the Lord's battles*, why does not he appear like a man, in the open field, and not lie scouting behind the hedge? But perhaps this is to keep off a full blow that he is afraid might be given to him. But to go on, this debate or conference is represented, as managed by two persons, under the fictitious names of Mr. J. P. a plunger in water, and Mr. B. W. a baptizer with water; for it seems, according to our author, that plunging *in* water, and baptizing *with* water, are directly opposite to each other; but unless he can tell us, how a person can be baptized or dipped *into* water, without being baptized *with* it, they will not appear so opposite as he imagines, but of this more hereafter.

It is scarce worth my while to take any notice of the time when this conference was held, unless it be just to remark, that it would have been as well for the credit of the author, the good and peace of the churches of Christ, and the glory of his name, or better, if it had never been, or at least, if it had never been published; but it seems it is *published for instruction in righteousness*; but if any are instructed by it in that way, in which our blessed Lord thought it became him and his followers to

fulfill all righteousness, it will be contrary to the design and intention of the author; though I am credibly informed, that two persons have been already convinced by reading his book, that plunging or dipping the whole body in water, is the right way and mode of administering Baptism; such is the force of truth, that it will break out and appear, in spite of all opposition made against it.

I have nothing more to observe here, but only, that seeing the author has not thought fit to discover his name, the reader is desired to observe, that I shall call him by the name of Mr. B. W, which is what he has been pleased to assume to himself; and so proceed to the consideration of this wild, jumbling, and confused debate, in the best order and method into which I am capable of ranging it: Though I should have observed to the reader, the terms or articles agreed upon in this conference. As,

1. "That whatever was spoke, should be tried by the written word of God, and that only." But I thought from the title page, that right reason was to be joined to the word of God, in the management of this debate; but perhaps the mode of baptizing, the thing debated, is to be tried by the one, and *cleared* up by the other.

2. "That in all they should use plainness of speech, without any cunning craftiness; granting unto him that spoke, the liberty of explaining his own words, and meaning;" but if *cunning craftiness* is not made use of, and *a handling the word of God deceitfully*, in this debate, by Mr. B. W. I am much mistaken.

3. "That all be done with the spirit of meekness, and true Christianity; without passion, prejudice, bitter reflection, or railing accusation." How Mr. B. W. has conformed and acted agreeably to this article, may be very easily observed, when he calls baptism, as administered by plunging, *a superstitious invention*; and a pleading for it, *fathering foolish lies upon God*, page 23 and *will-worship*, page 24. The last article is, "That they both should keep within the bounds of brevity "and civility; the one must not be tedious in speaking, nor the other troublesome in interrupting:" Which terms being agreed upon, to work they go, and what they made of it, is now our business to inquire.

CHAPTER 2

The first argument for dipping or plunging in water, as the right mode of baptizing, taken from John's practice, and our Lord's example, in Matthew 3:16 with the objections of Mr. B.W. thereunto, considered.

Mr. B. W. introduces his antagonist in page 6 producing the instance of Christ's being baptized by John in Jordan, in favor of plunging or dipping in water, as the right and only mode of baptizing: the text cited is, Matthew 3:16, *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water*; from whence he argues, that he had been in it, seeing he could never be said to go out of that wherein he had not been. To which Mr. B. W. replies:

1. That the words signify no more than that he *went up* from *the water*; as, says he, persons of your judgment have been often told. It is true, it is kind in such learned Gentlemen as Mr. *B. W.* that they will condescend to instruct such poor ignorant creatures as we plungers are commonly represented, and as I suppose this author takes us to be; but when they have done their part, we are left without excuse, and cannot say, that we have not been *told* to the contrary; though it is prodigiously affronting, that after all the pains they have taken to instruct us, yet that we should strenuously insist on the justness of our translation, as we think, to be a little more serious, we have just reason to do. The reason of this low criticism is, because the preposition $\alpha\pi\omega$, and not $\epsilon\phi\kappa$, is here made use of, but $\alpha\pi\omega$ signifies *out of*, as well as *from*, and answers to the Hebrew $\מִן$, which also is of the same signification; and the rather it should be rendered so here, not only because it suits best with the scope of the place, but agrees with that parallel text in Acts 8:39 where $\epsilon\phi\kappa$ is made use of: So that there can be no foundation there for this trifling criticism. But if Mr. *B. W.* should question whether the word $\alpha\pi\omega$ is ever used in this sense, let him turn to the Septuagint in Psalm 40:2 which he seems to have some regard for, and there he will find it, where *David* says, the Lord *brought him up out of an horrible pit*, $\kappa\iota\ \alpha\pi\omega\ \pi\eta\lambda\omicron\upsilon\ \iota\lambda\upsilon\sigma\omega$, *and out of the miry clay*. But,

2. He adds, "Supposing the translation very right, I wonder, says he, where "dipping, overwhelming, or plunging, can be seen therein!" What a prodigious deal of strong reasoning is here? And I as much wonder too, where washing with water, either by pouring or sprinkling, can be seen therein. He goes on, "you say, he went out of the water, therefore he had been in it; but if you had said, he had been dipped, overwhelmed, or plunged, I should have denied the consequence."

It seems, however, that he is willing to grant, that Christ's going into the water, and being there, is a necessary inference and consequence, justly deduced from his coming up out of the water; though he is unwilling to allow plunging to be so, for otherwise I doubt not, but that he would have denied the one as well as the other; and I hope he will be willing to grant, that Christ went down into the water, in order to be baptized, and that he came up out of it as a baptized person; therefore he is desired to observe, that we do not infer plunging merely from Christ's going down into the water, nor from his coming up out of it, but from his going down into it in order to be baptized, and from his coming up out of it as a baptized person; for that a person may go into water, and come again out of it, and not be plunged into it, we know as well as he; but that a person should go into water, and be baptized in it, as Christ was, without being dipped or plunged into it, is what we deny; and if those circumstance, of John's administering this ordinance in the river *Jordan*, and Christ, when baptized, coming up out of the water, are not demonstrative proofs of plunging, yet they are at least strong presumptive ones, and such as I challenge him to produce the like, in favor of this ordinance being administered to Christ, by washing with water, either by pouring or sprinkling. If plunging is not a *necessary inference* from what is revealed concerning Christ's baptism, I am sure sprinkling or pouring of water can never be; and I will leave it to any *impartial man of judgment*, to use his own phrase, whether there is not a greater probability, to put it upon no other foot, of Christ's being baptized by immersion, when he went into the *river Jordan* to be baptized, and accordingly was baptized there by *John*, than there is of his being baptized in that river only by an affusion or sprinkling of water upon him: So that he has but little reason, with that air of assurance, and in that dogmatical way, to say, "that John baptized in Jordan is true, but he never dipped nor plunged any in his life;" as he does in page 10. And here I cannot forbear mentioning a passage of those excellent divines, *John Polyander*, *Andrew Rivet*, *Anthony WaLeus*, and *Anthony Thysius*, who at the same time that they are endeavoring to have the mode of baptism, either by plunging or

sprinkling, accounted an indifferent thing, acknowledge this instance of Christ's baptism to be an example of plunging. Their words are these, [\[1\]](#) "Whether baptism is to be administered by a single or a trine immersion, was always judged a thing indifferent in the Christian church; as also whether plunging or sprinkling is to be used, seeing no express command is extant concerning it; and examples of sprinkling as well as of plunging may be found in scripture; for as in Matthew 1:1 Christ went into the water, and came out of it, as also the *Ethiopian*, Acts 8. So, many thousands are said to be baptized in one day, in the *city of Jerusalem*, Acts 2. Likewise many in private houses (Acts 16, 18; 1 Cor. 1:16), where such a going into water was scarcely possible:" Which, by the way, is a mistake in those great men, for none of the texts alleged, though they prove a baptism of whole households, yet they do not prove that it was administered in their houses; for most of them plainly shew, that this was performed before the apostles entrance into them; and if it had been done there, it would be no proof or evidence that it was done by sprinkling, seeing proper accommodations to baptize by immersion might be had, even in a house: Though there is no reason, as I have hinted, to suppose it was done there; all that I produced this passage for, is to show, that though those valuable writers were fond of these instances, as evidences of sprinkling; yet they could not but acknowledge, that the baptism of Christ, and of the Eunuch, were examples of plunging. But to return: I desire, when our author insinuates, that Christ's being plunged by *John* in the river *Jordan*, when he was baptized by him, is a *human conjecture*, which he is not willing to build his faith upon; I desire, I say, that he would consider whether his suppositions that Christ went *ankle* or *knee* deep into the water, and was baptized by pouring or sprinkling water upon him, and that the multitudes baptized by *John* in *Jordan*, went down some *little way* into the water, from whence, being baptized, without any such thing as *stripping*, and *shifting*, and *plunging*, as his words are, "they straightway came up, and went about their business," are not *human conjectures*; and whether, seeing things are so, he may not be justly numbered among those who build their faith upon human conjectures, which he seems to be resolved against. And if nothing but conjectures can be formed from Christ's baptism, concerning the mode of it, I persuade myself, that to every thinking and unprejudiced person, the conjecture, if it must be called so, of Christ's being plunged, when baptized, will appear more probable, and much preferable to that of his having water poured or sprinkled on him. As for his rejecting the observation which some have made on Mark 1:9 and saying, that it might as well be let alone, I do not much wonder at it, it no ways agreeing with his notion of baptism. The observation is this, that whereas it is said in Mark 1:9 that Jesus *was baptized of John in Jordan*, it might have been rendered εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην, *into Jordan*, as the preposition εἰς is frequently translated. Now to say, that he was *poured* or *sprinkled* of *John* into *Jordan*, would want sense, but to say, that he was plunged or dipped into *Jordan*, runs very smooth, and is very good sense; for a person cannot be said to be baptized, or dipped *in* a river, without being baptized or dipped *into* it; and indeed this is the meaning of all those scriptures which speak of *John's* baptizing in *Jordan*, as Matthew 3:6 and Mark 1:5. And whereas he says, that the Holy Ghost intends by it *a baptizing in Jordan*; he ought to observe, that this cannot be without a baptizing into it; to which, I suppose, he will readily reply, that this is taking for granted that the word properly signifies *to dip or plunge*; and he may take it for granted that we will do so, until he, or somebody else, can give us an instance where the word is otherways used; which I believe he, and greater masters of the Greek tongue than himself, will never be able to do. But,

3. Mr. *B. W.* not only represents plunging, as urged from Christ's baptism, to be a mere *non sequitur*, and an human conjecture, but also attended with nonsense, and very gross absurdities; as when he says, page 9 "By the same way of reasoning, you may as well persuade an impartial man

of judgment, that Christ is under water still, because it is said, that he went into the place where John at first baptized, and there he abode (John 10:40)." As if Christ's going to *Bethabara*, a place where *John* had formerly baptized, and Christ had dwelt in, was a parallel case to his going down into the river *Jordan*, to be baptized by *John* there. But I am persuaded, that the very mention of this, without making any further remarks upon it, will much more expose our author to the scorn and contempt of every *impartial man of judgment*, than our way of reasoning, for plunging, from Christ's baptism, ever will do us. He goes on in a trifling manner, to shew how weak and ridiculous our method of arguing from *John's* baptism is, "they were baptized in *Jordan*, says he; therefore they were plunged over head and ears;" which he fancies is as absurd, and as inconsequential, as if one should say, the staff stands in the corner, therefore it rains; or because, says he, it is said that *John* baptized in the wilderness, therefore in baptizing he thrust the people into thorns and briars."

What he means by all this ludicrous stuff I cannot tell, unless it be to banter the ordinance of water-baptism in general, and so join forces with the Quakers, utterly to explode it; for what he seems here to direct against the mode of baptizing by immersion, may be retorted upon any other, and particularly his own; thus, they were baptized in *Jordan*, therefore they went *ankle or knee deep* into it, and had water poured or sprinkled on them; which is equally as filly and ridiculous, as if one should say, "the staff stands in the corner, therefore it rains;" or because it is said, that *John* baptized in the wilderness, therefore in baptizing, he put the people *knee deep into thorns and briars*, and scratched their faces with them. But away with such ridiculous impertinencies as these. Could not the man distinguish between the place where *John* was preaching the doctrine of baptism unto repentance, and the place where he was administering the ordinance of it, the one being in the wilderness, and the other in the river *Jordan*, as he might have been informed, if he had more diligently consulted the text he has reference to, in Mark 1:4, 5. But what he fancies will most affect us, is, that *John* is said to baptize *with* water: now says our author, if "baptizing and plunging signify the same thing, then *John* might have said, I plunge you indeed with water;" all persons, adds our author, but those of your judgment, would readily conclude, that such an expression wanted sense;" that is, because he looks upon us plungers, as he is pleased to call us, no doubt, as persons exceeding illiterate, and who are altogether unacquainted with language; whilst he, and those of his persuasion, must be considered as the only men of sense and learning; but if this penetrating man, this man of sense, can tell us, how a person can be plunged *in* water, without being plunged *with* it, what a prodigious discovery would he make to the world! and if it would want sense to read the words, "I plunge you indeed *with* water;" then pray let them be read, *I plunge you indeed in water*, and I hope they will not want sense then; aye, "but, says Mr. *B. W.* *John* tells us himself, that he baptized them *with* water; and, says he, lest plungers should not observe this, all the four evangelists take notice of it" (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:26). I confess I have consulted all those texts, and find the words to be read thus, *I indeed baptize you*, εν υδαπ, *in water*, only in Luke 3:16 the preposition εν is omitted, which some, as *Pasor* and *Schmidius* think, in the other texts, is an Hebraism, or an Attic pleonasm, and then the sense and reading will be, either way, the same as what I have given; but then here is another prodigious absurdity behind, which those of a different persuasion from us think we are inevitably thrown into by this reading, and that is, that then we must be obliged to read the other part of the text thus, *he shall baptize you in the holy Ghost and in fire*; and this our author seems to have regard unto, when he says, "It is impossible that any impartial man of judgment can so much as imagine, that by being baptized with the holy Ghost, a being plunged in the holy Ghost should be understood; for the Lord himself tells

us, that by baptizing he means pouring;" for the proof of which, he mentions Isaiah 44:3 and Acts 10:44.

That the donation of the Spirit is sometimes expressed by pouring, sometimes by sprinkling, I frankly own; but this which John has reference to, is the extraordinary donation of the Spirit on the day of *Pentecost*, as is manifest from Acts 1:5. and therefore another word is made use of, as being more expressive of the glory and greatness of that dispensation; and when we consider the account that is given of it, by the inspired writer, as that *there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the house where they were sitting; and that cloven tongues, like as of fire, sat upon each of them; and that they were all filled with the holy Ghost*; it will not seem so very strange, incongruous, and disagreeable to say, that they were as if they had been dipped or plunged all over therein. I am persuaded our author will acknowledge the learned *Casaubon* to be an *impartial man of judgment*, and yet he speaks of, and explains this affair much in the same language. His words are there, with which I shall conclude this chapter: "Although, says he,^[2] do not disapprove of the word *baptizare* being retained here, that the antithesis may be full, yet I am of opinion, that a regard is had in this place to its proper signification, for βαπτίζειν is to immerse, so as to tinge or dip, and in this sense the apostles are truly said to be baptized, for the house in which this was done, was filled with the holy Ghost so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it as into a fish-pool." And in the same way, their being baptized or dipped in fire, may be accounted for, that being expressive of the same thing, unless our author should think, that this is still a much more improper way of speaking, but among the best Greek authors, we have this phrase of dipping in fire made use of, and particularly in *Moschus*.^[3]

CHAPTER 3

The second argument in favor of baptism by immersion, taken from the place John chose to baptize in, and the reason of that choice (John 3:23). with the weak replies, and foolish shifts and evasions which Mr. B. W. makes thereunto, considered.

Mr. *B. W.* next introduces his friend Mr. *P.* in page 11, 12 arguing for immersion, from those words in John 3:26. *And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there*, after this manner; namely, "*John was baptizing in Enon, because there was much water there; therefore all that were baptized were overwhelmed with water. They were dipped, they were plunged, because there was much water there.*"

But this argument is not very fairly represented; for we do not argue merely from there being much water there, that they were dipped or plunged, but from their being *baptized* in a place of much water, and which was chose for that very reason. We know that there may be much water where no person is dipped or plunged into it; but that any person should be *baptized* in a place of much water, without being dipped or plunged into it, is what we deny. Moreover the reasonableness of concluding that baptism, in those times, was performed by immersion, we think may be fairly argued from John's choosing of, and baptizing in a place where there was much water, and we

believe it will appear so to every thinking and unprejudiced person; but let us consider what Mr. *B. W.* has to reply. And,

1st, To shew his learning and skill in choreography, he inquires what *Enon* was, whether it was a river or no, and seems to call in question its being so, and therefore tells us, page 13. *That such a river cannot be found in the best accounts we have of the land of Israel: and adds, and it is very probable, that Enon was either a village, or a tract of land, where there were abundance of springs and little rivulets of water.* Whether *Enon* is the name of a river, or of a city, town or village, or of a tract of land abounding with water, does not *much* affect our controversy, if it is but granted that there was much water there, for which reason *John* made choice of it to baptize in; and I hope it will be granted, that there was a sufficiency of water to baptize by immersion, especially seeing Mr. *B. W.* tells us in page 17 that *for plunging of people there need not be much water.* The Arabic version divides the word into two, and calls it Ain-Nun, which may be rendered, *the fountain of Nun*; as does also the *Syriac*, *Ain-Yon*, which *Junius* renders *the fountain of the Dove*: And as for *Salim*, near to which was *Enon*, and which is the best direction for the finding where it was; this was either *Shalem*, a city of *Shechem*, mentioned in Genesis 33:18 as some think, though this is not very likely, seeing that was in *Samaria*, with the inhabitants of which *John* had nothing to do; or else it is the same with *Shalim*, in 1 Samuel 9:4 as *Junius* and others think, though it seems rather to be that place which *Arias Montanus*^[4] calls *Salim juxta torrentem*, *Salim by the brook*, which he places in the tribe of *Issachar*, not far from the lake of *Genesaret*; and may be called so, perhaps, either because it was near this *Enon*, where there was much water, or else because it was not far from the place where the two rivers *Jaboc* and *Jordan* met; as *Calvin*, from the geographers, observes upon this place. But supposing that our present best accounts of the land of *Israel*, make no mention of any such river as *Enon*; nor can it be determined by them what it was, or where it was; yet I hope it will be acknowledged, that the account of it in the sacred text is just, and that whether it be a river, village, or tract of land, yet there was *much water* there; for which reason *John* made choice of it as a proper place to baptize in, which is sufficient for our purpose. But,

2dly, From inquiring into the place itself, he proceeds to give us *the notation* of the word, or the reason of its name; for he says, *the learned tell us, that the word does signify a place of springs*: And the learned^[5] also tell us, that it signifies an *eye*, as well as a spring or fountain; and also *soothsaying*, and *clouds*, or a *beclouding*; so that there is not much to be learned from that. And here I cannot forbear mentioning the observation of *Aretius*, upon this place; though I suppose that Mr. *B. W.* will think that he might as well have let it alone, who, after he had said that it was a town near *Jordan*, observes,^[6] that it *signifies affliction, humility, and weeping*: I suppose he derives it from the Hebrew word *hn*[*Anab*, which sometimes signifies to humble and afflict; "thereby, says he, teaching us, "that such we are required to be in baptism and true repentance." But to go on: In order to strengthen this sense of the word, which Mr. *B. W.* says is given by the learned, he informs us, that "it is observable, that the town called. *Middin*, in Joshua 15:61 is called *Enon*, by the seventy Greek interpreters of the Old Testament;" whether this is an observation of his own, or of the learned with whom he converses, he does not tell us; if of the latter, he might have been so kind as to have told us who they were, that we might have consulted them, and have considered their proofs of it. By what goes before and after, it seems as if he meant that it was one of theirs; which when one comes to examine, it looks, according to the order of the text, as if it was *Secacah*, and not *Middin*, that is rendered *Enon*; the words in Joshua 15:61 *in the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin & Secacah*, are by the Septuagint thus rendered, etc. *Baddargeis, etc Tharabaam, etc.*

Aenon; so that if a regard is to be had to the order of the words, then as *Baddargeis* answers to *Beth-arabah*, so *Tharabaam* to *Middin*, and *Aenon* to *Secacah*; and if so, here is a fine piece of critical learning spoiled: But supposing that *Baddargeis* answers to *Bamidbar*, which we render, *in the wilderness*; and *Tharabaam* to *Beth-arabah*, and so *AEnon* to *Middin*, because the Septuagint make seven cities here, and in the following verse, when there are but fix, to what purpose is this produced? or what is gained by it? or how does this prove that the word signifies a place of springs? Yes, in Mr. *B. W's* imagination, it serves a very good purpose, and sufficiently proves this signification of the word; but how? why *they* (the learned) *also observe*, says he, "that in Judges 5:10, there is mention made of those that fit in, upon, or near *Middin*, we read *injudgment*, where immediately the holy Ghost takes notice of the *places of drawing water*; so that, if any body would know wherefore *Middin* is rendered *Enon* by the Septuagint, the reason is ready, because of the *places of drawing water*."

A fine way of arguing indeed! what, *because Middin*, in Joshua 15:61 is rendered *Aenon* by the Septuagint, and because a word of the same form and found, is rendered in Judges 5:10. by the same $\epsilon\pi$ Κριτηριου , "upon the judgment-seat;" and we read *in judgment*, where the holy Ghost immediately takes notice of the places of drawing water; therefore the reason is ready for any body to know why *Middin* is rendered by *Enon*, in the former text, and that is, because of the *places of drawing water*." Can any man in the world see any connection here? and how does this appear to be the ready, plain and easy reason of this version: Had either *Middin* or *Enon* been in the Septuagint text of Judges 5:10 there had been some tolerable color and pretense for all this, though that would have fell short of proving it to be the reason of such a version in Joshua 15:61 but here is not the least appearance of either; though it is true, there are some interpreters who think that the word rendered *judgment*, is the proper name of a place either of that city mentioned in Joshua 15:6, or of a *path* or road-way which bore this name; so the *Masora*, *R. David Kimchi*, and *R. Levi Ben Gersom*; though the Targum, Septuagint, *R. Solomon Jarchi*, *R. Isaiah*, understood it of *judgment*, as we do, as well as many other interpreters and expositors; but granting that the word does signify a place of fountains and springs, and was so called, because of the places of drawing water, then I hope there was aplenty of water there, and what was sufficient for the baptizing of persons by immersion of the whole body; for which reason *John* made choice of it. But,

3. He goes on and says, "You and your friends must grant, that the words of the holy Ghost do not denote much water in one great channel, but many waters, streams or rivulets, in a certain tract or neighborhood." By the *words of the holy Ghost*, I suppose he means πολλα υδατα , which our translators have very well rendered *much water*; and he seems in this passage to have reference to that poor low criticism, which those of his persuasion are often obliged to have recourse to, which is, that there words are not expressive of a large quantity of water, but signify only, many little streams and rivulets, which are not sufficient for an immersion of the whole body, and therefore should have been rendered, not *much water*, but *many waters*. We grant that υδατα πολλα may be literally rendered *many waters*; but that they signify some little small streams and rivulets of water, and not a large quantity thereof, is what we deny. That *John* intends a large and not a small quantity of water, is manifest from his use of the phrase in other of his writings, as for instance, in Revelation 1:15, it is said of Christ, that *his voice was as the sound*, υδατοιν πολλα , *of many waters*; but what found does little purling streams, and small rivulets of water make? And who can imagine the allusion should be made to them; or that these should be expressive of the voice of Christ in the gospel, especially in the ministry of it by the apostles, *whose sound went into all the*

earth, and their words unto the end of the world? Again, in Revelation 17:1 the great whore is represented as fitting ἐπι τῶν ὕδατων τῶν πολλῶν, "upon many waters," by which are metaphorically set forth unto us, those many people, kingdoms, and nations over whom she exercised a lawless and tyrannical power, as appears from verse 15 where the angel tells *John*, that the waters which he saw, where the *whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*: from whence it is manifest, that by this phrase is intended, not a small quantity of people, or some little petty nations and kingdoms, which were subject to the see of *Rome*; but a large quantity of people, even *multitudes*, and of nations and kingdoms, the chief and greatest; besides, our author, as well as others, would do well to consider, that ὕδατα πολλὰ is an Hebraism, and answers to מים רבים *Rabbim Mayim*, and by which the Septuagint frequently render these words; and that where small streams and rivulets cannot be intended, but large and great waters are spoken of, nay where indeed, the waters of the sea are plainly meant: As for instance, in Psalm 77:19 it is said concerning God's leading his people through the *Red Sea, Thy way is in the sea, and thy path, εφ' ὕδασι ὠλλοισῶ, in many waters*, or as we justly read it, *in the great waters*; for surely the waters of the sea may be called so, and I hope that ὕδατα πολλὰ, here, does not signify many little streams and rivulets. Again, in Psalm 107:23, sea-faring persons are thus described, *they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business, εφ' ὕδασι πολλοῖσιν, in many waters*, that is, *in great waters*, as the waters of the sea are; and I persuade myself, that none can be so weak as to imagine, that ships can sail in small streams and rivulets, or the business that the *Psalmist* speaks of, to be done in such places where there is not a sufficiency of water to dip or plunge into.

Moreover, if this phrase may not be allowed to be an Hebraism, it will be hard to prove that many waters signify a small quantity, and only some little streams or rivulets: Sure I am, some persons, of far superior learning to what Mr. *B. W.* discovers, have thought the contrary, as *Grotius, Piscator, Lightfoot*, and others; but if there may not be allowed to be good judges of the Greek tongue, I hope *Nonnus Panopolitanus* may, who flourished about the year 420 was a famous Greek and Christian poet, and turned this gospel, according to *John*, into Greek verse, who not only says, that the place where *John* was baptizing, was βαθυκυμονοῦ, "a place of deep waters," but also expresses ὕδατα πολλὰ by ἀφθονον ὕδωρ, *copiosa aqua*, "a large water, or abundance of water:" But because his version of the whole text makes much for the elucidation of it, I will transcribe it from him:—
 Ἦν δε κι αυτοῦ θεος Ἰωαννης θεοπειθεα λαον αλητην Ὑδατι βαπτιζων βαθυκυμονος ενδου
 θι σαλημ Κειθι γαρ ευρυποροιο κυλενδομενου ποταμοιο Χευμασιν αεναοις κυμαινεται α
 φθονον ὕδωρ Ἀρκιον ειμ ενι πασιν, Which may be rendered in English thus, "And the divine *John* himself also was baptizing in water, the straying people, who were obedient to God, at *or in* a place of deep waters, near to *Salem*, because there abundance of water, sufficient for them altogether, flowed in the ever-running streams of the winding river, whole passage over is very broad." But supposing that much water in one great channel is not intended, though I must confess I can see no reason why it should not, and that many waters, streams, or rivulets are here meant; yet, who does not know that many of these together, can not only fill large and capacious pools, sufficient enough for immersion, but also frequently form and feed very great rivers? so that I do not see that this will much help his cause, or affect our argument. But Mr. *B. W.* says, page 14. "But what and if the holy Ghost intends to give us the reason why the place was called *Enon*, because there were many waters, springs or rivulets there? what will become of your argument then, and how will you help yourself?" Where he insinuates, as if the design of the holy Ghost in these words, *because there was much water there*, is not to inform us of the convenience of this place for baptizing, or that it was the reason why *John* made choice of it, but to explain the meaning of the

word *Enon*, and to let us know, that the place was so called, because there was much water, or many springs or rivulets there: How trifling and ridiculous is this? Does the holy Ghost take such a method as this in other parts of the Bible, where the proper names of places are mentioned? and what necessity can there be for explaining of this any more than there is of others? and why is not the meaning of *Salim* as well as *Enon* given? Surely we need not be afraid of losing our argument from such interpretations and senses of scriptures as there, which will appear vain and trifling at the first view, to every impartial man of judgment; nor need we be much solicitous about helping ourselves, when pressed with such silly nonsense as this. But,

4. Mr. *B. W.* proceeds to charge the argument for plunging in baptism, taken from hence, not only with want of consequence, but as a vain conjecture: his words are there; "Granting, says he, that *Enon* was a great river, or a great water, yet it can never be proved that *John* plunged persons all over in it; that is nothing at all but your vain conjecture;" and then in his usual, positive, and dogmatical way, adds, "he baptized them, but he never plunged them." Here I need only reason as I did before, with regard to the baptism of Christ, and others, in *Jordan*, that if *John's* pitching upon *Enon*, as a convenient place to baptize in, *because there was much water there*, and his baptizing in that place is not a demonstrative proof of his baptizing by plunging, yet at least must be a strong presumptive one, and such an one as he can never produce in favor of his baptizing there by an affusion or sprinkling of water: And again, is to suppose that *John* baptized there by immersion, is a vain and trifling conjecture, I am sure, and I believe it will appear to every unprejudiced person, that to suppose that he did it by sprinkling or pouring, is much more so. And if we poor ignorant creatures may not be allowed to infer and conclude immersion from hence, without being charged with making vain and trifling conjectures; yet I hope he will be a little more sparing of the great *Calvin*, for whom, I do not doubt, from some few hints I have observed in this conference, he has a value and respect, and whom I persuade myself he will allow to be an *impartial man of judgment*, and to whose judgment he will always pay a deference: His note upon this text, is this; "Geographers write, says he, that there two towns, *Enon* and *Salim*, were not far from the confluence of *Jaboc* and *Jordan*, nigh to which they place *Scythopolis*. Moreover, from those words we may gather that baptism was performed by *John* and Christ, by a plunging of the whole body under water;"^[7] and I think we may conclude this very fairly too, whatever Mr. *B. W.* may think of it. But,

5thly, Our ingenious author, by a new turn and mighty stretch of thought, has found out another reason, besides that of convenience, for baptizing, which made *John* fix upon, and determined him in the choice of this place, there being much water there, and that is, that *the vast multitudes* which flocked to, and attended upon his ministry, might be *refreshed*; as also their horses, or their camels, or whatsoever we may suppose many of them did ride upon; by which, I suppose, he means *asses*. I cannot but observe, that he seems to speak this with some caution or guard upon himself, as he does also in page 17 where he says, speaking of the people which flocked to *John's* ministry, "a great number of them, doubtless, must travel many miles; and we must suppose, many on foot, and many otherwise:" and this I cannot but attribute to a self-consciousness in him, that he deserved to be numbered among those animals, or at least, to his being aware that this would be turned upon him, for his foolish and ridiculous glosses on the sacred writings. What seems the most to strengthen him in his folly, and upon which he says much stress, is the vast multitudes of people which followed *John*, and attended upon his ministry; and the unwise part *John* would have acted, if he had not chose places where refreshment might be had for themselves and their cattle: But surely the

man forgets himself, or at least, does not give himself time to consider, that *John* was now upon the declining hand, and had not those vast numbers and multitudes following him as formerly he had; the crowd was now after Christ, and not *John*; and though he had some which came to him, and were baptized, yet they were but few in comparison of what he had formerly, or what now followed Christ; as he might easily have observed, by reading this third chapter of *John*; and therefore there was no need for him to be so solicitous for accommodations for the people and their cattle, as is here by our author intimated; and to make his sense appear the more plausible, he tells us, that "by *John's* baptizing, we are to understand *John's* preaching, administering in his office, and fulfilling his course;" for which he cites, Matthew 21:25 and Acts 10:47. It is readily granted, that sometimes by *John's* baptism, we are to understand his whole ministry, and particularly the doctrine of baptism, preached by him, as distinct from the administration of the ordinance; but that by his baptizing here is meant his preaching, must be denied; for that it intends his administration of the ordinance of water-baptism, not only his act of *baptizing*, but the people's submission to it; for the text says, *they came and were baptized*, manifestly prove it; to say nothing of the place where it was performed, being a place of much water, the thing now in debate. He also insinuates, that great part of the land of *Judea* was sandy and barren; but not so barren as his arguments are. "You may understand, says he, what sort of a country, for water, a great part of that land was, from the great contentions between *Isaac's* servants, and others, about digging, finding, and enjoying wells of water;" but these contentions did not arise so much from the scarcity of water, as from the envy of the *Philistines* on the one hand, and from *Isaac's* servants, stiffly insisting upon their right and property, on the other: For though persons may have never such plenty of things, yet they are not willing to be defrauded of what is their just right.

He goes on: "Glad at heart they were when they found plenty of water, for their own refreshment, and the refreshment of their cattle." One would be almost tempted to think that the man was describing the sandy deserts of *Arabia*, rather than the fertile land of *Canaan*, and representing *the travelling companies of Dedanim* who being almost scorched with heat, are thrown into a transport of joy, at the sight of a spring of water; but who will it be most proper to give credit to, *Moses*, an inspired writer, who told the people of *Israel*, that God was bringing them into a *good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills*; or our blundering geographer, who represents it as a desert and wilderness. Moreover, it seems, that there need not be much water for the plunging of persons, and therefore *John* need not have chose this place upon that account; but I hope, so much is needful, as will cover the persons all over. And there is one thing therefore that we need not be afraid of being pressed with by our author, as we are by some, and that is, the scarcity of water in some parts. But what he says of the practice of our friends in *London*, is entirely false, which is, that they *plunge in little holes or tubs*; for I cannot see, but he must mean them, and not those in other places; because he adds, rather than the *Thames*, that is just by. Now there are but two places, in and about *London*, that I know of, which are made use of for the administration of this ordinance, the one is in the midst of a public meeting-house, and the other in an open place, where there are conveniences for a large number of spectators; and it is very rare that this ordinance is administered by us in a private manner, as some other performances commonly are, in a lying-in chamber; and that only in the presence of a midwife, a nurse, and two or three gossiping women. As for the instance of a certain plunger in the country, performing the ordinance in an horse-pond, in the middle of a town, I shall suspend my thoughts about it, and neither condemn nor commend his practice, unless I had a better account of it, with its circumstances, than Mr. *B. W.* has given; though I can see no great damage in it, as he has related it,

provided the water was not dirty and filthy: But I suppose he designs it as a banter upon us, and a diversion for his reader; much good may do him with it, and let him make the best of it he can.

CHAPTER 4.

The third argument insisted on, in favor of plunging or dipping, as the right mode of baptizing, taken from the practice of the apostles, and particularly from the instance of the Eunuch's baptism in Acts 8:38, 39 with the cavils and exceptions of Mr. B. W. against it, considered.

The next argument which our author, page 18 produces, as insisted on by us, for the proof of baptism by immersion, and which he excepts against, is taken from the practice of the apostles, and particularly the instance of *Philip's* baptizing the Eunuch, recorded in Acts 8:38, 39. thus; And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, etc. Here I must again observe, as I have already, in a parallel case, that we do not from this instance infer plunging, merely from *Philip* and the *Eunuch's* going down into, and coming up out of the water; for we know, as well as he, that persons may go hundreds of times into water, as he says, without any design of plunging, or of being plunged; but we argue from both of them going down into the water; the one in order to administer the ordinance of water-baptism, and the other to submit unto it; and from their coming up out of it, as having performed it; from whence we think we have sufficient reason to conclude, that this was performed by immersion, or a plunging of the whole body under water; for to what purpose should they both go down into the water, if the ordinance was to be performed any other way? or what need would there have been of it? But if plunging cannot be inferred from hence, I am sure it is impossible that pouring or sprinkling should. But let us see what Mr. *B. W.* will infer from this instance, and has to except against our argument from hence. And,

1st, From *Philip* and the *Eunuch's* both going down into the water, and coming up out of it, in a profane and irreligious manner, he infers, that neither of them were *drowned there*. Does this become a minister of the gospel, to treat the sacred writings, and the accounts they give of a solemn ordinance of Christ, after this manner? Whatever profane loose he may give himself in his attempts to be witty on the mode of baptizing by immersion, which he supposes to be unscriptural, yet, at least, he ought to set bounds to himself, and not be so free in playing with, and bantering the very words of the holy Ghost. But,

2dly, If that is rejected, why then he infers from hence, that they were *both plunged* over head and ears in the water. This, I suppose, is designed to shew the absurdity of our way of reasoning, as he imagines: But does not the man consider, that the one went down as an *administrator*, the other as a *subject* of baptism; the one *to baptize*, the other *to be baptized*? But suppose the ordinance was administered by pouring or sprinkling water, might it not be as justly inferred, that because they both went down into the water, one to perform, and the other to have it performed, and came up again out of it, when it was done, therefore they both had water poured upon them, or were sprinkled with it? And then,

3dly, When he is asked why he could not have concluded, that *one* was plunged and the *other* not: he replies, "Why truly, says he, because I thought it out "of the way of all sense, reason and revelation so to infer." I hope he will not say that it is out of the way of *all sense, reason, and revelation* to infer, that the one went down in order to administer the ordinance of baptism, and the other to have it administered to him; but I suppose he means that it is out of the way of all sense, reason and revelation, to infer plunging from hence: But how then came the judicious *Calvin* to be so much out of the way, to conclude from hence that plunging was the ancient mode of baptizing, as he does, when he says, "here we see what was the rite of baptizing with the ancients; for they plunged the whole body into water?"^[8] How came this great man to be guilty of matting such a *vain conjecture* as our author says it is? especially when he affirms there is not in sacred history, the *least shadow of a foundation* for it. But to proceed,

4thly, In order to elude the force of our argument, from their going down into the water, he observes, that whosoever goes to any water, especially out of a chariot, must go down to it. But he is desired to observe, that it is not said, that they both went down *to* the water, but they both went *into* it. As for the text in Psalm 107:23 which speaks of persons going *down to the sea in ships*, I hope our author does not think that they went by land in ships to the sea-side: If he would know what is meant by this, let him read ver. 26 where the distress that seafaring men are often in, is thus elegantly and beautifully described, *they mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble*; and what this means, those who have used the seas know full well, when their ships have been tossed up as it were to the heavens, and then again plunged into the depths of the sea, where they have been immersed in, and covered over with the waves thereof for a while, and on a sudden, have sprang out from thence. It is then they see the wondrous works of the Lord, in his remarkable appearance for them, and providential preservation of them.

5thly, He tells us, that "had he been in the Eunuch's place, he should not have chosen to have water poured upon him in the chariot, but for several reasons should have been entirely for going down to the water." He does not tell us what these *designs* are, that we might have considered them; but with his usual air of confidence affirms, that "there was no stripping, nor plunging, nor putting on change of raiment in the case;" and all the reason he has to assign for it, is, because "Philip was directly caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and the Eunuch immediately went on his way rejoicing:" But I hope he will allow that *Philip* was come up out of the water first, before he was caught away, and that the Eunuch was got into his chariot, before he went on his way; and to suppose so much time as was necessary to change their raiment, is no way contrary to the account in the sacred text, and he would also do well to consider, that those words *directly*, and *immediately*, are not to be found there. But,

6thly, He argues, that if those who were baptized by the apostles were plunged or overwhelmed, "then what prodigious labor must the apostles go through, when three thousand were baptized in one day, yea perhaps in less than half of it!" To which I answer; There does not seem to be any necessity of concluding from Acts 2:41 that they were all baptized in one day; but if they were, when we consider that there were twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, who were employed in the ministry of the word, Luke 10:1 and so no doubt in baptizing, it will not appear so prodigiously fatiguing as our author intimates; for a single person, without having the strength either of *Hercules*, or *Samson*, and without much fatiguing himself, may baptize, in this way, a considerable number in a very little time. But then here is another difficulty behind, and that is, "What great

trouble must they be at in stripping, and shifting, and changing apparel! and what abundance of plunging garments they must have ready!" To which I reply, no more trouble than a single person has for himself, and no more plunging garments to be provided than every one to provide for themselves, which is no more trouble than when five or ten persons only are baptized: and when we consider how much *bathing* was in use among the Jews, it will not seem so strange, where, and how they should be so easily provided with plunging garments. Our objector goes on, and adds, "In what a poor condition was *Paul*, when he was plunged, having been so ill, and so long without eating or drinking! and after that, how unfit must *Paul* himself be under his wounds and bruises, and in the dead of the night, to go into some deep water, and take up the jailor and plunge him!" Here I cannot but remark the wretched blunder that our author makes, or at least the inadvertency, to say no worse of it, that he is guilty of, in talking as if the baptism *Paul* and the jailor was in one and the same night. But if he objects this is not his meaning, why did he write in such a blundering manner, and many times with want of sense, as when he talks of *Paul's taking up the jailor*, and many such like passages which are to be found in this his performance. But to proceed, that *Paul* was three-days before his baptism without eating or drinking, is true, but that he was so very ill as our author represents, does not appear so manifest; however, it is plain, that he was not so ill, but he was able to arise and be *baptized*, which he need not have done, had it been performed by pouring or sprinkling water upon him. As to *Paul's* unfitness, under his wounds and bruises, to plunge the jailor, I need only act, how he and *Silas* were capable of praying and singing the praises of God, and that so loud as the other prisoners heard them? and after thee preached the gospel to the jailor and his family, which must be a much more laborious work, and more spending and fatiguing to them, than baptizing of them was; but that same God who enabled them to perform the one, carried them through the other. Again, he says, "how improperly did *Peter* speak in *Cornelius's* house, when he talked of *forbidding water*! whereas he should have said, can any man forbid these men from going to the river to be plunged?" to which I answer; if there is any impropriety in this text, it is not to be charged upon the words or sense of the holy Ghost, but upon our translation; for υδωρ "water," ought not to be put in construction, with κειλυσσαι, "forbid," but with βαπτιζηναι, "to be baptized;" and so the whole be rendered thus, "Can any man forbid, that these should be baptized with water, which have received the holy Ghost as well as we?" and then the sense is this; has any man any thing to object why these who have received the holy Ghost, even as we, should not be admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism? for seeing they have received the greater privilege, why should they be deprived of the lesser? And this reading and sense of the words are confirmed by the learned *Erasmus*, in his notes upon the text, which are these, "the Greeks, says he,^[9] read after this manner, μητι υδωρ, etc. and the sense appears to be this: "Can any man forbid that there should be baptized in water, who have received the holy Ghost as well as we? for as the spirit is preferable to water, and seeing they have him, it will be no great matter if this be added also: Moreover the accusative το υδωρ. "water;" either depends upon the preposition κατα, which may be understood, or else adheres to the verb βαπτιζηναι, "to be baptized;" just in the same form in which we say, βαπτιζομοι βαπτιζισμα, "to be baptized with a baptism."

As to what Mr. *B. W.* says, concerning the use of plunging garments in baptism, that therefore the water comes to the body only a *filtering*, or as it can work its way through, which, says he, at best is only equivalent to sprinkling. I need only reply, it is sufficient in baptism that the whole body be plunged into and covered under water; nor does it much concern us, to observe and know, how it works its way through to the body. I hope he will acknowledge, that a corpse may be said to be truly buried, when covered with earth, though it is wrapt up in a shroud, or in its funeral clothes,

and put up close in a coffin, so that the earth with which it is covered, does not as yet touch it; even so a person may be truly said to be baptized, when in the name of the three Divine Persons, he is plunged into, and covered over with water, even though the water may not be supposed to have had time enough to have worked its way through to his body; and hen it has done so, how that is equivalent to sprinkling, no man can evise. But enough of this, I proceed to the next argument.

CHAPTER 5

The fourth argument taken from Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12 with the sense given of those scriptures, by Mr. B. W. considered.

Our next argument for baptism by immersion, which Mr. *B. W.* has thought fit to produce in page 24 and except against, is taken from *Romans 6:4* and *Colossians 2:12* where this ordinance is took notice of by the apostle, as a burial, and as representing the burial and resurrection of Christ; which argument may be formed thus, and not in the loose rambling way, in which he has represented it, and which, no doubt, he thought would best answer his purpose; namely, "If the end and design of baptism are to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, then it ought to be performed by plunging into, and overwhelming with water; but the end and design of baptism, are to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, therefore it ought to be performed by plunging into, and overwhelming with water; the reason is, because no other mode of baptizing either by pouring or sprinkling a little water on the face, can answer this end." But let us attend to what Mr. *B. W.* has to except. And,

1. He seems to deny this to be the end and design of the institution of this ordinance, when he asks, "But did Christ ever institute baptism for any such end? As for the Lord's Supper, he hath said, *Do this in remembrance of me*; and it is plain from the word, that in the Lord's Supper we *shew forth his death till he come*: but where has he said, be plunged or baptized, to represent my burial or resurrection?" To which I answer, that though we have not the end of this institution declared, in so many express words, yet we think it may be fairly concluded from those texts now mentioned, and must continue to be of the same mind, for ought Mr. *B. W.* has advanced against it: Nor are we alone in our sentiments: For that Christ's burial and resurrection are represented by baptism, has been acknowledged by many, both ancient and modern divines, whose words I forbear to transcribe, partly because they have been many of them produced by others already, and partly because I would not fill my book with citations, and therefore shall only direct the reader to the reference in the margent. [\[10\]](#) Though Mr. *B. W.* is of opinion, that to infer this from those words, *buried with him in baptism*, is very absurd and inconclusive; and that "we may as well be hanged up against a tree, to represent Christ crucified, because it is said, that we *are* crucified with Christ." But can any mortal see this to be a parallel case? to say nothing how shocking this expression must be to every serious mind, and not to be borne with; no more than the wretched jargon which follows it, when he says, "and to make a fair end of you, be fore to see *you* dead under the earth or under the water;" which, I doubt not, to every impartial intelligent reader, will appear to have as little of argument as it has of sense in it. Besides, who does not see that all this, whatever he can mean by it, may be leveled as much against the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper, as that of Baptism.

Moreover, there are other texts, besides these mentioned, which demonstrate the representation of Christ's resurrection, which supposes his burial to be the end of baptism; as for instance, 1 Peter 3:21 where *baptism* is said *to save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ*. But how does it do that, but by representing the resurrection, of Christ unto us, and thereby leading our faith to it, to behold our justification and discharge, by a risen Savior? To which I might also add, 1 Corinthians 15:29 where the apostle evincing the truth of the resurrection of the dead, thus argues, else *what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not?* that is, "Who are baptized into the faith of the resurrection of Christ, which is represented thereby, and which is the confirmation of our resurrection;" the thing that is there debated; and which, if not true, the apostle argues that their baptism, as well as their faith, and his preaching, was in vain. Besides, if our author removes this end of baptism, he ought to have substituted another, and have told us what was the end and design of it, which he has not done; for all the ordinances of the gospel are, no doubt, designed for the comfort and edification of believers, and the confirmation of their faith in the person of Christ; and seeing there appears nothing more manifestly to be the end of it, than what has been mentioned, we shall think fit to abide by it. But,

2. Our author asks, "What there is in your plunging that represents Christ's burial and resurrection;" and to shew that there is no agreement, he runs the parallel between them, and observes, that Christ was *carried* to his grave, where, being *dead*, he was buried, and lay there *three days, and three nights*, and that in the *earth*, where a *great stone* was *rolled* at the mouth of the sepulcher, and when he arose, it was by *his own power*, and thereby declared to be *the Son of God*: But as for us, we go ourselves into the water, are plunged *alive*, and that not *three minutes*, in *water*; and that our *plunger dares not leave us*, nor *roll a stone upon us*; and *it is he that puts us in that pulls us out*, and we are declared to be *what we are*: What would the man have us be declared to be, what we are not? and then in a taunting manner says, "and this is the representation and the mighty resemblance." These are some of our author's masterly strokes, and when the candor of the reader has supplied the want of sense in his expression, and charitably conjectured at his meaning, I need only reply, that the things instanced in are only circumstantial, and not essential to a burial, and therefore unnecessary to be represented in baptism; nay, it would have been absurd to have had them: It is enough that the things themselves are, namely, the burial and resurrection of Christ, which are sufficiently represented by an immersion into water, and an immersion out of it. But who does not see that a Quaker, or any other person that denies the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper, may argue after the same manner, and say, you say that this ordinance represents a crucified Christ, and shews forth his death and sufferings, but pray how does it appear? you take a loaf of bread, and break it in pieces, and a bottle of wine, and pour it out; but Christ, when he was crucified, was hanged on a tree, his head was crowned with thorns, his hands and feet were pierced with nails, and his side with a spear; but here are no thorns, nails, or spear made use of by you, his *real body* was treated after this manner, but yours is only a *loaf of bread*; he poured out his *blood*, you only *wine*; "and this is the representation, and the mighty resemblance." And I think all this may be said with as much justness as the other. But,

3. Mr. *B. W.* has got another way of getting off the argument taken from these texts, in Romans 6:3, 4 and Colossians 2:12 and that is, by asserting that the baptism of Christ's sufferings, and not water-baptism, is intended in them. It would be endless, and perhaps our author will say needless, to oppose to him the several expositors and interpreters, who understand, by baptism, the ordinance of water-baptism, in those texts; as well as a large number of them who think the allusion is made to

the ancient practice of baptizing by immersion; as *Grotius, Vorsius, Paraeus, Piscator, Diodate*, and the *Assembly of Divines* on Romans 6:4 and *Zanthy* and *Davenant* on Colossians 2:12. I suppose that Mr. *B. W.* will reply, that these are but men, and their judgment fallible; I hope he does not think that he is more than a man, or that his judgment is infallible; and it wilt scarcely be accounted modestly in him, to set himself upon a level with them: Though I confess that his sense of the words is not disagreeable to the analogy of faith, yet I wonder that he should be so positive as to say that this is *the only meaning* of them, as he does in page 31. As to what he says with respect to those texts, one of them being produced as an argument to promote holiness in believers, and the other to strengthen their faith in the doctrine of justification; I cannot see, but to understand them of water-baptism, suits very well with the scope thereof, however it is ridiculed by our author: For why may not our baptism, wherein we profess our faith in a buried Christ, and that we are dead by him to the law, the world, and particularly to sin, be urged and made use of by the spirit of God, as an argument why we should not live any longer therein. And are there no force, power and cogency in this argument? Again, in baptism we profess our faith in the resurrection of Christ, which is represented hereby, and that we are risen with him, and therefore are under the highest obligations, to walk in newness of life, as the apostle himself argues. Moreover, what can have a greater tendency to strengthen our faith in the doctrine of justification, than this ordinance has? by which it is led to see where our Lord lay, and how our sins were left in the grave by him; and he, as our glorious representative, rising again *for our justification*, by whom we are acquitted and discharged from all sin and *condemnation*; and is such a way of arguing from hence, to promote holiness, and strengthen us in the doctrine of justification, to be wondered at, what is meant by it? But to proceed,

4. Supposing that the baptism of Christ's sufferings is intended here, and that we are buried with him therein, as our head and representative, it must be allowed, that Christ's sufferings are called so, in allusion to water-baptism; and if we are said to be *buried* with him in them, it must be in allusion to a person's being buried in water in that ordinance, which cannot be by pouring or sprinkling of water upon him, but by an immersion into it. So that our argument for plunging, from hence, is like to lose nothing by this sense of the words. That Christ's sufferings are called a baptism, in Matthew 20:22 and Luke 12:50, as also that by a *Synechdoche*, they are called the *blood of his cross*, is granted; but then the shedding of his blood was not the whole of Christ's sufferings, but a part only, and riffs is called the *blood of sprinkling*, not with regard to its being called a baptism; but because it is sprinkled upon a believer's conscience, and being so, speaks peace and pardon there; but when the greatness and multitude of Christ's sufferings are let forth, they are represented, not by a sprinkling of water, but by mighty floods of water, which overflowed him, so that he seemed, as it were, to be plunged into them, and overwhelmed with them; as he says, in Psalm 69:2. *I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me*; where the Septuagint use the word *καταποντιζω*, as they do also in verse 15 which Mr. *B. W.* in page 45 grants is very proper to express plunging by; and therefore no wonder then that his sufferings are compared to a baptism, and such an one as is administered by immersion: So that the argument from hence, notwithstanding all those cavils and exceptions, stands firm and unshaken. As to the argument taken from the universality of Christ's sufferings in every part of his body, which he makes his antagonist plead in page 32 he acknowledges it was never made use of by the greatest men of our persuasion, why then does he produce it? If every thing that has been dropt by weak Christians, in private conversation on the subject of infant-baptism, was published to the world, how silly and ridiculous would it appear?

CHAPTER 6

The fifth and last argument taken from the signification of the word βαπτίζω, which always signifies to dip or plunge, with Mr. B. W's. exceptions to it, considered.

The fifth and last argument used by us, for immersion in baptism, taken from the constant signification of the word βαπτίζω, *baptizo*, to dip or *plunge*, Mr. B. W. has thought fit to produce in page 33 and except against, which we hope, notwithstanding, to make good, however we may be represented by our author, as incapable of reading our mother tongue. And,

1. Mr. B. W. denies that βαπτω, *bapto*, and βαπτίζω, *baptizo*, signify one and the same thing; but the reason he gives, is not a sufficient one, and that is, because the holy Ghost never makes use of the former, when this ordinance is expressed, but the latter; for the holy Ghost may make use of what words he pleases, without destroying the sense of others; and by the way, then it may be observed, that ρανπίζω, *rantizo*, and βαπτίζω, *baptizo*, do not signify one and the same thing; because the holy Ghost never makes use of the former, when the ordinance is expressed, but the latter. Besides, all the Lexicographers that I have been able to consult, tell me, that βαπτω and βαπτίζω do signify one and the same thing; for they render both by the very same words, and they are both promiscuously used by Greek authors: And indeed, why should not βαπτίζω, *baptizo*, the derivative, signify the same as its primitive? what, is its signification lessened by the addition of a syllable to it? Dr Gale^[11] has given instances enough of derivatives in ζω, which signify the same with their primitives. And indeed, some have taken the word, under consideration, to be what grammarians call a frequentative, which signifies more than the derivative does. But,

2. It seems our author will scarcely allow βαπτω, *bapto*, to signify *dip* or *plunge*, and therefore puts it upon us to prove, that *Judas*, when he put his hand in the dish, thrust it all over in the sauce (Matthew 26:23), where the word εμβαπτωσας *embapsas*, is used; but he should have observed, that it was not his hand, but the sop in his hand, by a metonymy of the subject, as *Piscator* observes, which he dipt into the sauce, as he might have learned, by comparing the text with John 13:26. And in page 45 he says, "yea, with respect unto βαπτω itself, it is very evident that the Greeks did not directly mean plunging thereby; for when the Septuagint tell us in Daniel 4:33 that *Nebuchadnezzar's* body was wet with the dew of heaven, they make use of the very word;" and I would also add, very justly, it exactly answered to the Chaldee word נטבט here used. which word always signifies to tinge or dip, as dyers dip their clothes in their vats, and so is expressive of what a condition *Nebuchadnezzar's* body was in, he being as wet with the dew of heaven, as if he had been dipt or plunged all over in water. But enough of this; let us consider,

3. How we are like to come off with the word βαπτίζω, *baptizo*; And here our author in page 41 tells us, *ore rotundo*, and with confidence enough, in so many words, that "it never does signify plunging; washing with water by pouring or sprinkling, is the only meaning of it." The man has got a good assurance, but yet by his writing, he does not seem to have such a stock of learning; however what he wants in one, he makes up in the other. It is strange that all our Lexicographers,

so many learned critics, and good divines, should be so much mistaken, as to render the word to *dip* or *plunge*, and allow this to be the proper signification of it. I have myself consulted several Lexicons, as those of *Suidas*, *Scapula*, *Hadrian*, *Junius*, *Pasor*, as also another made by *Budaeus*, *Tusanus*, *Gesner*, *Junius*, *Constantine*, *Hartung*, *Hopper*, and *Xylander*, who all unanimously render the word by *mergo*, *immergo*, to *plunge* or *dip into*: And though they afterwards add also, *abluo*, *lava*, to *wash*, yet it is plain they mean such a washing, as is by dipping; and we are very willing to grant it, for we know that there can be no dipping without washing: But had they meant a washing by pouring or sprinkling, they would have rendered it by *persundo*, or *aspergo*, to *pour upon*, or *sprinkle*; but this they never do. And, to there I might add a large number of learned critics, and good divines, who grant, that the word in its first and primary sense; signifies to *dip* or *plunge* only; and to *wash* only in a secondary, remote, and consequential one; as *Casaubon*, *Camerarius*, *Grotius* (Matthew 3:6), *Calvin*,^[12] *Alting*,^[13] *Alsted*,^[14] *Wendelin*,^[15] and others. But what need I heap up authors, to prove that which no man of any tolerable learning will deny: But what will not ignorance, attended with a considerable share of confidence, carry a man through? I might oppose to him, the use of the word in many Greek authors, but this has been done better already than I am capable of doing it, to which I refer him,^[16] and shall content myself, with just mentioning that passage of *Plutarch*,^[17] βαπτίζων οναυτον εις θαλασσαν, which I think the author I have reference to, has took no notice of; and let him try how his sense of pouring or sprinkling will agree with it. I am afraid it will found very harsh, to render the words *pour* or *sprinkle thyself into the sea*, but will read very well to be rendered thus, *plunge thyself into the sea*: But I suppose he will take this to be a breach of the first article agreed upon in this conference; but why the Greek authors should not be allowed as evidences, in the sense of a Greek word, I cannot see: I am sure this is not very consistent with *right reason*, which the thing in debate was to be *cleared up from*, as well as from the word of God. But let us consider the use of the word with, the Septuagint, which I suppose he will not except against, because he has himself brought it into the controversy. And there are but two places, which I have as yet met with, where the word is used by them, and the first is in 2 Kings 5:14 where it is said of *Naaman the Syrian*, that he *went down*, κτ εβαπτζατο, and *baptized* or *dipped himself seven times in Jordan*: I presume our author will not say, that this is to be understood of a washing, by pouring or sprinkling; especially, seeing it answers to the Hebrew word טבל, which always signifies to dip or plunge, and is the word, which is so often rendered by βαπτο, *bapto*, and which, by the way, proves there two to be of the same signification, seeing they are promiscuously used by them, to express one and the same word. The other place is in Isaiah 21:4 where what we read, *fearfulness affrighted me*, they render, κ ανομια με βαπτζει, *iniquity hath plunged me*; for to translate the words, *iniquity hath washed*, or *poured*, or *sprinkled me*, would be intolerable; but both the language and the sense are smooth and easy, by rendering them, *iniquity hath plunged me*; that is, into the depths of misery and distress; so that I am overwhelmed with horror and terror: And hereby also the sense of the Hebrew word בצח, here used, is very beautifully expressed. But let us now consider,

4. What exceptions Mr. *B. W.* makes against this universal sense of the word, and there are three places in the New Testament which he opposes to it. The first is in Mark 7:4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not, and many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. Whereupon Mr. *B. W.* observes, that the words of the holy Ghost are, except they first *baptize* themselves; and many other such things they have, as the *baptizing* of tables. Excellent observations indeed! But how does this prove that the word signifies only a washing, by pouring or sprinkling? I believe it will appear,

that this is meant of the washing of the whole body by dipping, which might be done, without their going *into a pond or a river* before they came home; for they had, no doubt, proper conveniences for immersion, when they came home, seeing bathing was in many cases required of the people, as well as of the priests; and to understand it of such a washing, seems better to express their superstitious solicitude to cleanse themselves from all impurity they might contract by converting with others in the market; it seems to be distinct from washing of hands in the former verse, where a different word is used. But supposing that washing of hands was intended here, does not every body know, that the usual manner of doing that, is not by pouring or sprinkling water upon them, but by putting them into it. And here I cannot but take notice of the observation of *Beza* [\[18\]](#) upon this text; βαπτίζεθαι, says he, in this place, is more than χερνιπτειν; for the former seems to respect the whole body, the latter only the hands, nor does βαπτίζειν signify to wash, but only by consequence, for it properly denotes to immerse for the sake of dipping."

As for the washing or baptizing of cups, pots, etc. it is well known that the cleansing of vessels, which were polluted by the falling of any dead creature that was unclean into them, was by putting into the water, and not by pouring or sprinkling water upon them. The express command in Leviticus 11:32, is, that *it must be put into the water*, or as the Septuagint render it βαφμοεται, *it must be dipt into water*. Moreover, their superstitious washing of vessels, which our Lord seems here to mean, and justly reprehends, of which we read many things in their Misnah, [\[19\]](#) or oral law, their book of traditions, was performed this way, where they make use of the word טבל to express it by, which always signifies to dip or plunge. But what need I use many words to prove this, when every old woman could have informed him of the usual manner of washing their vessels, which is not by pouring or sprinkling water upon them, but by putting them into it: And if he asks, did the Jewish women wash their tables so? There appears no reason to conclude the contrary; and if he should say, how and where could they do it? I answer, in or near their own houses, where they had conveniences for bathing themselves, and washing their garments, at proper times, without carrying them to a river.

The next place instanced in by him, is Hebrews 9:10. where the ceremonial law is said to stand *only in meats and drinks, and divers washings*; it is in the Greek text, *in divers baptisms*; and, says our author, "it is evident from the word of God, that those washings generally stood in pouring or sprinkling of water;" but that is a mistake of his, for they neither flood in them generally, nor particularly; for those ceremonial ablutions were always performed by bathing or dipping in water, and are called διαφοριο, *divers*, or *different*, not because they were performed different ways, as some by sprinkling, others by pouring, and others by plunging, but because of the different persons and things, the subjects thereof; as the priests, Levites, Israelites, vessels, garments, etc. And here it may not be at all to observe what *Maimonides*, [\[20\]](#) who was one of the most learned of the Jewish writers, says concerning this matter, "Wherever, says he, the washing of the flesh or garments is mentioned in the law, it means nothing else than the washing of the whole body; for if a man washes himself all over, excepting the very tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness." Nay, he says it is necessary that every hair of his head should be washed; and therefore the apostle might well call these washings, *baptisms*. The third and last instance produced by him, is 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2, where the apostle says, that *all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea*; which when our author has mentioned, he very briskly asks, "Pray how were our fathers baptized there?" to which, I hope, we shall be capable of returning an answer, without appearing to be so *bitterly*

graveled with this place, as he is pleased to make his friend say we are. As for the manner in which he represents some of our friends accounting for it; namely, that when the people of *Israel* passed through the Red sea, they had the waters stood up, both on their right hand, and on their left, and a cloud over them; so that there was a very great resemblance of a person's being baptized, or plunged under water. This, I say, is not so much to be despised, nor does it deserve so much ridicule and contempt, as he has pleased to cast upon it; and I believe will appear to any unprejudiced person, a much better way of accounting for it, than he is capable of giving, consistent with his way of administering the ordinance: Though I cannot but think that the Israelites *were first baptized in the cloud, and then in the sea*, according to the order of the apostle's words; and agreeable to the story in Exodus 14 where we read, that *the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them*, and was between the two camps, to keep off the Egyptians from the Israelites. I am therefore of opinion, with the learned *Gataker*,^[21] that the cloud when it passed over them, let down a plentiful rain upon them, whereby they were in such a condition, as if they had been all over dipt in water; so that they were not only covered by it, but baptized in it: Therefore our author very improperly directs us to Psalm 77:17, *the clouds poured out water*, as the better way of resolving the case; for the apostle does not say, that they were baptized *in the clouds*, but *in the cloud* which went before them, but now palling over them, in order to stand behind them, they were, as it were, immersed in it. But supporting that the text in Psalm 77 may be a direction in this case, and seem to explain what the apostle means by baptizing, it will no ways agree either with our author's sense of the word, nor his way of administering the ordinance: For, were the Israelites baptized under the clouds, by their pouring or sprinkling a small quantity of water upon their faces? the Hebrew word זרם here used, signifies an overflow, or an inundation of water: And *Ainsworth* reads it *streamed down* or *gushed with a tempest*; so that they were as persons overwhelmed, and plunged over head and ears in water; and therefore the apostle might well call it a being *baptized*.

But now let us consider also, how they might be said to be *baptized in the sea*; and there are several things, in which the Israelites passage through the Red sea, resembled our baptism. As for instance, their following of *Moses* into it, which may be meant by their being *baptized into* him, was an acknowledgment of their regard unto him, as their Guide and Governor; as our baptism is a following of Christ as our Prophet, who has taught and led us the way; as well as a profession of our faith in him, as our Surety and Savior, and a subjection to him, as our King and Governor: Theirs was at their first entrance upon their journey to *Canaan*, as ours is, when, in a way of profession, we publicly begin our Christian race: They, when they came out of it, could ring and rejoice, in the view of all their enemies being destroyed; as the believer also can in this ordinance, in the view of all his sins being drowned in the sea of Christ's blood, withers the instances of the Eunuch and Jailor. But in nothing is there a greater resemblance between them, than in their descending into it, and coming up out of it; which is very much expressive of the mode of baptism by immersion. And this I choose to deliver in the words of the judicious *Gataker*.^[22] "The descent, (that is, of the Israelites) says he, into the inmost and lowest parts of the sea, and their ascent out of it again upon dry land, hath a very great agreement with the rite of Christian baptism, as it was administered in the primitive times; seeing in baptizing they went down into the water, and came up again out of the same; of which descent and ascent express mention is made in the dipping of the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:38, 39). Moreover, as in the Christian rite, when they were immersed, they were overwhelmed in water, and as it were buried; and in some measure, seemed to be buried together with Christ. And again, when they immersed, they seemed to rise, even as out of a grave, and to be risen with Christ (Rom. 6:4, 5; Col. 2:12). "So likewise, the waters of the sea standing up

higher than the heads of those that passed through it, they might seem to be overwhelmed; and in some respects, to be buried therein, and to immerse and rise out again, when they came out safe on the other side of the shore." And having now considered all those exceptions, which our author has made against this sense of the word, which is contended for, I hope it will appear, that he has little reason to make that vain triumph he does, in page 38 where, he asks, "Where now is your *baptizo*, that signifies nothing else but plunging and overwhelming?" As for his comparing the passage of the Israelites through the Red sea, to his travelling to *Scotland* with the Irish Sea on his left hand, and the German on his right, and to his journeying to *Cornwall*, with the British channel at some distance from him, on his left hand, and the channel of *Bristol* on his right, I cannot see it can be of any service, unless it be to lay aside the Israelites' passage through the sea as a miracle, and so furnish the atheist and deist with an argument, such an one as it is, for their purpose. As for his sneer upon plunging in it, I can easily forgive him, and pass it by, as well as that of the plunging of the Egyptians, with the same contempt in which he delivers them. Having thus considered his exceptions to those arguments produced for plunging, I shall in the next chapter take notice of his reasons against it.

CHAPTER 7

Mr. B. W.'s reasons against plunging in baptism, considered.

Mr. *B. W.* in the next place, proceeds to give us some reasons in page 43 why he is against the administration of the ordinance of baptism by plunging. And his

First reason is, "because there is not any foundation for it in the word of God; no precept, no example, says he, no necessary consequence, no words nor found of words to favor it;" and a little lower, "There is not a word, he means of plunging, nor the shadow of a word; and therefore I think I have good reason against it." Words are the shadows, representations, and expressions of our minds; but what the *shadow of a word* is, I cannot devise, unless he means the least appearance of a word: as perhaps he may; and that I suppose is an initial letter of a word, or an abbreviation, etc. But the holy Ghost does not write in such a manner, and therefore we expect to find whole words, or none at all. But to proceed, does he want a *precept*? let him read Matthew 28:19 or an *example*? let him take Christ for one (Matthew 3:16), the Eunuch (Acts 8:38, 39). And is no necessary consequence to be deduced from the places *John* and the apostles baptized in? nor from the circumstances which attended it, of going down and coming up out of the water? I hope it will appear to every thinking, and unprejudiced person, that it has been proved that not only the found of words, but the true sense of words favor it.

His *other* reason is, "because it is not only without foundation in the word of God, but it is directly against it;" but how does that appear? Why, suppose some poor creatures, says he, upon a bed of languishing, under consumptions, catarrhs, pains, sores, and bruises, be converted, and that perhaps in the depth of winter, it is their duty to be baptized, that is true? but is it their duty to be plunged? no, to be sure; for the whole word of God commands self-preservation; and therefore it is evident, that plunging is against the commands of God."

I suppose he takes it to be contrary to the sixth command; but if it is the duty of persons to be baptized, it is their duty to be plunged; for there is no true baptism without it? But what, in the depth of winter? why not? what damage is like to come by it? Our climate is not near so cold as *Muscovy*, where they always dip their infants in baptism, to this very day; as does also the Greek church in all parts of the world. But what, plunge persons when under consumptions, catarrhs, etc? why not? perhaps it may be of use to them for the restoration of health; and its being performed on a sacred account, can never be any hindrance to it. Whoever reads Sir *John Floyer's History of Cold-bathing*, and the many cures that have been performed thereby, which he there relates, will never think that this is a sufficient objection against plunging in baptism; which learned physician has also of late published *An Essay to restore the dipping of Infants in their Baptism*; which he argues *for*, not only *from* the signification of baptism, and its theological end, but likewise from the medicinal use of dipping, for preventing and curing many distempers. If it may be useful for the health of tender infants, and is in many cases now made use of, it can never be prejudicial to grown persons: He argues from the liturgy and rubric of the church of *England*, which requires *dipping* in baptism, and only *allows pouring of water* in case of weakness, and never so much as granted a permission for sprinkling. He proves in this book, and more largely in his former, that the constant practice of the church of *England*, ever since the plantation of Christianity, was to dip or plunge in baptism; which he says continued after the reformation until King *Edward* the sixth's time and after. Nay, that its disuse has been within this hundred years: And here I cannot forbear mentioning a passage of his, to this purpose,[\[23\]](#) "Our fonts are built, says he, with a sufficient capacity for dipping of infants, and they have been so used for five hundred years in *England*, both Kings and Common people have been dipped; but now our fonts stand in our churches as monuments, to upbraid us with our change or neglect of our baptismal immersion." And I wish he had not reason to say as he does,[\[24\]](#) that sprinkling was first introduced by the Assembly of Divines, in 1643, by a vote of 25 against 24, and established by an ordinance of parliament in 1644. Which complaint Mr. *Wall*[\[25\]](#) has taken up, who wrote the last in this controversy, having studied it for many years; and has fairly acknowledged, that immersion is the right mode of baptism; for which reason he calls upon his brethren, the clergy, to a reformation in it: As for those who would willingly conform to the liturgy, he says before them the difficulties they must expect to meet with; which, betides the general one of breaking an old custom, he mentions two more: The one is from those *who are presbyterianly inclined*, who as they were the first introducers of it, will be tenacious enough to keep it. And the other is, from midwives and nurses, *etc.* whole pride in the fine dressing of the child will be entirely lost. But to return from whence I have digressed. Mr. *B. W.* it seems, is of opinion, that baptism by plunging, is not only against the sixth, but also against the seventh command, for which reason he must be against it. To baptize by plunging, he insinuates is "a practice contrary to the whole current of Christ's pure precepts, of an uncomely aspect, and seemingly scandalous and ignominious to the honor of Christianity; and that one would think a man would as soon deny all right reason, and religion, as believe Christ would ever command such a practice."

But I appeal to any, even our worst adversaries, that make any conscience of what they say or do, who have seen the ordinance administered, whether it is of such an uncomely aspect, and so seemingly scandalous, as this defamer has represented it. "And, says he, to use the words of a servant of Christ, can we therefore imagine, that Christ's baptism should entrench so much upon the laws of civility, charity, and modesty, as to require women and maids to appear openly in the light of the fun, out of their wonted habit, in transparent and thin garments, next to nakedness, and in that

posture be took by a man in his arms, and plunged in the face of the whole congregation, before men and boys!" Who this servant of Christ is, whose words he uses, and has made his own, he does not tell us. I shall therefore inform the reader, they are the words of one *Ruffen*, an author he might well be ashamed to mention in the manner he does: However I shall not be ashamed to give Mr. *Stennett's* reply to this paragraph, in his excellent answer to that scurrilous writer, which I have put in the margin; [\[26\]](#) and would also recommend that book to the readers of our author, but especially to himself; for had he read it before he published his, perhaps it might have prevented it, or at least, have made him ashamed to quote those expressions, with such a complement upon the author of them. How does this become one, who calls himself a minister of the gospel, to be guilty of such a scandal and defamation as this is? What, did the man never see the ordinance administered? If he has, his wickedness in publishing this is the greater; if not, he ought to have took an opportunity to have informed himself, before he had made so free with the practice, as to asperse it after this manner. It is well known, that the clothes we use in baptism, are either the person's wearing apparel, or else those which are on purpose provided, which are made of as thick, or thicker stuff, than what are usually worn in the performance of the most servile work. those who have seen the ordinance administered, know with what decency it is performed, and with couth, I am persuaded what our author says will find but little credit. I have nothing else, I think, to observe now, unless it be, his arguing for the preferableness of applying water to the person, to any other mode of baptism, from the application of grace to us, and not us to that, in page 46 which I suppose was forgot in the conference, or else he had not an opportunity to crowd it in. To which I need only reply, that there does not appear to be any necessity of using a mode in baptism, that must be conformable to that; besides, if there was, does not every body know, that in plunging a person, there is an application of the water to him, as well as an application of him to the water? For as soon as ever a person is plunged, the water will apply itself to him. As to the vanity which he thinks we are guilty of, in monopolizing the name of *baptists* to ourselves, he may take the name himself if he pleases, seeing he thinks we have nothing to do with it, for we will not quarrel with him about it: But since it is necessary to make use of some names of distinction in civil conversation, he does well to tell us, what name we should be called by, and that is *plungers*; but then he will be hard put to it to shew the difference between a *Baptist* and a *plunger*. Besides, the old objection against the name *Baptist* being peculiar to *John*, or so an administrator, may as well be objected against this name as the other, because we are not all *plungers*, but by far the greatest part, are only *persons plunged*. However I could wish, as well as he, that all names were laid aside, especially as terms of reproach, and the great name of Christ alone exalted.

CHAPTER 8.

Concerning the free or mixt communion of churches.

Mr. *B. W.* here and there drops a sentence, signifying his love and affection to persons of our persuasion, as in page 42 "Christians of your persuasion, I hope, I dearly love;" this and such like expressions, I can understand no otherwise than as a wheedling and cajoling of those of his members, who are of a different persuasion from him in this point, whom he knows he must have grieved and offended, by this shameful and scandalous way of writing. And at the same time, when

he expresses so much love to them, he lets them know, that he "does not admire their plunging principle, though he does not love to make a great noise about it." I think he has made a great noise about it, and such an one as, perhaps by this time, he would be glad to have said. He signifies his readiness "to carry on evangelical fellowship, in all the acts thereof, with cheerfulness," with those who are differently minded from him. That those of a different persuasion from us, should willingly receive into their communion such whom they judge believers in Christ, who have been baptized by immersion; I do not wonder at, seeing they generally judge baptism performed so, to be valid; but how Mr. *B. W.* can receive such, I cannot see, when he looks upon it to be no *ordinance of God*, page 41 and a *superstitious invention*, page 23. nay, *will-worship*, page 24. There are two churches in *London*, which, I have been informed, will not receive persons of our persuasion into their communion; but whether it is, because they judge our baptism invalid, and so we not proper persons for communion, or whether it is a prudential step, that their churches may not be over-run by us, I cannot tell; I think those of our persuasion act a very weak part in proposing to belong to any such churches, who, when they are in them, are too much regarded only for the sake of their subscriptions, are but *noun substantives* therein, and too many like *Issachar's* ass, *bow down between two burdens*. But to return, Mr. *B. W.* has thought fit, in the close of this conference, to produce "some few reasons for the equity and necessity of communion with saints as saints, without making difference in judgment about water-baptism, a bar unto evangelical church fellowship;" which I shall now consider.

1. "God has received them, and we should be followers of God as dear ildren. We are commanded to receive one another, as Christ hath received us to the glory of God." That we should be followers of God in all things, which he has made our duty, is certain, but his, and his Son's reception of persons, is no rule for the reception of church members. A sovereign lord may do what he pleases himself, but his servants must act according to his orders: God and Christ have received unconverted sinners, but that is no rule for churches; God the Father has so received them into his love and affections, as to let them apart for himself, provide all blessings of grace for them, nay, give himself in covenant to them, send his Son to die for them, his Spirit to convert them, and all previous to it. Christ also hath received them, so as to become a surety for them, take the charge both of their persons and grace, give himself a ransom for them, and bestow his grace upon them; for we are first apprehended by Christ, before we are capable of apprehending and receiving him: must we therefore receive unconverted persons into church-fellowship, because God and Christ have received them? It is what God has commanded us to do, and not all that he himself does, that we are to be followers of him in, or indeed can be; besides, the churches of Christ are oftentimes obliged, according to Christ's own rules, to reject those whom Christ has received, and cut them off from church-communion; witness the incestuous person; so that they are not persons merely received by Christ, but persons received by Christ, subjecting themselves to his ordinances, and to the laws of his house, that we are to receive, and retain in churches. The text in Romans 15:7 which speaks of receiving one another, as Christ, hath received us to the glory of God, can never be understood of the receiving of persons into church-fellowshipping For the persons who are exhorted both to receive and be received, were members of churches already; therefore that text only regards the mutual love and affection which they should have to one another, as brethren and church-members; which is enforced by the strong love and affection Christ had to them.

2. "All saints are alike partakers of the great and fundamental privileges of the gospel." If by the great and fundamental privileges of the gospel, he means union to Christ, justification by him, faith

in him, and communion with him, who denies that saints are partakers of these things? Though in some of them, not all *alike*; for some have more faith in Christ, and more communion with him, than others have: But what is this argument produced for? Or indeed, is there any argument in it? does he mean that therefore they ought to partake of gospel ordinances? who denies it? And we would have them partake of them *alike* too, both of Baptism and the Lord's supper; it is the thing we are pleading for.

3. "All believers, though in lesser things differently minded, are in a capacity to promote mutual edification in a church state." But then their admittance into it, and walk with it, must be according to gospel order, or else they are like to be of little service to promote mutual edification in it.

4. "It is observable that the churches for the free communion of saints, are "the most orderly and prosperous." This observation is wrong, witness the churches in *Northamptonshire*, where there is scarcely an orderly or prosperous one of that way; they having been made a prey of, and pillaged by others, to whole capricious humors they have been too much subject.

5. "Many waters should not in the least quench love, nor should the floods drown it." This is foolishly and impertinently applied to water-baptism: But what is it that some men cannot see in some texts of Scripture?

6. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is!" I think I must also make a note of admiration too, as wondering what the man means by giving us half a sentence! But perhaps this is to give us a specimen of *what shadows of words* are, though I suppose he means *for brethren to dwell together in unity*; it would have been no great trouble to have expressed it; but he is willing to let us know that he has got a concise way of speaking and writing. For brethren to dwell together in unity, is indeed very pleasant and delightful: But *how can two walk*, or dwell together thus, *except they are agreed!*

7. "All the saints shall for ever dwell in glory together." Who denies it? But does it from thence follow, that they must all dwell together on earth? And if he means that it may be inferred from hence, that they ought to be admitted, whilst here, to church-fellowship, who denies it? But I hope it must be in a way agreeable to gospel order; and he ought to have first proved, that admission to church-fellowship without water baptism, is according to gospel order, Jesus Christ, no doubt, receives many unbaptized persons into heaven; and so he does no doubt, such who never partook of the Lord's supper; nay, who never were in church-fellowship: But are these things to be laid aside by us upon that account? We are not to take our measures of acting in Christ's church here below, from what he himself does in heaven, but from those rules which he has left us on earth to go by. Having thus considered our author's reasons, for the free and mixt communion of saints, without making water baptism a bar to it; I shall take the liberty to subjoin some reasons against it, which I desire chiefly might be regarded and considered by those who are of the same persuasion with us, with respect to the ordinance of water-baptism. They are as follow:

1. Because such a practice is contrary to Christ's commission, in Matthew 28:19 where Christ's orders are to baptize those that are taught. It is not only without a precept of Christ, which in matters of worship we should be careful that we do not act without, (for he has no where commanded to receive unbaptized persons into churches) but it is also contrary to one which

requires all believers to be baptized; and this must be either before they are church members or after they are so, or never. The two latter, I dare say, will not be asserted, and therefore the former is true.

2. It is contrary to the order and practice of the primitive churches; it is not only without a precept, but without a precedent: The admission of the first converts after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, into church fellowship, was after this manner. First, *they gladly received the word*, then were *baptized*, and after that, *added to the church* (Acts 2:41). So the apostle *Paul* first believed, then was baptized, and after that assayed to join himself to the disciples (Acts 9:18, 26). Who therefore that has any regard to a command of Christ, and an apostolic practice, would break in upon such a beautiful order as this? I challenge any person, to give one single instance of any one that was ever received into those primitive churches without being first baptized.

3. It has a tendency to lay aside the ordinance entirely. For upon the same foot that persons, who plead their baptism in their infancy, which to us is none at all, may be received, those who never make pretensions to any, yea, utterly deny water-baptism, may also. Moreover, if once it is accounted an indifferent thing, that may, or may not be done; that it is unnecessary and unessential to church-communion, to which persons may be admitted without it, they will lie under a temptation wholly to omit it, rather than incur the trouble, shame, and reproach that attend it.

4. It has a tendency to lay aside the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper, and indeed all others. For, suppose a person should come and propose for communion, to any of those churches who are upon this foundation, and give a satisfactory account of his faith and experience to them, so that they are willing to receive him; but after all, he tells them he is differently minded from them, with respect to the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper: I am willing to walk with you, says he, in all other ordinances but that; and, as to that, I am very willing to meet when you do, and with you; to remember Christ's dying love: I hope I shall be enabled to feed by faith, upon his flesh and blood as well as you; but I think to eat the bread, and drink the wine, are but outward ceremonies, and altogether needless. I should be glad to know, whether any of these churches would reject this man? I am lure, according to their own principles, they cannot. Therefore has not this a tendency to lay aside the ordinance of the Lord's Supper? For if it is warrantable for one man, it is for ten or twenty, and so on *ad infinitum*. All that I can meet with, as yet, that is objected to this, is, that the Lord's-Supper is a church-ordinance, and cannot be dispensed with in such a case; but baptism is not, and therefore may. But baptism is an ordinance of Christ, and therefore cannot be dispensed with no more than the other: By a church-ordinance, they either mean an ordinance of the church's appointing; or else one that is performed by persons when in a church state. The former, I presume, they do not mean, because the Lord's-Supper is not in that sense a church-ordinance: And if they mean in the latter sense, that baptism is not a church-ordinance, then certainly it ought to be performed before they are in a church state; which is the thing pleaded for. When they talk of baptism's not being essential to salvation, who says it is? but will this tolerate the abuse, neglect, or omission of it? Is any thing relating to divine worship essential to salvation? but what, must it all be laid aside because it is not? is not this an idle way of talking?

5. It is a rejecting the *pattern* which Christ has given us, and a trampling upon his legislative power; is this doing all things according to his direction, when we step over the first thing, after believing, that is enjoined us? Is not this making too free with his legislative power, to alter his rules at

pleasure? and what else is it, but an attempt to jostle Christ out of his throne? It is no other than an imputation of weakness to him, as if he did not know what was best for his churches to observe; and of carelessness, as if he was unconcerned whether they regarded his will or no. Let such remember the case of *Nadab* and *Abihu*. In matters of worship, God takes notice of those things that seem but *small*, and will contend with his people upon that account. A power to dispense with Christ's ordinances, was never given to any men, or set of men or churches upon earth. An ordinance of Christ does not depend upon so precarious a foundation, as persons having, or not having light into it: If they have not, they must make use of proper means, and wait till God gives them it.

6. We are commanded to withdraw from *every brother that walks disorderly*; not only from persons of an immoral conversation, but also from those who are corrupt in doctrine, or in the administration of ordinances; if this is not a disorderly walking, to live in the abuse, or neglect and omission of a gospel ordinance,. I know not what is: We are not to suffer sin upon a brother, but reprove him for it; bear our testimony against it, lest we be partakers of his guilt; and if we are to *withdraw* from such disorderly persons, then we ought not to *receive* them.

7. This practice makes our separation from the Established church, look more like a piece of obstinacy, than a case of conscience: What, shall we boggle at reading the Common-prayer-book, wearing the surplice, kneeling at the Lord's supper, etc. and can at once drop an ordinance of Christ? If this is not straining at gnats, and swallowing of camels, I must confess myself mistaken. To all this I might have added also, that it is contrary to the constant and universal practice of the churches of Christ, in all ages of the world. To receive an unbaptized person into communion, was never once attempted among all the corruptions of the church of some: This principle of receiving only baptized persons into communion, was maintained by the authors of the glorious Reformation from Popery, and those who succeeded them. As for the present practice of our *Presbyterians* and *Independents*, they proceed not upon the same foot as our *Semi-Quakers* do. They judge our baptism to be valid, and their own too; and therefore promiscuously receive persons; but, according to their own principles, will not receive one that is unbaptized. And could we look upon their baptism valid too, what we, call mixed communion would wholly cease, and consequently the controversy about it be entirely at an end; therefore the *Presbyterians* and *Independents* do not maintain a free and mixt communion in the same sense, and upon the same foundation, as some of our persuasion do, which those persons would do well to consider. It may be thought necessary by some, that before I conclude, I should make an apology for taking notice of such a trifling pamphlet as this is, which I have been considering. Had it not been for the importunity of some of my friends, as well as the vain ovations, and silly triumphs, which those of a different persuasion from us are ready to make upon every thing that comes out this way, however weak it be, I should never have given myself the trouble of writing, nor others of reading hereof. If it should be asked, why I have been so large in considering several things herein, to which a shorter reply would have been sufficient? I answer, It is not because I thought the author deserved it, but having observed that the arguments and exceptions which he has licked up from others, have been, and still are, received by persons of far superior judgment and learning to himself, and who are better versed in this controversy than he appears to be; it is upon that account, as well as to do justice to the truth I have been defending, I have taken this method. But if any should think me blame-worthy, in taking notice of some things herein, which do not carry in them the appearance of an argument, I persuade myself they will easily forgive me, when they consider how ready some captious persons would

have been to say, I had passed over some of his material objections. However, without much concerning myself what any one shall say of this performance, I commit it to the blessing of God, and the consideration of every impartial reader.

A

**Defense Of A Book, Entitled,
THE ANCIENT MODE OF BAPTIZING BY
IMMERSION,**

Plunging, Or Dipping In Water, Etc.

AGAINST MR. MATTHIAS MAURICE'S REPLY, CALLED,

Plunging into Water no Scriptural Mode of Baptizing, etc.

Chapter 1.

Some Remarks on Mr. M's entrance to his Work

Having lately attempted to vindicate the ancient mode of baptizing, by immersion, plunging, or dipping into water, against the exceptions of an anonymous pamphlet, entitled, *The manner of baptizing with water, cleared up from the word of God and right reason, etc.* The author, who appears to be Mr. Matthias Maurice of Rowell in Northamptonshire, has thought fit to reply. He seems angry at the treatment he has met with; but if he thought that his name would have commanded greater respect, why did not he put it to his book? and why did he refuse to give satisfaction to his friends when inquired of about the author of it? Would he be treated as a gentleman, a scholar, or a Christian? he ought to have wrote as such. Who is the aggressor? who gave the first provocation? If I have any where exceeded the bounds of Christianity, or humanity, I would readily acknowledge it upon the first conviction; but who indeed "can touch pitch, without being defiled with it?" Three or four pages are filled up with a whining, insinuating harangue, upon the nature of controversies, and the disagreeable temper and spirit with which they are frequently managed; designing hereby to wipe himself clean, whilst he is casting reproach upon others. I would not be an advocate for burlesque and banter in religious controversies; but if he would have them banished from thence, why does he make use of them, even in this his performance, which begins with such loud exclamations against them. As for instance, how does he pun upon presumptive proofs, page 13 and in page 27. Speaking of our baptizing in *holes* or *cisterns*, as he is pleased to call them, "Thus, says he, you have forsook the scriptural way of baptizing *with* water, and have hewn out unto yourselves cisterns," referring to Jeremiah 2:13 besides the frequent sneers with which his book abounds. Now if burlesque and banter, in general, ought to be laid aside, much more punning and bantering with the words of scripture, which are sacred and awful. Is this the man that directs others to "write in the fear of God, having the awful Judge, and the approaching

judgment in view;" and yet takes such a liberty as this? He says, page 7, "I shall not entertain the reader with any remarks upon his performance, as it is ludicrous, virulent and defaming:" Which, itself is a manifest defamation, as the reader cannot but observe; it being asserted without attempting to give one single instance wherein it appears to be so. With what face can he call it ludicrous; when he himself, in the debate, has been so wretchedly guilty that way? when he talks, page 9 of "Christ's being under water still: and in page 10 of *John's* thrusting the people into thorns and briars, when he baptized in the wilderness;" as also his concluding from *Philip* and the Eunuch's coming up out of the water, page 19 that "neither of them was drowned there;" with other such like rambling stuff, which he might have been attained to publish to the world. Moreover, what defamation has he been guilty of, in representing it, as the judgment of "some of us to baptize naked?" page 22. And in the words of *a servant of Christ*, as he calls him, page 44 tells the world that we "baptize persons in thin and transparent garments;" which, in other cases, would be accounted down right lying. Nay even in this his last performance, page 44 he has the assurance to insinuate, as if we ourselves thought plunging to be immodest, because we put lead at the bottom of our plunging garments; why could not he as well have argued from our making use of clothes themselves? it is strange that a carefulness to prevent every thing that looks like immodesty, should be improved as an evidence of it: None but a man that is ill-natured and virulent, would ever be guilty of such an insinuation.

What his friends, at Rowell, may think of his performances, I cannot tell; but I can assure him, that those of his persuasion at London think very meanly of them; and, as the most effectual way to secure the honor of their cause, which is endangered by such kind of writing as his, say, "he is a weak man that has "engaged in the controversy;" though, perhaps, some of his admirers may think that he is one of the mighty men of Israel, who, like another Samson, has smote us hip and thigh; but if I should say, that it is with much such an instrument as he once used, I know that I should be very gravely and severely reprimanded for it, my grace and good manners called in question, and perhaps be pelted into the bargain, with an old musty proverb or sentence, either in Greek or Latin; but I will forbear, and proceed to the consideration of his work, as he calls it. His first attack, page 8 is upon a final sentence of Latin, made use of to express the nauseous and fulsome repetition, of threadbare arguments in this controversy, to which he has thought fit, to give no less than three several answers.

1. He says the Latin is false, because of an erratum of *coctum* for *cocta*; which had I observed before the last half sheet had been worked off, should have been inserted among the *errata*; whereby he would have been prevented making this learned remark; though had it not fallen under my notice, before he pointed it to me, he should have had the honor of this great discovery. He does well indeed to excuse his making such low observations, as being beneath the vast designs he has in view. I might as well take notice of his Greek proverb, page 25 where $\sigma\pi\epsilon\rho$, is put for $\alpha\sigma\pi\epsilon\rho$, and charge it with being false Greek, though I should rather choose to ascribe it to the fault of the printer, than the inadvertency of the writer. However, he does well to let his readers know that he can write Greek; which they could not have come at the knowledge of, by his former performance. But why does not he give a version of his Latin and Greek scraps, especially seeing he writes for the benefit of the Lord's people, the Godly, and poor men and women, that cannot look into Dictionaries, and consult Lexicons; besides, all the wit therein will be lost to them, as well as others be left unacquainted with his happy genius for, and skill in translating.

2. He says, "the application of this *sentence* is false:" But how does it appear? why, because at *Rowell* he and his people are very moderate in the affair of baptism, they *seldom* discourse of it; when every body knows, that has read my book, that the paragraph referred to, regards not the private conversation of persons on that subject, but the repeated writings which have been published to the world on his fide the question. If the different sentiments of his people, about Baptism, "make no manner of difference in affection, church-relation," etc. as he says page 9 why does he give them any disturbance? what could provoke him to write after the manner he has done? He knows very well, however mistaken they may be about this ordinance, in his apprehensions, yet that they are conscientious in what they do; why should he then sneer at them, as he does for their practice of plunging, and fix upon them the heavy charges of superstition and will-worship? Is not this man a wise shepherd, that will give disturbance to his flock, when the sheep are still and quiet?

3. He would have his reader believe, that in using this sentence, I would insinuate, that the notions wherein they differ from us about baptism are poisonous, when I intend no such thing; nor does the proverb, as expressed by me, lead to any such thought, but is used for a nauseous repetition of things, with which his performance, we are considering, very plentifully abounds. We do not look upon mistakes about the grace of God, the person of Christ, and the person and operations of the Spirit, to be of a lesser nature than those about Baptism, as he reproachfully insinuates; for we do with a becoming zeal and courage, oppose such erroneous doctrines in those who are of the same mind with us, respecting baptism, as much as we do in those who differ from us therein. Page 10. He seems to be angry with me for calling him an anonymous author; what should I have called him, since he did not put his name to his book? he asks, "Who was the penman of the epistle to the Hebrews?" Very much to the purpose indeed! and then brings in a scrap of Greek out of Synesius, with whom, however he may agree in the choice of an obscure life, yet will not in the affair of Baptism; for Synesius was baptized upon profession of his faith, and after that made bishop of Ptolemais. "Hundreds of precious tracts, he says, have been published without the names of their authors;" among which, I hope, he does not think his must have a place, it having no authority from the scripture, whatever else it may pretend to; as I hope hereafter to make appear.

Chapter 2.

The proofs for immersion, taken from the circumstances which attended the Baptism of John, Christ, and his Apostles, maintained: and Mr. M's demonstrative proofs, for pouring or sprinkling, considered.

The ordinance of water-baptism, is not only frequently inculcated in the New Testament, as an ordinance that ought to be regarded; but also many instances of persons who have submitted to it, are therein recorded, and those attended with such circumstances, as manifestly show, to unprejudiced minds, in what manner it was performed.

1. The baptism of Christ administered by John deserves to be mentioned, and considered first: This was performed in the river Jordan (Matthew 3:6, 13), and the circumstance of his coming up out of

the water, as soon as it was done, recorded verse 16 is a full demonstration that he was in it; now that he should go into the river Jordan, to have water poured, or sprinkled on him, is intolerable, and ridiculous to suppose. Mr. M. in his debate, page 6 tells us, that the words "only signify, □□□that he went up from the water;" to which I replied, that the preposition signifies out of, and is justly rendered so here. I gave him an instance of it, which he has not thought fit to except against; yet still he says, the "criticism delivers us from a necessity of concluding, that Christ was in the water:" though it has been entirely baffled; neither has he attempted to defend it. And, because I say, that "we do not infer plunging, merely from Christ's going down into, and coming up out of the water;" therefore he would have the argument from hence, as well as from the same circumstances attending the baptism of the Eunuch, wholly laid aside; which I do not wonder at, because it presses him hard. He seems to triumph, because I have not, in his positive and dogmatical way, asserted those circumstances, to be demonstrative proofs of immersion; as though they were entirely given up as such; but he is more ready to receive, than I am to give. This is a manifest indication, I will not say, of a wounded cause only, but of a dying one, which makes him catch at every thing to support himself under, or, free himself from those pressures, which lie hard upon him. We insist upon it, that those proofs are demonstrative, so far as proofs from circumstances can be so; and challenge him to give the like in favor of pouring or sprinkling. Is it not a wretched thing, to use our author's words; that not one text of scripture can be produced, which will vindicate the practice of sprinkling in baptism; and that among all the instances of the performance of the ordinance, which are recorded in scripture; not one single circumstance can render it so much as probable?

2. We not only read of many others baptized by *John*, but also the places which he chose to administer it in, which will lead any thinking, and considering mind to conclude, that it was performed by immersion: Now, one of those places, where *John* baptized a considerable number, and among the rest Christ Jesus, was the river *Jordan* (Matthew 3:6; Mark 1:5, 9), the latter of which texts Mr. M. says, page 12 "leads us to *no* other thought, than that Jesus was baptized of *John* at *Jordan*; as the preposition εἰς, he says, is sometimes translated;" though he gives us no one instance of it. Now in his debate, page 7 he says, "that the holy Ghost himself tells us, that nothing else is intended by it than baptizing *in Jordan*;" and yet this man takes a liberty to differ from him. What will he be at next? to such straits are men driven, who oppose the plain words of the Holy Ghost, as he is pleased to say in another case. *Ænon* was another of those places, which *John* chose to baptize in; and the reason of his making choice of it was, *because there was much water there* (John 3:23), which was proper and necessary, for the baptizing of persons by immersion. Mr. M. says, page 19 "that the holy Ghost does not say that they were baptized there, because there was much water; but that *John* was also baptizing in *Ænon* because there was much water there;" but what difference is there? Why only between *John's* administering the ordinance, and the persons to whom it was administered. He says, page 21 that I have granted that the words, he means ὕδατα πολλὰ, literally denote, "many rivulets or streams;" which is notoriously false; for I do in express words utterly deny it; and have proved from the use of the phrase in the New Testament, and in the Septuagint version of the Old, as well as from *Nonnus's* paraphrase of the text, that it signifies "large waters, or abundance of them:" I do assure him, that neither of the editions of *Nonnus*, which he has the vanity to mention, was made use of by me; but if there had been any material difference in them, from what I have made use of, I suppose he would have observed it to me, if he has consulted them; and I would also inform him, that *Nonnus* has not always a Latin version printed along with it, as he wrongly asserts. I have consulted *Calvin* upon the place directed to by him: the

text says, that *Jesus and his disciples came into the land of Judea*; and *Calvin* upon it says, that "he came into that part of the country which was nigh to *Ænon*;" but neither the text, nor *Calvin* upon it, say that they were both at *Ænon*, as our author insinuates; so that from hence there appears no necessity of concluding that choice was made of this place for the accommodation of the large number of people which attended, either upon the ministry of Christ or *John*; that so both they and their cattle might be refreshed, as he ridiculously enough suggests. As to the account he has given of the land of *Canaan*, it is manifest, notwithstanding all his shifts and cavils, that he did represent it in general as a land that wanted water, especially a great part of it; now whatever little spots (for the land itself was not very large) might not be so well watered, yet it is certain, that in general it was; and is therefore called *a land of brooks of water*, etc. But since he acknowledges there was plenty of water at *Ænon*, where *John* was baptizing, which is sufficient for our purpose, we need not further inquire about the land.

3. Another remarkable instance of baptism is that of the Eunuch's, in Acts 8:38 which is attended with such circumstances, as would leave any person, that is seriously inquiring after truth, without any scruple or hesitation, in what manner it was performed. In verse 36 we are told, that *they came unto a certain water*, where the Eunuch desiring baptism, and *Philip* agreeing to it, after he had made a confession of his faith, it is said, verse 38 that *they went down both into the water*; they first came *to* it, and then went *into* it; which leaves that observation without any real foundation, which supposes that their going down into the water signifies no more than the descent which led to the rivers for they were come thither before, as appears from verse 36 where a phrase is made use of different from this in verse 38. Now though I had observed to our author, that it was not *to*, but *into* the water they went, to which he has not thought fit to reply; yet he still produces his impertinent instance of *going down to the sea in ships*; which is all that can be obtained from him, to set aside the force of this evidence; which, how weak and ridiculous it is, will easily appear to every judicious reader. Now if persons will but diligently consider those plain instances of baptism, in an humble and hearty search after truth, they will find that they amount to little less than a full demonstration that it was performed in those early times of *John*, Christ, and his apostles, by an immersion or plunging of the whole body under water, as has been fully acknowledged by many great and excellent divines, But now let us consider Mr. M's demonstrative proofs for pouring or sprinkling water in baptism, produced by him, page 14.

1. He says, "pouring water in baptism, is a true representation of the donation of the Spirit; being, according to God's word, instituted for that end" (Isa. 44:3; Ezek. 36:25; Matthew 3:11; 1 Cor. 12:13). But the word of God no where expresses, or gives the least intimation, that baptism was instituted for any such end; it is true, the donation of the Spirit is sometimes called a *baptism*, and so are the sufferings of Christ; but do we make use of such mediums as there to prove the representation of them to be the end of this ordinance? though it would with equal strength conclude the one as the other: Besides, he might as well argue, that the end of baptism is to represent the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, because that is called *a baptism* also. But how does pouring of water in baptism, according to the practice of our modern Paedobaptists, represent the donation of the Spirit, when they only let fall a few drops of water upon the face? But the Spirit's grace is expressed by pouring *floods of water* upon his people in Isaiah 44:3 one of the texts referred to by our author. Though I have acknowledged, and still do, that the ordinary donation of the Spirit is sometimes expressed by pouring, and sometimes by sprinkling, yet that it was the extraordinary one which the disciples received on the day of Pentecost, that is particularly

called *the baptism of the Spirit and of fire*, by John and Christ. Now says Mr. M. page 17 if this was by pouring, then you are undone: perhaps not. But what does he think will undo us? why the prophecy of Joel, cited in Acts 2:16, 17. *I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh*. To which I reply, that though this extraordinary instance of the Spirit's grace is expressed, as well as the more ordinary ones are, by pouring, under the Old-Testament-dispensation, in allusion to those frequent libations, or drink-offerings, which were then used; yet it need not seem strange, that when this prophecy was nearer accomplishing, and there was a greater display of divine grace, that another word should be used which more largely expressed the abundance of it: It is no wonder that it should be more abundant in the exhibition than in the prophecy; besides this text, and all others in the Old Testament, which express the Spirit's grace in this, or any other form of language whatever, can never be looked upon as sufficient proofs of the manner in which a New-Testament ordinance is to be administered, which was never instituted with a view to represent it.

2. He says, *it*, that is, "pouring water in baptism," exactly answers to John's "baptism he said that *he baptized with water*" (Luke 3:15). But it seems, according to him in page 15 that the phrase of baptizing *with water*, regards the strength of the administrator's arms, *wherewith* he performs, and not the mode of baptizing; so that he can pretty easily tell us *wherein* and *wherewith* a person may be plunged, though he still says plunging *with water* is an expression without sense; but he cannot yet inform us how a man can be plunged *in* it, without being plunged *with* it. I urged that in all the evangelists the words are, εν υδατι, "in water," excepting Luke 3:16 where the preposition is omitted, which has occasioned some to think it redundant in the other Evangelists, which I observe no ways hurts our sense and reading of the words; now he wonders that this should make for our reading, or be of any use to us; when all that I observe is, that it does not make against us; if it does, let him make it appear. *John* baptized *in* water, persons were baptized by him *in* the river *Jordan*, and not *with* it.

3. Another demonstrative proof of "pouring water in baptism, is, that it is exactly agreeable to the signification of the word, as the Lord gives it to us in the New Testament" (1 Cor. 10:2). Which place I shall more fully consider hereafter, and make it appear, that it is there to be understood in the sense of dipping or plunging.

4. His last proof is, "that it directly answers the promise of what Christ should do (Isa. 53:15), so *shall he sprinkle many nations*;" to this text he says, page 43 the commission in Matthew 28:19 refers, which if it does, though I cannot see it can without a very large stretch, it must be only in that part of it which concerns the *teaching* of the Gentiles by the ministry of the apostles, and not that which respects the *baptizing* of them; for the word here rendered *sprinkle*, is *rwbd zyn*[expressive of *speaking*, as *Kimchi* on the place observes; and the meaning is, that Christ shall speak to the Gentiles in the ministry of the gospel by the apostles, with so much power, majesty, and authority, that *Kings themselves shall shut their mouths at him*; that is, shall silently submit to the scepter of his grace, and to the doctrines of his gospel; *for that which had not been told them, shall they see; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider*. Moreover, who, in the world, could ever imagine, that the ordinance of water baptism, with the mode of its administration, should be intended here? a man must have his imagination prodigiously heated indeed, and his mind captivated with a mere jingle of words, that can look upon such proofs as there, fetched out of the Old Testament, as demonstrative ones of the true mode of baptizing under the New. Thus we have had a *taste*, as he calls it, of his *demonstrations* of pouring or sprinkling water in baptism.

Chapter 3.

A vindication of Erasmus, and of his version of (Acts 10:47).

The author of the debate in page 22 urges the impropriety of *Peter's* speech in *Cornelius'* house, when he talked of *forbidding water* in baptism, if plunging was the right mode of its administration; to which I replied, that if there was any impropriety in the text, it was not to be charged, either upon the words or sense of the holy Ghost, but upon our translation; and urged, that the word *water* should be put in construction with the word *to be baptized*, and not with the word *forbid*, and the whole text be rendered thus, *Can any man forbid that these should be baptized in water, which have received the holy Ghost as well as we?* and produced the testimony of *Erasmus* to confirm it. Now let us attend to Mr. M's animadversions upon it. And,

1. Within the compass of four or five lines, he tells two palpable and notorious untruths; for first, he affirms that I say that the words in Acts 10:47 are not good sense, when it is he that insinuates an impropriety in *Peter's* manner of speaking, supposing plunging to be the mode of baptism; what I say, is, that if there is any impropriety in it, it is not to be charged upon the words or sense of the holy Ghost, but upon our translation;" and yet he would have it, that I assert that the words are not good sense; where do I say so? It is true, I think the words are better rendered according to *Erasmus'* version; and, for what I can yet see to the contrary, I shall abide by it. Again, he says, that I think there is something wanting in the original. With what face can he say so? Or have I attempted a supplement to any part of it? How unfair is this? Yet this is the man that complains of rank injustice, wresting of words and wracking of sentences in polemical writings. He says, he fears God; I hope he does; but he has given but very little evidence of it, in his management of this controversy.

2. He next falls foul upon *Erasmus*, calling him *old Erasmus*; and represents him as disapproved of by the learned; when almost every body knows how much the learned world owes to that great man, and what deference is always paid to him; but why *old Erasmus*, and *great Beza*? Not that I would go about to diminish the praise of *Beza*, yet I cannot but be of opinion, that to let *Erasmus* upon a level with him, in respect of learning, can be no lessening of him; but it seems to me, that the reason of those different epithets which Mr. M. has given to those excellent men, is only because the version of the one removes the foundation of his impertinent cavil, and the note of the other, as he imagines, secures it to him.

3. He proceeds, in the next place, to find fault with my translation of *Erasmus'* version; but if he had had that candor which he would have the world believe he shews in the management of this controversy, he would have easily overlooked this, which he thinks is so much blame-worthy; especially when he could not but observe, that in the very same page, this text is rendered according to the transposition of *Erasmus*, without the negative particle, which hurts the sense: so that he might easily have perceived that this did not arise from a want of knowledge in translating, but from an inadvertency in writing.

4. As to what *Beza* says of this trajection, that it is *dura ac plane insolens*; I shall only say *cum pace tanti viri*, that the trajections in scripture, which he himself approves of, for which see his notes on John 8:25 and Acts 1:2 are not more easy or more usual.

5. The sense of the text requires such a transposition of the words; for the meaning is not, as if *Peter* thought that any person would go about to hinder them of water convenient for the administration of the ordinance of baptism; for such a sense of the words would be trifling and jejune, and yet this our version seems to incline to; but that there might be some who would be displeased with, and to their utmost oppose, the baptizing of those Gentiles. Hence *Peter* says, *Who can forbid that these should be baptized in water?* Therefore, and what will further confirm this sense and reading of the words, he commands them in the next verse to be baptized: he does not order water to be brought unto them, but that they *be baptized in the name of the Lord*. To all which,

6. Might be added, that this transposition of the words has not its confirmation only from the authority, judgment and learning of *Erasmus*, which is not inconsiderable, but also from others; for, as *Cornelius a Lapide* has observed, both the *Tigurine* version, and that of *Pagnine's*, read the words the same way: so that however *Erasmus* may be disapproved of by the learned, as our author asserts, yet it seems this version is regarded by them.

Chapter 4.

The end of the institution of the ordinance of Baptism, considered.

As the ordinance of water-baptism derives its authority from Christ, so it was instituted by him for some end or other, which may make for his own glory, as well as for the comfort, edification, and increase of faith in his people; and what that end is, we shall now inquire. Mr. M. page 33 says, "the manifest end of it is a representation of the donation of the Spirit to us in the new covenant" (Isa. 44:3; Matthew 3:11; 1 Cor. 12:13). As for the former of these proofs, I need only say, that an Old-Testament-text can never be a proof or evidence of what is the end of the institution of a New-Testament-ordinance: Besides, if it could be thought to have any reference to the affair of baptism, it would only regard the mode, and not the end of this ordinance, for which he has cited it already, and to what purpose has been also shown. As for the two latter texts here produced by him, they only inform us, that the Spirit's grace is called *a baptism*, and so are the sufferings of Christ (Luke 12:50), the representation of which he will not own to be the end of baptism, though every body will see that this may be as strongly concluded from hence, as what he contends for; besides, the martyrdom of the saints is called *a Baptism* (Matthew 20:23), as also the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:2), yet no body ever thought that the design of baptism was to represent either of these. Now these are what he calls the plain proofs of the manifest end of baptism, without any force upon scripture. What sort of readers does Mr. M. expect to have, that will be imposed upon by such proofs as there? But there are manifest proofs which fully discover to

us, that the end of this ordinance is to represent the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ Jesus.

Christ has particularly instituted two ordinances, *Baptism* and the *Lord's-Supper*, to be observed by his people; and the end of the one is no less evident than that of the other. It is said of the Lord's-Supper, *As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come* (1 Cor. 11:26). It is also said of Baptism, *That so many of us, as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death* (Rom. 6:3). Did Christ say in the celebration of the Ordinance of the Supper? *This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins* (Matthew 26:28). His disciples in his name have also laid, *Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins* (Acts 2:38): that is, that their faith in that ordinance might be led to the blood of Christ, by which remission of sins was procured; to the grave of Christ, where they were left; and to a risen Savior, where they have a full discharge from them; all which, in a *very* lively manner, is represented in this ordinance of baptism. There are many other texts, besides their, which would lead any truly serious and inquiring mind to observe this to be the true end of baptism, as Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12, 1 Peter 3:21, and 1 Corinthians 15:29 but because those texts are excepted against by Mr. M. it will be proper more particularly to consider them, and what he is pleased to advance against the commonly received sense of them.

1st, "Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12" he says, "are not to be understood of water-baptism, but of the baptism of Christ's sufferings, in which his people were considered in him, and with him, as their head and representative." I firmly believe the doctrine of Christ's being a common head, representative, and surety of all the elect of God; for which reason, in my reply, I acknowledged his sense of those texts to be agreeable to the analogy of faith; on the account of which he triumphs, as if it shone *with an unconquerable evidence*, as his expression is, page 34 when I never owned it to be the true sense of the words; for a sense may be given of a text that is agreeable to the analogy of faith, which is foreign enough to the mind of the holy Ghost therein; as for instance, if of Genesis 1:1. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*; a man should give such a sense as this, that God chose a certain number of men in Christ unto salvation, before he created the heaven and the earth: This is a sense that is agreeable enough to the analogy of faith, but none will say that it is the sense of the text. But let us a little consider the exposition of those texts, so much boasted of, and see how well it will bear. As for Romans 6:4, it does not say, that *we are buried with him in baptism*, but *by baptism into death*: So that according to Mr. M's exposition, it runs thus, "*We are buried with Christ representatively in the grave, by his sufferings on the cross, into that death he there submitted to;*" in which, how oddly things hang together, every judicious reader will observe. As to Colossians 2:12. though we are hid to be *buried with him in baptism*, yet it is added, *Wherein also you are risen with him*; but how we can be laid to be risen with him in the baptism of his sufferings, will, I believe, not be very easy, to account for. It is better therefore to understand those texts, in the more generally received sense both of ancient and modern divines, who unanimously interpret them of water baptism; in which the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ are very evidently represented, when performed by immersion.

2dly, He says, 1 Peter 3:21 is not meant of water baptism, but of the blood of Christ sprinkled upon the conscience. That the blood of Christ, as sprinkled upon a believer's conscience, is ever called a *Baptism*, I never met with; and, I will venture to say, can never be proved. Besides, the baptism that *Peter* speaks of was a *figure*, *αντιτυπον*, "an antitype" of *Noah's* ark, and of the deliverance of him

and his family by water; which was a kind of resurrection from the dead, and did well prefigure our salvation by the resurrection of Christ, represented to us in the ordinance of water baptism.

3dly, The sense of 1 Corinthians 15:29. given by me, is also objected against by Mr. M. page 32. and another substituted in its room. Let the readers of the controversy between us judge which is most agreeable. The text is difficult, and has employed the thoughts and pens of the most able and learned men in all ages: Both the senses have their defenders. I shall only refer the reader to the learned notes of Sir *Norton Knatchbull*, on 1 Peter 3:21 where both those texts are considered by him; and where he has sufficiently proved, from scripture, fathers, schoolmen, and modern interpreters, that the ordinance of baptism is a true figure, and just representation of the resurrection of Christ, and of ours by him.

Chapter 5

A consideration of the signification of the Greek word βαπτίζω, and particularly, the use of it in Mark 7:4, Luke 11:38, and Hebrews 9:10.

That the proper, primary, common, and natural sense of the Greek word βαπτίζω, is to *dip* or *plunge*, has been acknowledged by the greatest masters of that language; and it is a rule which should be carefully attended to, that the first, natural, and common sense of a word ought to be used in the interpretation of scripture, unless some very good reason can be given why it should be used in a remote, improper, and consequential one. Now though the nature, end, and circumstances of the ordinance of baptism, manifestly shew that immersion is the right mode of administering it, and do abundantly confirm the sense of the Greek word, directing us to the proper and primary use thereof; yet some have endeavored to confine it to a more low and remote sense, but none have attempted to do it with more positiveness and confidence than our author. But what method does he take to effect it, and how does he succeed therein?

Why, 1st, he will exclude all the testimonies of the use of the word among Greek authors uninspired, especially Heathens; which is unreasonable If our translators had confined themselves to this rule, they would have made but poor work in their version of some part of the Bible, where a word is but once used, or at least but very rarely in that sense in which it is to be taken. Now if a controversy concerning the use of a Greek word in scripture arises, which cannot be determined by it, though I do not say this is the case in hand, what methods must be taken? Will it not be very proper to consult Greek authors, either Christian or Heathen, and produce their testimonies, especially the latter? who cannot be suspected of perverting the use of a word, having never been concerned in our religious controversies. But it seems, if we will make use of them, we must be said under an obligation to prove that: "they were delivered under the immediate inspiration of the holy Ghost" was ever such an unreasonable demand made in this world before? Or was the inspiration of the holy Spirit ever thought necessary to fix and determine the sense of a word? But I am willing to lay aside those testimonies in this controversy. And,

2dly, Be confined, as he would have me, to the use of the word in the New Testament; but then I must, it seems, be confined to the use of it, as applied to the ordinance of baptism, which is also unreasonable: He says the word, whenever applied to the ordinance, signifies *pouring* or *sprinkling* only; which is a shameful begging of the question; and if I should say it only signifies *dipping* or *plunging*, whenever applied to it, how must the controversy be decided? Must we not refer the decision of it to other texts of scripture? It is true, the circumstances, which attend the administration of the ordinance are sufficient to determine the true sense of the word, and I am willing to put it upon that issue; but I know he will not stand to it: Besides, why has he himself brought other texts of scripture into the controversy, where the ordinance or baptism is not concerned? As Mark 7:4, Hebrews 9:10, and 1 Corinthians 10:2 as also the Septuagint version in Daniel 4:33 why may not others take the same liberty? And what miserable replies has he made to my instances out of the latter? that in 2 Kings 5:14 he says, discovers that they, that is, the Septuagint, understood no more by it than, λουω. *No more* than λουω! Is not that enough? is not λουω a word that includes in it all kinds of washing, especially bathing of the whole body; and is always used by the Septuagint to express the Jewish bathings, which were always performed by immersion; and that *Naaman* understood the prophet of such a kind of washing, is manifest from his use of it; he *dipped* himself in *Jordan*, κατα το ρημα Ελισαιε, *according to the word of Elisha*. As for the other in Isaiah 21:4 he says, "it is no wonder they made use of the word, for they knew very well that sin procures showers of divine displeasure to be poured upon a person, people, and nation." I desire the next time he pretends to baptize an infant, that he would *pour showers* of water upon it, if he thinks proper, according to this sense of the word βαπτίζω, which he allows of. But however, though those testimonies must be laid aside, yet,

3dly, I hope Lexicons may be made use of to direct us in the sense of the word, if it is only as it is used in the New Testament. Yes, that will be allowed of; for Mr. M. himself consults Lexicons, though he does well to let us know so; for one would have thought, by his positiveness, that he had never looked into one in all his life. Well, but what do the Lexicons say? How do they render the word βαπτίζω? Why by *mergo*, *immergo*, to *dip* or *plunge into*; and this they give, as the first, and primary sense of the word; but do they make use of no other words to express it by? Yes, they also use *abluo*, *lavo*, to wash; and they mean such a washing as is by dipping, but Mr. M. page 38 asks, where do they tell us so? I answer in their Lexicons. Let *Scapula* be consulted, who thus renders the word βαπτίζω, *mergo seu immergo: Ut quae tingendi aut abluendi gratia aquae immergimus*. But,

4thly, Let us now consider those texts where the word is used in the New Testament; I am willing to be confined to those which Mr. M. himself has fixed upon, and we will begin,

First, With Mark 7:4 *and when they come from the market, except they wash or baptize (themselves) they eat not*; which may be understood either,

1. Of the things they bought in the market, which they did not eat until they were washed: Thus the *Syriac* version reads the words; *and what they buy in the market, unless it be washed, they eat not*: The same way read all the oriental versions, the *Arabic*, *Ethiopic*, and *Persic*. Now this must be understood of those things that may be, and are proper to be washed, as herbs, etc. And nobody will question, but that the manner of the washing there was by putting them into water. But,

2. If the words design the washing of persons, they must be understood, either of the washing of their whole bodies, or else of some part only; as their hands or feet: It seems most likely, that the washing of the whole body is intended, as *Grotius*,^[1] *Vatablus*, *Drufius*,^[2] and others think; because washing of hands is mentioned in the preceding verse. Besides, to understand it thus, better expresses the outward, affected sanctity of the more superstitious part of the people. All the Jews washed their hands and feet before eating; but those who pretended to a greater degree of holiness, washed their whole bodies, especially when they came from a market; and of this total ablution of the body is Luke 11:38 to be understood. And here I cannot forbear mentioning, a passage of the great *Scaliger*^[3] to this purpose. "The more superstitious part of the Jews, says he, not only washed their feet, but their whole body. Hence they were called *Hemerobaptists*, who every day washed their bodies before they sat down to food; wherefore, the Pharisee, which had invited Jesus to dine with him, wondered that he sat down to meat before he had washed his whole body, Luke 11. But those that were more free from superstition, were contented with washing of their feet, instead of that universal immersion. Witness the Lord himself, who being entertained at dinner by another Pharisee, objected to him, when he was sat down to meat, that he had given him no water for his feet, Luke 7."

3. If, by this washing, we understand only the washing of their hands when they came from market; then it will be proper to inquire in what manner this was performed: And it must be observed, that whatever was the manner which they used, it was not used as a national custom, or as it was according to the word of God; but what was most agreeable to the traditions of the elders, as is manifest from the text itself. Now this tradition is delivered in their *Misna* in these words; "They washed their hands before they eat common food, by an elevation of them; but before they eat the tithes, the offering, and the holy flesh, they washed by immersion."^[4] It is reported in the same tract, that *Johanan Ben Gud-Gada*, who, they say, was one of the most religious in the priesthood, "always eat his common food after the manner of purification for eating of the holy flesh;" that is, he always used immersion before eating; and it is highly reasonable to suppose, that the Pharisees, especially the more superstitious part, who pretended to a greater strictness in religion than others, used the same method. It deserves also to be remarked, that this tradition, which some of the Jews have been so tenacious of, that they would rather die than break it, is by them laid to be founded on Leviticus 15:11 *and hath not rinsed his hands in water*; where the Hebrew word *qfç* is used, which signifies a washing by immersion: and so *Buxtorf* renders it. Moreover, in the above said *Misna*^[5] we are told many things concerning this tradition, as the quantity and quality of the water they used, the vessels they washed in, as well as how far this washing reached, which was *qrp d[*, by which they meant, either the *back of the hand* or the wrist or else the *elbow*, as *Theopylact* observes on Mark 7:3 who in this is followed by *Capellus*.^[6]

Now some one of these, the word *πυγμυ* intends, which we translate *oft*. As to their manner of washing, it was either by taking water in one hand and pouring it upon the other, and then lifting it up,^[7] that the water might run down to the aforesaid parts, that so it might not return and defile them; or else it was performed by an immersion of them into water; which latter was accounted the moot effectual way, and used by the more superstitious part of the Jews. Now those who contend the most for a washing of hands, and not the whole body, as *Pocock*^[8] and *Lightfoot*, yet frankly acknowledge that it must be understood of washing of them by immersion. *Lightfoot's* words are these, "The Jews used, says he, *μυdy tlyfg* "a washing of hands;"^[9] that is, by lifting them up in the manner before described; and *μυry tlibf* an immersion of the hands; and the word *νιψωνται*, used

by our Evangelist, seems to answer to the former, and βαπτίζονται, to the latter." So that from the whole, suppose washing of hands is here intended; yet the sense of the Greek word, βαπτίζω contended for, is nevertheless effectually secured: Nor need we be much concerned at 2 Kings 3:11 being thrown in our way by Mr. M. page 41. For,

1. The text does not say that *Elisha* poured water upon the hands of *Elijah*, to wash his hands withal: and if he asks what did he then do it for; suppose I should answer, I cannot tell, how will he help himself? It lies upon him to prove that he did it for that end, which he will not find very easy to do.

2. Some of the Jewish writers think, [\[10\]](#) that washing of hands, is not intended, but some very great miracle, which followed upon *Elisha's* pouring water on *Elijah's* hands, and is therefore mentioned as a thing known, and what would serve to recommend him to the kings of *Judah, Israel, and Edom*. But taken in the other sense, the recommendation would be but very inconsiderable; besides, they were now in a very great strait for water, ver. 9 and they might expect, from his former performance, some miracle would be now wrought by him for their relief, as was verses 17, 20. But,

3. Suppose washing of hands is intended, and that this phrase is expressive of *Elisha's* being *Elijah's* ministering servant, and that it was his usual method to wash his master's hands by pouring water upon them; it makes nothing against the sense of the word in Mark 7:4 since that regards the superstitious washing of hands, as has been observed, which was performed by an immersion of them, and is there justly reprehended by our Lord.

Secondly, The other text produced by Mr. M. in page 41 is Hebrews 9:10 where the apostle speaks of *divers washings* or *baptisms*, which I have asserted to be performed always by bathing or dipping, and never by pouring or sprinkling. And I still abide by my assertion, the instances produced by him being insufficient to disprove, it 1. He mentions Hebrews 9:19 where the apostle speaks of *Moses's* sprinkling the book and people with blood; but does he say that they were waffled therewith? or was ever this instance of sprinkling reckoned among the ceremonial ablutions? When only a few drops of blood or water are sprinkled upon persons or things, can they be said, in any just propriety of speech, to be washed therewith?

2. He instances in Exodus 29:4. which speaks of the washing of *Aaron* and his sons, but not a word either of sprinkling or pouring, so that it makes nothing for his purpose: Besides, the Septuagint here use the word λουω, by which they always express the Jewish bathings, which were performed by a total immersion of the body in water.

3. His next instance is Numbers 8:6, 7. Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them; and thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them; sprinkle water of purifying upon them. But why did not he read on? and let them shave all their flesh, and wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean; that is, by bathing their whole bodies, which was done, as the *Targum* of *Jonathan* upon the place says, *in forty measures of water*. Now, it was thus the Levites were washed. Sprinkling the water of purification, was indeed a ceremony used preparatory to this bathing, but was itself no part of it, as will more fully appear from,

4. His other instance in Numbers 19:18. where it is laid, that *tents, vessels, or persons, that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave,* were to be *sprinkled*; but why did not he transcribe the 19th verse? where his readers would have been informed, that as this sprinkling was to be done on the *third and seventh days*, so after that, on the seventh day, the unclean person was to purify himself, *and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water*: So that all those aspersions before, were but so many preparations to the general washing or bathing himself all over in water, on the seventh day. I shall therefore still abide by it, that none of the ceremonial washings were performed by sprinkling; and indeed, to talk of washing by sprinkling, deserves rather to be laughed at, than to have a serious answer; it being no more reconcilable to good sense, than it is to the just propriety of language, or universal customs of nations. From the whole it appears, that *Maimonides* was not mistaken in his observation; and that the word in Hebrews 9:10 properly signifies *bathings or dippings*. And now,

Thirdly, We are come, as he says, to that great text, 1 Corinthians 10:2. which he directs to, as the poor man and woman's Lexicon; and it is pity but that they should know how to make use of it. Here the children of *Israel* are said to be *baptized in the cloud, and in the sea*. But since the word is here used in a figurative sense, it is not very fair in our antagonists to urge us with it, nor, indeed, any other place where it is so used; yet we are no: afraid of engaging with them in the consideration of those places, and particularly this; wherein there is enough to justify the apostle in the use of the word, and at the same time secure its sense on our side. When we consider, that the cloud in which they are said to be baptized, passed over them, so that they were covered therewith; and if it let down, at the same time, a shower of rain upon them, it makes it still look more like a baptism; which also is aptly resembled by their passage through the sea, the waters standing up on both tides, so that they seemed to be buried in them. Which things being considered, justifies the apostle, I say, in the use of the word, which strictly and properly signifies dipping or plunging. Words, when used in a figurative sense, though what is expressed by them is not literally true; yet the literal sense is not lost thereby: For instance, in the word *dipage* When a person has been in a large shower of rain, so that his clothes and body are exceeding wet, we often say of such an one, *he is finely dipt*; the meaning of which is, that he is as wet as if he had been dipt all over in a brook or river. So likewise of a person that has just looked into a book, controversy, art, or science; we say, that he has just *dip into it*; whereby we mean, that he has arrived but to a small acquaintance with, or knowledge in those things. Now would it not be a vain thing for a man, from hence, to attempt to prove, that the word *dip* is not to be understood in its native, common, and literal sense, in which we mostly use it. This observation will serve to vindicate my way of accounting for the use of the word in the present text, as well as for βαπτω in Daniel 4:33. In fine, from the whole, we may well conclude that Baptism ought to be performed by immersion, plunging, or dipping in water, according to the practice of *John*, Christ, and his apostles, the nature and end of the ordinance, and the true and native signification of the word; which mode of baptizing has been used in all ages of the world, and I doubt not but will be, notwithstanding all opposition made against it.

As to the endangering of health by immersion, I referred the reader to Sir *John Floyer's History of Cold-bathing*. Mr. M. insinuates that I have misrepresented him. I only intimate to the reader, that Sir *John* gives a relation of several cures performed by cold-bathing: And I could easily fill up several pages with a catalogue of diseases for which he says it is useful, together with instances of cures performed by it. He asks, "Why I do not inform *my* reader in how many cases Sir J. F. and Dr. B. thought cold-bathing inconvenient and dangerous?" I could, indeed, soon acquaint the

reader, that Sir John *Floyer* thought it not proper to be used when persons were hot and sweating, nor after excessive eating or drinking; as also, that they should not stay in it too long, until they were chilled; and that if any danger came by it, it was usually in such cases: But this will do his cause no service, nor affect ours. I could also have told my reader, that he thinks cold-bathing to be useful in Consumptions, Catarrhs, *etc.* the cases which Mr. M. instances in; who cites Dr. *Cheyne's Essay on Health*, page 108. where the Doctor says, "that Cold-bathing should never be used under a fit of a chronical distemper, with a quick pulse, or with a headache, or by those that have weak lungs." But why does he not acquaint his reader that the Doctor in the very same paragraph, says, "that cold-bathing is of great advantage to health — It promotes perspiration, enlarges the circulation, and prevents the danger of catching cold."

So that every body will easily see, as all experience testifies, that there is no force in the argument, taken from the endangering of health by immersion. By this time the reader will be capable of judging whether Mr. Gill is fairly answered or no, as Mr. M. has expressed in his title-page; though it would have been as well to have left it for another to have made the remark, and so took the advice of the wise man, Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips (Prov. 27:2). But before I conclude, I shall take liberty to ask Mr. M. four or five questions.

1. Why does he not tell the world who that servant of Christ is, whose words he uses; he says, I am mistaken in saying that they are the words of Ruffen; but I still aver, that they are used by him; but whether Ruffen took them from his servant of Christ, or his servant of Christ from Ruffen, I cannot tell; for that two men, without the knowledge of one another's words, should fall into the same odd, and awkward way of speaking, and commit the very same blunders, is not reasonable to suppose; but however, let him be who he will, Mr. Stennett's reply to Ruffen, which I have transcribed, fully detects the sin and folly of those indecent expressions. As to what Mr. M. says, page 44 "that he is very willing that both Stennett and Ruffen should lie dormant;" I believe it, for as the latter will never be of any service to his cause, so the former would give a considerable blow to it, was his book more diligently perused.

2. What does he mean by the *word of the Lord*, he so often mentions, when speaking of the sense of the Greek word? Does he mean the original text of the New Testament? That uses a word in the account it gives of this ordinance, which, as has been made appear, always signifies to *dip* or *plunge*. Or, by *the word of the Lord*, does he mean our translation; which uses the word *baptize*, thereby leaving the sense of the Greek word undetermined, had not the circumstances, attending the accounts we have of the administration of this ordinance, sufficiently explained it; as will clearly appear to every one who considers them: Had this rendered it *dip*, as some other versions have done, none, one would think, would have been at a loss about the right mode of administering this ordinance; though in *Holland*, where they use no other word but *dipping* to express baptism by, yet they nevertheless use sprinkling; nay, as I am informed, the minister when he only sprinkles or pours water upon the face of the infant, says, "I dip thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost." Such a force have prejudice and custom on the minds of men, that it puts them on doing what is contrary to the plain and manifest sense of words.

3. Why has he dropped his new found name of *Plungers*, which he seemed to be so fond of in his former performance, and thought so exceeding proper for us, and revived the old name of

Anabaptists? which we cannot be, neither according to his principles, nor our own; not according to ours, because we deny pouring or sprinkling to be baptism; not according to his, because he denies dipping or plunging to be baptism.

4. Why are Dr *Owen's* arguments for Infants-baptism published at the end of his book? How impertinent is this? When the controversy between us, is not about the subjects, but the mode of baptism: Perhaps his bookseller did this, seeing Mr. M. says nothing of them himself, nor recommends them to others; but if he thinks fit to shew his talent in this part of the controversy, he may expect attendance thereto, if what he shall offer deserves it.

5. Why has he not defended his wise reasons for mixed communion, and made some learned strictures upon those arguments of mine, which he has been pleased to call *frivolous*, without making any further reply to them? He has very much disappointed many of his friends, who promised both me and themselves an answer, to that part of my book especially; but perhaps a more elaborate performance may be expected from him, upon that subject, or some other learned hand. However, at present, I shall take my leave of him; but not with Proverbs 26:4 which he has been ashamed to transcribe at length, lest his readers should compare the beginning and end of his book together; whereby they would discover, how much he deserves the character of a Gentleman, a Scholar, or a Christian; as also, how well this suits the whining insinuations, with which he begins his performance. I shall add no more, but conclude with the words of *Job*, Teach me, and I will hold my tongue; and cause me to understand wherein I have erred. How forcible are right words? But what doth your arguing reprove?

The
DIVINE RIGHT OF INFANT BAPTISM,
Examined And Disproved;

Being an Answer to a Pamphlet, Entitled,
A brief Illustration and Confirmation of the Divine Right of Infant-Baptism.

PRINTED AT BOSTON IN NEW-ENGLAND, 1746.

CHAPTER 1.

The Introduction, observing the Author, Title, method and occasion of writing the Pamphlet under consideration.

Many being converted under the ministry of the word in New-England, and enlightened into the ordinance of believers baptism, whereby the churches of the Baptist persuasion at Boston and in that country have been much increased, has alarmed the paedobaptist ministers of that colony; who have applied to one Mr. Dickenson, a country minister, who, as my correspondent informs me, has wrote with some success against the Arminians, to write in favor of infant sprinkling; which application he thought fit to attend unto, and accordingly wrote a pamphlet on that subject; which has been printed in several places, and several thousands have been published, and great pains have been taken to spread them about, in order to hinder the growth of the Baptist interest. This performance has been transmitted to me, with a request to take some notice of it by way of reply, which I have undertook to do.

The running title of the pamphlet, is The Divine Right of Infant-Baptism; but if it is of divine right, it is of God; and if it is of God, if it is according to his mind, and is instituted and appointed by him, it must be notified somewhere or other in his word; wherefore the scriptures must be searched into, to see whether it is so, or no: and upon the most diligent search that can be made, it will be found that there is not the least mention of it in them; that there is no precept enjoining it, or directing to the observation of it; nor any instance, example, or precedent encouraging such a practice; nor any thing there laid or done, that gives any reason to believe it is the will of God that such a rite should be observed; wherefore it will appear to be entirely an human invention, and as such to be rejected. The title-page of this work promises an Illustration and Confirmation of the said divine right; but if there is no such thing, as it is certain there is not, the author must have a very difficult task to illustrate and confirm it; how far he has succeeded in this undertaking, will be the subject of our following inquiry. The writer of the pamphlet under consideration has chose to put his thoughts

together on this subject, in the form of a dialogue between a minister and one of his parishioners, or neighbors. Every man, that engages in a controversy, may write in what form and method he will; but a by-stander will be ready to conclude, that such a way of writing is chose, that he may have the opportunity of making his antagonist speak what he pleases; and indeed he would have acted a very unwise part, had he put arguments and objections into his mouth, which he thought he could not give any tolerable answer to; but, inasmuch as he allows the person the conference is held with, to be not only a man of piety and ingenuity, but of considerable reading, he ought to have represented him throughout as answering to such a character; whereas, whatever piety is shewn in this debate, there is very little ingenuity discovered; since, for the most part, he is introduced as admitting the weak reasonings of the minister, at once, without any further controversy; or if he is allowed to attempt a defense of the cause and principles he was going over to, he is made to do it in a very mean and trifling manner; and, generally speaking, what he offers is only to lead on to the next thing that presents itself in this dispute: Had he been a man of considerable reading, or had he read Mr. Stennett, and some others of the Antipaedobaptist authors, as is said he had, which had occasioned his doubt about his baptism, he would have known what answers and objections to have made to the minister's reasonings, and what arguments to have used in favor of adult-baptism, and against infant-sprinkling. What I complain of is, that he has not made his friend to act in character, or to answer the account he is pleased to give of him: However he has a double end in all this management; on the one hand, by representing his antagonist as a man of ingenuity and considerable reading, he would bethought to have done a very great exploit in convincing and silencing such a man, and reducing him to the acknowledgment of the truth; and, on the other hand, by making him talk so weakly, and so easily yielding to his arguments, he has acted a wise part, and taken care not to suffer him to say such things, as he was not able to answer; and which, as before observed, seems to be the view of writing in this dialogue-way.

CHAPTER 2

Of the Consequences of renouncing Infant baptism.

The minister, in order to frighten his parishioner out of his principle of adult-baptism, he was inclined to, suggests terrible consequences that would follow upon it; as his renouncing his baptism in his infancy; vacating the covenant between God and him, he was brought into thereby; renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel, as the ministry of the Word, and the sacrament of the Lord's-Supper; that upon this principle, Christ, for many ages, must have forsaken his church, and not made good his promise of his presence in this ordinance; and that there could be no such thing as baptism in the world now, neither among Paedobaptists, nor Antipaedobaptists.

1st, The first dreadful consequence following upon a man's espousing the principle of believers baptism, is a renunciation of his baptism; not of the ordinance of baptism, that he cannot be laid to reject and renounce; for when he embraces the principle of adult-baptism, and acts up to it, he receives the true baptism, which the word of God warrants and directs unto, as will be seen hereafter: But it seems it is a renunciation of his baptism in his infancy; and what of that? it should

be proved first, that that is baptism, and that it is good and valid, before it can be charged as an evil to renounce it; it is right to renounce that which has no warrant or foundation in the word of God: But what aggravates this supposed evil is, that in it a person in his early infancy is dedicated to God the Father, Son, and holy Ghost; it may be asked, by whom is the person in his infancy dedicated to God, when baptism is said to be administered to him? Not by himself, for he is ignorant of the whole transaction; it must be either by the minister, or his parents: The parents indeed desire the child may be baptized, and the minister uses such a form of words, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; but what dedication is here made by the one, or by the other? However, seeing there is no warrant from the word of God, either for such baptism, or dedication; a renunciation of it need not give any uneasiness to any person so baptized and dedicated.

2dly, To embrace adult-baptism, and to renounce infant-baptism, is to vacate the covenant into which a person is brought by his baptism, [page 4] by which covenant the writer of the dialogue means the covenant of grace, as appears from all his after-reasonings from thence to the right of infants to baptism.

1. He supposes that unbaptized persons are, as to their external and visible relation, strangers to the covenants of promise; are not in covenant with God; not so much as visible Christians; but in a state of heathenism; without hope of salvation, but from the uncovenanted mercies of God, [pages 4, 5, 6]. The covenant of grace was made from everlasting; and all interested in it were in covenant with God, as early, and so previous to their baptism, as to their secret relation God-wards; but this may be thought to be sufficiently guarded against by the restriction and limitation, "as to external and visible relation:" But I ask, are not all truly penitent persons, all true believers in Christ, though not as yet baptized, in covenant with God, even as to their external and visible relation to him, which faith makes manifest? Were not the three thousand in covenant with God visibly, when they were pricked to the heart, and repented of their sins, and gladly received the word of the gospel, promising the remission of them, though not as yet baptized? Was not the Eunuch in covenant with God? or was he in a state of heathenism, when he made that confession of his faith, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, previous to his going down into the water, and being baptized? Were the believers in Samaria, or those at Corinth, in an uncovenanted state, before the one were baptized by Philip, or the other by the apostle Paul? Was Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened, and who attended to the things that were spoken; and the Jailer, that believed and rejoiced in God, with all his house, in an uncovenanted state, before they submitted to the ordinance of baptism? Are there not some persons, that have never been baptized, of whom there is reason to believe they have an interest in the covenant of grace? Were not the Old Testament saints in the covenant of grace, before this rite of baptism took place? Should it be said, that circumcision did that then, which baptism does now, enter persons into covenant, which equally wants proof, as this; it may be replied, that only commenced at a certain period of time; was not always in use, and belonged to a certain people only; whereas there were many before that, who were in the covenant of grace, and many after, and even at the same time it was enjoined, who yet were not circumcised; of which more hereafter: From all which it appears, how false that assertion is.

2. That a man is brought into covenant by baptism, as this writer affirms; seeing the covenant of grace is from everlasting; and those that are put into it, were put into it so soon; and that by God himself, whose sole prerogative it is. Parents cannot enter their children into covenant, nor children

themselves, nor ministers by sprinkling water upon them; it is an act of the sovereign grace of God, who says, I will be their God, and they shall be my people: The phrase of bringing into the bond of the covenant, is but once used in scripture; and then it is ascribed to God, and not to the creature; not to any act done by him, or done to him (Ezek. 20:37), and much less,

3. Can this covenant be vacated, or made null and void, by renouncing infant-baptism: The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, and sure; its promises are Yea and Amen in Christ; its blessings are the sure mercies of David; God will not break it, and men cannot make it void; it is to everlasting, as well as from everlasting; those that are once in it can never be put out of it; nor can it be vacated by any thing done by them. This man must have a strange notion of the covenant of grace, to write after this rate; he is said to have wrote against the Arminians with some success; if he has, it must be in a different manner from this; for upon this principle, that the covenant of grace may be made null and void by an act of the creature, how will the election of God stand sure? or the promise of the covenant be sure to all the seed? What will become of the doctrine of the faints perseverance? or of the certainty of salvation to those that are chosen, redeemed, and called?

3dly, Another consequence said to follow, on espousing the principle of adult-baptism, and renouncing that of infants, is a renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel, as the ministry of the word, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper, practically denying the influences of the Spirit in them, and all usefulness, comfort and communion by them. All which this author endeavors to make out, by observing, that if infant-baptism is a nullity, then those, who have received no other, if ministers, have no right to administer sacred ordinances, being unbaptized; and, if private persons, they have no right to partake of the Lord's supper, for the same reason; and so all public ordinances are just such a nullity as infant-baptism; and all the influence: of the Spirit, in conversion, comfort, and communion, by them, must be practically denied, [pages 5, 6]. To which may be replied, that though upon the principle of adult-baptism, as necessary to the communion of churches, it follows, that no unbaptized person is regularly called to the preaching of the word, and administration ordinances, or can be a regular communicant; yet it does not follow, that a man that renounces infant baptism, and embraces believers baptism, must renounce all other ordinances, and look upon them just such nullities as infant-baptism is, and deny all the comfort and communion he has had in them; because the word may be truly preached, and the ordinance of the Lord's supper be duly administered, by an irregular man, and even by a wicked man; yea, may be made useful for conversion and comfort; for the use and efficacy of the word and ordinances, do not depend upon the minister or administrator; but upon God himself, who can, and does sometimes, make use of his own word for conversion, though preached by an irregular, and even an immoral man; and of his own ordinances, for comfort, by such an one, to his people, though they may be irregular and deficient in some things, through ignorance and inadvertency.

4thly, Another consequence following upon this principle, as supposed, is, that if infant-baptism is no institution of Christ, and to be rejected, then the promise of Christ, to be with his ministers in the administration of the ordinance of baptism, to the end of the world (Matthew 28:19, 20), is not made good; since for several ages, even from the fourth to the sixteenth century, infant baptism universally obtained, [pages 6-8]. To which the following answer may be returned; That the period of time pitched upon for the prevalence of infant, baptism is very unhappy for the credit of it, both as to the beginning and end; as to the beginning of it, in the fourth century, a period in which corruption in doctrine and discipline flowed into the church, and the man of sin was ripening apace,

for his appearance; and likewise as to the end, the time of the reformation, in which such abuses began to be corrected: The whole is a period of time, in which the true church of Christ began gradually to disappear, or to be hidden, and at last fled into the wilderness; where she has not been forsaken of Christ, but is, and will be, nourished, for a time, and limes, and half a time; this period includes the gross darkness of popery, and all the depths of Satan; and which to suffer was no ways contrary to the veracity of Christ, in his promise to be with his true church and faithful ministers to the end of the world. Christ has no where promised, that his doctrines and ordinances should not be perverted; but, on the contrary, has given clear and strong intimations, that there should be a general falling-away and departure from the truth and ordinances of the gospel, to make way for the revelation of antichrist; and though it will be allowed, that during this period infant-baptism prevailed, yet it did not universally obtain. There were witnesses for adult-baptism in every age; and Christ had a church in the wilderness, in obscurity, at this time; namely, in the valleys of Piedmont; who were, from the beginning of the apostasy, and witnessed against it, and bore their testimony against infant-baptism, as will be seen hereafter, and with these his presence was; nor did he promise it to any, but in the faithful ministrations of his word and ordinances, which he has always made good; and it will lie upon this writer and his friends, to prove the gracious presence of Christ in the administration of infant-baptism.

5thly, It is said, that, upon these principles, rejecting infant-baptism, and espousing believers-baptism, it is not possible there should be any baptism at all in the world, either among Paedobaptists or Antipaedobaptists; the reason of this consequence is, because the madmen of Munster, from whom this writer dates the first opposition to infant-baptism; and the first Antipaedobaptists in England, had no other baptism than what they received in their infancy; that adult-baptism must first be administered by unbaptized persons, if infant-baptism is no ordinance of Christ, but a mere nullity; and so by such as had no claim to the gospel ministry, nor right to administer ordinances; and consequently the whole succession of the Antipaedobaptist churches must remain unbaptized to this day; and so no more baptism among them, than among the Paedobaptists, until there is a new commission from heaven, to renew and restore this ordinance, which is, at present, lost out of the world, [pages 6, 8, 9]. As for the madmen of Munster, as this writer calls them, and the rife of the Antipaedobaptists from them, and what is said of them, I shall consider in the next chapter.

The English Antipaedobaptists, when they were first convinced of adult-baptism, and of the mode of administering it by immersion, and of the necessity of letting a reformation on foot in this matter, met together, and consulted about it: when they had some difficulties thrown in their way, about a proper administrator to begin this work; some were for sending messengers to foreign churches, who were the successors, of the ancient Waldenses in France and Bohemia; and accordingly did send over some, who being baptized, returned and baptized others. And this is a sufficient answer to all that this writer has advanced. But others thought that this was a needless scruple, and looked too much like the popish notion of an uninterrupted succession, and a right conveyed through that to administer ordinances; and therefore judged, in such a care as theirs, there being a general corruption as to this ordinance, that an unbaptized person, who appeared to be otherwise qualified to preach the word, and administer ordinances, should begin it; and justified themselves upon the same principles that other reformers did, who, without any regard to an uninterrupted succession, let up new churches, ordained pastors, and administered ordinances: It must be owned, that in ordinary cases, he ought to be baptized himself, that baptizes another, or

preaches the word, or administers other ordinances; but in an extraordinary care, as this of beginning a reformation from a general corruption, where such an administrator cannot be had, it may be done; nor is it essential to the ordinance that there should be such an administrator, or otherwise it could never have been introduced into the world at all at first; the first administrator must be an unbaptized person, as John the Baptist was.

According to this man's train of reasoning, there never was, nor could be any valid baptism in the world; for John, the first administrator, being an unbaptized person, the whole succession of churches from that time to this day must remain unbaptized. It will be said, that he had a commission from heaven to begin this new ordinance; and a like one should be shewn for the restoration of it. To which I answer, that there being a plain direction for the administration of this ordinance, in the Word, there was no need of a new commission to restore it from a general corruption; it was enough for any person, sensible of the corruption, to attempt a reformation, and to administer it in the right way, who was satisfied of his call from God to preach the gospel, and administer ordinances, according to the word. I shall close this chapter with the words of Zanchy, ¹¹ a Protestant Divine, and a Paedobaptist, and a man of as great learning and judgment, as any among the first reformers: "It is a fifth question, he says, proposed by Augustin, [contra Parmen. 1.2. c. 13. col. 42] but not solved, whether he that never was baptized may baptize another; and of this question he says, that is, Austin, nothing is to be affirmed without the authority of a council. Nevertheless, Thomas (Aquinas) takes upon him to determine it, from an answer of Pope Nicholas, to the inquiries of the Dutch, [as it is had in Decr. de Consec. dist. 4. can. 22] where we thus read; "You say, by a certain Jew, whether a Christian or a heathen, you know not, (that is, whether baptized or unbaptized) many were baptized in your country, and you desire to know what is to be done in this care; truly if they are baptized in the name of the holy Trinity, or only in the name of Christ, they ought not to be baptized again."

And Thomas confirms the same, by a laying of Isidore, which likewise is produced in the same distinction, [can. 21] where he says, "that the Spirit of Christ ministers the grace of baptism, though he be a heathen that baptizes. Wherefore, says Thomas, if there should be two persons not yet baptized, who believe in Christ, and. They have no lawful administrator by whom they may be baptized, one may, without sin, be baptized by the other; the necessity of death obliging to it. All this, adds Zanchy, proceeds from hence, that they thought water-baptism absolutely necessary; but what cannot be determined by the word of God, we should not dare to determine. But, says he, I will propose a question, which, I think, may be easily answered; supposing a Turk in a country where he could not easily come at Christian churches; he, by reading the New Testament, is favored with the knowledge of Christ, and with faith; he teaches his family, and converts that to Christ, and so others likewise; the question is, whether he may baptize them whom he has converted to Christ, though he himself never was baptized with water-baptism? I do not doubt but he may; and, on the other hand, take care that he himself be baptized, by another of them that were converted by him; the reason is, because he is a minister of the Word, extraordinarily raised up by Christ; so that such a minister may, with them, by the consent of the church, appoint a colleague, and take care that he be baptized by him." The reason which Zanchy, gives, will, I think, hold good in the case of the first Antipaedobaptists in England.

CHAPTER 3.

Of the Antiquity of Infant- baptism; when first debated; and concerning the Waldenses.

The minister, in this dialogue, in order to stagger his neighbor about the principle of adult-baptism, he had espoused, suggests to him, that infant-baptism did universally obtain in the church, even from the apostles times; that undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that it constantly obtained in the truly primitive church; and that it cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, till the madmen of Munster set themselves against it; and affirms, that the ancient Waldenses being in the constant practice of adult-baptism, is a mere imagination, a chimerical one, and to be rejected as a groundless figment, [pages 7, 9].

I. This writer intimates, that the practice of infant-baptism universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. The truly primitive church is the church in the times of Christ and his apostles: The first Christian church was that at Jerusalem, which consisted of such as were made the disciples of Christ, and baptized; first made disciples by Christ, and then baptized by his apostles; for Jesus himself baptized none, only they baptized by his order (John 4:1, 2; Acts 1:15). This church afterwards greatly increased; three thousand persons, who were pricked to the heart under Peter's ministry, repented of their sins, and joyfully received the good news of pardon and salvation by Christ, were baptized, and added to it; these were adult persons; nor do we read of any one infant being baptized, while this truly primitive church subsisted. The next Christian church was that at Samaria; for that there was a church there, is evident from Acts 9:31. This seems to have been founded by the ministry of Philip; the original members of it were men and women baptized by Philip, upon a profession of their faith in the things preached by him, concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 8:12); nor is there the least intimation given that infant-baptism at all obtained in this church. Another truly primitive Christian church, was the church at Philippi; the foundation of which was said in the two families of Lydia and the Jailer, and which furnish out no proof of infant-baptism obtaining here, as we shall see hereafter; for Lydia's household are called brethren, whom the apostles visited and comforted; and the Jailer's household were such as were capable of hearing the word, and who believed in Christ, and rejoiced in God as well as he (Acts 16:14, 15, 32-34, 40). So that it does not appear that infant-baptism obtained in this church. The next Christian church we read of, and which was a truly primitive one, is the church at Corinth, and consisted of persons who, hearing the apostle Paul preach the gospel, believed in Christ, whom he preached, and were baptized (Acts 18:8): but there is no mention made of any infant being baptized, either now or hereafter, in this truly primitive church state. These are all the truly primitive churches of whole baptism we have any account in the Acts of the apostles, excepting Cornelius, and his family and friends, who very probably founded a church at Caesarea; and the twelve disciples at Ephesus, who very likely joined to the church there, and who are both instances of adult-baptism (Acts 10:48; Acts 19:1-7). Let it be made appear, if it can, that any one infant was ever baptized: in any of the above truly primitive churches, or in any other, during the apostolic age, either at Antioch or Thessalonica, at some, or at Colosse, or any other primitive church of those times. But though this cannot be made out from the writings of the New Testament, we are told,

II. That undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that infant-baptism constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. Let us a little inquire into this matter:

1. The Christian writers of the first century, besides the evangelists and apostles, are Barnabas, Herman, Clemens Romanus, Ignatius and Polycarp. As to the two first of these, Barnabas and Hermas, the learned Mr. Stennett^[2] has cited some passages out of them; and after him Mr. David Rees,^[3] for which reason, I forbear transcribing them; which are manifest proofs of adult-baptism, and that as performed by immersion; they represent the persons baptized, the one^[4] as hoping in the cross of Christ, the other^[5] as having heard the word, and being willing to be baptized in the name of the Lord; and both as going down into the water, and coming up out of it. Clemens Romanus wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, still extant; but there is not a syllable in it about infant-baptism. Ignatius wrote epistles to several churches, as well as to particular persons; but makes no mention of the practice of infant-baptism in any of them: what he lays of baptism, favors adult-baptism; since he speaks of it as attended with faith, love and patience: "Let your baptism, says he^[6] remain as armor; faith as an helmet, love as a spear, and patience as whole armor." Polycarp wrote an epistle to the Philippians, which is yet in being; but there is not one word in it about infant-baptism. So that it is so far from being true, that there is undoubted evidence from the ancient fathers, that this practice universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church, that there is no evidence at all that it did obtain, in any respect, in the first century, or apostolic age; and which is the only period in which the truly primitive church of Christ can be said to subsist. There is indeed a work called The constitutions of the apostles, and sometimes the constitutions of Clemens, because he is laid to be the compiler of them; and another book of Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, out of which, passages have been cited in favor of infant-baptism; but there are manifestly of later date than they pretend to, and were never written by the persons whose names they bear, and are condemned as spurious by learned men, and are given up as such by Dr. Wall, in his History of Infant Baptism.^[7]

2. The Christian writers of the second century, which are extant, are Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Tatian, Minutius Felix, Irenaeus, and Clemens of Alexandria; and of all these writers, there is not one that lays any thing of infant-baptism; there is but one pretended to, and that is Irenaeus, and but a single passage out of him; and that depends upon a single word, the signification of which is doubtful at best; and besides the passage is only a translation of Irenaeus, and not expressed in his own original words; and the chapter, from whence it is taken, is by some learned men judged to be spurious; since it advances a notion inconsistent with that ancient writer, and notoriously contrary to the books of the evangelists, making Christ to live to be fifty years old, yea, to live to a senior age: The passage, produced in favor of infant-baptism, is this; speaking of Christ, he says,^[8] "Sanctifying every age, by that likeness it had to him; for he came to save all by himself; all, I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, "who by him are born again unto God;" infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men; therefore he went through every age, and became an infant, to infants sanctifying infants; and to little ones a little one, sanctifying those: of that age; and likewise became an example of piety, righteousness, and subjection." Now, the question is about the word renascuntur, whether it is to be rendered born again, which is the literal sense of the word, or baptized; the true sense of Irenaeus seems to be this, that Christ came to save all that are regenerated by his grace and spirit; and none but they, according to his own words (John 3:3, 5), and that by assuming human nature, and parting through the several stages of life, he has sanctified it, and let an example to men of every age. And this now is all the evidence, the

undoubted evidence of infant-baptism, from the fathers of the first two centuries; it would be easy to produce passages out of the above writers, in favor of believers-baptism; I shall only cite one out of the first of them; the account, that Justin Martyr gave to the emperor Antoninus Pius of the Christians of his day; though it has been cited by Mr. Stennett and Mr. Rees, I shall choose to transcribe it; because, as Dr. Wall says,^[9] it is the most ancient account of the way of baptizing next the scripture. "And now, says Justin,^[10] we will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God; lest, omitting this, we should seem to act a bad part in this declaration. As many, as are persuaded, and believe the things, taught and said by us, to be true, and promise to live according to them, are instructed to pray, and to ask, fasting, the forgiveness of their past sins of God, we praying and fasting together with them. After that, they are brought by us where water is, and they are regenerated in the same way of regeneration, as we have been regenerated; for they are then washed in water, in the name of the Father and Lord God of all, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit." There is a work, which bears the name of Justin, called Answers to the orthodox, concerning some necessary questions; to which we are sometimes referred for a proof of infant-baptism; but the book is spurious, and none of Justin's, as many learned men have observed; and as Dr. Wall allows; and is thought not to have been written before the fifth century. So stands the evidence for infant-baptism, from the ancient fathers of the first two centuries.

3. As to the third century, it will be allowed, that it was spoken of in it; though as soon as it was mentioned, it was opposed; and the very first man that mentions it, speaks against it; namely, Tertullian. The truth of the matter is, that infant-baptism was moved for in the third century; got footing and establishment in the fourth and fifth; and so prevailed until the time of the reformation: Though, throughout these several centuries, there were testimonies bore to adult-baptism; and at several times, certain persons rose up, and opposed infant-baptism; which brings me,

III. To consider what our author affirms, that it cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, until the madmen of Munster let themselves against it, [page 7]. Let us examine this matter, and,

1. It should be observed, that the disturbances in Germany, which our Paedobaptist writers so often refer to in this controversy about baptism, and so frequently reproach us with, were first begun in the wars of the boors, by such as were Paedobaptists, and them only; first by the Papists, some few years before the reformation; and after that, both by Lutherans and Papists, on account of civil liberties; among whom, in process of time, some few of the people called Anabaptists mingled themselves; a people that scarce in any thing agree with us, neither in their civil, nor religious principles; nor even in baptism itself; for if we can depend on those that wrote the history of them, and against them; they were for repeating adult-baptism, not performed among them; yea, that which was administered among themselves, when they removed their communion to another society; nay, even in the same community, when an excommunicated person was received again,^[11] besides, if what is reported of them is true, as it may be, their baptism was performed by sprinkling, which we cannot allow to be true baptism; it is laid, that when a community of them was satisfied with the person's faith and conversation, who proposed for baptism, the payor took water into his hand, and sprinkled it on the head of him that was to be baptized, using these words, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost.^[12] And even the disturbances in Munster, a famous city in Westphalia, were first begun by Bernard Rotman, a Paedobaptism

minister of the Lutheran persuasion, assisted by other ministers of the reformation, in opposition to the Papists in the year 1532; and it was not till the year 1533, that John Matthias of Harlem, and John Bocolodus of Leyden came to this place;^[13] who, with Knipperdolling and others, are, I suppose, the madmen of Munster this writer means; and he may call them madmen, if he pleases; I shall not contend with him about it; they were mad notions which they held, and mad actions they performed; and both dip avowed by the people who are now called Anabaptists; though it is not reasonable to suppose, that there were the only men concerned in that affair, or that the number of their followers should increase to such a degree in so small a time, as to make such a revolution in so large a city: However, certain it is, that it was not their principle about baptism, that led them into such extravagant notion, and actions: But what I take notice of all this for, is chiefly to observe the date of the confusions and distractions, in which there madmen were concerned; which were from the year 1533 to 1536: And our next inquiry therefore is, whether there was any debate about the practice of infant-baptism before this time. And,

2. It will appear, that it was frequently debated, before these men set themselves against it, or acted the mad part they did: In the years 1532 and 1528, there were public disputations at Berne in Switzerland, between the ministers of the church there and some Anabaptist teacher;^[14] in the years 1529, 1527 and 1525, Oecolampadius had various disputes with people of this name at Basil in the same country;^[15] in the year 1525, there was a dispute at Zurich in the same country about Paedobaptism, between Zwinglius, one of the first reformers, and Balthasar Hubmeierus,^[16] who afterwards was burnt, and his wife drowned at Vima, in the year 1528; of whom Meshovius,^[17] though a Papist, give, this character; that he was from his childhood brought up in learning; and for his singular erudition was honored with a degree in divinity; was a very eloquent man, and read in the scriptures, and fathers of the church. Hoornbeck^[18] calls him a famous and eloquent preacher, and lays he was the first of the reformed preachers at Waldshut: There were several disputations with other, in the same year at this place; upon which an edict was made by the senate at Zurich, forbidding rebaptization, under the penalty of being fined a silver mark, and of being imprisoned, and even drowned, according to the nature of the offense. And in the year 1526, or 1527, according to Hoornbeck, Felix Mans, or Mentz, was drowned at Zurich; this man, Meshovius says,^[19] whom he calls Felix Mantscher, was of a noble family; and both he, and Conrad Grebel, whom he calls Cunrad Grebbe, who are said to give the first rise to Anabaptism at Zurich, were very learned men, and well skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages. And the same writer affirms, that Anabaptism was set on foot at Wittenberg, in the year 1522, by Nicholas Pelargus, or Stork, who had companions with him of very great learning, as Carolostadius, Philip Melancthon, and others; this, he says, was done, whilst Luther was lurking as an exile in the cable of Wartpurg in Thuringia; and that when he returned from thence to Wittenberg he banished Carolostadius, Pelargus, More, Didymus, and others,^[20] and only received Melancthon again. This carries the opposition to Paedobaptism within five years of the reformation, begun by Luther; and certain it is, there were many and great debates about infant-baptism at the first of the reformation, years before the affair of Munster: And evident it is, that some of the first reformers were inclined to have attempted a reformation in this ordinance, though they, for reasons best known to themselves, dropped it; and even Zwinglius himself, who was a bitter persecutor of the people called Anabaptists afterwards, was once of the same mind himself, and against Paedobaptism. But,

3. It will appear, that this was a matter of debate, and was opposed before the time of the reformation. There was a set of people in Bohemia, near a hundred years before that, who appear to

be of the same persuasion with the people, called Anabaptists; for in a letter, written by Costelecus out of Bohemia to Erasmus, dated October 10, 1519,^[21] among other things said of them, which agree with the said people, this is one; "such as come over to their sect, must every one be baptized anew in meer water;" the writer of the letter calls them Pyghards; so named, he says, from a certain refugee, that came thither ninety-seven years before the date of the letter. Pope Innocent the third, under whom was the Lateran council, A.D. 1215, has, in the decretals, a letter, in answer to a letter from the bishop of Arles in Provence, which had represented to him,^[22] that "some Heretics there had taught, that it was to no purpose to baptize children, since they could have no forgiveness of sins thereby, as having no faith, charity, etc." So that it is a clear point, that there were some that let themselves against infant-baptism in the thirteenth century, three hundred years before the reformation; yea, in the twelfth century there were some that opposed Paedobaptism. Mr. Fax, the martyrologist, relates from the history of Robert Guisburne,^[23] that two men, Gerhardus and Dulcinus, in the reign of Henry the second, about the year of our Lord 1158; who, he supposes, had received some light of knowledge of the Waldenses, brought thirty with them into England; who, by the king and the prelates, were all burnt in the forehead, and so driven out of the realm; and after were slain by the Pope. Rapin^[24] calls them German Heretics, and places their coming into England at the year 1166: But William of Newbury^[25] calls them Publicans, and only mentions Gerhardus, as at the head of them; and whom he allows to be somewhat learned, but all the rest very illiterate, and says they came from Gascoigne; and being convened before a council, held at Oxford for that purpose, and interrogated concerning articles of faith, said perverse things concerning the divine sacraments, detesting holy baptism, the Eucharist and marriage: And his annotator, out of a manuscript of Radulph Picardus, the monk, shews, that the Heretics, called Publicans, affirm, that we must not pray for the dead; that the suffrages of the saints were not to be asked; that they believe not purgatory; with many other things; and particularly, afferunt isti parvulos non baptisandos donec ad intelligibilem perveniant etatem; "they assert that infants are not to be baptized, till they come to the age of understanding."^[26]

In the year 1147, St Bernard wrote a letter to the earl of St Gyles, complaining of his harboring Henry, an Heretic; and among other things he is charged with by him, are there; "the infants of Christians are hindered from the life of Christ, the grace of baptism being denied them; nor are they suffered to come to their salvation, though our Savior compassionately cries out in their behalf, Suffer little children to come unto me, etc." and, about the same time, writing upon the Canticles, in his 65th and 66th sermons, he takes notice of a sort of people, he calls Apostolici; and who, perhaps, were the followers of Henry; who, says he, laugh at us for baptizing infants,^[27] and among the tenets which he ascribes to them, and attempts to confute, this is the first, "Infants are not to be baptized:" In opposition to which, he affirms, that infants are to be baptized in the faith of the church; and endeavors, by instances, to show, that the faith of one is profitable to others,^[28] which he attempts from Matthew 9:2 and Matthew 15:28; 1 Timothy 2:15.

In the year 1146, Peter Bruis, and Henry his follower, set themselves against infant-baptism. Petrus Cluniacensis, or Peter the Abbot of Clugny, wrote against them; and among other errors he imputes to them, are there: "That infants are not baptized, or saved by the faith of another, but ought to be baptized and saved by their own faith; or, that baptism without their own faith does not save; and that those, that are baptized in infancy, when grown up, should be baptized again; nor are they then rebaptized, but rather rightly baptized."^[29] And that there men did deny infant-baptism, and pleaded for adult-baptism, Mr. Stennett^[30] has proved from Cassander and Prateolus, both Paedobaptists:

And Dr. Wall^[31] allows these two men to be Antipaedobaptists; and says, they were "the first Antipaedobaptist preachers that ever let up a church, or society of men, holding that opinion against infant-baptism, and rebaptizing such as had been baptized in infancy;" and who also observes,^[32] that the Lateran^[33] council, under Innocent the II, 1139, did condemn Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting infant-baptism: Moreover, in the year 1140, or a little before it, Evervinus, of the diocese of Cologne, wrote a letter to St Bernard; in which he gives him an account of some heretics, lately discovered in that country; of whom he says, "they condemn the sacraments, except baptism only; and this only in those who are come to age; who, they say, are baptized by Christ himself whoever be the minister of the sacraments; they do not believe infant-baptism; alleging that place of the gospel, he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."^[34]

There seem also to be the disciples of Peter Bruis, who began to preach about the year 1126; so that it is out of all doubt, that this was a matter of debate, four hundred years before the madmen of Munster let themselves against it: And a hundred years before there, there were two men, Bruno, bishop of Angiers, and Berengarius, archdeacon of the same church, who began to spread their particular notions about the year 1035; which chiefly respected the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's-Supper. What they said about the former, may be learned from the letter sent by Deodwinus, bishop of Liege, to Henry I. King of France; in which are the following words:^[35] "There is a report come out of France, and which goes through all Germany, that there two (Bruno and Berengarius) do maintain, that the Lord's body (the Host) is not the body, but a shadow and figure of the Lord's body; and that they do disannul lawful marriages; and, as far as in them lies, overthrow the baptism of infants:" And from Guimundus, bishop of Aversa, who wrote against Berengarius, who says, "that he did not teach rightly concerning the baptism of infants, and concerning marriage."^[36] Mr. Stennett^[37] relates from Dr. Allix, a passage concerning one Gundulphus and his followers, in Italy; divers of whom, Gerard, bishop of Cambray and Arras, interrogated upon several heads in the year 1025. And, among other things, that bishop mentions the following reason, which they gave against infant-baptism; "because to an infant, that neither wills, nor runs, that knows nothing of faith, is ignorant of its own salvation and welfare; in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, or confession; the will, faith and confession of another seem not in the least to appertain."

Dr. Wall, indeed, represents these men, the disciples of Gundulphus, as Quakers and Manichees in the point of baptism; holding that water-baptism is of no use to any: But it must be affirmed, whatever their principles were, that their argument against infant-baptism was very strong. So then we have testimonies, that Paedobaptism was opposed five hundred years before the affair of Munster. And if the Pelagians, Donatists, and Luciferians, so called from Lucifer Calaritanus, a very orthodox man, and a great opposer of the Arians, were against infant-baptism, as several Paedobaptist writers affirm; this carries the opposition to it still higher; and indeed it may seem strange, that since it had not its establishment till the times of Austin, that there should be none to let themselves against it: And if there were none, how comes it to pass that such a canon should be made in the Milevitan council, under pope Innocent the first, according to Carranza;^[38] and in the year 402, as say the Magdeburgensian centuriators;^[39] or be it in the council at Carthage, in the year 418, as says Dr. Wall^[40] which runs thus, "Also, it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized; or says, they are indeed to be baptized for the remission of sins; and yet they derive no original sin from Adam to be expiated by the washing of regeneration; (from

whence it follows, that the form of baptism for the forgiveness of sins in them, cannot be understood to be true, but false) let him be anathema:"

But if there were none, that opposed the baptism of new-born infants, why should the first part of this canon be made, and an anathema annexed to it? To say, that it respected a notion of a single person in Cyprian's time, 150 years before this, that infants were not to be baptized, until eight days old; and that it seems there were some people still of this opinion, wants proof. But however certain it is, that Tertullian^[41] in the beginning of the third century, opposed the baptism of infants, and dissuaded from it, who is the first writer that makes mention of it: So it appears, that as soon as ever it was set on foot, it became matter of debate; and sooner than this, it could not be: And this was thirteen hundred years before the madmen of Munster appeared in the world. But,

IV. Let us next consider the practice of the ancient Waldenses, with respect to adult-baptism, which this author affirms to be a chimerical imagination, and groundless figment. It should be observed, that the people called Waldenses, or the Vaudois, inhabiting the valleys of Piedmont, have gone under different names, taken from their principal leaders and teachers; and so this of the Waldenses, from Peter Waldo, one of their barbs, or pastors; though some think, this name is only a corruption of Vallenses, the inhabitants of the valleys: And certain it is, there was a people there before the times of Waldo, and even from the apostles time, that held the pure evangelic truths, and bore a testimony to them in all ages,^[42] and throughout the dark times of popery, as many learned men have observed; and the sense of there people concerning baptism may be best understood,

1. By what their ancient barbs or pastors taught concerning it. Peter Bruis, and Henry his successor, were both, as Morland affirms,^[43] their ancient barbs and pastors; and from them there people were called Petrobrussians and Henricians; and we have seen already, that there two men were Antipaedobaptists, denied infant-baptism, and pleaded for adult-baptism. Arnoldus of Brixia, or Brescia, was another of their barbs, and is the first mentioned by Morland, from whom there people were called Arnoldists. Of this man Dr. Allix says,^[44] that besides being charged with some ill opinions, it was said of him, that he was not found in his sentiments concerning the sacraments of the altar and the baptism of infants; and Dr. Wall allows,^[45] that the Lateran council, under Innocent the second, in 1139, did condemn Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting infant-baptism, Lollardo was another of their barbs, who, as Morland says, was in great reputation with them, for having conveyed the knowledge of their doctrine into England, where his disciples were known by the name of Lollards; who were charged with holding, that the sacrament of baptism used in the church by water, is but a light matter, and of small effect; that Christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need no water; and that infants be sufficiently baptized, if their parents be baptized before them.^[46] All which seem to arise from their denying of infant baptism, and the efficacy of it to take away sin.

2. By their ancient confessions of faith, and other writings which have been published. In one of there, bearing date A.D. 1120, the 12th and 13th articles run thus:^[47] "We do believe that the sacraments are signs of the holy thing, or visible forms of the invisible grace; accounting it good that the faithful sometimes use the said signs, or visible forms, if it may be done. However we believe and hold, that the above said faithful may be saved without receiving the signs aforesaid, in case they have no place, nor any means to use them. We acknowledge no other sacrament but baptism and the Lord's-Supper." And in another ancient confession, without a date, the 7th article

is:^[48] "We believe that in the sacrament of baptism, water is the visible and external sign, which represents unto us that which (by the invisible virtue of God operating) is within us; namely, the renovation of the Spirit, and the mortification of our members in Jesus Christ; by which also we are received into the holy congregation of the people of God, there protesting and declaring openly our faith and amendment of life." In a tract,^[49] written in the language of the ancient inhabitants of the valleys, in the year 1100, called The Noble Lesson, are these words; speaking of the apostles, it is observed of them, "they spoke without fear of the doctrine of Christ; they preached to Jews and Greeks, working many miracles, and those that believed they baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." And in a treatise concerning Antichrist, which contains many sermons of the barbs, collected in the year 1120, and so speaks the sense of their ancient pastors before this time, stands the, following passage:^[50] "The third work of antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the holy Spirit, unto the dead outward work (or faith) baptizing children in that faith, and teaching, that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had, and therein he confers and bellows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his Christianity, which is against the Holy Spirit."

There are indeed two confessions of theirs, which are said to speak of infant-baptism; but there are of a late date, both of them in the sixteenth century; and the earliest: is not a confession of the Waldenses or Vaudois in the valleys of Piedmont, but of the Bohemians, said to be presented to Ladislaus king of Bohemia, A.D. 1508, and afterwards amplified and explained, and presented to Ferdinand king of Bohemia, A.D. 1535; and it should be observed, that those people say, that they were fairly called Waldenses;^[51] whereas it is certain there were a people in Bohemia that came out of the valleys, and sprung from the old Waldenses, and were truly so, who denied infant-baptism, as that sort of them called Pyghards, or Picards; who, near a hundred years before the reformation, as we have seen by the letter sent to Erasmus out of Bohemia, rebaptized persons that joined in communion with them; and Scultetus,^[52] in his annals on the year 1528, says, that the united brethren in Bohemia, and other godly persons of that time, were rebaptized; not that they patronized the errors of the Anabaptist's, (meaning such that they were charged with which had no relation to baptism) but because they could not see how they could otherwise separate themselves from an unclean world. The other confession is indeed made by the ministers and heads of the churches in the valleys, assembled in Angrogne, September 12, 1532.^[53] Now it should be known, that this was made after that "Peter Masson and George Morell were sent into Germany in the year 1530, as Morland^[54] says, to treat with the chief ministers of Germany, namely, Oecolampadius, Bucer, and others, touching the reformation of their churches; but Peter Masson was taken prisoner at Dijon."

However, as Fox says^[55] "Morell escaped, and returned alone to Merindol, with the books and letters he brought with him from the churches of Germany; and declared to his brethren all the points of his commission; and opened unto them how many and great errors they were in; into the which their old ministers, whom they called Barbs, that is to say Uncles, had brought them, leading them from the right way of true religion." After which, this confession was drawn up, signed, and swore to: From hence we learn, where they might get this notion, which was now become matter of great debate in Switzerland and Germany; and yet, after all this, I am inclined to think, that the words of the article in the said confession, are to be so understood, as not to relate to infant-baptism: They are these;^[56] "We have but two sacramental signs left us by Jesus Christ; the one is baptism; the other is the Eucharist, which we receive, to shew that our perseverance in the faith, is such, as we promised, when we were baptized, being little children." This phrase, being little

children, as I think, means, their being little children in knowledge and experience, when they were baptized; since they speak of their receiving the Eucharist, to shew their perseverance in the faith, they then had promised to persevere in: Besides, if this is to be understood of them, as infants in a literal sense; what promise were they capable of making, when such? Should it be said, that "they promised by "their sureties;" it should be observed, that the Waldenses did not admit of godfathers and godmothers in baptism; this is one of the abuses their ancient Barbs complained of in baptism, as administered by the Papists.¹⁵⁷¹

Besides, in a brief confession of faith, published by the reformed churches of Piedmont, so late as A.D. 1655, they have these words in favor of adult-baptism;¹⁵⁸¹ "that God does not only instruct and teach us by his word, but has also ordained certain sacraments to be joined with it, as a means to unite us unto Christ, and to make us partakers of his benefits. And there are only two of them belonging in common to all the members of the church under the New Testament; to wit, baptism and the Lord's-Supper; that God has ordained the sacrament of baptism to be a testimony of our adoption, and of our being cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and renewed in holiness of life." Nor is there one word in it of infant-baptism.

Upon the whole, it will be easily seen, what little reason the writer of the dialogue under consideration had to say, that the ancient Waldenses, being in the constant practice of adult-baptism, is a chimerical imagination, and a groundless fiction; since there is nothing appears to the contrary, but that they were in the practice of it until the sixteenth century; for what is urged against it, is since that time: And even at that time, there were some, that continued in the practice of it; for Ludovicus Vives, who wrote in the said century, having observed, that "formerly no person was brought to the holy baptistry, till he was of adult age, and when he both understood what that mythical water meant, and desired to be washed in it, yea, desired it more than once," adds the following words; "I hear, in some cities of Italy, the old custom is still in a great measure preferred."¹⁵⁹¹

Now, what people should he mean by some cities of Italy, unless the remainders of the Petrobrussians, or Waldenses, as Dr. Wall observes,¹⁶⁰¹ who continued that practice in the valleys of Piedmont: And it should be observed, that there were different sects, that went by the name of Waldenses, and some of them of very bad principles; some of them were Manichees, and held other errors: And indeed, it was usual for the Papists in former times, to call all by this name, that dissented from them; so that it need not be wondered at, if some, bearing this name, were for infant-baptism, and others not. The Vaudois in the valleys, are the people chiefly to be regarded; and it will not be denied, that of late years infant-baptism has obtained among them: But that the ancient Waldenses practiced it, wants proof.

CHAPTER 4.

The Argument for Infant-baptism, taken from the Covenant made with Abraham, and from Circumcision, the Sign of it, considered.

The minister in this debate, in answer to his neighbor's requiring a plain scripture institution of infant-baptism, tells him; if he would "consider the covenant of grace, which was made with Abraham, and with all his seed, both after the flesh, and after the Spirit, and by God's express command to be sealed to infants, he would there find a sufficient scripture instance for infant-baptism:" And for this covenant he directs him to Genesis 17:2, 4, 7, 10, 12. He argues, that this covenant was a covenant of grace; that it was made with all Abraham's seed, natural and spiritual, Jews and Gentiles; that circumcision was the seal of it; and that the same institution, which requires circumcision to be administered to infants, requires baptism to be also administered to them, that succeeding circumcision, [page 10-18]. Wherefore,

First, The leading inquiry is, whether the covenant made with Abraham (Gen. 17), was the covenant of grace; that is, the pure covenant of grace, in distinction from the covenant of works; which is the sense in which it is commonly understood, and in which this writer seems to understand this covenant with Abraham; for of it, he says [p. 13], "it was the covenant of grace, that covenant by which alone we can have any grounded hope of salvation:" But that it was the covenant of grace, or a pure covenant of grace, must be denied: For,

1. It is never called the covenant of grace, nor by any name which shews it to be so; it is called the covenant of circumcision, which God is said to give to Abraham (Acts 7:8) but not a covenant of grace; circumcision and grace are opposed to one another; circumcision is a work of the law, which they that sought to be justified by, fell from grace (Gal. 5:2-4).

2. It seems rather to be a covenant of works, than of grace; for this was a covenant to be kept by men. Abraham was to keep it, and his seed after him were to keep it; something was to be done by them; they were to circumcise their flesh; and not only he and his seed were to be circumcised, but all that were born in his house, or bought with his money; and a severe penalty was annexed to it: In care of neglect, or disobedience, such a soul was to "be cut off from his people" (Gen. 17:9-14). All which favor nothing of a covenant of grace, a covenant by which we can have a grounded hope of salvation, but the contrary.

3. This was a covenant that might be broken, and in some instances was (Gen. 17:14); but the covenant of grace cannot be broken; God will not break it (Ps. 89:34), nor man cannot: It is a covenant ordered in all things, and sure; it cannot be moved; it stands firmer than hills, or mountains.

4. It must be owned, that there were temporal things promised in this covenant, such as a multiplication of Abraham's natural seed; a race of kings from him, with many nations, and a possession of the land of Canaan (Gen. 17:6, 8). Things which can have nothing to do with the pure covenant of grace, any more than the change of his name from Abram to Abraham [v. 5].

5. There were some persons, included in this covenant made with Abraham, of whom it cannot be thought they were in the covenant of grace, as Ishmael, Esau, and others; and on the other hand, there were some, and even living at the time when this covenant was made, and yet were not in it; who, nevertheless, were in the covenant of grace, as Arphaxad, Melchizedek, Lot, and others; wherefore this can never be reckoned the pure covenant of grace.

6. The covenant of grace was only made with Christ, as the federal head of it; and who is the only head of the covenant, and of the covenant-ones; wherefore, if the covenant of grace was made with Abraham, as the federal head of his natural and spiritual seed, of Jews and Gentiles; then there must be two heads of the covenant of grace, contrary to the nature of such a covenant, and the whole current of scripture: Yea, this covenant of Abraham's, so far as it respected his spiritual seed, or spiritual blessings for them, it and the promises were made to Christ (Gal. 3:16). No mere man is capable of covenanting with God, of stipulation and restipulation; for what has man to restipulate with God? The covenant of grace is not made with any single man; and much less with him on the behalf of others: When, therefore, at any time we read of the covenant of grace, being made with a particular person, or with particular persons, it must always be understood of making it manifest to them; of a revelation of the covenant, and of an application of covenant-blessings to them; and not of any original contract with them; for that is only made with them in Christ. To which may be added,

7. That the covenant of grace was made with Christ, and with his people, as considered in him, from everlasting; for so early was Christ set up as the mediator of it; the promise of eternal life in it was before the world was; and those interested in it, were blessed with all spiritual blessings and grace before the foundation of it; now could there be a mediator so early, a promise of eternal life so soon, and blessings of grace provided, and no covenant subsisting? wherefore the covenant made with Abraham in time, could not, strictly and properly speaking, be the covenant of grace. But,

8. To shorten this debate, it will be allowed, that the covenant made with Abraham was a peculiar covenant, such as was never made with any before, or since; that it was of a mixed kind; that it had in it promises and mercies of a temporal nature, which belonged to his natural seed; and others of a spiritual sort, which belonged to his spiritual seed: The former are more numerous, clear, and distinct; the latter are comprised chiefly in Abraham's being the father of many nations, or of all, that believe, and in God being a God to him and them (Rom. 4:11, 12, 16, 17). Which observation makes way for the next inquiry,

Secondly, With whom this covenant was made, so far as it respected spiritual things, or was a revelation of the covenant of grace; as for the temporal things of this covenant, it does not concern the argument. It is allowed on all hands, that they belonged to Abraham, and his natural seed: But the question is, whether this covenant, so far as it may be reckoned a covenant of grace, or a revelation of it, or respected spiritual things, was made with all Abraham's seed after the flesh, and with all the natural seed of believing Gentiles? This question consists of two parts,

1st, Whether the covenant made with Abraham, so far as it was a covenant of grace, was made with all Abraham's seed, according to the flesh? Which must be answered in the negative. For,

1. If it was made with all the natural seed of Abraham, as such, it must be with his more immediate offspring; and so must be equally made with a mocking and persecuting Ishmael, born after the flesh, the son of the bond-woman, as with Isaac, born after the Spirit, and the son of the free woman; and yet we find, that Ishmael was excluded from having a share in spiritual blessings, only temporal ones were promised him; and, in distinction and opposition to him, the covenant was established with Isaac (Gen. 17:19, 20, 21). Again, if this was the case, it must be equally made

with a profane Esau, as with plain-hearted Jacob; and yet it is said, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated (Mal. 1:1, 2).

2. If it was made with all Abraham's seed according to the flesh, it must be made with all his remote posterity, and if and good to them in their most corrupt state; it must be made with them who believed not, and whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, and entered not into rest; it must be made with the ten tribes, that revolted from the pure service of God, and who worshipped the calves at Dan and Bethel; it must be made with the people of the Jews in Isaiah's time, when they were a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that were corrupters; whose rulers are called the rulers of Sodom, and the people the people of Gomorrah (Isa. 1:4, 6, 10), it must be made with the Scribes and Pharisees, and that wicked, adulterous, and hypocritical generation of men in the time of our Lord, who were his implacable enemies, and were concerned in his death; who killed him, persecuted his apostles, pleased not God, and were contrary to all men. What man, that seriously considers these things, can think that the covenant of grace belonged to these men, at least to all; and especially when he observes, what the apostle says, they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children? (Rom. 9:6, 7). Yea,

3. If it was made with all that are the seed of Abraham according to the flesh then it must be made with Ishmaelites and Edomites, as well as with Israelites; with his posterity by Keturah, as well as by Sarah; with the Midianites and Arabians; with the Turks, as well as with the Jews, since they descended and claim their descent from Abraham, as well as these. But,

4. To shut up this argument; this covenant made with Abraham, be it a covenant of grace, seeing it could be no more, at most, than a revelation, manifestation, copy, or transcript of it, call it which you will; it can never be thought to comprehend more in it than the original contract, than the eternal covenant between the Father and the Son. Now the only persons interested in the everlasting covenant of grace, are the chosen of God and precious; whom he has loved with an everlasting love; gave to his Son to be redeemed by his blood; for whom provision is made in the same covenant for the sanctification of their nature, for the justification of their persons, for the pardon of their sins, for their perseverance in grace, and for their eternal glory and happiness: So that all that are in that covenant are chosen to grace here, and glory hereafter, and shall certainly enjoy both: they are all secured in the hands of Christ, and are redeemed from sin, law, hell, and death, by his precious blood; and shall be saved in him with an everlasting salvation; they have all of them the laws of God put into their minds, and written on their hearts; they have new hearts and new spirits given them, and the stony heart taken away from them; they have the righteousness of Christ imputed to them; they have their sins forgiven them for his sake, and which will be remembered no more; they have the fear of God put into their hearts, and shall never finally and totally depart from him; but, being called and justified, shall be glorified (Jer. 31:33, 34; 32:40; Ezek. 36:25-27; Rom. 8:30).

Now if this covenant was made with all Abraham's natural seed, and comprehends all of them, then they must be all chosen of God; whereas there was only a remnant among them, according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:5): they must be all given to Christ, and secured in his hands; whereas there were some of them, that were not of his sheep, given him by his Father, and so did not believe in him (John 10:26); they must be all redeemed by his blood; whereas he laid down his life for his

sheep, his friends, his church, which all of Abraham's seed could never be said to be: In a word, they must be all regenerated and sanctified, justified and pardoned; must all have the grace of God, and persevere in it to the end, and be all eternally saved; and the same must be said of all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, if they also are all of them in the covenant of grace. But what man, in his senses, will affirm these things? And, upon such a principle, how will the doctrines of personal election, particular redemption, regeneration by efficacious grace, not by blood or the will of man, and the saints' final perseverance, be established? This Gentleman, whose pamphlet is before me, is said to have written with some success against the Arminians; but sure I am, that no man can write with success against them, and without contradiction to himself, that has imbibed such a notion of the covenant of grace, as this I am militating against.

2dly, The other part of the question is, whether the covenant made with Abraham, so far as it was a covenant of grace, was made with all the natural seed of believing Gentiles? which also must be answered in the negative: For,

1. It will be allowed, that this covenant respects Abraham's spiritual seed among the Gentiles; even all true believers, all such that walk in the steps of his faith; for he is the Father of all them that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, Jews or Gentiles (Rom. 4:11, 12, 15); but not the natural seed of believing Gentiles. They, indeed, that are of the faith of Abraham, are his children in a spiritual sense, and they are blessed with him with spiritual blessings, and are such, as Christ has redeemed by his blood; and they believe in him, and the blessing of Abraham comes upon them: But then this spiritual seed of Abraham is the same with the spiritual seed of Christ, with whom the covenant was made from everlasting, and to them only does it belong; and to none can spiritual blessings belong, but to a spiritual seed, not a natural one. Let it be proved, if it can, that all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, are the spiritual seed of Abraham, and then they will be admitted to have a claim to this covenant. But, though it appears, that believing Gentiles are in this covenant, what clause is there in it, that respects their natural seed, as such? Let it be shown, if it can; by what right and authority, can any believing Gentile pretend to put his natural seed into Abraham's covenant? The covenant made with him, as to the temporal part of it, belonged to him, and his natural seed; and with respect to its spiritual part, only to his spiritual seed, whether Jews or Gentiles and not to the natural seed of either of them, as such.

2. The covenant made with Abraham, and his spiritual seed, takes in many of the seed of unbelieving Gentiles; who being called by grace, and openly believing Christ, are Abraham's spiritual seed, with whom the covenant was made: That there are many among the Gentiles born of unbelieving parents, who become true believers in Christ, and so appear to be in the covenant of grace, must be allowed; since many are received as such into the communion of the Paedobaptists, as well as others; and, on the other hand, there are many born of believing Gentiles, who do not believe in Christ, are not partakers of his grace, on whom the spiritual blessings of Abraham do not come; and so not in his covenant. Wherefore, by what authority do men put in the infant seed of believing Gentiles, as such, into the covenant, and restrain it to them, and leave out the seed of unbelieving Gentiles; when, on the contrary, God oftentimes takes the one, and leaves the other?

3. That all the natural seed of believing Gentiles cannot be included in the covenant of grace, is manifest, from the reason above given, against all the natural seed of Abraham being in it; shewing, that all that are in it are the elect of God, the redeemed of Christ, are effectually called by grace,

persevere to the end, and are eternally saved; all which cannot be said of all the natural seed of believing Gentiles: And if all the natural seed of Abraham are not in this covenant made with him, as it was a covenant of grace, it can hardly be thought that all the natural seed of believing Gentiles should.

4. Seeing it is so clear a case, that some of the seed of unbelieving Gentiles are in this covenant, and some of the seed of believing Gentiles are not in it, and that it cannot be known who are, until they believe in Christ, and so appear to be Abraham's spiritual seed; it must be right to put off their claim to any privilege supposed to arise from covenant interest, until it appear that they have one.

5. After all, covenant interest gives no right to any ordinance, without a positive order and direction from God. So, for instance, with respect to circumcision; on the one hand, there were some persons living at the time that ordinance was instituted, who undoubtedly had an interest in the covenant of grace, as Shem, Atrphaxad, Lot, and others, on whom that was not enjoined, and who had no right to use it; and, on the other hand, there have been many that were not in the covenant of grace, who were obliged to it: And so with respect to baptism, it is not covenant interest that gives a right to it; if it could be proved, as it cannot, that all the infant seed of believers, as such, are in the covenant of grace, it would give them no right to baptism, without a positive command for it; the reason is, because a person may be in covenant, and as yet not have the prerequisite to an ordinance, even faith in Christ, and a profession of it; which are necessary to baptism and the Lord's Supper. This leads me on,

Thirdly, To another inquiry, whether circumcision was a real of the covenant of grace to Abraham's natural seed; the writer, whole performance I am considering, affirms, that it was by God's express command to be sealed to infants; and that circumcision is the real of it [p. 10, 36]. But this must be denied: circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace; for,

1. If it was, the covenant of grace, before that took place, must be without a real; the covenant subsisted from everlasting, and the revelation of it was quickly made after the fall of Adam; and there were manifestations of it to particular persons, as Noah, and others, before this to Abraham, and no circumcision enjoined: Wherefore, from Adam to Abraham, according to this notion, the covenant must be without a real; nay, there were some persons living at the time it was instituted, who were in the covenant, yet this was not enjoined them; as it would, if this had been designed as a seal of it.

2. Circumcision, in the institution of it, is called a sign, but not a seal; it is said to be *אוֹת* Oth, a Token, or Sign (Gen. 17:11); but not *חֹתֶם* Chothem, a Seal; it was a sign or mark in the flesh, which Abraham's natural seed were to bear, until the promises made in this covenant were accomplished; it was a typical sign of the pollution of human nature, propagated by natural generation, and of cleansing from it by the blood of Christ, and of the inward circumcision of the heart; but did not seal or confirm any spiritual blessing of the covenant, to those on whom this mark or sign was let; it is never called a seal throughout the whole Old Testament; and so far is there from being any express command, that the covenant of grace should be sealed to infants by it, that there is not the least hint of it given.

3. It is indeed in the New Testament called a seal of the righteousness of faith (Rom. 4:11); but it is not said to be a seal of the covenant of grace, nor a seal to infants: it was not a seal to Abraham's natural seed; it was only so to himself. The plain meaning of the apostle is, that circumcision was a seal to Abraham, and assured him of, or confirmed his faith in this, that he should be the father of many nations, in a spiritual sense; and that the righteousness of faith which he had, when he was an uncircumcised person, should also come upon, and be imputed unto the uncircumcised Gentiles: and accordingly, this mark and sign continued until the gospel, declaring justification by the righteousness of Christ, was preached, or ordered to be preached to the Gentiles; and could it be thought that circumcision was a seal to others besides him, it could at most be only a seal to them that had both faith and righteousness, and not to them that had neither.

4. If it was a seal of the covenant of grace to Abraham's natural seed, it must be either to some or all; if only to some, it should be pointed out who they are; and if to all, then it must be sealed, that is, confirmed, and an interest in it assured of, to a mocking Ishmael; to a profane Esau; to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their accomplices, whom the earth swallowed up alive; to Achitophel, that hanged himself; to Judas, that betrayed our Lord; and to all the Jews concerned in his crucifixion and death; since there is reason to believe they were all circumcised. But,

5. The covenant made with Abraham, so far as it was a covenant of grace, was not made, as we have seen, with all Abraham's natural seed; and therefore circumcision could not be a seal of it to them. I pass on,

Fourthly, To another inquiry, whether baptism succeeded circumcision, and so became a seal of the covenant: of grace to believers, and their natural seed? This must be answered in the negative; for,

1. There is no agreement between them, in the subjects to whom they are administered; circumcision was administered to Jews only, or such as became proselytes; baptism both to Jews and Gentiles, without any distinction, that believe in Christ; circumcision was administered to infants, baptism only to adult persons; circumcision belonged only to the males, baptism to male and female: Seeing then the subjects of the one and the other are so different, the one cannot be thought to succeed the other.

2. The use of the one and the other is not the same; the use of circumcision was to distinguish the natural seed of Abraham from others, until Christ was come in the flesh; the use of baptism is to be a distinguishing badge of the spiritual seed of Christ, such as have believed in him, and put him on; the use of circumcision was to signify the corruption of human nature, the necessity of regeneration, of the circumcision without hands, and of cleansing by the blood of Christ; the use of baptism is to answer a good conscience towards God to represent the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and requires repentance and faith.

3. The manner of administering the one and the other is very different; the one is by blood, the other by water; the one by an incision made in one part of the body, the other by an immersion of the whole body in water; the one was done in a private house, and by a private hand; the other, for the most part, publicly, in open places, in rivers, and before multitudes of people, and by a person in public office, a public minister of the word. Now, ordinances so much differing in their subjects,

use, and manner of administration, the one can never be thought to come in the room and place of the other. But,

4. What puts it out of all doubt, that baptism can never be said to succeed circumcision is, that baptism was in force and use before circumcision was abolished, and its practice discontinued, or ought to be discontinued. Circumcision was not abolished till the death of Christ when, with other ceremonies of the law, it was made null and void; but, unto that time, it was the duty of Jewish parents to circumcise their infants; whereas some years before this, John came preaching the doctrine of baptism, and administered it to multitudes; our Lord himself was baptized, three or four years, according to the common computation, before his death; now that which is in force before another is out of date, can never, with any propriety, be said to succeed or come in the room of that other.

5. It has been proved already, that circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace to Abraham's natural seed; and therefore, could it be proved, as it cannot, that baptism succeeds it, it would not follow that baptism is a real of the covenant of grace; there are many persons who have been baptized) and yet not in the covenant of grace, and to whom it was never sealed, as Simon Magus, and others; and, on the other hand, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and it may be sealed to him, and he may be comfortably assured of his interests in it, though, as yet, not baptized in water. The author of the dialogue before me says, [p. 16] that it is allowed on all hands, that baptism is a token or real of the covenant of grace; but it is a popular clamor, a vulgar mistake, that either that or the Lord's-Supper are seals of the covenant of grace. The blood of Christ is the seal, and the only seal of it, by which its promises and blessings are ratified and confirmed; and the holy Spirit is the only earnest pledge, seal, and sealer of the saints, until the day of redemption. ^[61]

And so all that fine piece of wit of our author, about the red and white seal, is spoiled and lost: [p. 17]. Upon the whole, we may see what sufficient scripture institution for infant-baptism is to be found in the covenant made with Abraham; since the spiritual part of that covenant did not concern his natural seed, as such, but his spiritual seed, and so not infants, but adult persons, whether among Jews or Gentiles, that walked in the steps of his faith; and seeing there is not one word of baptism in it, and much less of infant-baptism; nor was circumcision a seal of it, nor does baptism succeed that, or is a seal of the covenant of grace: Hence also, it will appear, what little reason there is for that clamorous outcry, so often made, and is by our author, of lessening and abridging the privileges of infants under the gospel dispensation, and of depriving them of what they formerly had; or for an harangue upon the valuable blessing, and great and glorious privilege they had, of having the covenant of grace sealed unto them by circumcision; or for that demand, how, why, and when, children were cut off from this privilege? or for such a representation, this being the care, that the gospel is a less glorious dispensation, with respect to infants, than the former was, [pp. 19, 20, 22,30]. Seeing the covenant of grace was never sealed to infants by circumcision; nor was that bloody and painful rite accounted a rich and glorious privilege; far from it; especially as it bound them over to keep the whole law, it was a yoke of bondage, an insupportable one: and it is a rich mercy, and glorious privilege of the gospel, that the Jews and their children are delivered from it; and that Gentiles and their children are not obliged to it: And as for the demand, how, why, and when, children were cut off from it, it is easily answered, that this was done by the death of Christ, and at the time of it, when all ceremonies were abolished; and that for this reason, because of the weakness, unprofitableness, and burdensomeness of that, and them: And as for the gospel-

dispensation, that is the more glorious, for infants being left out of its church-state; that is to say, for its being not national and carnal, as before, but congregational and spiritual; for its consisting, not of infants without understanding, but of rational and spiritual men, of believers in Christ, and professors of his name; and these not in a single and small country, as Judea, but in all parts of the world, as it has been, at one time or another, and it will be in the latter day: And as for infants themselves, their care is as good, and their privileges as many and better, than under the legal dispensation; their salvation is not at all affected by the abrogation of circumcision, or through want of baptism to succeed it. As the former did not real the covenant to them, and could not fare them, so neither could the latter, were it administered to them: To which may be added, that being born of Christian parents, and having a Christian education, and the advantage of hearing the gospel, as they grow up, and this not in one country, but many, must exceed all the privileges the Jewish children had under the former dispensation.

CHAPTER 5

A consideration of the several texts of scripture produced in favor of Infant-baptism.

The minister in the dialogue before me, being pressed by his neighbor to declare what were the numerous texts of scripture he referred to, as proving the continuance of children's privileges under the gospel-dispensation, meaning particularly baptism, mentions the following.

1st, The passage in Acts 2:39, For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. This scripture is often made use of by our author, and seems to be his dernier resort on all occasions, and the sheet-anchor of the cause he is pleading for. The promise spoken of, he says, undoubtedly, was the covenant made with Abraham; and was urged as a reason with the Jews, why they and their children ought to be baptized; and as a reason with the Gentiles, why they and their children, when called into a church-state, should be also baptized [p. 11, 12]. He makes use of it, to prove that this promise gives a claim to baptism, and that an interest in it gives a right unto it [p. 15, 16, 18, 29, 30].

1. It is easy to observe the contradictions, that such are guilty of, that plead for infant-baptism, from the covenant or promise made with Abraham, as this writer is. One while, he tells us, that persons are by baptism brought into the covenant of grace; and what a dreadful thing it is to renounce baptism in infancy; whereby the covenant is vacated, and the relation to the glorious God disowned, they were brought into by baptism [p. 4]. And yet here we are told, that interest in this promise gives a right and claim to baptism; but how can it give a previous right and claim to baptism, when it is by baptism, according to this writer, that persons are brought into this covenant?

2. The promise here observed, be it what it will, is not taken notice of, as what gives a claim and right to baptism, but as an encouraging motive to persons pricked in the heart, and in distress, both to repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins, and as giving them hope of receiving the holy Ghost, since such a promise was made; wherefore repentance and baptism were urged, in order to

the enjoyment of the promise; and, consequently, can be understood of no other than adult persons, who were capable of repentance, and of a voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism.

3. The children, here spoken of, do not design infants, but the posterity of the Jews, and such, who might be called children, though grown up: And nothing is more common in scripture,¹⁶² than the use of the phrase in this sense; and, unless it be so understood in many places, strange interpretations must be given of them: wherefore the argument, from hence, for Paedobaptism, is given up by some learned men, as Dr. Hammond, and others, as inconclusive; but some men, wherever they meet with the word children, it immediately runs in their heads, that infants must be meant.

4. The promise, be it what it will, is restrained to as many as the Lord our God shall call, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, as well as to repenting and baptizing persons; and therefore can furnish out no argument for infant-baptism, but must be understood of adult persons, capable of being called with an holy calling, of professing repentance, and of desiring baptism upon it; and of doing this, that their faith might be led to the blood of Christ, for the remission of sin,

5. It seems clear from the context, that not the covenant made with Abraham, but either the promise of the Messiah, and salvation by him, the great promise made in the Old Testament to the Jews, and their posterity; or the particular promise of remission of sins, a branch of the new covenant made with the house of Israel, and mentioned in the preceding verse, and which was calculated for comfort, and pertinently taken notice of; or of the pouring out of the holy Ghost, which is last mentioned: And indeed all may be included in this promise, and used as a means to comfort them under their distress, and as an argument to encourage them to do the things they are pressed to in the foregoing verse.

2dly, To the former is added another scripture in Matthew 19:14. Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Upon which, it is asked, how, and which way, should we bring our little children to Christ, but in the way of his ordinances? If they belong to the kingdom of heaven, they must have a right to the privileges of that kingdom, p. 20. To which I answer,

1. These little children do not appear to be new-born babes; the words used by the evangelists do not always signify such, but are sometimes used of such as are capable of going alone, yea, of receiving instructions, of understanding the scriptures, and of one of twelve years of age (Matthew 18:2; 2 Tim. 3:15; Mark 5:39, 42). Nor is it probable that children just born, or within the month, should be had abroad. Moreover, these were such as Christ called unto him (Luke 18:16), and were capable of coming to him of themselves, as these words suppose; nor does their being brought unto him, or his taking them in his arms, contradict this; since the same things are said of such as could walk of themselves (Matthew 12:22; 17:16; Mark 9:36).

2. It is not known whose children these were, whether the children of those that brought them, or of others; and whether their parents were believers in Christ, or not, or whether their parents were baptized or unbaptized; and if they were unbelievers and unbaptized persons, the Paedobaptists themselves will not allow that their children ought to be baptized.

3. Certain it is, that they were not brought to Christ, to be baptized by him; for the ends for which they were brought are mentioned; Matthew says, they brought them unto him, that he should put his hands on them, and pray; that is, for them, and bless them; as was usual with the Jews to do (Gen. 49:14-16); and it was common with them to bring their children to venerable persons, men of note for religion and piety, to have their blessing and their prayers; and such an one the persons that brought these children might take Christ to be, though they might not know him to be the Messiah. Mark and Luke say, they were brought to him, that he would touch them (Mark 10:13; Luke 18:15); as he sometimes used to do, when he healed persons of diseases; and probably some of these children, if not all of them, were diseased, and were brought to be cured; otherwise it is not easy to conceive what they should be touched by him for; however, they were not brought to be baptized: If the persons that brought them had their baptism in view, they would not have brought them to Christ, but to his disciples; seeing not he but they baptized the persons fit for it; they might have seen the disciples administer that ordinance, but not Christ; and from hence it is certain, that they were not baptized by Christ, since he never baptized any.

4. This passage concludes against Paedobaptism, and not for it; for it seems, by this, that it had never been the practice of the Jews, nor of John the Baptist, nor of Christ and his disciples, to baptize infants; for had this been then in use, the apostles would scarcely have rebuked and forbid those that brought these children, since they might have concluded they brought them to be baptized; but knowing of no such usage, that ever obtained in that nation, neither among those that did or did not believe in Christ, they forbid them; and Christ's entire silence about the baptism of infants at this time, when he had such an opportunity of speaking of it to his disciples, had it been his will, has no favorable aspect on such a practice.

5. This writer's reasoning upon the passage, is betide the purpose for which he produces it; if he brings it to prove any thing respecting baptism, it must be to prove that infants were brought to Christ, in order to be baptized by him, and not to him in the way of his ordinance, or in the way of baptism: the reason our Lord gives why they should be suffered to come to him, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, is to be understood of such as were comparable to little children, for modesty, meekness, and humility, and for freedom from rancor malice, ambition, and pride (Matthew 18:2). And so the Syriac version is, who are as these; and the Parsic version, which is rather a paraphrase, shewing the sense, who have been humble as these little children; and such are the proper subjects of a gospel church-state, sometimes called the kingdom of heaven, and shall inherit eternal happiness. If the words are to be literally understood of infants, and of their belonging to the kingdom of heaven, interpreted of the kingdom of grace, or of the gospel church-state, according to this author's reasoning, they will prove too much, and more than he cares for; namely, that belonging to that kingdom, they have a right to the privileges of it, even to all of them, to the Lord's supper, as well as to baptism; but the kingdom of glory seems to be designed: And we are not unwilling to admit the literal sense, for the eternal salvation and happiness of infants dying in infancy, is not denied by us; and, according to this sense, our Lord's reasoning is strong, that seeing he thought fit to save the souls of infants, and introduce them into the kingdom of heaven, why should they be forbid being brought to him, to be touched by him, and healed of their bodily diseases? The argument is from the greater to the lesser; but furnishes out nothing in favor of Paedobaptism.

3dly, The next text mentioned is Matthew 18:6. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him, that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Upon which it is observed, that the little one referred to was in an infant state, as appears from verse 21, and Mark 9:36 and that little children are reputed, by Christ, believers in him: And so here is a full anticipation of the common objection against the baptism of infants, and a justification of their claim to the seal of the righteousness of faith; as well as a strong declaration of the awful danger of offending there little ones, by denying them the covenant privileges, to which they have a righteous claim, [pages 20, 21, 23, 27]. But,

1. Though the little child, in verse 2d, which our Lord let in the midst of his disciples, and took an occasion from thence to rebuke and instruct them, was in an infant-state, yet those our Lord here speaks of, were not little ones in age; for how capable soever they may be of having the principle or habit of faith implanted in them, they cannot be capable of exercising it, or of acting faith, which the phrase used expresses; for if they are not capable of exerting reason, though they have the principle of it in them, they cannot be capable of exercising faith; nor indeed of being offended in the sense the word is here used, and to such a degree, that the offenders of them had better have died a violent death, than to be guilty of such offense. But,

2. The disciples of Christ are meant, his apostles, who were contending among themselves who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven; which ambition our Lord rebukes, by placing a little child in the midst of them, verses 1, 2, saying to them, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven; adding, that whoever humbled himself as the child before him, should be the greatest in it; and that such who received such humble disciples of his, received him; but those that offended them, would incur his resentment, and the greatest danger expressed in the words under consideration (vv. 3-6). And there were such, not only who by faith looked to Christ, and received him as their Savior, and made a profession of him; but preached the doctrine of faith; who, having believed, therefore spoke; and who may be said to be offended, when their persons were despised, their ministry rejected, and they reproached and persecuted; and, when it would go ill with them that should treat them in this manner. There were such, who were little ones, in their own esteem, and in the esteem of others.

3. Admitting that infants in age could be meant, and there to have the principle and habit of faith in them, yet this would not justify their claim to baptism, which this writer means, by the real of the righteousness of faith; though not baptism, but circumcision is designed by that phrase; since actual faith, yea, a profession of it, is a necessary prerequisite to baptism; If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest (Acts 8:37).

4. This writer seems conscious to himself, that faith in Christ is necessary to baptism, and is that which justifies a claim unto it; since he seems glad to lay hold on this text, and the sense he puts upon it, in order to anticipate the objection to infant-baptism taken from faith in Christ, being a prerequisite to it; which he knows not how otherwise to get rid of, than to suppose that infants have faith, and that this is a proof of it. But,

5. Supposing this, either all infants have faith, or only some: If all; how comes it to pass, that there are so many, when grown up, that are manifestly destitute of it: Can the grace be lost? Is it not an abiding one? Is not He, who is the Author, the Finisher of it? If only some have it, how can it be known, who have it, and who not? Wherefore, to baptize upon this supposed faith, is to proceed on a very precarious foundation: It seems, therefore, much more eligible, to defer their baptism, till it appears, that they do truly and actually believe in Christ.

4thly, The next passage of scripture, produced in favor of infant-baptism, is 1 Corinthians 7:14. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. Upon which, our author thus reasons; "If either of the parents be a believer, the children are reputed holy; that is, they have a covenant holiness, and have, therefore, a claim to covenant-privileges; — they are holy, by virtue of their covenant-relation to God, and must therefore, have a right to have

that covenant sealed to them in baptism" [p. 21]. But,

1. It ought to be told, what these covenant-privileges are, that children have a claim unto, by virtue of their covenant-relation, this writer so often speaks of. If baptism is one of them, as it seems to be his intention, that must be denied to be a covenant-privilege, or a privilege of the covenant of grace; for then all the covenant ones in all ages, ought to have enjoyed it; whereas they have not: And we have seen already, that covenant interest gives no right to any positive institution, or ordinance, without a divine direction; and that baptism is no real of the covenant.

2. It should be told, what this covenant is, whether it is a real or imaginary thing; it seems to be the latter, by our author's way of expressing himself. He says, children are reputed holy; that is, have a covenant-holiness: So that covenant-holiness is a reputed holiness; but such a holiness can never qualify persons for a New Testament ordinance; nor has the covenant of grace any such holiness belonging to it; that provides, by way of promise, for real holiness, signified, by putting and writing the laws of God in the heart, by giving new hearts and new spirits, and taking away the stony heart, and by cleansing from all impurity; this is real, inward holiness, and shews itself in an outward holy conversation: Where this appears, such have an undoubted right to the ordinance of baptism, since they must have received the holy spirit, as a spirit of sanctification (Acts 10:47).

3. A holiness, appertaining to the covenant of grace, can never be meant, since it is such a holiness, as unbelievers, yea, as heathens are said to have; it is such a holiness, as unbelieving husbands, and unbelieving wives are said to have, by virtue and in consequence of their relation to believing wives and believing husbands; and which they have prior to the holiness of their children; and on which their children's holiness depends. Now, surely, unbelievers and heathens, will not be allowed to be in covenant, or to be possessed of a covenant holiness, by virtue of their yoke-fellows; and yet, theirs, and their children's holiness, must be of the same kind and nature. Wherefore,

4. If children, by virtue of this holiness, have a claim to covenant-privileges, and to have the covenant sealed to them by baptism; then, much more, their unbelieving parents, because they are sanctified before them, by their believing yoke-fellows, and they are as near to them, as their children; and if the holiness of the one gives a right to baptism, why not the holiness of the other? And yet, our Paedobaptists do not pretend to baptize the unbelieving husband or wife, though

sanctified, whole holiness is the more near; but the children, that become holy through the sanctification of both, whose holiness is the more remote. For, it should be observed, that the holiness, spoken of in the text, be it what it will, is derived, or denominated, from both parents, believing and unbelieving; yea, the holiness of the children depends upon the sanctification of the unbelieving parent; for if the unbeliever is not sanctified, the children are unclean, and not holy. Besides, the words are not necessarily to be understood of infants, or young children, but of the posterity of such persons, whether of 40, or 50 years of age, or of what age soever; and must be unclean in the sense of the word, here used, if their unbelieving parent is not sanctified by, or to the believing one. But,

5. These words are to be understood of a matrimonial holiness; not merely of the holiness of marriage, as it is an institution of God, but of the very act of marriage, which, in the language of the Jews, is frequently expressed, by being sanctified, innumerable instances might be given of this; I have produced one in my exposition of this place, in which the word, מקדש Kadash, "to sanctify," is used no less than ten times, to espouse. And, for the sake of those who have it not, I shall transcribe the passage: And it is, as follows,¹⁶³¹ "a man ׀דqm Mekaddesh, "sanctifies," or espouses a wife by himself, or by his messenger; a woman, מתקדש Mithkaddesh, "is sanctified," or espoused by herself, or by her messenger; a man, מקדש Mekaddesh, "sanctifies," or espouses his daughter, when she is a young woman, by himself, or by his messenger: If any one says to a woman, התקדשי Hitbkaddeshi, "be thou sanctified," or espoused to me by this date (the fruit of the palm tree) התקדשי Hithkaddeshi, "be thou sanctified," or espoused by this (or any other thing:) If there is in any one of these things the value of a farthing, מקודשת Mekuddesheth, "she is sanctified," or espoused; and if not, she is not מקודשת Mekuddesheth, "sanctified," or espoused: If he says, by this, and by this, and by this; if there is the value of a farthing in them all, מקודשת Mekuddesheth, "she is sanctified," or espoused; but if not, she is not, מקודשת Mekuddesheth, "sanctified," or espoused: If she eats one (date) after another, she is not, מקודשת Mekuddesheth, "sanctified," or espoused, unless one of them is the value of a farthing."

In the Misnah, the oral law of the Jews, there is a whole treatise of קידושין Kiddushin, "sanctifications," or espousals; out of which the above passage is taken: And in the Gemara is another, full of the disputes of the doctors on this subject: And Maimonides has also written a treatise of women and wives; out of which might be produced almost innumerable instances, in proof of the observation; and such, as can read, and have leisure to read the said tracts, may fully satisfy themselves in this matter. And in the same sense, the apostle uses the word ακαζς, here: And the passage should be rendered thus; the unbelieving husband is espoused, or married to the wife, or rather has been espoused; for it relates to the act of marriage past, as valid; and the unbelieving wife has been espoused to the husband. The preposition εν, translated by, should be rendered to, as it is in the very next verse, God hath called us, εν τωηνη, "to peace." The passage is introduced, to support the advice the apostle had given to believers married to unbelievers, not to depart from them, but live with them, who had had some scruple upon their minds, whether they ought to cohabit with them, being unbelievers; he advises them, by all means, to dwell with them, unless the unbeliever departed, seeing they were duly, rightly, and legally espoused to each other; and, therefore, ought not, notwithstanding their different sentiments of religion, to separate from one another; otherwise, if they were not truly married to one another, as such a departure and separation would suggest, this consequence must necessarily follow, that children, born in such a state of cohabitation, where the marriage is not valid, must be spurious, and not legitimate: which is

the sense of the next clause, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy; that is, they would have been accounted illegitimate, but now legitimate. And,

6. This sense of the words is not novel, nor singular: It is agreeable to the minds of several interpreters, ancient and modern; as Jerom, Ambrose, Erasmus, Camerarius, Musculus, and others: which last writer, and who was a zealous Paedobaptist, makes this ingenuous confession; "formerly, says he, I have abused this place against the Anabaptists, thinking the meaning was, that the children were holy for the parents faith; which, though true, the present place makes nothing for the purpose"

5thly, To all which, this writer adds the commission in Matthew 28:19. Go, teach all nations, baptizing them, etc. Concerning which, he says, that as the commission to the sacred ministry enjoined the baptizing of all nations, whereof infants are a very great part; it also enjoined the baptizing infants, as a part of the nations they were to disciple and baptize, [p. 21]. And, elsewhere, he says, the words ought to be read, Go, disciple all nations, baptizing them;—and should be understood, as requiring the ministers of the gospel to make all nations disciples by baptizing them,—whereby every one is constituted a learner of Christ: And to prove, that infants are called disciples, he refers to Acts 15:10. Why tempt ye God to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples, etc. and to all, such scriptures, that respect the education of children, [pp. 24, 25]. But,

1. The commission does not enjoin the baptizing of all nations, but the baptizing of such as are taught; for the antecedent to the relative them cannot be all nations, since παντο τα ηθνη, the words for "all nations," are of the neuter gender; whereas αυτους "them," is of the masculine; but μαθητας, "disciples;" is supposed and contained in the word μαθητευσατε, "teach, or make disciples;" such as are first taught, or made disciples by teaching under the ministry of the word, by the Spirit of God, Christ's orders are to baptize them.

2. If infants, as a part of all nations, were to be baptized, and because they are such; then the infants of Heathens, Turks and Jews, ought to be baptized, for they are a part of all nations, as well as the children of Christians, or believers.

3. We are very willing, the words should be rendered disciple all nations, or make all nations disciples; that is, disciples of Christ, which is the same, as believers in him; for they are the true disciples of Christ, that have learned the way of life, and salvation by him; that deny themselves, sinful, righteous, and civil self, for his sake; who forsake all, take up the cross, and follow him; who bear, and bring forth much fruit, love one another, and continue in the doctrine of Christ (Luke 14:27, 33; John 15:8; 13:35; 8:31). And such, and such only, are the proper subjects of baptism: so, agreeable to this commission and the sense of it, Christ first made disciples, and then baptized them, or ordered them to be baptized.

4. These two acts, discipling and baptizing, are not to be confounded together; they are two distinct acts, and the one is previous to the other, and absolutely (John 4:1, 2) necessary thereunto. Men are not made disciples by baptizing them, as this writer suggests, but they must be first disciples, and then baptized. So Jerom^[64] long ago understood the commission, who has these words upon it; "first, they teach all nations, then dip those that are taught in water: For, it cannot be, that the body should receive the sacrament of baptism, unless the soul has before received the truth of faith." To

the same purpose, Athanasius says,¹⁶⁵¹ wherefore the Savior does not simply command to baptize, but first says, teach; and then baptize thus, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; that faith might come of teaching, and baptism be perfected."

5. Such a disciple, as this writer supposes to be constituted by baptism, namely, a learner of Christ, cannot agree with an infant. What can a new-born babe learn of Christ? What can it be taught of him, or receive by way of teaching, at the time of its baptism, or by being baptized? If learners and disciples are synonymous terms, as this author says, they cannot be disciples before they are learners; and they cannot be learners of Christ, unless they have learned something of him: And, according to this notion, they ought to learn something of him, before they are baptized in his name. But what can an infant learn of Christ?

6. The text in Acts 15:10 is not to be understood of infants, but of adult persons; even converted Gentiles, who believed in Christ, and were his disciples; and upon whom, the false teachers would have imposed the yoke of the ceremonial law; and, particularly, circumcision: Which, because it bound over to the whole law, the apostle represents as an insupportable one; and calls this imposition of it on the believing Gentiles, a tempting of God: And as for any other passages that enjoin the education of children, or speak of it, they are never from thence called the disciples of Christ, nor any where else.

6thly, This writer asserts, that "it is plain that the apostles thus understood our Savior's meaning, and accordingly baptized Lydia and her household, and the Jailer and all his (Acts 16:15, 35); and the household of Stephanas" (1 Cor. 1:16); [p. 21]. But,

1. Seeing the understanding of our Savior's meaning in the commission, depends upon those instances of baptism, and so the warrant for the baptizing of infants, the Paedobaptists ought to be sure that there were infants in these families, and that they were baptized, or otherwise they must baptize them, at most, upon a very precarious foundation; for if the commission of itself is not clear for it, and those instances in which the apostles acted according to the commission, are not sufficient to vouch it, it must stand upon a very bad bottom, having neither precept nor precedent for it; and they must know, that there are families that have no infants in them, and how can they be sure there were any in these? And,

2. It lies upon them to prove there were infants in these families, and that these infants were baptized, or the allegation of those instances is to no purpose; how they can satisfy themselves without it, they best know; they ought not to put it upon us to prove a negative, to prove that there were none, this is unfair; and one would think, should not sit very easy upon their minds, to rest their practice on so poor a shift, and so unreasonable a demand. But,

3. We are able to make it appear, that there are many things in the account of the baptism of these families, which are inconsistent with infants, and which make it at least probable, that there were none in them; and certain, that those that were baptized were adult persons, and believers in Christ. As for Lydia, it is not certain in what state of life she was, whether single or married, whether maid, widow, or wife; whether she had any children, or ever had any; or if she had, and them living, whether they were infants or adult; and if infants, it does not seem probable that she should bring them along with her from her native place Thyatira to Philippi, where she seems to have been upon

business, and so had hired a house during her stay there; wherefore, her household seems to have consisted of menial servants she brought along with her, to assist her in her business; and certain it is, that those that the apostles found there, when they entered into it, after they came out of prison, were such as are called brethren, and were capable of being comforted by them (Acts 16:15, 40). And as for the Jailer's household, they were such as were capable of having the word of God spoken to them, and of rejoicing at it, and in the conversation of the apostles, at what was laid and done by them; and are even expressly said to believe in God, as the Jailer did, and together with him; and as for the household of Stephanas, that is, by some, thought to be the same with the Jailer's; but, if not, it is certain it consisted of adult persons, believers in Christ, and very useful in the public service of religion; for they were the first-fruits of Achaia, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints (1 Cor. 16:15). All which, in each of the instances, can never be said of infants. But,

7thly, This writer adds one text more, which, he says, must be allowed to be decisive in the present case, and that is Romans 11:17-25 from whence he thinks it is most evident, that since the believing Gentiles are grafted into all the privileges and spiritual blessings of the Jewish church, they cannot be cut off from that great blessing and privilege of having the covenant sealed to their infant seed [p. 21]. To which I reply,

1. It will readily be allowed, that believing Gentiles shared in all the spiritual blessings and privileges of the Jewish church, or of believers under the former dispensation; the same blessings of imputed righteousness and pardon of sin came upon the uncircumcision, as well as upon the circumcision, who walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham (Rom.4:6-12), for such that are Christ's, true believers in him, they are Abraham's seed, his spiritual seed, and heirs, according to the promise, of all spiritual blessings and privileges (Gal. 3:29). But,

2. The covenant of grace was never sealed to Abraham's natural seed; the covenant of grace itself did not belong to them, as such; nor was circumcision a seal of it to them; nor is baptism a seal of the covenant of grace to any; and therefore it is a great impropriety and impertinence to talk of cutting off from, that which was never had, and never was.

3. Though believing Gentiles share in the spiritual blessings and privileges which the Jewish church, or Jewish believers enjoyed, they never were grafted into that church; that church-state, with all the peculiar ordinances of it, was utterly abolished by Christ, signified by the shaking of the heavens and the earth, and removing of those things that are shaken, that those which cannot be shaken may remain (Heb. 12:26, 27). The Jewish church is not the olive-tree, of whole root and fatness the Gentiles partake; they are not grafted into the old Jewish stock; the ax has been laid to the root of that tree; and it is entirely cut down, and no engraftment is made upon it. But,

4. The olive-tree, of whose root and fatness believing Gentiles partake, is the gospel church-state, out of which the Jews that rejected Christ were left, and are the broken branches; and those that believed in Christ were taken in, and laid the first foundation of it; there are the first-fruits, and the root, which being holy, are a pledge of the future convection and holiness of that people; they of them that received the first-fruits of the Spirit, were first incorporated into a gospel church-state; and then the Gentiles which believed were received among them, and were engrafted into them; and this engrafture or coalition was first at Antioch, where and when, and hereafter, the Gentiles

partook of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; enjoyed the same privileges, communicated in the same ordinances, and were satisfied with the goodness and fathers of the house of God; and of this engrafture, and of this only, does this text speak; so that it is so far from being decisive in the present case, that there is not one word, one syllable about baptism in it, and still less can any thing, in favor of infant-baptism, be inferred from it. I shall conclude this chapter, and with it the affair of the divine right of infant-baptism, which, whether illustrated and confirmed in the Dialogue, must be left to the judicious reader, by observing, that the minister in it being required to give express New Testament proof for infant-baptism, which he was conscious to himself he could not do, in answer to it, requires express New Testament proof that women should partake of the Lord's Supper, and offers to prove infant-baptism by the same arguments that this should be proved. But,

1. We do not go about to prove women's right to partake of the Lord's Supper, by such arguments as this writer forms for us; as, by their covenant-interest, by their claim to have the covenant sealed to them, and by their being a part of all nations; and though we look upon their being believers and disciples of Christ, proper qualifications for their admission to the Lord's supper, when there can be made to appear to belong to infants, we shall readily admit them to baptism. But,

2. We prove their right to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, by their right to the ordinance of baptism; for they that have a right to one ordinance, have to the other; that women believing in Christ: have a right to baptism, is clear, from Acts 8:12. They were baptized, both men and women, and therefore should partake of the Lord's Supper. Let it be proved, that infants ought to be baptized, and it will be allowed and insisted upon, that they partake of the Lord's Supper.

3. We prove it by their being church members; Mary the mother of Jesus, with other women, were of the number of the disciples that formed the first gospel church at Jerusalem; Sapphira, the wife of Ananias, was, with her husband, of the multitude that believed, and were together, and had all things common; after whole awful death, believers were the more added to the Lord, that is, to the church, both men and women (Acts 1:14, 15; 4:32; 5:9, 14). There were women in the church at Corinth; concerning whom the apostle gives rules respecting their conduct (1 Cor. 11:5, 6, 13; 14:34, 35). Now all those that are members of gospel churches, ought to eat the bread and drink the cup, in remembrance of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26). Women are members of gospel churches; and therefore ought to eat and drink in like manner.

4. We prove this by example: Mary, the mother of our Lord, and other women, being of the number of the disciples, which constituted the gospel church state at Jerusalem, as they continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, so likewise in breaking of bread (Acts 1:14, 15; Acts 2:1, 44, 46).

5. We prove this by a divine direction, exhortation, and command, Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat (1 Cor. 11:29). The word used is *ανθρωπος*, a word of the common gender, and signifies both men and women; in which sense it must be often understood, as in 1 Timothy 2:5 for is Christ a mediator only between God and men, and not women? Under the gospel dispensation, in a gospel church state, there is neither male nor female; they are all one in Christ, and enjoy the same privileges and ordinances (Gal. 3:28). Let the same proof, or as good, be given for infant-baptism, and we have done; let it be proved that infants have a right to any other gospel ordinance

as such; that they are or ought to be members of gospel churches; that there is either precept or precedent for the baptizing of them, and we shall readily admit them.

CHAPTER 6

Concerning the Mode of administering the Ordinance of Baptism, whether by immersion or by sprinkling.

The author of the dialogue under consideration affirms, that there is not one single Lexicographer, or critic upon the Greek Language, he has ever seen, but what agrees, that though the word baptizo sometimes signifies to dip, yet: it also naturally signifies to wash; and that washing, in any mode whatsoever, is the native signification of the word baptisimas [p. 31], that the words baptize and baptism, as used in the New Testament, do not, from their signification, make dipping or plunging the necessary mode of administering the ordinance [p. 33], and that one single instance of that mode of administering the ordinance, is not to be found in all the New Testament [p. 34], nor is it probable it should be the mode [p. 38], and that the mode of administering it by sprinkling is a more lively emblem of what is signified and represented by it, than dipping or plunging can be supposed, and therefore the most proper one [p. 39].

First, As to the lexicographers, and critics on the Greek language, they agree that the word βαπτίζω, signifies, in its first and primary sense, "to dip or plunge," and only in a secondary and consequential sense, to wash, but never to pour or sprinkle; there being no proper washing, but what is by dipping; and for this we appeal to all the writers of this kind, and even to those this author mentions. Scapula, the first of them, renders βαπτίζω, by merga, seu immergo, ut quae tingendi, aut, abluendi gratia aquae immersimus, "to dip or plunge into, as what for the sake of dying or washing we dip into water;" item mergo, submergo, abruo aqua, "also to plunge, plunge under, overwhelm in water;" item abluo, lavo, "also to wash off, wash;" and βαπτίζωμας, he renders, by mergor, submergor, "to be plunged, plunged under;" and observes, that it is used metaphorically for obruer, to be overwhelmed; and βαπισμος, and βαπτισμα, he says, is, mersio, lotio, ablutio, ipse immergendi, item lavandi, seu abluendi actus, "plunging, washing, ablutio, the act itself of plunging, also of washing or ablutio." In all which he makes dipping, or plunging, to be the first and preferable sense of the words.

Stephens gives the same sense of the words, and so Schrevelius, who renders βαπτίζω, by baptizo, mergo, lavo, "baptize, plunge, wash." Pasor only renders it baptizo, baptize, without determining its sense. And Leigh, in his Critica Sacra, observes, that "the nature and proper signification of it, is to dip into water, or to plunge under water;" and refers to John 3:22, 23; Matthew 3:16 and Acts 8:38. And cites Casaubon, Bucanus, Bullinger, and Zanchy, as agreeing and testifying to this sense of it; and baptisma, he says, is "dipping into water, or washing with water." And there are the Lexicographers and Critics our author refers us to: To which I may add the Lexicon compiled by Budaeus, Constantine, and others, who render the word βαπτίζω, by immergo, mergo, intingo, lavacro tingo, abluo, madesacio, law, mundo; "plunge, plunge into, dip into, dip in a laver, wash

off, make wet, wash, cleanse:" And βαπτισμος , they say, is tingendi, hoc est mergendi actio, in quo significatu sinitura dicitur; "the action of tingeing, that is, of plunging; in which signification it is called a tincture, or dying;" and another by Hadrian Junius, who renders βαπτισω, by immergo, "to plunge into;" and βαπτισμος , by immersio, lotio, baptismus, "immersion, washing, baptism." As for other critics on the Greek language, who assert, that the proper signification of the word baptizo, is to dip, or plunge; they are so numerous, that it would be tedious to reckon them up: I shall only mention a few of them, and their words. Calvin¹⁶⁶¹ says, "Ipsum baptizandi verbum mergere significat, & mergendi ritum veteri ecclesiae observatum fuisse constat;" the word baptize, signifies to plunge; and, it is plain, that the rite of plunging was observed in the ancient church." Beza, who must be allowed to be a learned critic in the Greek language, lays, on Mark 7:4 , "Neque vero το βαπτισειν, significat lavare nisi a consequenti, nam proprie dedarat tingendi causa immergere; " neither does the word baptizo, signify to walk, unless consequentially; for it properly signifies, to plunge into, for the sake of tinging, or dying;" and on Matthew 3:11 he says, "significat autem το βαπτισειν, tingere quum παρα το βαπτειν, dicatur, & quum tingenda mergantur; "the word baptizo, signifies to dip (as Dyers in the vat) seeing it comes from bapto, to dip, and seeing things, that are to be dyed, are dipped."

Casaubon, another great critic on the Greek language, has these words on Matthew 3:6, "Hic enim fuit baptizandi ritus ut in aquas immergerentur, quod vel ipso vox βαπτισειν, declarat fatis — unde intelligimus non esse ab re, quod jam pridem non nulli disputarant de taro corpore immergendo in ceremonia baptismi; vocem enim βαπτισειν, urgebant;" for this was the rite of baptizing, that persons should be plunged into water, which the word baptizo, sufficiently declares. —Hence, we understand, that it was not foreign from the matter, which some time ago disputed, concerning plunging the whole body in the ceremony of baptism; for they urged the signification of the word baptizo. And, that this is the proper signification of the word, he observes, in his notes on Acts 1:5 and Acts 2:4. To which, I shall only add one more critic, and that is Grotius; who, on Matthew 3:6. thus writes; "Mersatione autem nan persusione agi solitum hunc ritum indicat & vocis proprietates, & loca ad eum ritum delecta (John 3:13; Acts 8:38), & allusiones multae apostolorum quae ad aspersionem referri non possunt" (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12), that this rite used to be performed by plunging, and not by pouring, both the propriety of the word, and the places chosen for this rite, shew (John 3:23; Acts 8:38), and the many allusions of the apostles, which cannot be referred to sprinkling" (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12). I might have here subjoined, some instances of the use of the word in Greek authors, by which it appears to have the sense of dipping and plunging, and not of pouring, or sprinkling; but this has been largely done by Dr. Gale, and others. I shall, therefore, proceed,

Secondly, To consider the use of the words, baptize and baptism, in the New Testament; which our author says, do not, from their signification, make dipping or plunging, the necessary mode of administering the ordinance of baptism: And the places enumerated by him, in which they are used, are as follow.

1. The descent of the holy Ghost on the apostles, and on Cornelius, and his company, is called baptizing (Acts 1:5; 11:16), where he observes, it cannot be pretended that there was the least allusion to, or resemblance of dipping, or plunging, in this use of the word. But the learned Casaubon, a very great critic in the Greek tongue, before-mentioned and referred to, does pretend, that there is such an allusion and resemblance, his words on Acts 1:5 are there, "et si non improbo,

etc. although I do not disapprove of the word baptized, being retained here, that the antithesis may be full; yet, I am of opinion, that regard is had, in this place, to its proper signification; for βαπτίζειν, is to immerse, so as to tinge or dip: And, in this sense, the apostles are truly said to be baptized; for the house, in which this was done, was filled with the holy Ghost: So that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it, as into some pool." And the extraordinary descent of the spirit in those instances, is much more strongly expressed by a word, which signifies plunging, than if it had been expressed by a word, that signifies bare perfusion, and still left by sprinkling.

2. "Christ's crucifixion is called a baptism (Mark 10:38), but, being buffeted, spit upon, and lifted up upon the cross, says our author, bear no resemblance, nor can have any allusion to dipping, or plunging. But, it is easy to observe, that the sufferings of our Lord, which are compared to a baptism, in the place referred to, and in Luke 12:50, because of the greatness and abundance of them, are, sometimes, expressed by deep waters, and floods of waters; and he is represented as plunged into them, and covered and overwhelmed with them;" For so he says himself; The waters are come into my soul; I sink in deep mire, where is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me (Ps. 119:1, 2). And, therefore, a word signifying immersion, and a covering of the whole body in water, is a very apt one to express the multitude of Christ's sufferings, and the overwhelming nature of them; and must, more fitly, express the same, than a word, which only signifies pouring, or sprinkling a few drops of water.

3. The text in Mark 7:4 is next mentioned; which speaks of the Jews, when come from the market, not eating, except they wash (baptizoantai); and of the washing (baptismous) of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables, or beds, as the word signifies. And this, our author thinks, is an unexceptionable instance of these words signifying washing, without dipping, or plunging; since it can hardly be supposed, that they dipped themselves under water, every time they came from market, or, that they dipped their beds, every time they sat, or lay upon them. But, in answer to this, it should be observed, that our Lord is here speaking of the superstition of the Pharisees, who, when they came from market, or any court of judicature, if they touched any common persons, or their clothes, reckoned themselves unclean; and, according to the traditions of the elders, were to immerse themselves in water, and did: So that a most proper word is here made use of, to express their superstition. And, as for cups, pots and brazen vessels, what other way of washing them is there, than by dipping, or putting them into water? And, in this way, unclean vessels were to be washed, according to the law (Lev. 11:32), as well as all that were reckoned so by the traditions of the elders; and even beds, pillows and bolsters, when they were unclean in a ceremonial sense, and not, as this author puts it, every time they lay, or sat upon them, were to be washed by immersion, or dipping them in water; as I have proved from the Jews' oral law, which our Lord has respect to, in my Exposition of this place; to which, I refer the reader. Wherefore, the words are here used in their primary sense, as signifying dipping; and, if they did not so signify, they would not truly represent the superstition, they are designed to do.

4. The next passage produced, is 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2 which speaks of the Jewish fathers, being baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea. Upon which, this writer observes, that he thinks, he need not seriously undertake to convince his friend, he is debating with; "that the fathers were not dipped in the cloud, but that the rain from the cloud bore a much greater resemblance to sprinkling, or affusion, than to dipping." But let us a little examine this matter, and see wherein the agreement lay, between baptism and the Israelites passage under the cloud, and through the sea.

Which may be considered, either together, or separately: If together, the agreement between it and baptism, lay in this; the Israelites, when they passed through the Red Sea, had the waters on each side of them, which stood up, as a wall, higher than they, and the cloud over them; so that they were, as persons immersed in, and covered with water; and, in this view, it is easy to see, that the resemblance is much greater to immersion, than to sprinkling, or affusion: or this may be considered separately, as baptized in the cloud, and as baptized in the sea; in the cloud, when, as Gataker,^[67] a Paedobaptist writer, thinks, it passed from before the face of the Israelites, and stood behind them, and was between the two camps, to keep off the Egyptians; and which, when it palled over them, let down a plentiful rain upon them, whereby they were in such a condition, as if they had been dipped all over in water; or, when under the cloud they were all over covered with it, as a person, when baptized by immersion, is all over covered with water; and they might be said to be baptized in the sea, when, as they passed through it, the waters standing up above their heads, they seemed as if they were immersed. The resemblance to plunging, therefore, considered in either way, must be nearer than to pouring, or sprinkling a small quantity of water. To which may be added, that the descent of the Israelites into the sea, when they seemed as though they were buried in the waters of it; and their ascent out of it again on the shore, have a very great agreement with baptism, as administered by immersion; in which, the person baptized goes down into the water, is buried with Christ therein; and comes up out of it, as out of a grave, or as the children of Israel out of the Red sea.

5. The last text mentioned, where the word baptism is used, is Hebrews 9:10 where our author observes, "the apostle, speaking of the ceremonial dispensation, tells us, that it stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings (baptismous) and carnal ordinances; and the principal of these washings, he exemplifies to us, verse 13 to be the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean: Here, therefore, the word cannot, with any appearance of modesty, be explained in favor of immersion." To which, I reply, that the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, were so far from being the principal part of the Jewish washings or baptisms, that it was no part at all; nor is this mentioned by the apostle, as any exemplification of them, who understood these things better. Sprinkling the ashes of the heifer, and the waffling, or bathing of the person in water, which was by immersion, are spoken of, as distinct and separate things, in the ceremony referred to, Numbers 19:19 and indeed, washing by sprinkling, is not reconcilable to good sense, to the propriety of language, and to the universal custom of nations. However, certain it is, that the priests, Levites, Israelites, vessels, garments, etc. which were enjoined washing by the ceremonial law, and which washings, or baptisms, are here referred to, were done, by putting them into water, and not by pouring, or sprinkling water upon them. It is a rule with the Jews,^[68] that, "wheresoever, in the law, washing of the flesh, or of the clothes is mentioned, it means nothing else, than כל הגג טבילת Tebileth Col hagoph, the dipping of the whole body in a laver—for if any man dips himself all over, except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness." From the whole, it appears, that the words, baptize and baptism, in all the places mentioned, do, from their signification, make dipping, or plunging, the necessary mode of administering the ordinance of baptism. I now go on,

Thirdly, To vindicate those texts of scripture, which afford instances of the mode of administering baptism by immersion, from the exceptions of this writer, who confidently affirms, "that none of those texts will necessarily prove that any one person was baptized by dipping, by John Baptist, our blessed Savior, or his apostles." [p. 34]. And,

1. The first text brought into the debate, and excepted to, is Matthew 3:6. And were baptized by him in Jordan, confessing the sins. But we do not argue on this place, from those persons being baptized, to their being dipped, as this writer makes his neighbor to do, but from their being baptized in the river Jordan; for why should John choose the river Jordan to baptize in, and baptize in that river, if he did not administer the ordinance by immersion? Dr. Hammond, a Paedobaptist, thought that these words afford an argument for dipping in baptism, though our author will not allow it: His paraphrase of them is; "And he received them by baptism, or immersion in the water of Jordan, promising them pardon upon the sincerity of their conversion and amendment, or reformation of their lives." And in his note on Matthew 3:1 having respect to this place, says, "John preaching repentance to the Jews in the desert, received all that came unto him as new proselytes, forsaking their old relations, that is, their sins, and in token of their resolved change, put them into the water, dipped them all over, and so took them out again; and upon the sincerity of their change, promised them the remission of their sins, and told them of the Messiah which was suddenly to appear among them, and warned them to believe on him." The instances of washing in the pool of Siloam, in Solomon's ten lavers, or the hands in a bason, mentioned by our author, are very impertinent; and besides, such washing is not performed without dipping. Who ever washes his hands without dipping them in the water he washes in?

2. Another text mentioned, is John 3:23. John was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there. Upon which this writer observes, that "the words in the original are many waters; which implies many springs or brooks of water; waters suited to the necessity and convenience of the vast multitudes that resorted to John, as a supply of drink for themselves, and for the horses and camels which they rode upon, as well as for their baptism. Here is no appearance of dipping in the case.—Had John baptized all these multitudes by dipping, he must have stood almost continually in water, up to his waist, and could not have survived the employment but by miracle." To which I reply,

(1.) Admitting that the words in the original, many waters, imply many springs or brooks, this shews there was a confluence of water there; and every body knows, that many springs and brooks being together, could easily fill large pools, sufficient for immersion; and even form and feed great rivers, which is often the case; and besides, the use this author finds for these springs and brooks, requires a considerable quantity of water, namely, for the vast multitudes of men, and for their horses and camels; and surely, therefore, there must be a sufficient quantity to cover a man's body in.

(2.) The words *πολλα υδατα*, many waters, signify a large quantity, great abundance, both in the literal and metaphorical sense of the phrase, as it is used by the evangelist John elsewhere, see Revelation 1:15 and 17:1, 15 and by the Septuagint interpreters, it is used even for the waters of the sea (Ps. 127:19; 107:23) and answers to *מים רבים*, *Mayim Rabbim*, in Song of Solomon 8:7 many waters cannot quench love; which surely must refer not to a small, but a large quantity of water; and which phrase there, the Septuagint render by much water, as we do the phrase here.

(3.) These words are given as a reason, not for the convenience of drink for men and their cattle, but for the baptizing of men, and the convenience of that; that the men that came to John's baptism came on horses and camels, we know not; however, the text assigns no reason for the choice of the place upon the account of convenience for them, but for baptism only; and therefore, we should not

overlook the reason in the text, that is certain, and receive one, which, at most, is very precarious and uncertain; besides, John had not, at this time, such vast multitudes that followed him; those followed Christ, and not him: he was decreasing: Christ made and baptized more disciples than he. See verses 26, 30 and chapter 4:1.

(4.) Supposing that vast multitudes still followed him, and were baptized by him, this affords no argument against dipping in baptism; and especially since this was performed in a place where there was much water. Nor was the baptizing of such great multitudes by immersion so great an undertaking, as that he could not survive it without a miracle; admit the work to be hard and laborious, yet as his day was, his strength was; according to the divine promise. We have had instances in our own nation, in our climate, of persons that have baptized great multitudes in rivers, and even in the winter time, and that for many days successively, if credit is to be given to our own writers. Mr. Fox the martyrologist, relates,^[69] from Fabian, that Austin, archbishop of Canterbury, baptized ten thousand in one day, in the river Swale; and observes upon it, that whereas he then baptized in rivers, it followeth, there were then no use of fonts. And the same, Ranulph, the monk of Chester affirms, in his history,^[70] and says, it was on a day in the middle of winter; and, according to Fox, it was on a Christmas-day. And our historian Bede says,^[71] that Paulinus, for six and thirty days successively, did nothing else, than instruct the people, which from all parts flocked unto him, and baptized them that were instructed in the river Glen; and who also baptized in one day vast numbers in the river Trent, King Edwin being present.

(5.) Though, this writer says, here is no appearance of dipping, in the case referred to in the text, yet there are several Paedobaptists, who are of another opinion, and think there was. Calvin, on the text, thus writes; "from these words, we may gather, that baptism was performed by John and Christ, by a plunging of the whole body under water." Piscator, on the place, has these words; "this is mentioned, to signify the rite of baptism which John used; namely, plunging the whole body of the man, standing in the river; hence, Christ, being baptized of John in Jordan, is said to come up out of the water (Matthew 3:16). The same mode Philip observed" (Acts 8:38). Aretius, on the passage, writes in the following manner; "but, why did John stay here? He gives a reason, because there was much water here; wherefore penitent persons might be commodiously baptized; and, it seems to intimate, that a large quantity of water was necessary in baptizing, that they might, perhaps, immerse the whole body." To which, I shall only add the words of Grotius, on the clause, much water: "Understand, says he, not many rivulets, but, simply, a plenty of water; such, namely, in which a man's body could easily be immersed: In which manner baptism was then performed."

3. Another text, produced in favor of dipping in baptism, is Matthew 3:16. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water. To which is objected, that "there is no more in the original, than that our Savior went up straightway $\alpha\pi\omicron$, from the water; which Greek preposition always naturally signifies from, but never out of, and therefore, this instance can stand in no stead." But if the preposition never signifies out of, it is strange that our learned translators should so render it here, as also the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; and so it is rendered in the New Testament in several places, as in Mark 16:9; Luke 4:35, 41; Acts 2:9; 17:2 and 28:23, and in others. And, moreover, it should be observed, that this preposition answers to the Hebrew $\eta\kappa$ Min, which signifies out of, as well as from; and which the Syriac version uses here: And, as a proof of both, let Psalm 40:2 be consulted, and the Septuagint version of it, where David says, the Lord brought him up out of an horrible pit, $\alpha\rho \alpha\pi\omicron \pi\eta\lambda\omicron\upsilon \iota\lambda\upsilon\omicron\varsigma$, and out of the miry clay. And, if

our Lord came up out of the water, it is a clear case, that he must have been in it; that he went down into it, in order to be baptized; and that he was baptized in it: And, is it reasonable to think, he should be baptized in the river Jordan, in any other way, than by immersion? See the note of Piscator, upon the preceding text.

4. Acts 8:38, 39 goes in company with the former; and they went down both into the water—and when they were come up out of the water. And the following remark is made; "there can be no more proved from this text, than that Philip and the Eunuch went down to the water, and came up from it. The preposition εἰς, rendered into, naturally signifies unto, and is commonly so used in the New Testament and the preposition ἐκ, rendered out of, properly signifies from—so that there is no evidence from this text, that the Eunuch was baptized by dipping." Here our author seems to have in view, a very false piece of criticism, frequently used upon this text; as if the going down into the water signified no more, than going down to the bank of the water, to the water-side: And, to support which, his sense of the preposition εἰς, which he would have rendered unto, is calculated. But, it should be observed, that the historian relates in verse 36 that, before this, they were come to a certain water, to the water-side; and, therefore, this, their going down, must be into it. Wherefore, as it cannot be denied, but that this preposition frequently signifies into, it must have this signification here; and this determines, and settles the sense of the other preposition, and shews, that that must be rendered, as it is, out of; seeing, whereas they went down into the water, when they came up, it must be out of it: All which gives evidence, that the Eunuch was baptized by dipping. Calvin thought so, who, on the text, has these words; "hic perspicimus, etc. Here we see, what was the manner of baptizing with the ancients, for they plunged the whole body into water."

5. The last text, mentioned in the debate, is Romans 6:4. We are buried with him by baptism into death. Where baptism is called a burial; a burial with Christ, a representation and resemblance of his; which it cannot be, unless it is administered by dipping. But this writer observes, it is also said, we are baptized into Christ's death; and asks, "What resemblance is there in baptism to Christ's dying upon the cross, if we are baptized by dipping? Was there any thing like dipping in our Savior's crucifixion? —would you have such a manner of death resembled in baptism, by drowning men when you baptize them? And affirms, that this text has no reference at all to the imitation either of Christ's death or burial, or to any particular mode of administering that ordinance; but the scope is to shew us our obligation, by baptism, unto a conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ: by dying unto sin, and rising again unto newness of life." But, we have seen already, that there is a resemblance between the crucifixion and death of Christ and baptism, as administered by dipping. The overwhelming sufferings of Christ are fitly signified, by a person's being plunged into water; and a great likeness there is between the burial of Christ and baptism, as performed by immersion: And, indeed, there is no other mode of administering that ordinance, that can represent a burial, but immersion. And be it so, that the scope of the place is to shew us our obligation, by baptism, unto a conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ, by dying unto sin, and rising again to newness of life; then that ordinance ought to be so administered, that it may represent unto us, the death and resurrection of Christ, and our dying unto sin, and rising unto newness of life; which are done, in a most lively manner, by an immersion into water, and an emersion out of it. And, that there is an allusion, in this passage, to the primitive mode of baptizing by dipping, is acknowledged by many divines and annotators; too many to recite: I will just mention two or three. The Assembly of divines, on this place, say, "in this phrase, the apostle seemeth to allude to the ancient manner of baptism; which was to dip the parties baptized, and, as it were, to bury them

under the water, for a while; and then to draw them out of it, and lift them up, to represent the burial of our old man, and our resurrection to newness of life."

Dr. Hammond's paraphrase of the words, is this; "it is a thing, that every Christian knows, that the immersion in baptism, refers to the death of Christ; the putting the person baptized into the water, denotes and proclaims the death and burial of Christ; and signifies our undertaking in baptism, that we will give over all the sins of our former lives (which is our being buried together with Christ, or baptized into his death) that so we may live that regenerate new life (answerable to Christ's resurrection) which consists in a course of all sanctity, a constant Christian walk all our days." So Piscator, on the text, "videtur respicere ad veterem ritum, etc. It seems to respect the ancient rite, when, in the whole body, they were plunged into water, and so were, as if they had been buried; and immediately were drawn out again, as out of a grave." But,

Fourthly, This writer thinks, it is not probable, from the instances of administering this ordinance in scripture, that it was performed by dipping. And,

1. He observes, "that in Acts 2:41. there were three thousand baptized in Jerusalem, in one day; most certainly, adds he, towards the close of the day; and asks, was there any probability (I had almost said possibility) that they should all be baptized by dipping, in so short a time? Or, is it probable that they could so suddenly find water sufficient in that city, for the dipping of such a multitude; especially while they were so firmly attached to the ceremonial institution, which made it unlawful for two persons to be dipped in the same vessel of water." To which I reply,

(1.) That though three thousand were added to the church on one and the same day, it does not necessarily follow from the text, that they were all baptized in one day, the words do not oblige to such a sense; I am indeed willing to allow it, and am of opinion they were baptized in one day; though it does not appear that it was most certainly at the close of the day, as this writer affirms; for it was but the third hour, or nine o'clock in the morning, when Peter began his sermon, which does not seem to be a long one; and when that was ended, after some discourse with the converted persons, and exhortations to them, this ordinance was administered. And if Austin, as we have seen from our historians, could baptize ten thousand in a short winter's day, it need not seem improbable, and much less impossible, that three thousand should be baptized, even at the close of a day; when it is considered that there were twelve apostles to administer baptism to them, and it was but two hundred and fifty persons apiece; and besides, there were the seventy disciples, who were administrators of this ordinance; and supposing them all employed, they would have no more than six or seven and thirty persons apiece to baptize; and as for the difference between administering the ordinance by dipping, and by sprinkling, it is very inconsiderable; for the same form of words must be pronounced in administering it one way as another; and a person being ready, is very near as soon dipped into water, as water can be taken and sprinkled or poured on his face. And,

(2.) Whereas a difficulty is made of finding suddenly water sufficient in the city of Jerusalem, for the dipping of such a multitude; it should be observed, that besides baths in private houses, for purification by immersion, in case of menstrea's, gonorrhoea's, etc. there was in the temple an apartment called the dipping-room, for the high-priest to dip himself in, on the day of atonement; and there were ten layers of brass, each of which held forty baths of water, sufficient for the

immersion of the whole body of a man; and there was the molten sea, for the priests to wash in, which was done by immersion; and there were also several pools in the city, as the pools of Bethesda, Siloam, etc. where persons bathed or dipped themselves, on certain occasions: So that there were conveniences enough for baptism by immersion in this place. And,

(3.) As for what this author says, that according to the ceremonial institution, it was unlawful for two persons to be dipped in the same vessel of water: I must own my ignorance of it, till some proof is given; the laver in the temple was in common for the priests.

2. The narrative of Paul's baptism, he says, makes it appear to be administered in his bed-room (Acts 9:9, 18), but that he was in his bed-room when Ananias came to him, is not so clear; however, certain it is, that he arose, and was baptized. Whether he arose off of his bed, or off of his chair, cannot be said; but be that as it will, had the ordinance been to have been performed by sprinkling or pouring a little water on him, he need not have rose up from either; but he arose, and went either to a bath that might be in Judas's house, fit for such a purpose, or to some certain place without doors, convenient for the administration of the ordinance.

3. The words of the text, Acts 10:47, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized? he says, seem plainly to contradict the dipping of Cornelius and his household, But why so? there is nothing in the text contradicts it; for the sense is, "Can any man forbid the use of his river or bath, or what convenience he might have, for the baptizing of those persons?" Which shews, that it required a place of some quantity of water, sufficient for baptizing by immersion; otherwise it would not have been in the power of any man to hinder them having a little water, to be sprinkled or poured on the face. And what follows confirms it; And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord; besides, the words of the text may be rendered, Can any man forbid that these should be baptized with water? See Erasmus on the place. Wherefore, what this writer says, that the apostle did not speak of forbidding the water to run in the river, or to remain in any other receptacle or reservoir of water, and therefore must speak of bringing water for their baptism, is very impertinent and ridiculous.

4. He observes, that "the Jailer and his household were baptized in the dead of the night, in the same hour of his conversion by the earthquake; and therefore, there was no probability (nor indeed possibility) of their going to any depth of water for that purpose" (Acts 16:33). But where is the impossibility, or improbability of it? Grotius thinks it probable, that there was a pool in the prison, where he washed the stripes of the apostle and here the ordinance might be administered; but, if nor, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that they went out of the prison, to the river near the city, where the oratory, or place of prayer was, verse 13 and there administered the ordinance, and then returned to the prison again, before morning, unobserved by any: compare verses 30 and 34 together. And now let it be considered, whether there instances, as our author says, are sufficient to convince an unprejudiced person, that the ordinance was not administered by dipping, in the apostolic times.

5. He concludes, that seeing sprinkling was the greatest purification among the Jews, and the blood of Christ, and the influences of the holy Spirit, are frequently represented by sprinkling, but never by dipping; therefore, it must be the most proper mode of administration. But,

1. It must be denied, that sprinkling was the greatest purification among the Jews; their principal purifications, and which were most frequently used in cases of ceremonial uncleanness, were performed by immersion, and therefore they are called washings, or baptisms, in Hebrews 9:10 and even the purification by the ashes of the red heifer, which this writer instances in, was not performed without bathing the person all over in water (Num. 19:19), and which was the closing and finishing part of it.

2. It is not fact, that the blood of Christ, and the influences of the Spirit, are never represented by dipping. The bloody sufferings of Christ, and the large abundance of his blood-shed, are called a baptism, or dipping (Luke 12:50). And his blood is represented, as a fountain opened to wash in, for sin, and for uncleanness (Zech.13:1). And the donation of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, is also called a baptism, or dipping (Acts 1:5). But, it is not on those allusive expressions, that we lay the stress of the mode of the administering this ordinance, though they are only such, this author attempts to mention, in favor of sprinkling. Wherefore, upon the whole, let the reader judge, which is the most proper and significant rite, used in the administration of the ordinance of baptism; whether immersion, which is the proper and primary sense of the word baptism, and is confirmed to be the rite used, by the places in which baptism was administered; and by several scriptural instances and examples of it, as well as by allusive expressions; and which fitly represents the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; or, sprinkling, which the word baptism never signifies; and is not confirmed by any of the said ways; nor does it represent any thing for which baptism is administered. Let it be, therefore, seriously considered, what a daring thing it is to introduce into this ordinance subjects which Christ never appointed, and a mode of administering it never used by him or his apostles. In matters of worship, God is a jealous God. The case of Nadab and Abihu ought to be remembered by us, who offered strange fire, the Lord commanded not. In things relating to religious worship, as this ordinance of baptism is a part of a precedent: And we ought to keep to the rule, both as to matter and manner, and not dare to innovate in either, lest it should be said to us, hath required this at your hands? worship, and with teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men.

The
ARGUMENT FROM APOSTOLIC
TRADITION,
In Favor Of Infant Baptism
With OTHERS,

advanced in a late Pamphlet, called,

The Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. considered;

It is with reluctance I enter again into the controversy about baptism; not from any consciousness either of the badness or weakness of the cause I am engaged in; but partly on account of other work upon my hands, which I chose not to be interrupted in; and partly because I think there has been enough written already, to bring this controversy to an issue; and it is not our fault that it has not been closed long ago; for there has been scarce any thing wrote by us these *fifty* years past, but in our own defense; our Paedobaptist brethren being continually the aggressors, and first movers of the controversy; they seem as if they were not satisfied with what has been done on their fide, and therefore are always attempting either to put the controversy upon a new foot, or to throw the old arguments into a new form; and even say the same things over and over again, to make their minds, and the minds of their people easy, if possible. If persons are content to search the scriptures, and form their judgment of this matter by them, there has been enough published on both sides of the question to determine themselves by; and we are willing things should rest here: but this is our care; if we reply to what is written against us, then we are litigious persons, and lovers of controversy; though we only rise up in our own vindication, for which surely we are not to be blamed; and if we make no reply, then what is written is unanswerable by us, and we are triumphed over.

No less than half a dozen pamphlets have been published upon this subject, within a very little time; without any provocation from us., that I know of. Some of them indeed are like mushrooms, that rise up and die almost as soon as they live; it has been the luck of the pamphlet before me, to live a little longer; and which is cried up as an unanswerable one, for no other reason, that I can see, but because it has not yet been answered in form; otherwise the arguments advanced in it, have been answered before it was in being; for there is nothing new throughout the whole of it. Is there any one argument in it, but what has been brought into the controversy before? not one. Is the date of infant-baptism, as it appears from the writings of the ancients, from antiquity, for which this performance is mostly boasted of, carried one year, one month, one day, one hour, or moment higher, than it was before? not one. Is there any one passage of the ancients cited, which has not

been produced and been under consideration before? not one. What then has this Gentleman been doing? just nothing at all. However an answer would have been made to him before this time, had not some things in providence prevented. My late worthy friend, the Reverend Mr. *Samuel Wilson*, intended to have drawn up one, as he signified to me; for which reason, I did not give myself the trouble to read this pamphlet: His view was first to publish his *Manual*, and then to take this under consideration; but he dying before the publication of the former, prevented his design; nor did he, as I could ever find, leave any materials behind him relating to this affair. Some time after Mr. *Killingworth* published an answer to Dr. *Foster* on the subject of communion, and added some remarks upon this pamphlet; when I ordered my Bookseller to get me that, and the strictures on it; upon reading of which, I found that Mr. *Killingworth* expected a formal answer to it was preparing, and would be published by a Gentleman he represents as the occasion of its being written; which for some time I have been waiting for: but hearing nothing of it, and the boasts of the party increasing, because of no answer, determined me to take it under examination in the manner I have done; but whether after all I am not too *forward*, I cannot tell; but if any thing is preparing or prepared by another hand, I hope what I have written will not hinder the publication of it.

Infant-baptism is sometimes put upon one footing, and sometimes on another; as on the covenant of grace; on circumcision; on the baptism of Jewish proselytes; on scripture consequences; and by our author it is rested on *apostolic tradition*. This he says is *an argument of great weight*,^[1] and that it is principally for the sake of this, that his performance appears in the world;^[2] for which reason, I shall chiefly attend unto it. Whatever weight this argument may be thought to have in the present controversy, it has none in others; not in the controversy with the Papists, nor with the church of *England* about rites and ceremonies, this Gentleman himself being judge; who I understand is the author of *The dissenting Gentleman's answer to Mr. White's Three Letters*. In his controversy with him, Christ is the *only* lawgiver and head of the church, and no man upon earth, or body of men, have authority to make laws, or prescribe things in religion, or to set aside, alter or new-make any terms fixed by him; and apostolical authority, or what is directed to by the apostles, as fallible and unassisted men, is no authority at all, nor obligatory as a law on men, they having no dominion over their faith and practice; and the scriptures are the *only, common, sufficient and perfect* rule: but in the controversy about infant-baptism, apostolic tradition is of great weight; if the dispute is about sponsors and the cross in baptism, then fathers and councils stand for nothing; and the testimonies of the ancients for these things, though *clear and indubitable*, and about the sense of which there is no contest, and are of as *early* antiquity as any thing can be produced for infant-baptism, are not allowed sufficient; but if it is about infant-baptism itself, then fathers and councils are called in, and their testimonies produced, insisted upon, and retained, though they have not one syllable of baptism in them; and have senses affixed to them, strained and forced, contrived to serve an hypothesis, and what the good old fathers never dreamed of; is this fair dealing? can this be said to be *sincerity, integrity and honesty*? no surely.

This Gentleman should know that we, who are called Anabaptists, are Protestants, and the Bible is our religion; and that we reject all pretended apostolic tradition, and every thing that goes under that name, not found in the Bible, as the rule of our faith and practice.

The title of the pamphlet before me is, *The baptism of Infants a reasonable service, founded upon Scripture, and undoubted Apostolic Tradition*; but if it is founded upon scripture, then not upon tradition; and if upon tradition, then, not on scripture; if it is a scriptural business, then not a

traditional one; and if a traditional one, then not a scriptural one: if it can be proved by scripture, that is enough, it has then no need of tradition; but if it cannot be proved by that, a cart-load of traditions will not support it.—This put me in mind of what I have heard, of a countryman offering to give the Judge a *dozen* reasons why his neighbor could not appear in court; in the *first* place, my Lord, says he, *he is dead*; that is enough, quote the Judge, I shall spare you the trouble of giving me the rest: so prove but infant-baptism by scripture, and there will be no need of the weighty arguments from tradition. However, by putting the care as it is, we learn that this author by *apostolic tradition*, means *unwritten* apostolic tradition, since he distinguishes it from the scripture; and not apostolic tradition, delivered in the scriptures, which is the sense in which sometimes *tradition* is used, both in the word of God (1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Thess. 2:15), and in ancient writers.^[3] So we are not at a loss about the sense of it; it is *unwritten*, uninspired apostolic tradition; tradition not *in*, but *out* of the scriptures; not delivered by the apostles in the sacred writings, but by word of mouth to their successors, or to the churches.

It is pretty much that infant-baptism should be called an *undoubted* apostolic tradition, since it has been *doubted* of by some learned Paedobaptists themselves; nay, some have affirmed that it is not observed by them as an apostolic tradition, particularly *Curcellaeus*,^[4] and who gives a very good reason for it: his words are these; "Paedobaptism was unknown in the two first ages after Christ; in the third and fourth it was approved by a few; at length, in the fifth and following ages it began to obtain in divers places; and therefore this rite is indeed observed by us as an *ancient custom*, but not as an *apostolic tradition*."

Bishop *Taylor*^[5] calls it a *pretended* apostolical tradition; and says, that the tradition cannot be proved to be apostolical, we have very good evidence from antiquity. Since then the Paedobaptists disagree about this point among themselves, as well as it is called in question and contested by others; one would think, this writer should not be so confident as to call it an *undoubted* apostolic tradition.

Besides, apostolic tradition, at most and best, is a very precarious and uncertain thing, and not to be depended on; we have a famous instance of this, in the controversy that arose in the second century, about the time of keeping *Easter*; whether it should be observed on the 14th day of the first moon, let it fall on what day of the week it would, or on the Sunday following; the former was observed by the churches of *Asia*, and the latter by the church of some; both pleaded the custom and usage of their predecessors, and even ancient apostolic tradition;^[6] the Asiatic churches said, they had it by tradition from *Philip* and *John*; the Roman church from *Peter* and *Paul*; but not being able to fettle this point, which was in the right, *Victor*, the then bishop of *Rome*, excommunicated the other churches that would not fall in with the practice of him and his church; this was in the year 196; and even before this, in the year 157, this same controversy was on foot; and *Polycarp* bishop of *Smyrna*, who had been a hearer and disciple of the apostle *John*, made a journey to some, and conversed with *Anicetus* bishop of that place, about this matter; they talked it over candidly, parted friendly, but without convincing each other, both retaining their former customs and tradition;^[7] if now it was so difficult a thing to fix a tradition, or fettle what was an apostolic tradition, about the middle of the second century, fifty or sixty years after the death of the apostle *John*, and when some of the immediate successors of the apostles were living; what judgment can we form of apostolic traditions in the eighteenth century?

Moreover, it is *doubtful* whether there ever was any such thing as apostolic tradition; or that ever any thing was delivered by the apostles to their successors, or to the churches, to be observed by them, which was not delivered in the sacred writings; and I defy this Gentleman, and demand of him to give me one single instance of any apostolic tradition of this nature; and if no such instance can be given, it is in vain to talk of *undoubted apostolic tradition*; and upon what a miserable foundation must infant baptism stand, that relies upon this? unwritten apostolic tradition is a *non-entity*, as the learned *Alting*^[8] calls it; it is a mere chimaera; a refuge of heretics formerly, and of papists now; a favorite argument of theirs, to prove by it what they please. But be it so, that there is such a thing as *apostolic tradition*; let it be proved that infant-baptism is such; let the apostles be pointed out that delivered it. Were they all the apostles or only some of them that delivered it? let them be named who they were, and to whom they delivered it, and when, and where. The apostles *Peter* and *Paul*, who were, the one the apostle of the circumcision, and the other the apostle of the uncircumcision, one would think, should be the most likely to hand down this tradition; the one to the Christian Jews, and the other to the Christian Gentiles; or however, to their successors or companions: but is there any proof or evidence that they did so? none at all; though there are writings of persons extant that lived in their times. If *Clemens Romanus* was a successor of *Peter*, as the papists say, it might have been expected, that it would have been delivered to him, and he would have published it; but there is not a word of it in his epistles still in being. *Barnabas* was a companion of the apostle *Paul*; and had it been a tradition of his, it might be justly thought, it would be met with in an epistle of his now extant; but there is not the least hint of it in it, but on the contrary, several passages in favor of believers-baptism. Perhaps, as *John* was the last of the apostles, and outlived them all, it was left with him to transmit it to others; and had this been the care, it might have been hoped it would have been found in the writings of *Polycarp*, a hearer and disciple of the apostle *John*; but not a syllable of it is to be found in him. Nay *Papias*, bishop of *Hierapolis*, one that was a hearer of *John* the elder of *Ephesus*, and a companion of *Polycarp*, and who had conversed with those who were familiar with the apostles, and made it his business to pick up sayings and facts, said or done by the apostles, not recorded in scripture, has not a word of this; which *childish* business would have been a very pretty thing for that weak-headed man, as *Eusebius*^[9] represents him, to have gone prattling about with; here is an apostolic tradition then, which no body knows by whom it was delivered, nor to whom, nor when and where: the companions and successors of the apostles say nothing of it. The^[10] Jews talk of a Mosaic tradition and oral law, delivered from one to another for several thousand years running; they tell you by whom it was first given and received; and can name the persons to whom it was transmitted in succeeding ages; this is something to the purpose; this is doing business roundly; but here is a tradition no body can tell from whence it comes, nor who received it, and handed it down; for there is not the least mention of it, nor any pretended to in the first century or apostolic age. But let us attend to what evidence is given of it, in the next or second century.

Two passages are produced out of the writers of this age, to prove this *undoubted* apostolic tradition; the one out of *Justin Martyr*; the other out of *Irenaeus*. That from *Justin* is as follows;^[11] "several persons among us, men and women, of sixty and seventy years of age, οἱ ἐκ παιδῶν ἐμαθητευθῆσαν τῷ Χριστῷ, *who from their childhood were instructed in Christ*, remain incorrupt:" for so the phrase on which the whole depends should be rendered, and not *discipled* or *proselyted to Christ*; which rendering of the words, as it is unjustifiable, so it would never have been thought of, had it not been to serve a turn; and is not agreeable to *Justin's* use of the word, who frequently makes use of it in the sense of instruction and teaching; as when he

speaks of persons being μαθητευθηνας , *instructed* into divine doctrines;¹²¹ and of others being μαθητευομενους , *instructed* in the name (person or doctrine) of Christ, and leaving the way of error;¹²³ and of Christ's sending his disciples to the Gentiles, who by them εμααθητευσαν, *instructed* them:¹²⁴ nor should εκ παιδων, be rendered *in infancy, but from childhood*; and is a phrase of the same signification with that in Timothy 3:15. where *Timothy* is said απο βρεφους , *from a child* to know the holy scriptures; and *Justin's sense* is, that notwithstanding the strict and severe commands of Christ in *Matthew* 5:28, 29, 30, 44 as they might seem to be, and which he cites; yet there were several persons of the age he mentions, then living, who had been instructed in the person, offices, and doctrines of Christ, or had been trained up in the Christian religion from their childhood, who had persevered hitherto, and were incorrupt in their practices, and in their principles; and which is no other than a verification of what the wise man observes, Proverbs 22:6. Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it: and we are able in our day, to point out persons of an age that *Justin* mentions, who have been trained up in the Christian religion from their childhood; and who in riper years have made a public profession of it, and have held fast their profession without wavering, and lived unblemished lives and conversations; and yet never were baptized in their infancy.

Behold, here the first proof and evidence of infant-baptism being an *undoubted apostolic tradition*; when there is not a word of baptism in it, much less of infant-baptism; nor any hint of it, or reference unto it. Can the most sanguine Paedobaptist sit down, and in cool reflection conclude, upon reading and considering this passage, that it proves infant-baptism to be an *undoubted apostolic tradition*? surely he cannot. The other passage is out of *Irenaeus*, and stands thus;¹²⁵ "He (Christ) came to save all; all I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, *who by him are born again unto God*, infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men."

For so the words are to be rendered, and not *baptized unto God*; for the word *renascor* is never used by *Irenaeus*, or rather by his translator, in such a sense; nor had it as yet obtained among the ancients to use the words *regenerated* and *regeneration*, for *baptized* and baptism. Likewise, it is certain that *Irenaeus* speaks elsewhere of regeneration as distinct from baptism, as an inward spiritual work, agreeable to the scriptures; which never speak of it but as such, no not in John 3:5, Titus 3:5. And what reason can there be to depart from the literal and scriptural sense of the word, and even the sense which *Irenaeus* uses it in; and especially, since infants are capable of regeneration in such a sense of it? besides, to understand *Irenaeus* as speaking of baptism, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false; as if Christ came to save all and only such, who are baptized unto God; when it is certain, he came to save the Old-Testament-saints, who never were baptized, as well as New-Testament saints; and no doubt many now are fared by him, who never were baptized with water at all: and on the other hand, nothing is more true than that he came to save all and only those, who are regenerated by the Spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age they be. And after all, when it is observed that the chapter out of which this passage is taken, is thought by some learned men to be none of *Irenaeus'*, but a spurious piece; and if it is his, it is only a translation, as almost all his works be, and a very foolish, uncouth and barbarous one, as learned men observe; so that it is not certain that there are his words, or are a true translation of them; what wise and considerate man will say, that this is a proof of infant-baptism being an *undoubted apostolic tradition*? seeing the passage is so much contested, and so much is to be said against it; seeing, at most and best, the sense of it is doubtful; and seeing it is certain that *Irenaeus* uses the word *regeneration* in a different sense from baptism;¹²⁶ who can be sure he uses it

of baptism here? Upon the whole, what thoughtful man will affirm from hence, that infant-baptism is an *undoubted* apostolic tradition? And seeing these two testimonies are the only ones produced in favor of infant-baptism in the second century; and the latter Dr. *Wall*^[17] confesses, "is the first express mention that we have met with of infants baptized;" though there is no mention at all made of it in it, any more than in the former; he must have a strong faith to believe, and a good assurance upon such evidence to assert,^[18] "that the baptism of infants was the *undoubted* practice of the Christian church in its purest and first: ages; the ages immediately succeeding the apostles." Let us now proceed to the third century.

Tertullian is the first man that ever made mention of infant-baptism, that we know of; and as he was the first that spoke of it, he at the same time spoke against it, dissuaded from it, and advised to defer it; and though he was quite *singular*, as our author says, in this his advice; it should be observed, that he is also quite *singular* in his mention of the thing itself; there being no writings of any contemporary of his extant, from which we might learn their sense of this affair. We allow that infant-baptism was moved in the third century; that it then began to be talked of, and became matter of debate, and might be practiced in the African churches, where it was first moved. We do not deny the *probability* of the practice of it then, though the *certainty* of it does not appear; it is probable it might be practiced, but it is not certain it was; as yet it has not been proved. Now here we stick, by this we abide, that there is no mention made of it in any authentic writer before *Tertullian's* time. And this writer himself elsewhere^[19] observes, that "by *his* time, it is well known, a great variety of superstitious, and ridiculous, and foolish rites were brought into the church." The date of infant-baptism cannot, we apprehend, be carried higher than his time; and we require of any of our learned Paedobaptist brethren, to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before *Tertullian*, in which infant-baptism is expressly mentioned, or clearly hinted at, or plainly supposed, or manifestly referred unto. This being the case, as we own it began in this century, and might be practiced by some, it might be needless in a good measure to consider after-testimonies; however, I shall not think fit wholly to neglect them.

Origen is next quoted, and *three* passages out of him; shewing that the baptism of infants is a tradition of the apostles, and an usage of the church for the remission of sins; but it should be observed, that these quotations are not from the Greek of *Origen*; he wrote much in that language, and there is much still extant in it; and yet nothing is produced from thence, that can fairly be construed in favor of infant-baptism; though many things may be observed from thence, in favor of adult-baptism. The three passages are quoted out of some Latin translations, greatly interpolated, and not to be depended on. His Homilies on *Leviticus*, and exposition of the epistle to the *Romans*, out of which *two* of them are taken, are translated by *Ruffinus*; who with the former, he himself owns, he used much freedom, and added much, and took such a liberty in both of adding, taking away, and changing, that, as *Erasmus* says,^[20] whoever reads there pieces, it is uncertain whether he reads *Origen* or *Ruffinus*; and *Vossius* observes,^[21] that the former of these was interpolated by *Ruffinus*, and thinks therefore, that the passage cited was of the greater authority against the *Pelagians*, because *Ruffinus* was inclined to them. The Homilies on *Luke*, out of which is the other passage, were translated by *Jerom*, of whom *Du Pin* says,^[22] that "his versions are not more exact than *Ruffinus's*." Now both there lived at the latter end of the fourth century, and it looks very probable, that these very passages, are additions, or interpolations of these men, tinct (the color of) the language agrees with those times, and no other; for no contemporary of *Origen's*, nor any writer before him or after him, until the times of *Ruffinus*, *Jerom* and *Austin*, speak of infant-baptism as an

usage of the church, or an apostolical tradition; in short, as bishop *Taylor* observes,^[23] "a tradition apostolical, if it be not consigned with a fuller testimony than of one person (*Origen*,) whom all after-ages have condemned of many errors, will obtain so little reputation amongst those, who know that things have upon greater authority pretended to derive from the apostles, and yet falsely; that it will be a great argument, that he is credulous, and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation, in a matter of so great concernment."

Cyprian, with his council of sixty-six bishops, are brought as witnesses of infant-baptism, a little after the middle of the third century. We allow that as infant-baptism was moved for in *Tertullian's* time, so it obtained in the *African* churches in *Cyprian's* time; but then by *Fidus* the country bishop, applying to the council to have a doubt resolved, whether it was lawful to baptize infants until they were eight days old; it appears to be a novel practice; and that as yet it was undetermined, by council or custom, when they were to be baptized, whether as soon as born, or on the eighth day, or whether it was to be left to every one's liberty: and it should also be observed, that in this age, infant communion was practiced as well as infant, baptism; and very likely both began together, as it is but reasonable, that if the one be admitted, the other should. But of this more hereafter.

The *Clementine Constitutions*, as they are called, are next produced, as enjoining infant-baptism; but why does this Gentleman call them the *Clementine Constitutions*, unless he is of opinion, and which he suggests by this title of them, that *Clemens Romanus* was the compiler of them from the mouths of the apostles? and if so, he might have placed the passage out of them with greater advantage, at the head of his testimonies; but he must know, that these writings are condemned as spurious, by almost all learned men, excepting Mr. *Whiston*; and were not heard of till the times of *Epiphanius*, in the latter end of the fourth century, if so soon: and it should be observed, that these same *Constitutions*, which direct to the baptizing of infants, injoin the use of godfathers in baptism; the form of renouncing the devil and all his works; the consecration of the water; trine immersion; the use of oil, and baptizing, fasting; crossing with the sign of the cross in the forehead; keeping the day of Christ's nativity, *Epiphany*, the *Quadragesima* or *Lent*; the feast of the passover, and the festivals of the apostles; falling on the fourth and sixth days of the week; praying for saints departed; singing for the dead, and honoring their relics; with many other things foreign enough from the simplicity of the apostolic doctrine and practice. A testimony from such a work, can be of very little credit to the cause of infant-baptism.

And now we are come to a very remarkable and decisive testimony, as it is called, from the writings of *Austin* and *Pelagius*; the sum of which is, that there being a controversy between these two persons about original sin, the latter, who denied it, was pressed by the former, with an argument taken from the baptism of infants for the remission of sins; with which *Pelagius* seemed exceedingly embarrassed, when it greatly concerned him to deny it if he could; and had it been an innovation, so acute, learned, and sagacious a man as he was, would have discovered it; but on the contrary, when he was charged with a denial of it as the consequence of his opinion, he warmly disclaims it, and complains of a slander; and adds, that he never heard that even any impious heretic denied it, or refused it to infants; and the same says *Austin*, that it never was denied by any man, catholic or heretic, and was the constant usage of the church; for all which vouchers are produced. To which may be replied,

1. However embarrassed *Pelagius* might be with the argument, it did not lead to a controversy about the subject, but the end of baptism, and about the latter, and not the former was the dispute; nor was he under so great a temptation, and much less necessity, nor did it so greatly concern him to deny the baptism of infants, on account of his tenet; since he was able upon his principles to point out other ends of their baptism, than that of remission of sin; and particularly, their receiving and enjoying the kingdom of heaven; and as a late writer^[24] observes, this proposition "*baptism ought to be administered to children, as well as to the adult*"; was not inconsistent with, nor repugnant to his doctrine; for though he denied original sin, he allowed baptism to be administered even to children, but only for their sanctification."

2. It should be known and observed, that we have no writings of *Pelagius* extant, at least under his name, only some passages quoted by his adversaries, by which we can judge what were his sentiments about infant-baptism; and it is well known that a man's words often are misquoted, or misunderstood, or misrepresented by an adversary; I will not say that this is the case of *Pelagius*; I would hope better things of his adversaries, particularly *Austin*, and that he has been used fairly; I am willing to allow his authorities, though it would have been a greater satisfaction to have had there things from himself, and not at second hand. Nor,

3. Would I detract from the character of *Pelagius*, or call in question his acuteness, sagacity, and learning; yet two doctors of the age in which he lived, are divided about him in this respect, *Austin* and *Jerom*; the former speaks of him as a very considerable man, and of great penetration; but the latter, as if he had no genius, and but very little knowledge;^[25] it must be owned, that *Austin* was the most candid man, and *Jerom* a sour one, who seldom spoke well of those he opposed, though he was a man of the greatest learning, and so the best judge of it: but however acute, learned, and sagacious *Pelagius* was, yet falling in with the stream of the times, and not seeing himself concerned about the subject, but the end of baptism, might give himself no trouble to inquire into the rise of it; but take it for granted, as *Austin* did; who perhaps was as acute, learned and sagacious as he, that it had been the constant usage of the church, and an apostolic tradition; as he had many other things, in which he was mistaken, as will soon appear.

4. Though *Pelagius* complained that he was defamed, and slandered by some who charged him with denying infant-baptism; yet this, *Austin* observes, was only a shift of his, in order to invert the state of the question, that he might more easily answer to what was objected to him, and preserve his own opinion. And certain it is, according to *Austin*;^[26] that the Pelagians did deny baptism to some infants, even to the infants of believers, and that for this reason, because they were *holy*; what others made a reason for it, they make a reason against it.

5. *Pelagius* says no such thing, that he never heard, no not even any impious heretic, who denied baptism to infants. His words indeed are^[27] *nunquam se vel impium aliquem haereticum audisse, qui hoc, quod proposuit, de parvulis diceret*; that "he never heard, no not any impious heretic, that would say concerning infants, what he had proposed or mentioned:" the sense depends upon the meaning of the phrase, *quod proposuit*, "what he had proposed or mentioned," of whom, and what that is to be understood; whether of *Austin*, and the state of the case as proposed and set down by him; so our author seems to understand it, since by way of explanation, he adds, *viz.* "that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man; and that they are not to be cleansed by the regeneration of baptism:" but this gentleman has not put it as *Austin* has stated it,

which is thus; "it is objected to them (the Pelagians) that they will not own that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man; & *in eos transfisse originale peccatum regeneratiane purgandum*, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration:" and according to this sense the meaning cannot be, that he never heard that any heretic denied baptism to infants; but either that he never heard that any one should say, that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin had not passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration; but then this is to bring the wicked heretics as witnesses against himself, and to make himself worse than they: or the meaning is, that he never heard that any of them should say, that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration, which is most likely: but then this makes rather against, than for the thing for which it is brought; since it makes the heretic as never saying that infants flood in need of being cleansed by baptism: or else, *quod proposuit*, "what he had proposed or mentioned," refers to *Pelagius*, and to the state of the question as he had put it; representing that he was charged with promising the kingdom of heaven to some, without the redemption of Christ; and of this he might say, he never heard the most impious heretic to say; and this seems to be the sense by what he subjoins; "for who is so ignorant of what is read in the gospel, not only as to attempt to affirm it, but even lightly mention it, or even imagine it?"

Moreover, who so impious that would exclude infants from the kingdom of heaven, *dum eos baptizari & in Christo renasci putat?* whilst he thinks, or is of opinion that they are baptized and regenerated in Christ?" for so it is in my edition^[28] of *Austin*; *putet*, and not *vetat*, as Dr. *Wall* quotes it; and after him this Gentleman: and *Pelagius* further adds, "who so impious as to forbid to an infant, of whatsoever age, the common redemption of mankind?" but this, *Austin* says, like the rest is ambiguous; what redemption he means, whether from bad to good, or from good to better: now take the words which way you will, they cannot be made to say, that he had never heard that any heretic denied baptism to infants, but that they denied the kingdom of heaven to them; and indeed every one must: allow, whoever is of that opinion, that infants are by baptism really regenerated in Christ; which was the prevailing notion of those times, and the light in which it is put; that they must belong to the kingdom of heaven, and share in the common redemption by Christ.

6. *Austin* himself does not say, that he had never heard or read of any catholic, heretic, or schismatic, that denied infant-baptism; he could never say any such thing; he must know, that *Tertullian* had opposed it; and he himself was at the council of *Carthage*, and there presided, and was at the making of that canon which runs thus; "also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized—let him be anathema:" but to what purpose was this canon made, if he and his brethren knew of none that denied infant-baptism? To say that this respects some people, who were still of the same opinion with *Fidus*, an African bishop, that lived 150 years before this time, that infants were not to be baptized until they were eight days old, is an idle notion of Dr. *Wall*:^[29] can any man in his senses think, that a council, consisting of all the bishops in *Africa*, should agree to *anathematize* their own brethren, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves; only they thought it should not be administered to them as soon as born, but at eight days old? *Credat Judaeus Apella*, believe it who will; he is capable of believing any thing, that can believe this. *Austin* himself makes mention of some that argued against it, after this manner:^[30] "men are used to ask this question, says he, of what profit is the sacrament of Christian baptism to infants, seeing when they have received it, for the most part they die before they know any thing of it?" and as before observed, he brings in the Pelagians^[31] saying,

that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized: and so *Jerom*,^[32] who was a contemporary of his, speaks of some Christians, *qui dare noluerint baptisma*, "who refused to give baptism to their children;" so that though infant-baptism greatly obtained in those times, yet it was not so general as this author represents it. *Austin* therefore could not say what he is made to say: but what then does he say, that he never remembered to have read in any catholic, heretic, or schismatic writer? why, "that infants were not to be baptized, that they might receive the remission of sins, but that they might be sanctified in Christ:" it is of this the words are spoken, which our author has quoted, but are not to be found in the place he refers to; having through inadvertence mistaken Dr. *Wall*, from whom I perceive he has taken this, and other things. This, and not infant-baptism itself, was what was transiently talked of at *Carthage*, and cursorily heard by *Austin* some little time ago, when he was there: this was the novelty he was startled at, but did not think it seasonable to enter into a debate about it then, and so forgot it: for surely it will not be said, that it was the denial of infant-baptism that was defended with so much warmth against the church, as he lays this was; and was committed to memory in writing; and the brethren were obliged to ask their advice about it; and they were obliged to dispute and write against; for this would prove the very reverse of what this gentleman produces it for. Now, though *Austin* could not say that he never remembered to have heard or read of any catholic, schismatic, or heretic, that denied infant-baptism; yet he might say he never remembered to have heard or read of any that owned and practiced infant-baptism, but who allowed it to be for the remission of sin; which is widely different from the former: it is one thing what *Austin* says, and another, what may be thought to be the consequence of his so saying; and in the same sense are we to understand him, when he says,^[33] "and this the church has *always* had, has *always* held." What? why, that infants are diseased through *Adam*; and stand in need of a physician; and are brought to the church to be healed. It was the doctrine of original sin, and the baptism of infants for the remission of it, he speaks of in these passages; it is true indeed, he took infant-baptism to be an ancient and constant usage of the church. and an apostolic tradition,^[34] which perhaps he had taken up from the Latin translations of *Origen* by *Jerom* and *Ruffinus* before-mentioned; since no other ecclesiastical writer speaks of it as such, before those times: but in this he was deceived and mistaken, as he was in other things which he took for apostolic traditions; which ought to be equally received as this, by those who are influenced by his authority; and indeed every *honest* man that receives infant-baptism upon the foot of tradition, ought to receive every thing else upon the same foot, of which there is equally as *full*, and as *early*, evidence of apostolic tradition, as of this: let it then be observed,

1. That the same *Austin* that asserts infant-baptism to be an apostolic tradition, affirms infant-communion to be so likewise, as Bishop *Taylor*^[35] observes; and thus *Austin* says,^[36] "if they pay any regard to the apostolic authority, or rather to the Lord and Matter of the apostles, who says, that they have no life in themselves, *unless they eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood*, which they cannot do unless baptized; will sometimes own that unbaptized infants have not life;"—and a little after, "no man that remembers that he is a Christian, and of the catholic faith, denies or doubts that infants, not having the grace of regeneration in Christ, and without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in them; but are hereby liable to everlasting punishment;" by which he means the two sacraments of baptism, and the Lord's supper; the necessity of both which to eternal life he founded upon a mistaken sense of John 3:5 and John 6:53 as appears from what he elsewhere says;^[37] where having mentioned the first of those passages, he cites the latter, and adds; "let us hear the Lord, I say, not indeed speaking this of the sacrament of the holy laver, but of the sacrament of the holy table; whither none rightly come, unless baptized. *Except ye eat my flesh, and*

drink my blood, ye shall have no life in you; what do we seek for further? what can be laid in answer to this, unless one would set himself obstinately against clear and invincible truth? will any one dare to say this, that this passage does not belong to infants; and that they can have life in themselves, without partaking of his body and blood?" And of the necessity of this, as well as of baptism to eternal life, he says^[38] the *African* Christians took to be an ancient and apostolic tradition. *Innocent* the first, his contemporary, was also of the same mind; and the giving of the Eucharist to infants generally obtained; and it continued fix hundred years after, until transubstantiation took place; and is continued to this day in the Greek church: and if we look back to the times before *Austin*, we shall find that it was not only the opinion of *Cyprian*, but was practiced in his time; he tells^[39] a story which he himself was a witness of; how that "a little child being left in a fright by its parents with a nurse, she carried the child to the magistrates, who had it to an idol's sacrifice; where because the child could not eat flesh, they gave it bread soaked in wine: some time after, the mother had her child again; which not being able to relate to her what had passed it was brought by its parent to the place where *Cyprian* and the church were celebrating the Lord's-supper; and where it shrieked, and was dreadfully distressed; and when the cup was offered it in its turn by the deacon, it shut its lips against it; who forced the wine down its throat; upon which it sobbed, and threw it up again." Now here is a plain instance of infant-communion in the third century; and we defy any one to give a more early instance, or an instance so early, of infant-baptism: it is highly probable that infant-baptism was now practiced; and that this very child was baptized, or otherwise it would not have been admitted to the Lord's-supper; and it is reasonable to suppose, they both began together; yet no instance can be given of infant-baptism, so early as of infant-communion; wherefore whoever thinks himself obliged to receive the one upon such evidence and authority, ought to receive the other; the one has as good a claim to apostolic authority and tradition, as the other has.

2. The sign of the cross in baptism was used by the ancients, and pleaded for as an apostolic tradition. *Basil*, who lived in the fourth century observes,^[40] that some things they had from scripture; and others from apostolic tradition, of which he gives instances; and, says he, "because this is the first and most common, I will mention it in the first place; as that *we sign with the sign of the cross* those who place their hope in Christ; and then asks who taught this in scripture?" *Chrysostom*, who lived in the same age, manifestly refers to it, when he says,^[41] "how can you think it fitting for the minister to make *the sign on its* (the child's) *forehead*, where you have besmeared it with the dirt?" which *Cyri*^[42] calls the *royal seal* upon the forehead. *Cyprian* in the middle of the third century relates the custom of his times;^[43] "what is now also in use among us is, that those who are baptized, are offered to the governors of the church; and through our prayers and imposition of hands, they obtain the holy Spirit, and are made compleat *signaculo Dominico*, with the seal of the Lord:" and in another place^[44] he says, "they only can escape, who are regenerated *and signed with the sign of Christ*." And *Tertullian*, in the beginning of the same century, speaking of baptism says^[45] "the flesh is washed, that the soul may be unspotted; the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated; *caro signatur*, "the flesh is signed," that the soul also may be fortified." Now this use of the cross in baptism, was as early as any instance of infant-baptism that can be produced; higher than *Tertullian's* time it cannot be carried: what *partiality* then is it, I know to whom I speak, to admit the one upon the foot of tradition, and reject the other? The same *Tertullian*^[46] also speaks of *sponsors*, sponsors, or godfathers, in baptism; which this writer himself has mentioned, and thus renders; "what occasion is there—except in cases of necessity, that the sponsors or *godfathers* be brought "into danger;" not to take notice of the *Clementine*

Constitutions, as our author calls them, which enjoin the use of them; and which appear to be as early as infant-baptism itself; and indeed it is but reasonable that if infants are baptized, there should be sponsors or sureties for them.

3. The form of "renouncing the devil and all his works," used in baptism, is also by *Basil*^[47] represented as an apostolic tradition; for having mentioned several rites in baptism, received upon the same foot, he adds; "and the rest of what is done in baptism, as to renounce the devil and his angels, from what scripture have we it? is it not from this private and secret tradition?" *Origen* before the middle of the third century relates the usage of his times;^[48] "let every one of the faithful remember when he first came to the waters of baptism; when he received the first seals of faith, and came to the fountain of salvation; what words there he then used; and what he denounced to the devil, *non se, usurum pompis ejus*, "that he would not use his *pomps*, nor his *works*, nor any of his service, nor obey his pleasures:" and *Tertullian*^[49] before him; "when we enter into the water, we profess the faith of Christ, in the words of his law; we protest with our mouth that *we renounce the devil, and his pomp, and his angels*;" and in another place^[50] in proof of unwritten tradition, and that it ought to be allowed of in some cases, he says; "to begin with baptism; when we come to the water, we do there, and sometimes in the congregation under the hand of the pallor, protest that we *renounce* the devil, and his pomp, and angels; and then we are thrice immersed; answering something more than the Lord has enjoined in the gospel:" now this is as early as any thing can be produced in favor of infant-baptism.

4. Exorcisms and exsuslations are represented by *Austin*^[51] as rites in baptism, *prisaie traditionis*, "of ancient tradition," as used by the church every where, throughout the whole world. He frequently presses the Pelagians with the argument taken from thence, and luggers, that they were pinched with it, and knew not how to answer it; he observes, that things the most impious and absurd, were the consequences of their principles, and among the rest there:^[52] "that they (infants) are baptized into a Savior, but not saved; redeemed by a deliverer, but not delivered; washed in the laver of regeneration, but not washed from any thing; exorcised and exsuslated, but not freed from the power of darkness:" and elsewhere he says,^[53] that "notwithstanding their craftiness, they know not what answer to make to this, *that infants* are *exorcised* and *exsuslated*; for this, without doubt, is done in mere show, if the devil has no power over them; but if he has power over them, and therefore are not *exorcised* and *exsuslated* in mere show, by what has the prince of sinners power over them, but by sin?" And *Gregory Nazianzen* before him, as he exhorts to confession of sin in baptism, so to exorcism; "do not refuse, says he,^[54] the medicine of exorcism—for that is the trial of sincerity, with respect to that grace (baptism)." And says *Optatus of Milevis*,^[55] "every man that is born, though born of Christian parents, cannot be without the spirit of the world, which must be excluded and separated from him, before the salutary laver; this exorcism effects, by which the unclean spirit is driven away, and is caused to flee to desert places." *Cyprian*, in the third century, speaking of the efficacy of baptism to destroy the power of Satan, relates what was done in his day,^[56] "that by the exorcist the devil was buffeted, distressed, and tortured, with an human voice, and by a divine power." And *Cornelius* bishop of Rome, a contemporary of his, makes mention^[57] of the same officers in the church; and this is also as early as the practice of infant-baptism.

5. Trine immersion is affirmed to be an apostolic tradition, nothing is more frequently asserted by the ancients than this. *Basil*,^[58] among his instances of apostolic tradition, mentions this; "now a man is thrice immersed, from whence is it derived?" his meaning is, is it from scripture or apostolic

tradition? not the former, but the latter. And *Jerom*,¹⁵⁹ in a dialogue of his, makes one of the parties say after this manner, which clearly appears to be his own sense; "and many other things which by tradition are observed in the churches, have obtained the authority of a written law; as to dip the head thrice in the laver," etc. And so *Tertullian* in the third century as above, in support of tradition, mentions¹⁶⁰ this as a common practice; "we are thrice immersed;" and elsewhere speaking¹⁶¹ of the commission of Christ, he says, "he commanded them to dip into the Father, and the Son, and the holy Ghost; not into one, for not once, but thrice are we dipped, at each name, into each person;" and he is the first man that makes mention of infant-baptism, who relates this as the then usage of the church: and *Sozomen*¹⁶² the historian observes, that it was said, that: "Eunomius was the first that dared to assert, that the divine baptism should be performed by one immersion; and so corrupted the apostolic tradition, which till now had been every where observed."

6. The consecration of the water of baptism is an ancient rite, and which¹⁶³ *Basil* derives from apostolic tradition; "we consecrate, says he, the water of baptism, and the anointing oil, as well as the person that receives baptism, from what scripture? is it not from private and secret tradition?" by which he means apostolic tradition, as he in the same place calls it; which was done, not only by the prayer of the administrator over the water, but by signing it with the sign of the cross; which rite was in use in the times of *Austin*,¹⁶⁴ who says, "baptism is signed with the sign of Christ, that is, the water where we are dipped;" and *Ambrose*, who lived in the same age, relates, that exorcism was also used in consecration: he describes the manner of it thus:¹⁶⁵ "why did Christ descend first, and afterwards the Spirit, seeing the form and use of baptism require, that first the font be consecrated, and then the person that is to be baptized, goes down? for where the priest first enters, he makes an exorcism, next an invocation on the creature of the water, and afterwards prays that the font may be sanctified, and the eternal Trinity be present." *Cyprian*, in the middle of the third century, makes mention of this ceremony of consecrating the baptismal water; he says,¹⁶⁶ "the water must first be cleansed and sanctified by the priest, that it may, by his baptizing in it, wash away the sins of the man that is baptized." And *Tertullian*¹⁶⁷ before him, though he makes no difference between the water of a pool, river or fountain, *Tyber* or *Jordan*, yet supposes there is a sanctification of it through prayer; "all waters," he says, from their ancient original prerogative, (referring to Genesis 1:2) "obtain the sacrament of sanctification, *Deo invocato*, God being called upon;" for immediately the Spirit comes down from heaven, and rests upon the waters, sanctifying them of himself; and so being sanctified, they drink in together the sanctifying virtue." This also is as high as the date of infant-baptism can be carried.

7. Anointing with oil at baptism, is a rite that claims apostolic tradition. *Basil*¹⁶⁸ mentions it as an instance of it, and asks; "the anointing oil, what passage in scripture teaches this?" *Austin*¹⁶⁹ speaks of it as the common custom of the church in his time; having quoted that passage in Acts 10:38, "how God anointed him (Jesus) with the holy Ghost; adds, not truly with visible oil, but with the gift of grace, which is signified by the visible ointment, *quo baptizatos ungit ecclesia*, "with which the church anoints those that are baptized:" several parts of the body were wont to be anointed. *Ambrose*¹⁷⁰ makes mention of the ointment on the head in baptism, and gives a reason for it. *Cyri*¹⁷¹ says, the oil was exorcised, and the forehead, ear, nose and breast, were anointed with it, and observes the mystical signification of each of there; the necessity of this anointing is urged by *Cyprian*¹⁷² in the third century; "he that is baptized must needs be anointed, that by receiving the chrysm, that is, the anointing, he may be the anointed of God, and have the grace of Christ." And *Tertullian*, in the beginning of the same century, says,¹⁷³ as before observed, "the flesh is anointed,

that the soul may be consecrated;" and in another place,¹⁷⁴ "when we come out of the laver, we are anointed with the blessed ointment, according to the ancient discipline, in which they used to be anointed with oil out of the horn, for the priesthood;" this was the custom used in the times of the man that first spoke of infant-baptism.

8. The giving a mixture of milk and honey to a person just baptized, is a rite that was used in the churches anciently through tradition; *Jerom*¹⁷⁵ makes mention of it, as observed upon this footing, and as an instance, among other things which obtained authority in that way: "as to dip the head thrice in the laver, and when they *came out* from thence, *to taste of a mixture of milk and honey*, to signify the new birth;" and elsewhere he says,¹⁷⁶ it was a custom observed in the western churches to that day, to give *wine and milk* to them that were regenerated in Christ. This was in use in *Tertullian's* time; for, speaking of the administration of baptism, he says,¹⁷⁷ we come to the water—then we are thrice dipped—then being taken out from thence we taste a mixture of *milk and honey*; and this, as well as anointing with oil, he observes, was used by heretics themselves, for so he says of *Marcion*;¹⁷⁸ "he does not reject the water of the creator, with which he washes his disciples; nor the oil with which he anoints his own; *nor the mixture of milk and honey*, by which he points them out as newborn babes;" yea, even *Barnabas*, a companion of the apostle *Paul*, is thought to refer to this practice, in an epistle of his still extant;¹⁷⁹ not to take notice of the white garment, and the use of the ring and kiss in baptism, in *Cyprian* and *Tertullian's* time.¹⁸⁰

Now these several rites and usages in baptism, claim their rise from *apostolic tradition*, and have equal evidence of it as infant-baptism has; they are of as early date, have the same vouchers, and more; the testimonies of them are clear and full; they universally obtained, and were practiced by the churches, throughout the whole world; and even by heretics and schismatics; and this is to be said of them, that they never were *opposed* by any within the time referred to, which cannot be laid of infant-baptism; for the very first man that mentions it, dissuades from it: and are there facts which could not but be *publicly* and perfectly known, and for which the ancient writers and fathers may be appealed to, not as reasoners and interpreters, but as historians and witnesses to public standing facts; and all the reasoning this gentleman makes use of, concerning the apostles forming the churches on one uniform *plan* of baptism, the *nearness* of infant-baptism to their times, from the testimony of the ancients, the difficulty of an innovation, and the easiness of its detection, may be applied to all and each of these rites.

Wherefore whoever receives infant-baptism upon the foot of apostolic tradition, and upon such proof and evidence as is given of it, as above, if he is an honest man; I say again, if he is an honest man, he ought to give into the practice of all those rites and usages. We do not think ourselves indeed obliged to regard these things; we know that a variety of superstitious, ridiculous, and foolish rites, were brought into the church in these times; we are not of opinion, as is suggested, that even the authority of the apostles a hundred years after their death, was sufficient to keep an innovation from entering the church, nor even whilst they were living; we are well assured, there never was such a set of impure wretches under the Christian name, so unfound in principle, and so bad in practice, as were in the apostles days, and in the ages succeeding, called the *purest* ages of Christianity. We take the Bible to be the only authentic, perfect and sufficient rule of faith and practice: we allow of no other head and lawgiver but one, that is, Christ; we deny that any men, or let of men, have any power to make laws in his house, or to decree rites and ceremonies to be observed by his people, no not apostles themselves, uninspired: and this gentleman, *out of this*

controversy, is of the same mind with us, who asserts the above things we do; and affirms, without the least hesitation, that what is "ordained by the apostles, without any precept from the Lord, or any particular direction of the holy Spirit, is not at all obligatory as *a law* upon the consciences of Christians;—even *the apostles* had no *dominion* over the *faith* and *practice* of Christians, but what was given them by the special presence, and Spirit of Christ, the only Lawgiver, Lord, and Sovereign of the church: they were to teach *only* the things which he should command them; and whatever they enjoined under the influence of that Spirit, was to be considered and obeyed as the injunctions of Christ; but if they enjoined any thing in the church, without the peculiar influence and direction of this Spirit, that is, as merely fallible and unassisted men, in that case, their injunctions had no authority over conscience; and every man's own reason had authority to examine and discuss their injunctions, as they approved themselves to his private judgment, to observe them or not: should we grant thee what you ask.—lays he to his antagonist—that the church in the present age, has the same authority and power, as the church in the apostolic age, considered, as not being under any immediate and extraordinary guidance of the holy Ghost what will you gain by it? This same authority and power is you see, Sir, really no power nor authority at all."^[81]

The controversy between us and our brethren on this head, is the same as between Papists and Protestants about tradition, and between the church of *England* and Dissenters, about the church's power to decree rites and ceremonies namely, whether Christ is the sole head and lawgiver in his church; or whether any let of men have a power to set aside, alter, and change any laws of his, or prescribe new ones? if the latter, then we own it is all over with us, and we ought to submit, and not carry on the dispute any further: but since we both profess to make the Bible our religion, and that only the rule of our faith and practice; let us unite upon this common principle, and reject every tradition of men, and all rites and ceremonies which Christ hath not enjoined, us; let us join in pulling down this *prop* of *Popery*, and remove this *scandal* of the Protestant churches, I mean infant-baptism; for lure I am, so long as it is attempted to support it upon the foot of apostolic tradition, no man can write with success against the Papists, or such, who hold that the church has a power to decree rites and ceremonies.

However; if infant baptism is a tradition of the apostles, then this point must be gained, that it is not a scriptural business; for if it is of tradition, then not of scripture; who ever appeals to tradition, when a doctrine or practice can be proved by scripture? appealing to tradition, and putting it upon that foot, is giving it up as a point of scripture: I might therefore be excused from considering what this writer has advanced from scripture in favor of infant-baptism, and the rather, since there is nothing produced but what has been brought into the controversy again and again, and has been answered over and over: but perhaps this gentleman and his friends will be displeased, if I take no notice of his arguments from thence; I shall therefore just make some few remarks on them. But before I proceed, I must congratulate my readers upon the blessed times we are fallen into! what an enlightened age! what an age of good sense do we live in! what prodigious improvement in knowledge is made! behold! *tradition* proved by *Scripture*! *apostolic tradition* proved by *Abraham's covenant*! *undoubted apostolic tradition* proved from writings in being *hundreds* of years *before* any of the *apostles* were born! all extraordinary and of the marvelous kind! but let us attend to the proof of these things.

The *first* argument is taken from its being an *incontestable fact*, that *the infants of believers* were received with their parents into covenant with God, in the former dispensations or ages of the

church; which is a great privilege, a privilege still subsisting, and never revoked; wherefore the infants of believers, having still a right to the same privilege, in consequence have a right to baptism, which is now the only appointed token of God's covenant, and the only rite of admission into it.^[82]

To which I reply, that it is not an incontestable loci:, but a *fact contested*, that the *infants of believers* were with their parents taken into covenant with God, in the former dispensations and ages of the church; by which must be meant, the ages preceding the *Abrahamic* covenant; since that is made, to furnish out a *second* and distinct argument from this; and so the scriptures produced are quite impertinent (Gen. 17:7, 10-12; Deut.29:10-12; Ezek. 16:20, 21), seeing they refer to the *Abrahamic* and *Mosaic* dispensations, of which hereafter. The first covenant made with man, was the covenant of works, with *Adam* before the fall, which indeed included all his posterity, but had no *peculiar* regard to the infants of believers; he standing as a federal head to all his feed, which no man since has ever done: and in him they all finned, were condemned, and died. This covenant, I presume this Gentleman can have no view unto: after the fall of *Adam*, the covenant of grace was revealed, and the way of life and salvation by the Messiah; but then this revelation was only made to *Adam* and *Eve* personally, as interested in there things, and not to their natural feed and posterity as such, as being interested in the same covenant of grace with them; for then all mankind must be taken into the covenant of grace; and if that gives a right to baptism, they have all an equal right to unto it; and so there is nothing *peculiar* to the infants of believers; and of whom, there is not the least syllable mentioned throughout the whole age or dispensation of the church, reaching from *Adam* to *Noah*; a length of time almost equal to what has run out from the birth of Christ, to the present age. The next covenant we read of, is the covenant made with *Noah* after the flood, which was not made with him, and his immediate offspring *only*; nor were they taken into covenant with him as the *infants of a believer*; nor had they any sacrament or rite given them as a token of *Jehovah* being their God, and they his children, and as standing in a peculiar relation to him; will any one dare to say this of *Ham*, one of the immediate sons of *Noah*? The covenant was made with *Noah* and all mankind, to the end of the world, and even with every living creature, and all the beasts of the earth, promising them security from an universal deluge, as long as the world stands; and had nothing in it *peculiar* to the infants of believers: and these are all the covenants the scripture makes mention of, till that made with *Abraham*, of which in the next argument.

This being the case, there is no room nor reason to talk of the greatness of this privilege, and of the continuance of it, and of asking when it was repealed, since it does not appear to have been a fact; nor during there ages and dispensations of the church, was there ever any *sacrament*, *rite*, or *ceremony*, appointed for the admission of *persons adult*, or *infants*, into covenant with God; nor was there ever any such rite in any age of the world, nor is there now: the covenant with *Adam*, either of works or grace, had no ceremony of this kind; there was a token, and still is, of *Noah's* covenant, the rainbow, but not a token or rite of admission of persons into it, but a token of the continuance and perpetuity of it in all generations: nor was circumcision a rite of admission of *Abraham's* feed into his covenant, as will quickly appear; nor is baptism now an *initiatory rite*, by which persons are admitted into the covenant. Let this Gentleman, if he can, point out to us where it is so described; persons ought to appear to be in the covenant of grace, and partakers of the blessings of it, the Spirit of God, faith in Christ, and repentance towards God, before they are admitted to baptism. This Gentleman will find more work to support his first argument, than perhaps he was aware of; the premises being bad, the conclusion must be wrong. I proceed to,

The *second* argument, taken from *the Abrahamic* covenant, which stands thus: The covenant God made with *Abraham* and his seed, Genesis 17: into which *his infants* were taken together with himself, *by the rite of circumcision*, is the *very same* we are *now* under, the same with that in Galatians 3:16, 17 still in force, and not to be disannulled, in which we believing Gentiles are included (Rom. 4:9-16, 17), and so being Abraham's seed, have a right to all the grants and privileges of it, and so to the admission of our infants to it, by the sign and token of it, which is changed from circumcision to baptism.^[83] But,

1. though *Abraham's* seed were taken into covenant with him, which designs his adult posterity in all generations, on whom it was enjoined to circumcise their infants, it does not follow that his infants were; but so it is, that wherever the words *seed*, *children*, etc. are used, it immediately runs in the heads of some men, that infants must be meant, though they are not necessarily included; but be it so, that *Abraham's* infants were admitted with him, (though at the time of making this covenant, he had no infant with him, *Ishmael* was then *thirteen* years of age) yet not as *the infants of a believer*; there were believers and their infants then living, who were left out of the covenant; and those that were taken in successive generations, were not the infants of believers only, but of unbelievers also; even all the natural feed of the Jews, whether believers or unbelievers.—

2. Those that were admitted into this covenant, were not admitted *by the rite of circumcision*; *Abraham's* female feed were taken into covenant with him, as well as his male feed, but not by any *viabile rite* or ceremony; nor were his male feed admitted by any such rite, no not by circumcision; for they were not to be circumcised until the eighth day; to have circumcised them sooner would have been criminal; and that they were in covenant from their birth, this gentleman, I presume, will not deny.—

3. The covenant of circumcision, as it is called (Acts 7:8), cannot be the same covenant we are now under, since that is abolished (Gal. 5:1-3), and it is a *new* covenant, or a new administration of the covenant of grace, that we are now under; the old covenant under the *Mosaic* dispensation is waxen old, and vanished away (Heb. 8:8, 13), nor is the covenant with *Abraham* (Gen. 17), the same with that mentioned in Galatians 3:17 which is still in force, and not to be disannulled; the distance of time between them does not agree, but falls short of the apostle's date, four and twenty years; for from the making of this covenant to the birth of *Isaac*, was one year (Gen. 17:1; 21:5), from thence to the birth of *Jacob*, sixty years (Gen. 25:26), from thence to his going down to *Egypt*, one hundred and thirty years (Gen. 47:9), where the Israelites continued two hundred and fifteen;^[84] and quickly after they came out of *Egypt*, was the law given, which was but four hundred and six years after this covenant. The reason this gentleman gives, why they must be the same, will not hold good, namely, "this is the only covenant in which "God ever *made* and *confirmed* promises to *Abraham*, and to *his seed*;" since God made a covenant with *Abraham* before this, and confirmed it to his seed, and that by various rites, and usages, and wonderful appearances (Gen. 15:8-18), which covenant, and the confirmation of it, the apostle manifestly refers to in Galatians 3:17 and with which his date exactly agrees, as the years are computed by *Paraeus*.^[85] thus; from the confirmation of the covenant, and taking *Hagar* to wife, to the birth of *Isaac*, fifteen years; from thence to the birth of *Jacob*, sixty (Gen. 25:26), from thence to his going down to *Egypt*, one hundred and thirty (Gen. 47:9), from thence to his death, seventeen (Gen. 47:28), from thence to the death of *Joseph*, fifty three (Gen. 1:26), from thence to the birth of *Moses*, seventy-five; from thence to the going out of *Israel* from *Egypt*, and the giving of the law, eighty years; in all four hundred and thirty years.—

4. It is allowed, that the covenant made with *Abraham* (Gen. 17), is of a mixed kind, consisting partly of temporal, and partly of spiritual blessings; and that there is a twofold seed of *Abraham*, to which they severally belong; the temporal blessings, to his natural seed the Jews, and the spiritual blessings, to his spiritual seed, even all true believers that walk in the steps of his faith, *Jews or Gentiles* (Rom. 4:11, 12, 16), believing Gentiles are Abraham's spiritual seed, but then they have a right only to the spiritual blessings of the covenant, not to *all* the grants and privileges of it; for instance, not to the land of *Canaan*; and as for their natural seed, there have no right, as such, to any of the blessings of this covenant, temporal or spiritual: for either they are the natural, or the spiritual seed of Abraham; not his natural seed, no one will say that; not his spiritual seed, for only believers are such; *they which are of faith* (believers) *the same are the children of Abraham*; and *if ye be Christ's*, (that is, believers) *then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise*; and it is time enough to claim the promise, and the grants and privileges of it, be they what they will, when they appear to be believers; and as for the natural seed of believing Gentiles, there is not the least mention made of them in *Abraham's* covenant.

5. Since *Abraham's* seed were not admitted into covenant with him, by any visible rite or token, no not by circumcision, which was not a rite of admission into the covenant, but a token of the continuance of it to his natural seed, and of their distinction from other nations, until the Messiah came; and since therefore baptism cannot succeed it as such, nor are the one or the other seals of the covenant of grace, as I have elsewhere^[86] proved, and shall not now repeat it; upon the whole, this second argument can be of no force in favor of infant-baptism: and here, if any where, is the proper time and place for this gentleman to ark for the *repeal* of this *ancient privilege*, as he calls it,^[87] of infants being taken into covenant with their parents, or to shew when it was repealed; to which I answer, that the covenant made with *Abraham*, into which his natural seed were taken with him, so far as it concerned them as such, or was a national covenant, it was abolished and disannulled when the people of the Jews were cut off as a nation, and as a church; when the *Mosaic* dispensation was put an end unto, by the coming, sufferings, and death of Christ; and by the destruction of that people on their rejection of him; when God wrote a *Loammi* upon them, and said, *Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God* (Hosea 1:9) when he took his staff, beauty, and cut it asunder, that he might break his covenant he had made with this people (Zech. 11:10), when the old covenant and old ordinances were removed, and the old church-state utterly destroyed, and a new church-state was set up, and new ordinances appointed; and for which new rules were given; and to which none are to be admitted, without the observance of them; which leads me to The *third* argument, taken from the commission of Christ for baptism (Matthew 28:19), and from the *natural* and *necessary* sense in which the apostles would understand it,^[88] though this gentleman owns that it is delivered in such general terms, as not certainly to determine whether adult believers only, or the infants also of such are to be baptized; and if so, then surely no argument can be drawn from it for admitting infants to baptism. And,

1. The rendering of the words, *disciple* or *proselyte all nations, baptizing them*, will not help the cause of infant-baptism; for one cannot be a proselyte to any religion, unless he is taught it, and embraces and professes it; though had our Lord used a word which conveyed such an idea, the evangelist *Matthew* was not at a loss for a proper word or phrase to express it by; and doubtless would have made use of another clear and express, as he does in Matthew 23:15.—

2. The suppositions this writer makes, that if, instead of *baptizing them*, it had been said *circumcising them*, the apostles without any farther warrant would have naturally and justly thought, that upon proselytizing the Gentile parent, and circumcising him, his infants also were to be circumcised: or if the twelve patriarchs of old had had a divine command given them, to go into *Egypt, Arabia, etc. and teach them the God of Abraham, circumcising them*, they would have understood it as authorizing them to perform this ceremony, not upon the parent only, but also upon the infants of such as believed on the God of *Abraham*. As these suppositions are without foundation, so I greatly question whether they would have been so understood, without some instructions and explanations; and besides the cases put are not parallel to this before us, since the circumcision of infants was enjoined and practiced before such a supposed commission and command; whereas the baptism of infants was neither commanded nor practiced before this commission of Christ; and therefore could not lead them to any such thought as this, whatever the other might do.—

3. The characters and circumstances of the apostles, to whom the commission was given, will not at all conclude that they apprehended infants to be actually included; some in which they are represented being entirely false, and others nothing to the purpose: Jews they were indeed, but men that knew that the covenant of circumcision was not still in force, but abolished: men, who could never have observed that the infants of believers with their parents had always been admitted into covenant, and passed under the same initiating rite: men, who could not know, that the Gentiles were to be taken into a joint participation of all the privileges of the Jewish church; but must know that both believing Jews and Gentiles were to constitute a new church, state, and to partake of new privileges and ordinances, which the Jewish church knew nothing of:—men, who were utter strangers to the baptism of Gentile proselytes, to the Jewish religion, and of their infants; and to any baptism, but the ceremonial ablutions, before the times of *John* the Baptist:—men, who were not tenacious of their ancient rites after the Spirit was poured down upon them at Pentecost, but knew they were now abolished, and at an end:—men, though they had seen little children brought to Christ to have his hands laid on them, yet had never seen an infant baptized in their days:—men, who though they knew that infants were sinners, and under a sentence of condemnation, and needed remission of sin and justification, and that baptism was a means of leading the faith of adult persons to Christ for them; yet knew that it was not by baptism, but by the blood of Christ, that these things are obtained:—men, that knew that Christ came to set up a new church-state; not national as before, but congregational; not consisting of carnal men, and of infants without understanding; but of spiritual and rational men, believers in Christ; and therefore could not be led to conclude that infants were comprehended in the commission: nor is Christ's silence with respect to infants to be construed into a strong and most manifest presumption in their favor, which would be presumption indeed; or his not excepting them, a permission or order to admit them: persons capable of making such constructions, are capable of doing and saying any thing. I hasten to The *fourth* argument, drawn from the evident and clear consequences of other passages of scripture;^[89] as,

1. From Romans 11:17 and *if some of the branches be broken off*, etc. here let it be noted, that the *olive tree* is not the Abrahamic covenant or church, into which the Gentiles were grafted; for they never were grafted into the Jewish church, that, with all its peculiar ordinances, being abolished by Christ; signified by the shaking of the heaven and the earth, and the removing of things shaken (Heb. 12:26, 27) but the gospel church-state, out of which the unbelieving Jews were left, and into

which the believing Gentiles were engrafted, but not in the stead of the unbelieving Jews: and by the *root and fatness* of the olive-tree, are meant, not the religious privileges and grants belonging to the Jewish covenant or church, which the Gentiles had nothing to do with, and are abolished; but the privileges and ordinances of the gospel-church, which they with the believing Jews jointly partook of, being incorporated together in the same church-state; and which, as it is the meaning of Romans 11:17 so of Ephesians 3:6 in all which there is not the least syllable of baptism; and much less of infant, baptism; or of the faith of a parent grafting his children with himself, into the church or covenant-relation to God, which is a mere chimera, that has no foundation either in reason or scripture.

2. From Mark 10:14. *Suffer little children to come unto me*, etc. and John 3:5. *Except any one is born of water*, etc. from these two passages put together, it is said, the right of infants to baptism may be clearly inferred; for in one they are declared actually to have a place in God's kingdom or church, and yet into it, the other as expressly says, none can be admitted without being baptized. But supposing the former of these texts is to be understood of infants, not in a metaphorical sense, or of such as are compared to infants for humility, etc. which sense some versions lead unto, and in which way some Paedobaptists interpret the words, particularly *Calvin*, but literally; then by *the kingdom of God*, is not meant the visible church on earth, or a gospel church-state, which is not national, but congregational; consisting of persons gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and that make a public profession of the name of Christ, which infants are incapable of, and so are not taken into it: betides, this sense would prove too much, and what this writer would not choose to give into, *viz.* that infants, having a place in this kingdom or church, must have a right to all the privileges of it; to the Lord's supper, as well as to baptism; and ought to be treated in all respects as other members of it. Wherefore it should be interpreted of the kingdom of glory, into which we doubt not that such as these in the text are admitted; and then the strength of our Lord's argument lies here; that since he came to save such infants as these, as well as adult persons, and bring them to heaven, they should not be hindered from being brought to him to be touched by him, and healed of their bodily diseases: and so the other text is to be understood of *the kingdom of God*, or heaven, in the same sense; but not of water-baptism as necessary to it, or that without which there is no entrance into it; which mistaken, shocking and stupid sense of them, led *Austin*, and the *African* churches, into a confirmed belief and practice of infant-baptism; and this sense being imbibed, will justify him in all his monstrous, absurd and impious tenets, as this writer calls them, about the ceremony of baptismal water, and the absolute necessity of it unto salvation: whereas the plain meaning of the words is, that *except a man be born again* of the grace of the Spirit of God, comparable to water, *he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, or be a partaker of the heavenly glory; or without the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, which in Titus 3:5 is called *the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost*, there can be no meetness for, no reception into, the kingdom of heaven; and therefore makes nothing for the baptizing of infants.

3. A distinction between the children of believers and of unbelievers, is attempted from 1 Corinthians 7:14 as if the one were in a visible covenant-relation to God, and the other not; whereas the text speaks not of two sorts of children, but of one and the same, under supposed different circumstances; and is to be understood not of any federal, but matrimonial holiness, as I have shewn elsewhere,¹⁹⁰ to which I refer the reader. As for the *Queries* with which the argument is concluded, they are nothing to the purpose, unless it could be made out, that it is the will of God that infants should be baptized, and that the baptism of them would give them the remission of sins,

and justify their persons; neither of which are true: and of the same kind is the *harangue* in the *introduction* to this treatise: and after all a poor, slender provision is made for the salvation of infants, according to this author's own scheme, which only concerns *the infants of believers*, and leaves all others to the uncovenanted mercies of God, as he calls them; seeing the former are but a very small part of the thousands of infants that every day languish under grievous distempers, are tortured, convulsed, and in piteous agonies give up the ghost. Nor have I any thing to do with what this writer lays, concerning the moral purposes and use of infant-baptism in religion; since the thing itself is without any foundation in the word of God: upon the whole, the baptism of infants is so far from being a *reasonable service*, that it is a *most unreasonable one*; since there is neither precept nor precedent for it in the sacred writings; and it is neither to be proved by *scripture* nor *tradition*.

An

ANSWER TO A WELSH CLERGYMAN'S TWENTY ARGUMENTS

In Favor of Infant-Baptism

*With Some STRICTURES on what the said AUTHOR has
advanced concerning the Mode of BAPTISM.*

A BOOK some time ago being published in the *Welch* language, entitled,

"A Guide to a saving Knowledge of the Principles and Duties of Religion, *viz.* Questions and Scriptural Answers, relating to the Doctrine contained in the Church Catechism," etc.

Some extracts out of it respecting the ordinance of baptism, its subject, and mode, being communicated to me, with a request from our friends in *Wales* to make some *Reply* unto, and also to draw up some *Reasons* for dissenting from the church of *England*, both which I have undertook, and shall attempt in the following manner.

I shall take but little notice of what this author says, part 5, page 40 concerning sponsors in baptism, but refer the reader to what is said of them in the *Reasons* for dissenting, hereunto annexed. This writer himself owns, that the practice of having sureties is not particularly mentioned in scripture; only he would have it, that it has in general obtained in the churches from the primitive times, and was enacted by the *powers which God has appointed*, and whole *ordinances are to be submitted to*, when they are not contrary to those of God;^u and must be allowed to be of great service, if the sureties fulfilled their engagements. The answer to all which is, that since it is not mentioned in scripture, it deserves no regard; at least, this can never recommend it to such, who make the Bible the rule of their faith and practice; and as to its obtaining in primitive times, it is indeed generally ascribed to Pope *Hyginus*, as an invention of his; but the genuineness of the epistles attributed to him and others, is called in question by learned men, and are condemned by them as spurious; but were they genuine, neither his office nor his age would have much weight and authority with us, who are not to be determined by the decrees of popes and councils; the *powers* spoken of in the scriptures referred to, were Heathen magistrates, who surely had no authority to enact any thing relating to gospel-worship and ordinances; nor can it be reasonably thought they should; and submission and obedience to them, are required in things of a civil nature, not ecclesiastical, as the scope of the passages, and their context manifestly shew; nor has God given power and authority to any let of men whatever, to enact laws and ordinances of religious worship; nor are we bound to submit to all ordinances of men in religious matters, that are not contrary to the appointments of God, that is, that are not expressly forbidden in his word; for by this

means, all manner of superstition and will worship may be introduced. *Oil* and *spittle* in baptism are no where forbidden, nor is the baptizing of *bells*; yet there ordinances of men are not to be submitted to, and a multitude of others of the like kind: we are not only to take care to do what God has commanded, but to reject what he has not commanded; remembering the care of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offered *strange fire* to the Lord, which he commanded not. And whereas it is suggested, that this practice would be very serviceable were the engagements of sureties *fulfilled*, it is not practicable they should; it is impossible to do what they engage to do, even for themselves, and much less for others, as is observed in the *Reasons*, before referred to.

But passing these things, I shall chiefly attend to the *twenty* arguments, which this writer has advanced in favor of infant-baptism, pages 41-45.

The *first* argument runs thus: "Baptism, which is a seal of the covenant of grace, should not be forbid to the children of believers, seeing they are under condemnation through the covenant of works; and if they are left without an interest in the covenant of grace, they then would be, to their parents great distress, under a dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation, without any sign or promise of the mercy of God, or of an interest in Christ; being by *nature children of wrath as others*, and consequently *without any hope* of salvation, if they die in their infancy."

In which there are some things true, and others false, and nothing that can be improved into an argument in favor of infant-baptism.

1. It is true that the infants of believers, as well as others, are by nature the children of wrath, and under condemnation through the covenant of works; so all mankind are as considered in *Adam*, and in consequence of his sin and fall (Rom. 5:12, 18). But,

2. It is not baptism that can save them from wrath and condemnation; a person may be baptized in water, and yet not saved from wrath to come, and still lie under the sentence of condemnation, *being* notwithstanding that, *in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity*, as the case of *Simon Magus* shews. Though this writer seems to be of opinion, that baptism is a saving ordinance, and that a person cannot be fared without it; and indeed he expressly says, p. 27. that "in general it is necessary to salvation;" as if salvation was by it, (which is a popish notion) and there was none without it; but the instance of the penitent thief, is a proof to the contrary: the text does not say, *he that is baptized shall be saved*, but *he that BELIEVETH and is baptized*; nor is it any where suggested, that a person dying without baptism shall be damned. It is CHRIST only, and not baptism, that fares from *wrath and condemnation*.

3. Being unbaptized, does not leave without an interest in the covenant of grace, or exclude from the hope of salvation, or the mercy of God, or an interest in Christ; persons may have an interest in all these, and yet not be baptized. See the strange contradictions men run into when destitute of truth; one while the covenant of grace is said to be made with believers, and their seed, as in the next argument, and so their infants being in it, have a right to baptism; at another time it is baptism that puts them into the covenant; and if they are not baptized they are left without interest in it, and, to the great grief of their parents, under a dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation. But,

4. as the salvation of an infant dying in its infancy is one of *the secret things which belong unto the Lord*, a judicious Christian parent will leave it with him; and find more relief from his distress, by hoping in the grace and mercy of God through Christ, and in the virtue and efficacy of his blood and righteousness, which may be applied unto it without baptism, than he can in baptism; which he may observe, may be administered to a person, and yet be damned. For,

5. baptism is no seal of the covenant of grace, nor does it give any person an interest in it, or seal it to them; a person may be baptized, and yet have no interest in the covenant, as *Simon Magus* and others, and to whom it was never sealed; and on the other hand, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and it may be sealed to him, and he assured of his interest in it, and not yet be baptized: the blood of Christ is the seal of the covenant, and the Spirit of Christ is the sealer of the saint's interest in it. And, after all, if baptism has such virtue in it, as to give an interest in the covenant of grace, to be a sign and promise of mercy, and of our interest in Christ, and furnish out hope of salvation, and secure from wrath and condemnation, why should not compassion be shewn to the children of unbelievers, who are in the same state and condition by nature? for, I observe all along, that in this and the following arguments, baptism is wholly restrained to the children of believers; upon the whole, the argument from the state of infants to their baptism is impertinent and fruitless; since there is no such efficacy in baptism, to deliver them from it.^[21]

The second argument is: "The children of believers should be admitted to baptism, since as the covenant of works, and the real of it belonged to *Adam* and his children, so the covenant of grace, and the real thereof belongs, through Christ, to believers and their children:" to which it may be replied,

1. That it is indeed true, that the covenant of works belonged to *Adam* and his posterity, he being a federal head unto them; but then it does not appear, that that covenant had any seal belonging to it, since it needed none, nor was it proper it should have any, seeing it was not to continue. And if the tree of life is intended, As I suppose it is, whatever that might be a sign of, it was no real of any thing, nor did it belong to *Adam's* children, who were never suffered to partake of it.

2. There is a great disparity between *Adam* and believers, and the relation they stand in to their respective offspring: *Adam* stood as a common head and representative to all his posterity; not so believers to theirs: they are no common heads unto them, or representatives of them; wherefore though the covenant of works belonged to *Adam* and his posterity, it does not follow, that the covenant of grace belongs to believers and their children, they not standing in the same relation he did. There never were but two covenant-heads, *Adam* and CHRIST, and between them, and them only, the parallel will run, and in this form; that as the covenant of works belonged to *Adam* and his seed, so the covenant of grace belongs to Christ and his seed.

3. As it does not appear there was any real belonging to the covenant of works, so we have seen already, that baptism is not the real of the covenant of grace; wherefore this argument in favor of infant-baptism is weak and frivolous; the reason this author adds to strengthen the above argument, is very lamely and improperly expressed, and impertinently urged; "for we are not to imagine, that there is more efficacy in the covenant of works, to bring condemnation on the children of the unbelieving, through the fall of *Adam*; than there is virtue in the covenant of grace, through the

mediation of the son of God, the second Adam, to bring salvation to the seed of those that believe" (Rom. 5:15, 18).

For the covenant of works being broken by the fall of *Adam*, brought condemnation, not on the children of the unbelieving only, but of believers also, even on all his posterity, to whom he stood a federal head; and so the covenant of grace, of which Christ the second *Adam* is the mediator, brings salvation, not to the seed of those that believe, many of whom never believe, and to whom salvation is never brought, nor they to that; but to all Christ's spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he stands a federal head; which is the sense of the passages of scripture referred to, and serves no ways to strengthen the cause of infant baptism.

The third argument runs thus: "The seed of believers are to be baptized into the same covenant with themselves; seeing infants, while infants, as ha-aural parts of their parents, are included in the same threatenings, which are denounced against wicked parents, and in the same promises as are made to godly parents, being branches of one root" (Rom. 11:16; Deut. 4:37, 40; 28:1-4; 30:6, 19; Ps. 102:28; Prov. 11:21; 20:7; Jer. 32:38, 39; Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Deut. 28:15, 18, 45, 46; Ps. 21:10; 19:9, 10; Isa. 14:20, 21; Jer.22:28; 36:31). Here let it be observed,

1. that it is pleaded that infants should be baptized into the same covenant with their parents, meaning no doubt the covenant of grace; that is, should by baptism be brought into the covenant as it is expressed in Argument 7th, or else I know not what is meant by being baptized into the same covenant; and yet in the preceding argument it is urged, that the covenant of grace belongs to the infants of believers, that is, they are in it, and therefore are to be baptized: an instance this of the glaring contradiction before observed.

2. Threatenings indeed are made to wicked parents and their children, partly to shew the heinousness of their sins, and to deter them from them; and partly to express God's hatred of sin, and his punitive justice; and also to point out original sin and the corruption of nature in infants, and what they must expect when grown up if they follow the examples of their parents, and commit the same or like sins; but what is all this to infant-baptism; Why,

3. In like manner promises are made to godly parents and their children, and several passages are referred to in proof of it; some of these are of a temporal nature, and are designed to stir up and encourage good men to the discharge of their duty, and have no manner of regard to any spiritual or religious privilege; and such as are of a spiritual nature, which respect conversion, sanctification, etc. when these take place on the seed of believers, then, and not till then, do they appear to have any right to Gospel-ordinances, such as baptism and the Lord's supper; wherefore the argument from promises to such privileges, before the things promised are bestowed, is of no force.

The fourth argument is much of the same kind with the foregoing, namely, "There are many examples recorded in scripture wherein the infants of ungodly men are involved with their parents in heavy judgments; therefore as the judgment and curse which belong to the wicked, belong also to their seed, so the privileges of the fainted belong also to their offspring, unless they reject the God of their fathers. The justice and wrath of God, is not more extensive to destroy the offspring of the wicked, than his grace and mercy is to fare those of the faithful; therefore baptism, the sign of the

promises of God's mercy, is not to be denied to such infants" (Num. 14:33; 2 Kings 5:27; Josh. 7:24, 25; Jer. 22:28). The answer given to the former may suffice for this: to which may be added,

1. That the inflicting judgments on the children of some wicked men, is an instance of the sovereign justice of God; and his bellowing privileges on the children of some good men, is an instance of his sovereign grace, who punishes whom he will, and has mercy on whom he will: for,
2. God does not always proceed in this method; he sometimes bellows the blessings of his grace on the children of the wicked, and inflicts deserved punishment on the children of good men; the seed of the wicked do not always inherit their curses, nor the seed of the godly their blessings; wherefore such dispensations of God can be no rule of conduct to us; and particularly with respect to baptism. And,
3. Whatsoever privileges belong to the seed of believers, we are very desirous they should enjoy; nor would we deprive them of any; let it be shewn that baptism belongs to them as ruth (compassion, ed.), and we will by no means deny it to them. But,
4. Whereas it is said that the privileges of fairs belong to their offspring, adding this exceptive clause, "unless they reject the God of their fathers;" it seems most proper, prudent and advisable, particularly in the care before us, to wait and see whether they will receive or reject, follow or depart from the God of their fathers.

The fifth argument is formed thus: "The children of believers are to be baptized now, as those of the Jews were circumcised formerly; for circumcision was then the real of the covenant, as baptism is now, which Christ has appointed in lieu thereof. *Abraham* and his son *Ishmael*, and all that were born in his house, were circumcised the same day; and God commanded all *Israel* to bring their children into the covenant with them, to give them the real of it, and circumcise them" (Gen. 17; Deut. 29:10-12; Col. 2:11, 12). To all which I reply,

1. that circumcision was no real of the covenant of grace; if it was, the covenant of grace from *Adam* to *Abraham* was without a real. It is called *a sign* in Genesis 17: the passage referred to, but not a real: it is indeed in Romans 4:11 said to be *a seal of the righteousness of the faith*, not to infants, not to Abraham's natural seed, only to himself; assuring him, that he should be the father of many nations, in a spiritual sense, and that the righteousness of faith he had, should come upon the Gentiles: wherefore this mark or sign continued until the gospel, in which *the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith*, was preached unto the Gentiles, and received by them; to which may be added, that there were many living who were interested in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was appointed, and yet it was not ordered to them; as it would have been, had it been a seal of that covenant; and on the other hand, it was enjoined such who had no interest in the covenant of grace, and to whom it could not be a real of it, as *Ishmael*, *Esau*, and others. And,
2. it has been shewn already, that baptism is no seal of the said covenant. Nor,
3. is it appointed by Christ in lieu of circumcision, nor does it succeed it; there is no agreement between them in their subjects, use, and manner of administration; and what most clearly shews that baptism did not come in the room of circumcision, is, that it was in force and use before

circumcision was abolished; which was not till the death of Christ; whereas, years before that, multitudes were baptized, and our Lord himself; and there-tore it being in force before the other was out of date, cannot with any propriety be said to succeed it. This writer, p. 28. has advanced several things to prove that baptism came in the room of circumcision.

1st, He argues from the Lord's supper being instead of the paschal lamb, that therefore baptism must be in the room of circumcision, which is ceased; or else there must be a deficiency. But it does not appear that the Lord's supper is in the room of the passover; it followed that indeed, in the institution and celebration of it by Christ, but it was not instituted by him to answer the like purposes as the passover; nor are the same persons admitted to the one as the other; and besides, was the Lord's supper in the room of the passover, it does not follow from thence that baptism *must* be in the room of circumcision: but then it is said there will be a deficiency; a deficiency of what? all those ceremonial rites, the passover and circumcision, with many others, pointed at thrift, and have had their fulfillment in him; he is come, and is the body and substance of them; and therefore there can be no deficiency, since he is in the room of them, and is the fulfilling end of them: nor can any other but he, with any propriety, be said to come in the room of them. And there can be no deficiency of grace, since he is full of it, nor of ordinances, for he has appointed as many as he thought fit.

2dly, This author urges, that it is proper there should be *two* sacraments under the gospel, as there were *two* under the law, one for adult persons, the other for their children, as were the paschal lamb and circumcision. But if every thing that was typical of Christ, as those two were, were sacraments, it might as well be said there were two and twenty sacraments under the law, as two; and, according to this way of reasoning, there should be as many under the gospel. Moreover, of these two, one was not for adult persons only, and the other for their children; for they were, each of them, both for adult persons and children too; they that partook of the one had a right to the other; all that were circumcised might eat of the passover, and none but they; and if this is a rule and direction to us now, if infants have a right to baptism, they ought to be admitted to the Lord's supper.

3dly, Baptism, he says, is appointed for a like end as circumcision; namely, for the admission of persons into the church, which is not true; circumcision was appointed for another end, and not for that: the Jewish church was national, and as loon as an infant was born, it was a member of it, even before circumcision; and therefore it could not be admitted by it; nor is baptism for any such end, nor are persons admitted into a visible church of Christ by it; they may be baptized, and yet not members of a church: what church was the eunuch admitted into, or did he become a member of, by his baptism?

4thly, This writer affirms, that "the holy Spirit calls baptism circumcision, that is, *the circumcision made without hands*, having the same spiritual design; and is termed the *Christian* circumcision, or that of Christ; it answering to circumcision, and being ordained by Christ in the room of it." To say that baptism is ordained by Christ in the room of circumcision, is begging the question, nor is there any thing in it that answers to circumcision, nor is it called the circumcision of Christ, in Colossians 2:11, which I suppose is the place referred to; for not that, but internal circumcision, *the circumcision of the heart* is meant, which Christ by his Spirit is the author of, and therefore called his; and the same is the circumcision *made without hands*, in opposition to circumcision in *the flesh*; it being by the powerful and efficacious grace of God, without the assistance of men; nor can

baptism with any shew of reason, or appearance of truth, be so called, since that is made with the hands of men; and therefore can never be the circumcision there meant.

5thly, He infers that baptism is appointed in the room of circumcision, from their signifying like things, as Original corruption, regeneration, or the circumcision of the heart (Deut. 30:6; Titus 3:5), being seals of the covenant of grace (Ezek. 16:21; Matthew 16:26), initiating ordinances, and alike laying men under an obligation to put off the body of sin, and walk in newness of life (Rom. 4:11) and also being marks of distinction between church-members and others (Rom. 6:4, 6). But baptism and circumcision do not signify the like things; baptism signifies the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, which circumcision did not; nor does baptism signify original corruption, which it takes not away; nor regeneration, which it does not give, but pre-requires it; nor is baptism meant in the passage referred to, Titus 3:5, nor are either of them seals of the covenant of grace, as has been shewn already; nor initiating ordinances, or what enter persons into a church-state: Jewish infants were church-members, before they were circumcised; and persons may be baptized, and yet not be members of churches; and whatever obligations the one and the other may lay men under to live in newness of life, this can be no proof of the one coming in the room of the other. Circumcision was indeed a mark of distinction between the natural seed of *Abraham* and others; and baptism is a distinguishing badge, to be wore by those that believe in Christ, and put him on, and are his spiritual seed; but neither of them distinguish church-members from others; the passages referred to are impertinent. But I proceed to consider—

The sixth argument in favor of infant-baptism, taken from "the sameness of the covenant of grace made with Jews and Gentiles, of which circumcision was the seal; from the seal and dispensation of which, the Jews and their children are cut off, and the Gentiles and their seed are engrafted in" (Gal. 3:14; Acts 15:11; Rom. 4:11; 11:15, 17). In answer to which, let it be observed,

1. That the covenant of grace is indeed the same in one age, and under one dispensation, as another; or as made with one sort of people as another, whether Jews or Gentiles; the same blessings of it that came upon Abraham, come upon all believers, Jews or Gentiles; and the one are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the other; but then,
2. The covenant of grace was not made with Abraham and his natural seed, or with all the Jews as such; nor is it made with Gentiles and their natural seed as such; but with Christ and his spiritual seed, and with them only, be they of what nation., or live they in what age they will.
3. Circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace, nor does Romans 4:11. prove it, as has been shewn already; and therefore nothing can be inferred from hence with respect to baptism.
4. The root or stock from whence the unbelieving Jews were cut off, and into which the believing Gentiles are engrafted, is not the covenant of grace, from which those who are interested in it can never be cut off; but the gospel church-state, from which the unbelieving Jews were rejected and left out, and the believing Gentiles took in, who partook of all the privileges of it (Rom. 11:17-25): though no mention is made throughout the whole of the passage of the children of either; only of some being broken off through unbelief, and others standing by faith; and therefore can be of no service in the cause of infant-baptism.

The seventh argument is taken from "the extent of the covenant of grace being the same under the New Testament, as before the coming of Christ, who came not to curtail the covenant, and render worse the condition of infants; if they were in the covenant before, they are so now; no spiritual privilege given to children or others can be made void" (Rom. 11:29; Jer. 30:20). To which may be replied,

1. That the extent of the covenant, as to the constitution of it, and persons interested in it, is always the same, having neither more nor fewer; but with respect to the application of it, it extends to more persons at one time than at another; and is more extensive under the gospel-dispensation than before; it being applied to Gentiles as well as Jews: and with respect to the blessings and privileges of it, they are always the same, are never curtailed or made void, or taken away from those to whom they belong; which are all Christ's spiritual seed, and none else, be they Jews or Gentiles. But,

2. It should be proved that the infant-seed of believers, or their natural seed as such, were ever in the covenant of grace; or that any spiritual privileges were given to them as such; or it is impertinent to talk of curtailing the covenant, or taking away the privileges of the seed of believers.

3. If even their covenant-interest could be proved, which it cannot, that gives no right to any ordinance, or to a positive institution, without a divine direction; there were many who were interested in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was appointed, who yet had nothing to do with that ordinance.

4. baptism not being allowed to infants, does not make their condition worse than it was under the former dispensation; for as then circumcision could not save them, so neither would baptism, were it administered to them; nor was circumcision really a privilege, but the reverse; and therefore the abrogation of it, without substituting any thing in its room, does not make the condition of infants the worse; and certain it is, that the condition of the infants of believing Gentiles, even though baptism is denied them, is much better than that of the infants of Gentiles before the coming of Christ; yea, even of the infants of Jews themselves; since they are born of Christian parents, and so have a Christian education, and the opportunity and advantage of hearing the gospel preached, as they grow up, with greater clearness, and in every place^[a] where they are. The text in Romans 11:29 regards not external privileges, but internal grace; that in Jeremiah 30:20 respects not infants, but the posterity of the Jews; adult persons in the latter day.

The eighth argument is taken from the everlastingness of the covenant of grace, and runs thus; "The example of *Abraham* and the Israelites in circumcising their children according to the command of God, should oblige us to baptize our children; because circumcision was then a real of the everlasting covenant, a covenant that was to last for ever, and not cease as the legal ceremonies; which God hath confirmed with an oath; and therefore can have suffered no alteration for the worse in any thing with respect to infants" (Gen. 7:17; Heb. 6:13, 18; Micah 7:18, 20; Gal. 3:8.) The answer to which is,

1. That the covenant of grace is everlasting, will never cease, nor admit of any alteration, is certain; but the covenant of circumcision, which is called an everlasting covenant, Genesis 17:7, was only to continue during the Mosaic dispensation, or unto the times of the Messiah; and is so called for

the same reason, and just in the same sense as the covenant of the priesthood with *Phinehas* is called, *the covenant of an everlasting Priesthood* (Num. 25:13). Though the covenant of grace is everlasting, and whatever is in that covenant, or ever was, will never be altered; yet it should be proved there is any thing in it with respect to infants, and particularly which lays any foundation for, or gives them any claim and right to baptism.

2. Though circumcision was a sign and token of the covenant made with Abraham, and his natural seed, it never was any real of the covenant of grace. And,

3. The example of *Abraham* and others, in circumcising their children according to the command of God, lays no obligation upon us to baptize ours, unless we had a command for their baptism, as they had for their circumcision.

The ninth argument is formed thus: "baptism is to be administered to the seed of believers, because it is certainly very dangerous and blameworthy, to neglect and despise a valuable privilege appointed by God from the beginning, to the offspring of his people."

But it must be denied, and should be proved, that baptism is a privilege appointed by God from the beginning, to the offspring of his people; let it be shewn, if it can, when and where it was appointed by him. This argument is illustrated and enforced by various observations; as that "that soul was to be cut off that neglected circumcision; and no just excuse can be given for neglecting infant-baptism, which is ordained to be the seal of the covenant instead of circumcision:" but we have seen already, that baptism does not come in the room of

circumcision, nor is it a real of the covenant of grace; and there is good reason to be given for the neglect of infant-baptism, because it never was ordained and appointed of God. Moreover it is said, "that the seed of believers were formerly, under the Old Testament, in the covenant together with their parents; and no one is able to shew that they have been cast out under the New, or that their condition is worse, and their spiritual privileges less, under the gospel, than under the law:" but that believers with their natural seed as such, were together in the covenant of grace under the Old Testament, mould not be barely affirmed, but proved, before we are put upon to shew that they are cast out under the New; though this writer himself, before in the *sixth* argument, talks of the Jews and their children being cut off from the real and dispensation of the covenant; which can never be true of the covenant of grace; nor do we think that the condition of infants is worse, or their privileges less now, than they were before, though baptism is denied them, as has been observed already. It is further urged, that "it is not to be imagined, without presumption, that Christ ever intended to "cut them off from an ordinance, which God had given them a right unto;" nor do we imagine any such thing; nor can it be proved that God ever gave the ordinance of baptism to them. As for what this writer further observes, that had Christ took away circumcision, without ordaining baptism in the room of it, for the children of believers; the Jews would have cried out against it as an excommunication of their children; and would have been a greater objection against him than any other; and would now be a hindrance of their conversion; and who, if they were converted, would have baptism or circumcision to be a seal of the covenant with them and their children, it deserves no answer; since the clamors, outcries, and objections of the Jews, and their practice on their legal principles, would be no rule of direction to us, were they made and gave into, since they would be without reason and truth; for though Christ came not to destroy the moral law, but to

fulfill it (Matthew 5:17); yet he came to put an end to the ceremonial law, of which circumcision is a part, and did put an end to it¹⁴: the text in Jeremiah 30:20 respects the restoration of the Jews in the latter day, but not their old ecclesiastical polity, which shall not be established again, but their civil liberties and privileges.

The tenth argument stands thus: "Children are to be baptized under the covenant of grace, because all the covenants which God ever made with men were made not only with them, but also with their children;" and instances are given in *Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob, Levi, Phinehas, and David*. The covenant of works was indeed made with Adam and his seed, in which covenant he was a federal head to his offspring; but the covenant of grace was not made with him and his seed, he was no federal head in that; nor is that made with all mankind, as it must, if it had been made with Adam and his seed: this is an instance against the argument, and shews that *all* the covenants that ever God made with men, were not made with them and their seed; for certainly the covenant of grace was made with Adam, and made known to him (Gen. 17:19-21), and yet not with his seed with him; nor can any instance be given of the covenant of grace being made with any man, and his natural seed. There was a covenant made with *Noah* and his posterity, securing them from a future deluge, but not a covenant of grace securing them from everlasting destruction; for then it must have been made with all mankind, since all are the posterity of *Noah*; and where then is the distinction of the seed of believers and of unbelievers? Besides *Ham*, one of *Noah's* immediate offspring, was not interested in the covenant of grace. As for the covenant made with Abraham, his son *Ishmael* was excluded from it"; and of *Isaac's* two sons one of them was rejected (Rom. 9:10-13) and all were not *Israel* that were of *Israel*, or of *Jacob*, verse 6. The covenant of the priesthood was indeed made with *Levi* and *Phinehas*, and their posterity; and though it is called an *everlasting* one, it is now made void; nor is there any other in its room with the ministers of the word and their posterity; and yet no outcry is made of the children of gospel-ministers being in a worse condition, and their privileges less than those of the priests and Levites: and as for *David*, the sad estate of his family, and the wicked behavior of most of his children, shew, that the covenant of grace was not made with him and his natural offspring; and whatever covenants those were that were made with these persons, they furnish out no argument proving the covenant of grace to be made with believers and their carnal seed, and still less any argument in favor of infant-baptism.¹⁵

The eleventh argument is: "The seed of believers ought to be baptized under the covenant of grace, otherwise they would be reckoned pagans, and the offspring of infidels and idolaters, to whom there is neither a promise nor any sign of hope; whereas the scripture makes a difference, calling them holy on account of their relation to the holy covenant, when either their father or mother believe (1 Cor. 7:14), *disciples* (Acts 15:10); reckoning them among them that *believe*, because of their relation to the household of faith (Matthew 18:6) styling them *the seed of the blessed*, and their offspring with them (Isa. 115:23); accounting them *for a generation to the Lord* (Ps. 22:30) as *David* says; who, verse 10 observes, that God was his God from his mother's belly; and also calling them the *children of God* (Ezek. 16:20, 21); therefore they ought to be dedicated to him by that ordinance which he has appointed for that purpose." To all which may be replied,

1. That the children of believers are by nature *children of wrath even as others*; and are no better than others; and were they baptized, they would not be at all the better Christians for it. Though,

2. It will be allowed that there is a difference between the offspring of believers, and those of infidels, pagans and idolaters; and the former have abundantly the advantage of the latter, as they have a Christian education; and consequently as they are brought up under the means of grace, there is hope of them; and it may be expected that the promise of God to such who use the means will be accomplished. But,

3. the characters mentioned either do not belong to children, or not for the reason given; and those that do, do not furnish out an argument for their baptism. Children are said to be *holy*, born in lawful wedlock (1 Cor. 7:14); not on account of their relation to the holy covenant, but on account of the holiness of a believing parent, which surely cannot be a federal holiness, but a matrimonial one; the marriage of a believer with an unbeliever being valid, or otherwise their children must be *unclean* or illegitimate, and not holy or legitimate. The disciples in Acts 15:10 are not young *children*, but adult persons, the converted Gentiles, on whom the false teachers would have put the yoke of the ceremonial law, and particularly circumcision. The little ones reckoned among those that believe in Christ, Matthew 18:6 were not infants in age, but the apostles of our Lord, who were little in their own account, and in the account of others, whom to offend was criminal, highly provoking to Christ, and of dangerous consequence. The text, Isaiah 65:23, speaks of the spiritual seed of the church, and not the carnal seed of believers,⁶¹ and therefore are the same who are *accounted to the Lord for a generation*; even a spiritual seed that shall serve him, Psalm 22:30 and the words in verse 10 are the words, not of *David*, but of Christ. And the sons and daughters born to God, and whom he calls his children, Ezekiel 16:20, 21 were so, not by grace or by covenant, but by creation. And from the whole there is not the least reason why the children of believers should be dedicated to God by baptism, which is an ordinance that never was appointed by him for any such purpose.

The twelfth argument is: "The seed of believers are to be baptized, because church-relation belongs to them, as citizenship belongs to the children of freemen; and it is by baptism that they are first admitted into the visible church, and there is neither covenant nor promise of salvation out of the church, for the church of Christ is his kingdom on earth, and Christ says this belongs to the children" (Mark 10:13, 14). In answer to which.

1. There is a manifest contradiction in the argument. Church-relation belongs to infants, that is, they are related to the church, and members of it, and therefore should be baptized; and yet they are first admitted into the church by baptism; what a contradiction this! in it, and out of it, related, and not related to it, at one and the time.

2. Church-membership does not pass from father to son, nor is it by birth, as citizenship, or the freedom of cities; the one is a civil, the other an ecclesiastical affair; the one is of nature, the other of grace; natural birth gives a right to the one, but the spiritual birth or regeneration only entitles to the other.

3. Church-membership gives no right to baptism, but rather baptism to church-membership, or however is a qualification requisite to it; persons ought to be baptized before they are church-members; and if they are church members, and not regenerate persons and believers in Christ, for such may be in a church, they have no right to baptism.

4. To talk of there being no covenant or promise of salvation out of the church, smells rank of popery. The covenant and promise of salvation are not made with and to persons as members of churches, or as in a visible church-state, but with and to the elect of God in Christ, and with persons only considered in him; who have an interest in the covenant and promise of salvation, though they may not be in a visible church-state; and doubtless many are saved who never were members of a visible church.

5. The kingdom of God, in Mark 10:13, 14 be it the church of Christ on earth, or eternal glory in heaven, only belongs to such persons who are like to little children for their meekness and humility, and freedom from malice and rancor, as verse 15 shows.

6. Could infants in age, or the seed of believers as such be here meant, and the kingdom of God be understood of Christ's visible church, and they as belonging to it, it would prove more than this writer chooses; namely, that they have a right to all church-privileges, and particularly and especially to the Lord's supper.

The thirteenth argument is: "Children are the lambs of Christ's flock and sheep; and the lambs ought not to be kept out of Christ's fold, nor hindered from the washing that is in his blood; he particularly promises to be their shepherd; and his Spirit has declared, that little children should be brought to him under the gospel, in the arms, and on the shoulders of their parents" (Isa. 40:11; 49:22; Song of Sol. 6:6; John 21:15). On which may be observed,

1. That there is indeed mention made of the lambs of Christ in Isaiah 40:11 and John 21:15 which he gathers in his arms, and ordered *Peter* to feed; yet not infants in age are intended in either place, but adult persons, weak believers, who, in comparison of others, because of their small degree of knowledge and strength, are called *lambs*; and are to be gently and tenderly dealt with; and such as these are not kept out of Christ's fold, but are received into it, though weak in the faith, but *not to doubtful disputations*; and are fed with knowledge and understanding, which infants in age are not capable of.

2. The infant-seed of believers are no where called the sheep of Christ, nor has he promised to be the shepherd of them; let the passages be directed to, if it can be, where this is said.

3. Those who are truly the lambs and sheep of Christ, are not hindered from the washing of his blood; though that is not to be done, nor is it done by baptism; persons may be washed with water, as *Simon Magus*, and yet not washed in the blood of Christ: Song of Solomon 6:6 does not intend washing in either sense; but either the regenerating grace of the spirit, or the purity of conversation, and respects not infants at all.

4. Nor is it declared by the Spirit of God, that parents should bring their children to Christ in their arms, and on their shoulders; the passage in Isaiah 49:22 brought in support of it, speaks of the spiritual seed of the church, and not of the carnal seed of believers; and of their being brought, not in the arms and on the shoulders of their natural parents, but of the Gentiles; and not to Christ, but to the church, through the ministry of the word in the latter day, in which the Gentiles would be very assisting.

The fourteenth argument runs thus: "The seed of the faithful ought to be baptized, because they were partakers of all the former baptisms mentioned in scripture, as the children of *Noah* in the ark (1 Pet. 3:20); the Israelites at the Red Sea, and in the cloud (1 Cor. 10:1, 2; Ex.12:37); Several children were baptized with the baptism of the Spirit, for several were filled with the holy Ghost from their mother's womb; all the children of *Bethlehem* under two years old, with the baptism of martyrdom (Matthew 2:1); and many children with *John's* baptism, since he baptized the whole country." But,

1. It unhappily falls out, for the cause of infant-baptism, that *Noah's* children in the ark were all adult and married persons (Gen. 7:7).

2. That there were children among the Israelites when they were *baptized in the cloud, and in the sea*, is not denied; but then it should be observed, that *they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink*; and therefore, if this does not give a sufficient claim to infants to partake of the Lord's supper, neither will the other prove their right to baptism: moreover, if any arguments can be formed from this and the former instance, for the administration of baptism under the New Testament, they will clearly shew, that it ought to be administered by immersion; for, as in the former, when the fountains of the great deep were broke up under them, and the windows of heaven were opened over them, they were as persons immersed in water; so when the waters of the Red Sea stood up on each side, and the cloud was over the Israelites, they were, as it were overwhelmed in water.

3. Though this writer says, that several children were filled with the holy Ghost from their mother's womb, yet we read but of one that was so, *John* the Baptist, a very extraordinary person, and extraordinarily qualified for extraordinary work, an instance not to be mentioned in ordinary cases; besides, it is a rule in logic, *a particulari ad univer-salem non valet consequentia*, "from a particular to an universal, the consequence is not conclusive." Moreover, in what sense *John* was filled with the holy Ghost so early, is not easy to say; and be it what it will, the same cannot be proved of the seed of believers in general; and could it, it would give no right to baptism, without a positive institution; it gave no right *to John* himself.

4. That the infants at *Bethlehem* were murdered, will be granted, but that they suffered martyrdom for Christ, will not easily be proved; since they knew nothing of the matter, and were not conscious on what account their lives were taken away.

5. That many or any children were baptized with *John's* baptism we deny, and call upon this writer to prove it, and even to give us one tingle instance of it; what he suggests is no evidence of it, as that the whole country in general were baptized by him, who could not be all childless; but I hope he does not think, that every individual person in the country of *Judea* was baptized by *John*; it is certain, that there were many even adult persons that were refused by him, and such as were baptized by him, were such as *confessed their sins*, which infants could not do (Matthew 3:5-7) and as to the probability of the displeasure of Jewish parents, suggested if their children had not been baptized by *John*, since they were used, and under a command of God, to bring their children to the covenant and ordinances of God (Gen. 17; Deut. 29:10, 13; Joel 2:16), it deserves no regard, since whatever probability there was of their displeasure, though I see none, there could be no just

ground for it; since in the instances given, they had the command of God for what they did, for this they had none.

The fifteenth argument is: "It is contrary to the apostle's practice, to leave any unbaptized in Christian families; for they baptized whole families when the heads of them believed; as the families of *Lydia*, the Jailor, and *Stephanas*; and it is evident, that the words, family and household, in scripture, mean chiefly children, sons, daughters, and little ones."^[7]

To which I reply, that whatever these words signify in some places of scripture, though in the passages mentioned they do not chiefly intend new-born infants, but grown persons; it should be proved, that there were infants in families and households that were baptized, and that there were baptized together with the head of the family; for it is certain, there are many families and households that have no little children in them; and as for those that are instanced in, it is not probable that there were any in them; and it is manifest, that such as were baptized, were adult persons and believers in Christ. It is not evident in what station of life *Lydia* was, whether married or unmarried, and whether one had young children or not; and if one had, it is not likely they should be with her, when at a distance from her native place, and upon business; it is most probable, that those that were with her, called her household, were her servants, that assisted her in her business; and it is certain, that when the apostles entered her house, those that were there, and who doubtless are the same that were baptized, were called *brethren*, and such as were capable of being *comforted* (Acts 16:15, 40) and the Jailor's household were such as had the word of God spoken to them, and received it with joy, took pleasure in the company and conversation of the apostles, and believed in God together with him, and so were adult persons, believers, and very proper subjects of baptism (Acts 16:32-34). *Stephanas* is by some thought to be the same with the Jailor; but if he was another person, it is plain his household consisted of adult persons, men called by grace, and who were made use of in public work; they were *the first-fruits of Achaia*, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.^[8]

The sixteenth argument is: "None that truly fear God, can seriously and with certainty say, that there were not many infants among the three thousand baptized by the apostles at once; for the Jews were not content with any ordinances without having their children with them. The apostle directs those who were at age to repent, but he commands every one of them to be baptized, and objects nothing against their children; because, as he says, the promise was unto them and their children also; and this is a plain command for infant-baptism to all that will judge impartially." But,

1. A man that carefully reads the account of the baptism of the three thousand, having the fear of God before his eyes, may with the greatest seriousness and strongest assurance affirm, not only that there were not many infants, but that there were not one infant among the three thousand baptized by the apostles; for they were all of them such as *were pricked to the heart, and cried out, Men and brethren what shall we do? they gladly received the word of the gospel, joined to the church, and continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine, in fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayer*; all which cannot be said of infants.

2. What this author suggests, agreeable to what he elsewhere says, that the Jews were not pleased with any ordinance unless they had their children with them, is without foundation; what discontent did they ever shew at a part of their children being left out of the ordinance of circumcision, and no

other appointed for them in lieu of it? And had they been discontented, what argument can be formed from it?

3. The distinction between those that were of age, whom the apostle directed to repent, and the *every one of them* whom he commanded to be baptized, has no ground nor reason for it, yea is quite stupid and senseless; and even, according to this writer himself, is a distinction without any difference, since the *every one* to be baptized are supposed by him to have children, and so to be at age; since he adds, "and objects nothing against their children." And a clear case it is, that the self-same persons that were exhorted to be *baptized*, were exhorted to *repent*, and that as previous to their baptism; and therefore must be adult persons, for infants are not capable of repentance, and of giving evidence of it.

4. Those words, *the promise is unto you and to your children*, are so far from being a plain command for infant-baptism, that there is not a word of baptism in them, and much less of infant-baptism; nor do they regard intents, but the posterity of the Jews, who are often called *children*, though grown up, to whom the promise of the Messiah, and remission of sins by him, and the pouring out of the holy Ghost, was made; and are spoken for the encouragement of adult persons only, to repent and be baptized; and belong only to such as are called by grace, and to all truth, whether Jews or Gentiles.

The seventeenth argument is: "The seed of believers should be baptized, be-cause the privileges and blessings which are signified and sealed in baptism are necessary to their salvation, and there is no salvation without them; namely, an interest in the covenant of grace, the remission of original sin, union with Christ, sanctification of the holy Spirit, and regeneration, without which none can be saved" (John 3:5). The answer to which is,

1. That the things indeed mentioned are necessary to salvation, and there can be none without them; but then baptism is not necessary to the enjoyment of these things, nor to salvation; a person may have an interest in these blessings, and be saved, though not baptized; there are things necessary to baptism, but baptism is not necessary to them; and indeed a person ought to have an interest in these, and appear to have one, before he is baptized. Wherefore,

2. There things are not signified in baptism, and much less sealed by it; other things, such as the sufferings, death, and the resurrection of Christ, are signified in it; there, as regeneration, etc. are prerequisites unto baptism, and are not communicated by it, or sealed up to persons in it, who may be baptized, and yet have no share and lot in this matter, witness the case of *Simon Magus*.

The eighteenth argument is: "The children of the faithful ought to be baptized, because this lays them under strong obligation to shun the works of Satan; and many have received much benefit from hence in their youth. Comfortable symptoms, or signs of a work of grace, have appeared very early in several, though perhaps bad company has afterwards corrupted them. Besides infant-baptism keeps up a general profession of faith and religion, and makes the word and means of grace of more virtue and efficacy, than if men had utterly renounced Christianity, and declared themselves infidels; and further, it says a powerful obligation on their parents and others, to teach them their duty, which is a main end of all the ordinances God has instituted" (Ps. 78:5, 6). But,

1. Is there nothing besides baptism, that can lay persons under strong obligation to shun the works of the Devil? certainly there are many things: if so, then it is not absolutely necessary on this account; besides, though the baptism of adult persons does lay them under obligation to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4), yet the baptism of infants can lay them under no such obligation as infants, and while they are such, because they are not conscious of it, nor can it take any such effect upon them.

2. What that much benefit or advantage is, that many have received from infant-baptism, I am at a loss to know, and even what is intended by this writer, unless it be what follows, that signs of a work of grace have appeared very early in several, which may be, and yet not to be ascribed to baptism; baptism has no such virtue and influence, as to produce a work of grace in the soul, or any signs of it; besides, a work of grace has appeared very early in several, and has been carried on in them, who have never been baptized at all.

3. Infant-baptism keeps up no public or general profession of faith or religion, since there is no profession of faith and religion made in it by the person baptized; nor is it of any avail to make the word and means of grace powerful and efficacious, which only become so by the Spirit and grace of God; and a wide difference there is between the diffuse of infant-baptism, and renouncing Christianity, and professing infidelity; these things are not necessarily connected together, nor do they go together; persons may deny and disuse infant-baptism, as it is well known many do, and yet not renounce the Christian faith, and declare themselves infidels.

4. Parents and others, without infant-baptism, are under strong obligations to teach children their duty to God and men, and therefore it is not necessary on that account.

The nineteenth argument is: "The seed of believers are to be baptized, though they have not actual faith, since Christ speaks not of there but of adult persons, Mark 16:16. And certain it is they have as much fitness for baptism as for justification and eternal life, without which they must all perish; the Spirit of God knows how to work this tithers in them, as well as in grown persons: *Jeremiah*, *John* the Baptist, and several others, were sanctified from their mother's womb" (John 3:8, 9; Eccl. 11:5; Luke 1:15, 44; Jer. 1:5; Isa. 44:3; Ps. 8:2). To which may be returned for answer,

1. That if the text in Mark 16:16 speaks not of infants, but of adult persons only, as it certainly does, I hope it will be allowed to be an instruction and direction for the baptism of adult believers, and to be a sufficient warrant for our practice.

2. If the infants of believers have no more fitness for baptism than they have for justification and eternal life, they have none at all, since they are by *nature children of wrath, even as others*; and therefore can have none, but what is given them by the Spirit and grace of God.

3. We dispute not the power of the Spirit of God, or what he is able to do by the operations of his grace upon the souls of infants; we deny not but that he can and may work a work of grace upon their hearts, and clothe them with the righteousness of Christ, and so give them both a right and meetness for eternal life; but then this should appear previous to baptism; actual faith itself is not sufficient for baptism, without a profession of it; the man that has it ought to declare it to the satisfaction of the administrator, ere he admits him to the ordinance (Acts 8:36, 37).

4. Of the several children said to be sanctified from their mother's womb, no proof is given but of one, *John* the Baptist, who was filled with the holy Ghost from thence, which has been considered in the answer to the *fourteenth* argument; as for *Jeremiah*, it is only said of him that he *was sanctified*, that is, set apart, designed and ordained, in the purpose and counsel of God to be a prophet, before he was born; and is no proof of internal sanctification so early, *Isaiah* 44:3 speaks of the Spirit of God being poured down, not upon the carnal seed of believers, but upon the spiritual seed of the church; and *Psalm* 8:2. is a prophecy, not of new-born infants, but of children grown up, crying *Hosanna* in the temple (*Matthew* 21:15,16) no argument from a particular instance or two, were there more than there are, is of avail for the sanctification of infants in general; it should be proved, that all the infant-seed of believers are sanctified by the Spirit of God; for if some only, and not all, how shall it be known who they are? let it first appear that they are sanctified, and then it will be time enough to baptize them.

The twentieth argument is: "The children of believers are to be baptized, because their right to the covenant and church of God is established from the first, much clearer than several other necessary ordinances; there is no express command nor example of women receiving the Lord's supper; no particular command in the New Testament for family-worship, and for the observation of the first day of the week as a sabbath; and yet none dare call them in question; and there is no objection against infant-baptism, but the like might formerly have been made against circumcision; and may now be objected against many other ordinances and commands, of God." To which I reply,

1. That with respect to women, receiving the Lord's supper, it is certain, that not only they were admitted to baptism (*Acts* 8:12), and became members of churches (*Acts* 1:14, 15; 4:37; 5:9, 14; 1 *Cor.* 11:5, 6, 13; *Acts* 14:34, 35). but there is an express command for their receiving the Lord's supper in 1 *Corinthians* 11:29 where a word is used of the common gender, and includes both men and women; who are both on in Christ, and in a gospel church-state, and have a right to the same ordinances (*Gal.* 3:28).

2. As to family-worship, that is not peculiar to the New Testament-dispensation, as baptism is; it was common to the saints in all ages, and therefore needed no express command for it under the New; though what else but an express command for it is *Ephesians* 6:4? for can children be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, without family-worship?

3. As to the observation of the first day, though there is no express command for it, there are precedents of it; there are instances of keeping it (*John* 20:19, 26; *Acts* 20:7; 1 *Cor.* 16:1, 2): now, let like instances and examples of infant-baptism be produced if they can: though no express command can be pointed at, yet if any precedent or example of any one infant being baptized by *John*, or Christ, or his apostles, can be given, we should think ourselves obliged to follow it.

4. That the same objections might be made against circumcision formerly, as now against infant-baptism, is most notoriously false; it is objected, and that upon a good foundation, that there is neither precept nor precedent for infant-baptism in all the word of God; the same could never be objected against circumcision, since there was such an express command of it to *Abraham*, *Genesis* 17, and so many instances of it are in the sacred writings; let the same be shewn for infant-baptism, and we have done.

5. What the other ordinances and commands of God are, to which the same objections may be made as to infant-baptism, is not said, and therefore no reply can be made. I have nothing more to do, than to take some little notice of what this writer says, concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, page 33. We are no more fond of contentions and strifes about words, than this author, and those of the same way of thinking with himself can be; but surely, modestly to inquire into, and attempt to fix the true manner of administering an ordinance of Christ, according to the scriptures, and the instances of it; according to the signification of the words used to express it, and agreeable to the end and design of it; can never be looked upon as a piece of impertinence, or be traduced as cavil and wrangling. And,

1st, Since this writer observes, that he does not find that either the sacred scripture or the church of *England*, have expressly determined, whether baptism is to be performed by plunging or sprinkling, but have left the one and the other indifferently to our choice; I hope he will not be displeased, that we choose the former, as most agreeable to the sacred writings, and the examples of baptism in them; as those of our Lord and others in *Jordan* (Matthew 3:6, 16) and in *AEnon*, where *John* was baptizing, because there was much water (John 3:23) and of the Eunuch (Acts 8:36-38) and as best representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12), as well as best suits with the primary sense of the Greek word, βαπτίζω, which signifies to plunge or dip. And,

2dly, Since, according to this writer, one mode is not more essential to the ordinance than another, but a *reverential* receiving of the sign; it may be asked, what of this nature, namely, a reverential receiving of the sign, the application of the water to the body, signifying the spiritual application of Christ and his gifts to the soul, can be observed in an infant when sprinkled, which is not conscious of what is done to it?

3dly, Whereas, he says, "it is not improbable but the apostles baptized by sprinkling, since several were baptized in their houses, Acts 9:17, 18 and Acts 16:33 and others, in former times, sick in their beds:" it may be replied, that it is not probable that the apostle *Paul* was baptized by sprinkling (Acts 9:17, 18) since had he, he would have had no occasion to have *arose* in order to be baptized, as he is said to do, Acts 9:18. It is most probable, that when he arose off of his bed or chair, he went to a bath in *Judas's* house; or out of the house, to a certain place fit for the administration of the ordinance by immersion; and since there was a pool in the prison, as *Grotius* thinks, where the Jailor washed the apostles' stripes, it is most probable, that here he and his household were baptized; or since they were brought out of the prison, and after baptism brought into the Jailor's house, verses 33, 34, it is most likely they went out to the river near the city *where prayer was wont to be made*, and there had the ordinance administered to them, verse 13. As for the baptism of sick persons in their beds, this was not in the times of the apostles, but in after-times, when corruptions had got into the church; and so deserves no regard.

4thly, In favor of sprinkling, or pouring water in baptism, he urges that "it is a sign of the pouring or sprinkling of the holy Ghost, and of the blood of Christ" (Ezek. 36:25; Heb. 12:24), but it should be observed, that baptism is not a sign or significative of the sprinkling of clean water, or the grace of the Spirit in regeneration, or of the blood of Christ on the conscience of a sinner, all which ought to precede baptism; but of the death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ; which cannot be represented in any other way than by covering a person in water, or an immersion of him.

5thly, "Water in baptism, he says, is but a sign and seal; a little of it is sufficient to signify the gifts which Christ has purchased, as a small quantity of bread and wine does in the other sacrament, and as a small seal is as much security as a larger one." But as baptism is no sign of the things before-mentioned, so it is no seal, as we have seen, of the covenant of grace; wherefore these similitudes are impertinent to illustrate this matter: and though a small quantity of bread and wine is sufficient in the other sacrament, to signify our partaking of the benefits of the death of Christ by faith; yet a small quantity of water is not sufficient to signify his sufferings and death, with his burial and resurrection, themselves. (*The Sermon is incomplete beyond this point . . . ed.*)

Antipaedobaptism;
or
INFANT-BAPTISM AN INNOVATION:
Being a Reply

To A Late Pamphlet, Entitled, PAEDOBAPTISM;

Or, A Defence of Infant-baptism, in point of Antiquity, etc.

A pamphlet being published some time ago by a nameless author, entitled, *The baptism of Infants a reasonable Service*, etc. I wrote an answer to it, chiefly relating to the antiquity of infant-baptism, called, *The argument from Apostolic tradition, in favor of Infant-baptism, etc. considered*; and of late another anonymous writer has started up in defense of the antiquity of it, from the exceptions made by me to it; for it seems it is not the same author, but another who has engaged in this controversy; but be he who he will, it does not greatly concern me to know; though methinks, if they judge they are embarked in a good cause, they should not be ashamed of it, or of their names, and of letting the world know who they are, and what share they have in the defense of it: but just as they please, it gives me no uneasiness; they are welcome to take what method they judge most agreeable, provided truth and righteousness are attended to.

In my answer, I observe that apostolic tradition at most and best is a very uncertain and precarious thing, not to be depended upon; of which I give an instance so early as the second century, which yet even then could not be settled; and that it is doubtful whether there is any such thing as apostolic tradition, not delivered in the sacred writings; and demand of the Gentleman, whose performance was before me, to give me one single instance of it; and if infant-baptism is of this kind, to name the apostle or apostles by whom it was delivered, and to whom, when, and where; to all which no answer is returned; only I observe a deep silence as to *undoubted apostolic tradition*, so much boasted of before.

The state of the controversy between us and the Paedobaptists, with respect to the antiquity of infant-baptism, lies here; and the question is, whether there is any evidence of its being practiced before the third century; or before the times of Tertullian. We allow it began in the third century, and was then practiced in the African churches, where we apprehend it was first moved; but deny there was any mention or practice of it before that age; and affirm that Tertullian is the first person known that spoke of it, and who speaks against it: I have therefore required of any of our learned Paedobaptists to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before Tertullian, in which infant-baptism is expressly mentioned, or clearly hinted at, or plainly supposed, or manifestly referred to: if this is not done, the controversy must remain just in the same state where it was, and

infant-baptism carried not a moment higher than it was before; and whatever else is done below this date, is all to no purpose. How far this Gentleman, who has engaged in this controversy, has succeeded, is our next business to inquire.

The only Christian writers of the first century, any of whose writings are extant, are Barnabas, Clemens Romanus, Hermas, Polycarp, and Ignatius; nothing out of Barnabas, Polycarp, and Ignatius, in favor of infant-baptism, is pretended to. "The most ancient writer that we have (says this Gentleman, in the words of Mr. Bingham) is Clemens Romanus, who lived in the time of the apostles; and he, though he doth not directly mention infant-baptism, yet says a thing that by consequence proves it; for he makes infants liable to original sin, which is in effect to say that they have need of baptism to purge it away, etc." The passage or passages in Clemens, in which he lays this thing, are not produced; I suppose they are the same that are quoted by Dr Wall, in neither of which does he say any such thing; it is true, in the first of them he makes mention of a passage in Job 14:4. according to the Greek version, no man is *free from pollution, no not though his life is but of one day*; which might be brought indeed to prove original sin, but is not brought by Clemens for any such purpose, but as a self-accusation of Job; shewing, that though he had the character of a good man, yet he was not free from sin: and the other only speaks of men coming into the world as out of a grave and darkness, meaning out of their mother's womb; and seem, not to refer to any moral death and darkness men are under, or to the sinful state of men as they come into the world: but be it so, that in these passages Clemens does speak of original sin, what is this to infant-baptism, or the necessity of it? is there no other way to purge away original sin, but baptism? nay, is there any such virtue in baptism as to purge it away? there is not; it is the blood of Christ, and that only, that purges away sin, whether original or actual. Should it be said that this was the sense of the ancients in some after-ages, who did ascribe such a virtue to baptism, and did affirm it was necessary to be administered, and did administer it to infants for that purpose, what is this to Clemens? what, because some persons in some after-ages gave into this stupid notion, that baptism took away original sin, and was necessary to infants, and ought to be given them for that reason, does it follow that Clemens was of that mind? or is there the least hint of it in his letter? What though he held the doctrine of original sin, does it follow therefore that he was for infant-baptism? how many Antipaedobaptists are there who profess the same doctrine? will any man from hence conclude that they are for and in the practice of infant-baptism? It follows in the words of the same writer; "*Hermes pastor* (Hermas I suppose it should be) lived about the same time with Clemens; and hath several passages to shew the general necessity of water, that is, baptism, to save men:" the passages referred to are those Dr Wall has produced. Hermas had a vision of a tower built on *water*; inquiring the reason of it, he is told, it was "because your life is, and will be saved by water:" and in another place, "before any one receives the name of the Son of God, he is liable to death; but when he receives that seal, he is delivered from death, and is assigned to life; and that seal is water."

Now by *water* Hermas is supposed to mean baptism; but surely he could not mean real material water, or the proper ordinance of water-baptism, since he speaks of the patriarchs coming up through this water, and being sealed with this seal after they were dead, and so entering into the kingdom of God: but how disembodied spirits could be baptized in real water, is not easy to conceive; it must surely design something mystical; and what it is, I must leave to those who better understand these visionary things: but be it so, that baptism in water is meant, salvation by it may be understood in the same sense as the apostle Peter ascribes salvation to it, when he says, that *baptism saves by the resurrection of Christ from the dead*; that is, by directing the baptized person

to Christ for salvation, who was delivered for his offenses, and rose again for his justification; of which resurrection baptism by immersion is a lively emblem; and Hermas is only speaking of adult persons, and not of infants, or of their baptism, or of the necessity of it to their salvation: in another place indeed he speaks of some that were as infants without malice, and so more honorable than others; and, adds he, all infants, are honored with the Lord, and accounted of first of all; that is, all such infants as before described: but be it that infants in age are meant, they may be valued and loved by the Lord; he may shew mercy to them, choose, redeem, regenerate, and save them, and yet not order them to be baptized; nor has he ordered it: however Hermas has not a word about the baptism of them, and therefore these passages are impertinently referred to.

Now these are all the passages of the writers of the first century brought into this controversy; in which there is so far from being any express mention of infant-baptism, that it is not in the least hinted at, nor referred unto; nor is any thing of this kind pretended to, till we come to the middle of the next age; and yet our author upon the above passages concludes after this manner: "thus—we have traced up the *practice* of infant baptism to the time of the apostles;" when those writers give not the least hint of infant-baptism, or have any reference to it, or the practice of it. It is amazing what a *face* some men have!

Let us now proceed to the second century. The book of *Recognitions*, this writer seems to be at a loss where to place it, whether after or before Justin; however, Mr. Bingham tells him, "it is an ancient writing of the same age with Justin Martyr, mentioned by Origen in his *Philocalia*, and by some ascribed to Bardesanes Syrus, who lived about the middle of the second century." It is indeed mentioned by Origen, though not under that name, and is by him ascribed to Clemens, as it has been commonly done; and if so, might have been placed among the testimonies of the *first* century; but this Gentleman's author says it is ascribed by some to Bardesanes Syrus: it is true, there is inserted in it a fragment out of a dialogue of his concerning fate, against Abydas an astrologer; but then it should rather be concluded from hence, as Fabricius observes,^[11] that the author of the *Recognitions*, is a later writer than Bardesanes: but be it so that it is him, who is this Bardesanes? an arch-heretic, one that first fell into the Valentinian heresy; and though he seemed afterwards to change his mind, he was not wholly free, as Eusebius says,^[12] from his old heresy; and he became the author of a new sect, called after his name Bardesanists; who held that the devil was not a creature of God; that Christ did not assume human flesh; and that the body rises not.^[13] The book of *Recognitions*, ascribed to him, is urged by the Papists, as Mr. James observes^[14] to prove the power of exorcists, free-will, faith alone insufficient, the chrism in baptism, and Peter's succession; though the better sort of writers among them are ashamed of it. Sixtus Senensis says^[15] that "most things in it are uncertain, many fabulous, and some contrary to doctrines generally received." And Baronius^[16] has these words concerning it: "Away with such monstrous lies and mad dotages, which are brought out of the said filthy ditch of the *Recognitions*, which go under the name of Clemens:" but all this is no matter, if infant-baptism can be proved out it; but how? "This author speaks of the necessity of baptism in the same stile as Justin Martyr did—was undeniably an assertor of the general necessity of baptism to salvation:" wherever this wretched tenet, this false notion of the absolute necessity of baptism to salvation is met with, the Paedobaptists presently smell out infant-baptism, one falsehood following upon another; and true it is, that one error leads on to another; and this false doctrine paved the way for infant-baptism; but then the mystery of iniquity worked by degrees; as soon as it was broached infant-baptism did not immediately commence: it does not follow, because that heretic asserted this notion, that therefore he was for or in the practice of

infant-baptism; besides this book, be the author of it who will, is not made mention of before the third century, if so soon; for the work referred to by Origen has another title, and was in another form; he calls it the *circuits of Peter*, an apocryphal, fabulous and romantic writing; and though the passage he quotes is in the *Recognitions*, which makes some learned men conclude it to be the same with that; yet so it might be, and not be the same with it. But I pass on to a more authentic and approved writer of the second century: Justin Martyr, who lived about the year 150; and the first passage produced from him is this:^[7] "We bring them (namely, the new converts) to some place where there is water, and they are regenerated by the same way of regeneration by which we were regenerated; for they are washed with water in the name of God the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit." In this passage, it is owned, "Justin is describing the manner of adult baptism only; having no occasion to descend to any farther particulars; nor is it alleged, it is said, as a proof of infant-baptism directly; but only to shew, that this ancient writer used the word *regeneration* so as to connote *baptism*—yet his words cannot be thought to exclude the baptism of infants in these days:" but if infant-baptism had been practiced in those days, it is not consistent with that sincerity and impartiality which Justin sets out with, when he proposed to give the Roman Emperor an account of Christian baptism, not to make any mention of that; for he introduces it thus: "We will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God, lest omitting this we should seem to act a bad part (prevaricate or deal unfairly) in this declaration;" whereas it was not dealing fairly with the Emperor, and not giving him a full and fair account of the administration of the ordinance of baptism to all its proper subjects, if infants had used to be baptized; which he could easily have introduced the mention of, and one would think could not have omitted it: betides, as Dr. Gale^[8] observes, he had an occasion to speak of it, and to descend to this particular, had it been used; since the Christians were charged with using their infants barbarously; which he might have removed, had this been the case, by observing the great regard they had to them in devoting them to God in baptism, and thereby initiating them into their religion, and providing for the salvation of their souls: but Justin is so far from saying any thing of this kind, that he leaves the Emperor and every body else to conclude that infants were not the subjects of baptism in this early age; for as the above writer observes, immediately follow such words as directly oppose infant-baptism; they are these: "And we have been taught by the apostles this reason for this thing; because we being ignorant of our first birth, were generated by necessity, etc. that we should not continue children of that necessity and ignorance, but of will (or choice) and knowledge; and should obtain forgiveness of the sins in which we have lived, by water:" so that in order to obtain these things by water or baptism, which Justin speaks of, there must be free choice and knowledge, which infants are not capable of: but it seems the main thing this passage is brought to prove, is, that the words *regenerated* and *regeneration* are used for *baptized* and *baptism*; and this agreeing with the words of Christ in John 3:5 shews that this construction of them then obtained, that baptism is necessary to salvation. Now, it should be observed, that the persons Justin speaks of are not represented by him as regenerated by baptism, because they are spoken of before as converted persons and believers; and it is as clear and plain that their baptism is distinguished from their regeneration, and is not the same thing; for Justin uses the former as an argument of the latter; which if the same, his sense must be, they were baptized because they were baptized; whereas his sense, consistent with himself, and the practice of the primitive churches, is; that these persons, when brought to the water, having made a profession of their regeneration, were owned and declared regenerated persons; as was manifest from their being admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism; and from hence it appears, that, then no such construction of John 3:5 obtained, that baptism is necessary to

salvation: and this now seems to be the passage referred to, in which Justin is said to speak of the necessity of baptism, in a style the author of the *Recognitions* agreed with him in; but without any reason.

The next passage out of Justin is in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew; where he says that "concerning the influence and effect of Adam's sin upon mankind, which the ancient writers represent as the ground and reason of infant-baptism—" The words, as cited by Dr Wall, to whom our author refers us, are there: Justin, speaking of the birth, baptism, and crucifixion of Christ, says^[9] "he did this for mankind, which by Adam was fallen under death, and under the guile of the serpent; beside the particular cause which each man had of sinning."

Now, allowing that this is spoken of original sin, as it seems to be, what is this to infant-baptism? I have already exposed the folly of arguing from persons holding the one, to the practice of the other. It is added by our author, "in the same book, he (Justin) speaks of baptism being to Christians in the room of circumcision, and so points out the analogy between those two initiatory rites." The passage referred to is this:^[10] "We also who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch, and those like him, have observed; and we have received it by baptism by the mercy of God, because we were sinners; and it is enjoined to all persons to receive it the same way." Now let be observed, that this spiritual circumcision, whatever Justin means by it, can never design baptism; since the patriarch Enoch, and others like him, observed it: and since Christians are said to receive it by *baptism*, and therefore must be different from baptism itself: nor does Justin say any thing of the analogy between baptism and circumcision, or of the one being in the room of the other; but opposes the spiritual circumcision to carnal circumcision; and speaks not one word of infants, only of the duty of adult persons, as he supposes it to be. The last passage, and on which this Gentleman intends to dwell awhile, is this:^[11] "Several persons (says Justin) among us of both sexes, of sixty and seventy years of age, οι εκ παιδων μαθητευθησαν τω Χριστω, "who were discipled to Christ in their childhood, etc." which I have observed should be rendered, "who from their childhood were instructed in Christ;" and which I have confirmed by several passages in Justin, in which he uses the word in the sense of instruction; and from whom can we better learn his meaning than from himself? all which this author takes no notice of; but puts me off with a passage out of Plutarch, where Antiphon the son of Sophilus, according to his version, is said to be *discipled* or *proselyted* to his father: I leave him to enjoy his own sense; for I do not understand it; and should have thought that μαθητευσαω δε τω πατρι, might have been rendered more intelligibly, as well as more truly, "instructed by his father;" since, as it follows, his father was an orator. He thinks he has caught me off of my guard, and that I suppose the word *disciple* includes baptism; because in my commentary on Acts 19:3 I say, "the apostle takes it for granted that they were *baptized*, since they were not only believers, but *disciples*;" but had he read on, or transcribed what follows, my sense would clearly appear; "such as not only believed with the heart, but had made a profession of their faith, and were followers of Christ:" nor is the sense of the word *disciple*, as including the idea of baptism, confirmed by Acts 14:21 where it is said, *when they had preached the gospel to that city*, κι μαθητευσαντες, "and taught many, or made them disciples;" which may be interpreted without tautology, and yet not include the idea of baptism; since the first word, *preached*, expresses the bare external ministry of the word; and the latter, *taught*, or made disciples, the influence and effect of it upon the minds of men; the former may be where the latter is not; and both, where baptism is not as yet administered. The reason why εκ παιδων must be rendered *in*, and not *from* their

childhood, because the baptism of any persons being not a continued, but one single transient act, to speak of their being baptized from their childhood would be improper, is merry indeed; when Justin is not speaking of the baptism of any person at all; but of their being trained up in the knowledge of Christ, and the Christian religion from their childhood, in which they had persevered to the years mentioned. Upon the whole, in all these passages of Justin quoted, there is no express mention of infant-baptism, nor any hint given of it, nor any reference unto it. Proceed we now to the next writer in this century, brought into this controversy:

Irenaeus; who lived towards the close of it, and wrote about the year 180; the only passage in him, and which has been the subject of debate a hundred years past, is this; speaking of Christ, he says,¹²¹ "he came to save all, all I say, *qui per eum renascuntur in Deum*, "who by him are *born again* unto God;" infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." Now not to insist upon the works of Irenaeus we have being mostly a translation, and a very poor one, complained of by learned men; nor upon this chapter wherein this passage is, being reckoned spurious by others; which weaken the force of this testimony, and will have their weight with considering persons; I shall only take notice of the sense of the phrase, born again unto God; and the injury done to the character of Irenaeus, to make it signify baptism, or any thing else but the grace of regeneration. Our author begins his defense of this passage in favor of infant-baptism, with a remark of the learned Feuarentius, as he calls him; "that by the name of regeneration, according to the phrase of Christ: and his apostles, he (Irenaeus) understands *baptism*, clearly confirming the apostolical tradition concerning the baptism of infants." As for the learning of this monk, I cannot discern it, unless his lies and impudence against the reformers, which run through his notes, are to be so called. Whether our author is a junior or senior man, I know not; by his writing he seems to be the former, but the advice of *Rivet*, who was without doubt a man of learning, is good; only, says he,¹³¹ "I would have the younger, that shall light on the works of Irenaeus advised, to beware of those editions, which that most impudent monk Feuarentius, a man of large assurance, and uncommon boldness, and of no faith nor faithfulness, has in many things foully corrupted and defiled with impious and lying annotations:" and a false gloss this of his is, which is quoted; for Christ and his apostles nowhere call baptism by the name of the new birth. I have observed, that as yet, that is, in Irenaeus' time, it had not obtained among the ancients, to use the words *regenerated* or *regeneration* for *baptized* or *baptism*; nor is this author able to prove it. The passage in Justin before-mentioned falls short of it, as has been shewn; and the passages in Tertullian and Clemens of Alexandria, concerning being born in water, and begotten of the womb of water, are too late; and beside, the one is to be interpreted of the grace of God compared to water; this is clearly Tertullian's sense; for he adds¹⁴¹ "nor are we otherwise safe or saved, than by remaining in water;" which surely can never be understood literally of the water of baptism and as for Clemens,¹⁵¹ he is speaking not of regeneration, but of the natural generation of man, as he comes out of his mother's womb, naked, and free from sin, as he supposes; and as such, converted persons ought to be.

To have recourse to heathens to ascertain the name of Christian baptism, is monstrous; though this, it is said, there is no need of, "since *several* Christian writers, who lived *with* or *before* Irenaeus, speak the same language, as will be seen hereafter:" and yet none are produced but Barnabas and Justin; the latter of which has been considered already, and found not to the purpose; and his reasoning upon the former is beyond my comprehension; for whatever may be said for the giving of milk and honey to persons just baptized, being a symbol of their being born again, it can be no proof of the words *regeneration* and *regenerated* being used for *baptism* and *baptized*; when there

words neither the one nor the other are mentioned by Barnabas; so that I have no reason to retract what I have said on that point. And now we are returned to Irenaeus himself; and two passages from him are produced in proof of the sense of the word contended for; and one is where he thus speaks^[16] "and again giving the power of regeneration unto God to his disciples, he said unto them, *Go and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc.*" By which power or commission is meant, not the commission of baptizing, but more plainly the commission of teaching the doctrine of regeneration by the Spirit of God, and the necessity of that to salvation, and in order to baptism; and which was the first and principal part of the apostles commission, as the order of the words shew; and it is molt reasonable to think, that he should so call the commission, not from its more remote and less principal part, but from the first and more principal one. The other passage is where Irenaeus mentions^[17] by name "*the baptism of regeneration to God:*" but this rather proves the contrary, that baptism and regeneration are two different things, and not the same; just as the scriptural phrase, the *baptism of repentance*, and which seems to have led the ancients to such a way of speaking, means something different from repentance, and not the same: baptism is so called, because repentance is a prerequisite to it, in the subjects of it; and for the same reason it is called the *baptism of regeneration*, because regeneration is absolutely necessary in order to it: to all which I only add, that Irenaeus not only uses the word *regeneration* in a different sense from baptism elsewhere,^[18] but most clearly uses it in another sense in this very passage; since he says, Christ came to save all who *by him* are born again unto God; who are regenerated by Christ, and not by baptism; and which is explained both before and after by his *sanctifying* all sorts of persons, infants, little ones, young men, and old men; which cannot be understood of his baptizing them, for he baptized none; and therefore they cannot be said to be regenerated by him in that sense: and I say again, to understand Irenaeus as speaking of baptism, is to make him speak what is absolutely false; that Christ came to save all and only such who are baptized unto God. It seems LeClerc is of the same sentiment with me, an author I am a stranger to; whom this writer lets pass without any reasoning against him, only with this chastisement; "he should have understood (being an *ecclesiastical historian*) the sentiments and language of the primitive fathers better;" but what their language and sentiments were, we have seen already; and let them be what they will, Irenaeus must express a downright falsehood, if he is to be understood in the sense contended for: on the one hand, it cannot be true that Christ came to save all that are baptized; no doubt but Judas was baptized, as well as the other apostles, and yet it will not be said Christ came to save him; Simon Magus was certainly baptized, and yet was in the *gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity*, and by all the accounts of him continued so till death; there were many members of the church at Corinth, who doubtless were baptized, and yet were unworthy receivers of the Lord's supper, and eat and drank damnation to themselves, for which reason there were many weak, sickly, and asleep;^[19] and it is to be feared, without any breach of charity, that this has been the case of thousands besides: and on the other hand, it cannot be with truth suggested, that Christ came to save only such as are baptized; he came to die for the transgressions that were under the First Testament, or to save persons under that dispensation, who never received Christian baptism; he said to one and to another, unbaptized persons, *thy sins are forgiven thee*; (Matthew 9:5; Luke 7:48) and no doubt there are many saved, and whom Christ came to save, who never were baptized in water; and the Paedobaptists themselves will stand a bad chance for salvation, if this was true; for they will find it a hard task to prove that any one of them, only sprinkled in infancy, was ever truly baptized; and yet as uncharitable as we are said to be, we have so much charity to believe that every good man among them, though unbaptized, shall be saved. And now since the words of Irenaeus taken in this sense contain a manifest falsehood, and they are capable of another sense, agreeable to truth,

without straining them; as that thrift: came to save all that are regenerated by himself, by his spirit and grace, we ought in a judgment of charity to believe that this latter sense is his, and not the former; and the rather, since his words in their proper and literal sense have this meaning; and since they are expressed with so much caution; lest it should be thought it was his meaning that Christ came to save *all* men, good and bad, he describes the patrons he came to save, not by their baptism, which is a precarious and uncertain evidence of salvation, but by their regeneration, which is a sure proof of it; and since this sense of his words is agreeable to his use of the phrase elsewhere, and to the context likewise, and is suited to all sorts of persons of every age here mentioned; and indeed to depart from this clear literal sense of his words, which establishes a well-known truth, and fix a figurative, improper one upon them, which makes him to say a notorious untruth, to serve an hypothesis, is *cruel* usage of the good old father, and is contrary to all the *rules* of *honor, justice, truth, and charity*. To put our Lord's words in Mark 16:16 upon a level with the false sense of Irenaeus, is mean and stupid; they need no qualifying sense; the meaning is plain and easy; that every baptized believer shall be saved, and leave no room to suggest that unbaptized believers shall not; but that every unbeliever, be he who he will, baptized or unbaptized, shall be damned. And now what a wretched cause must the cause of infant-baptism be, that requires such managing as this to maintain it? what a wretched cause is it, that at its first setting out, according to the account of the advocates of it; for Dr Wall says,^[20] "this is the first express mention that we have met with of infants "baptized?" I say again, what a wretched cause must this be, that is connected with lies and falsehood at its first appearance, as pleaded for; is established upon downright injustice to a good man's character, and supported by real injury to it? and yet notwithstanding all this, our author has the *front* to say, "so much then for the testimony, the *plain, unexceptionable* testimony, of Irenaeus, for the practice of infant-baptism."

And now we are come to the close of the second century; but before we pass to the next, we must stop a little, and consider a passage our author, after Dr. Wall, has produced out of Clemens of Alexandria, who lived at the latter end of this century, about the year 190; and it is this: speaking of rings worn on the fingers, and the seals upon them, advises against every thing idolatrous and lascivious, and to what is innocent and useful; "let our seals," says he,^[21] "be a dove, or a fish, or a ship running with the wind, or a musical harp—or a mariner's anchor,—and if any one is a fisherman, Αποσολου μεμνησεται κι των εξ υδατοσ ανασπωμενων παιδιων, let him remember the apostle, and the children drawn out of the water."

This passage was sent by two Gentlemen from different places to Dr Wall, after he had published two editions of his history; and he seems to have been ashamed of himself for not having observed it, and fancies that this refers to the baptizing of a child, and the taking, drawing, and lifting it out of the water. Now, though I do not pretend to support my conjecture by any manuscript or printed copy, nor do I think it worth while to search and inquire after it, whether there is any various reading or no, but shall leave it to others who have more leisure and opportunity; yet I persuade myself my conjecture will not be condemned as a groundless one by any man of sense and learning, especially out of this controversy: my conjecture then is, that it should be read not *παιδιων*, "children," but *ιχθυων*, "fishes;" for who ever heard of a *draught of children*; when a *draught of fishes* is common? and why should a fisherman, more than any other, remember an apostle and a draught of children? surely a draught of fishes is more proper to him: the words I think therefore should be read, "let him remember the apostle, and the fishes drawn out of the water;" and the sense is, let him remember the apostle Peter, and the draught of fishes taken by him, recorded either in

Luke 5:6, 9 or in John 21:6, 8, 11; for the words manifestly refer to some particular and remarkable fact, which should be called to mind, and not to a thing that was done every day; which must be the case, if infant-baptism now obtained: besides, the word used cannot with any decency and propriety be applied to the baptizing of a child; a wide difference there is in the expression, between taking and lifting a child out of the font, and a drawing or dragging it out of the water; the word is expressive of strength and force necessary to an action (Luke 14:15; Acts 11:10), and well agrees with the drawing or dragging of a net full of fishes. However, if this instance is continued to be urged, I hope it will be allowed that baptism in those early times was performed by immersion; since these children are said to be drawn out of the water, and therefore must have been in it: moreover, let it be what it will that Clemens refers unto, it must be something that was not common to every man, but peculiar to a fisherman; as he afterwards says, a sword or a bow are not proper for those that pursue peace; nor cups for temperate persons; and I insist upon it, that it be said what that is which is peculiar to such a one, except it be that which I have suggested: and after all, he must have a warm brain, a heated imagination, and a mind prepossessed, that can believe that infant-baptism is here referred to. Upon the whole, it does not appear from any authentic writer of the second century, that there is any express mention of infant-baptism in it, nor any clear hint of it, or manifest reference to it; and therefore it must be an innovation in the church, whenever it afterwards took place. I proceed now to,

The third century, at the beginning of which Tertullian lived; who is the first person that ever gave any hint of infant-baptism, or referred unto it, or made express mention of it, that is known; and he argued against it, and that very strongly, from the more usual delay of the administration of it, according to every one's age, condition, and disposition; from the danger sureties might be brought into by engaging for infants; from the necessity of first knowing and understanding what they were about; from their innocent age, as it comparatively is, not being yet conscious of sin, standing in no need of the application of pardoning grace, which the ordinance of baptism leads adult believers to; from the propriety of their first asking for it; and from a different method being taken in worldly affairs: his words are these, and as they are translated by Dr. Wall himself; "therefore according to every one's condition and disposition, and also their age, the delaying of baptism is more profitable, especially in the case of little children; for what need is there that the godfathers should be brought into danger? because they may either fail of their promises by death, or they may be mistaken by a child's proving of a wicked disposition. Our Lord says indeed, *Do not forbid them to come to me*: therefore let them come when they are grown up: let them come when they understand: when they are instructed whither it is that they come: let them be made Christians when they can know Christ; what need their guiltless age make such haste to the forgiveness of sins? Men will proceed more warily in worldly things; and he that should not have earthly goods committed to him, yet shall have heavenly. Let them know how to desire this salvation, that you may appear to have given to one that asketh."^[22]

It is observed by our author, after Dr Wall, that in the clause about sponsors, in the older editions, there words come in, *si non tam necesse*, which are rendered, *except in case of necessity*. But these *older editions* are but one Gagnaeus, whose reading is rejected by Rigaltius as a foolish repetition; censured by Grotius, as affording no tolerable sense;^[23] received by Pamelius for no other reason that he gives, but because it softens the opinion of the author about the delaying of baptism to infants;^[24] and it is for this reason it is caught at by the Paedobaptists; and yet they do not seem to be quite easy with it, because of the nonsense and impertinence of it; "*what need is there, except*

there is a need?" wherefore our author attempts an emendation, and proposes to read *tamen* for *tam*, which does not make it a whit the better, but rather increases the nonsense; "what need is there, except notwithstanding there is need?" but what is of more importance is, it is said, "these words of Tertullian seem fairly to imply that infant baptism was not only moved for, but actually practiced in his time:" to which I answer, that they neither do imply, nor *seem* to imply any such thing, at least not necessarily; for supposing the baptism of infants moved for, and sureties promised to be engaged for them, which seems likely to be the case as soon as mentioned, the better to get it received; Tertullian might say all that he does, though as yet not one infant had ever been baptized, or any sureties made use of: and indeed it would have been very strange, if nothing of this kind had been said previous to the observance of them; the bare motion of these things was sufficient to bring our the arguments against them: and what though Tertullian might have some odd notions and singular opinions, about which he talked wrong and weakly, does it follow that therefore he so did about these points? Nor is there any reason to interpret his words of the infants of infidels, since he makes no distinction in the passage, nor gives the least hint of any; and what he elsewhere says of the children of believers being holy, he explains of their being *designed for holiness*,^[25] and says men are not *born*, but *made* Christians:^[26] nor does he any where allow of the baptism of infants, in case of necessity, which is only established upon that impertinent reading before-mentioned: and with respect to his notion of the necessity of baptism to salvation, it is sufficient to observe what he says; "if any understand the importance of baptism, they will rather fear the having it, than the delaying it: true faith is secure of salvation."^[27] And the reason why he does not produce infant-baptism among his unwritten customs, is very easy to observe, because as yet no such custom had obtained, and as yet the apostolical tradition of it had never been heard of: the first that speaks of that, if he does at all, is the following person;

Origen, who flourished about the year 230, and comes next under consideration: and three passages are usually cited out of him in favor of infant-baptism; shewing not only that infants should be baptized; but that this was an ancient usage of the church, and a tradition of the apostles. Now there things are only to be met with in the Latin translations of this ancient writer; and though there is much of his still extant in Greek, yet in these his genuine works there is not the least hint of infant-baptism, nor any reference to it; and much less any express mention of it; and still less any thing did of it, being a custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition: This has justly raised a suspicion, that he has not been fairly used

in the translations of him by Ruffinus and Jerome: and upon inquiry, this is found to be the truth of the matter; and it is not only Erasmus, whom Dr. Wall is pleased to represent as angrily saying, that a reader is uncertain whether he reads Origen or Ruffinus; for Scutetus^[28] says the same thing; and it is the observation of many others, that it was the common custom of Ruffinus to interpolate whatever he translated. The learned Huetius, who has given us a good edition of all Origen's commentaries of the scripture in Greek, and who was as conversant with his writings, and understood them as well as any man whatever, was very sensible of the foul play he has met with, and often complains of the perfidy and impudence of Ruffinus; he says of him, that whatever he undertook to translate, he interpolated; that he so distressed and corrupted the writings of Origen by additions and detractions, that one is at a loss to find Origen in Origen: that whereas he undertook to translate his commentary on the Romans, at the instance of Heraclius, yet he asks, with what faithfulness did he do it? namely, with his own, that is, which is the worst; and when Huetius produces any thing out of there translations, it is always with diffidence, as not to be depended

upon and sometimes he adds when he has done, "but let us remember again the perfidy of Ruffinus;" and speaking particularly of his commentaries on the Romans, he says; "Let the learned reader remember that Origen is not so much to be thought the author of them, as Ruffinus, by whom they are not so much interpreted, as *new coined* and *interpolated*."^[29]

But what need I produce these testimonies? Ruffinus himself owns, not only that he used great freedom in translating the homilies on Leviticus, and added much of his own to them, as I have observed; but also in his translation of the commentary on the Romans, he grants the charge against him, "that he added some things, supplied what was wanting, and shortened what were too long;"^[30] and it is from these two pieces that the two principal passages which assert infant-baptism to be the custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition, are taken: and now of what use is this Gentleman's quotation from Marshall? it is good for nothing. The other passage, which stands in Jerome's translation of Origen's homilies on Luke, speaks indeed of the baptism of infants, and the necessity of it; but not a word of its being a custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition, as in the other; and betide, his translations being no more exact than Ruffinus', and which appears by his other versions; in which he takes the same liberty as Ruffinus did, are no more to be depended upon than his. And now, where is his highest *probability* and *moral certainty*, that there are no additions and interpolations in Origen? I appeal to the whole world, whether such sort of writings as these, so manifestly corrupted, so confessedly interpolated, would be admitted an evidence in any civil affair in any court of judicature whatever; and if not, then surely these ought not to be admitted as an evidence in religious affairs, respecting an ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it is said, "supposing all this, what does it signify in the present case, unless it could be proved that the particular passages under consideration were additions or interpolations?"

To which I answer; since the whole is so *interpolated*, and so deformed, that it can scarcely be known, as has been observed, what dependence can there be on any part of it? I have observed, that the passage in the homilies on Leviticus, is by Vossius thought to be of the greater authority against the Pelagians, because of the interpolations of Ruffinus. This Gentleman says, I have *unluckily* observed this; I do not see any *unluckiness* in it; it is *lucky* on my side, that Vossius, a Paedobaptist, should suggest that this passage is interpolated, however unlucky Ruffinus was in doing it; and it is no unusual thing for a writer to infect that in his works, which makes or may be improved against himself: beside, what makes these very passages suspected of interpolation, is, not only that no contemporary of Origen's, nor any writer before him, nor any after him, till the times of Ruffinus and Jerome, ever speak of infant-baptism as a custom of the church, or an apostolic tradition; but neither Cyprian who came after him, and pleaded for infant-baptism, ever refers to Origen as saying these things, or uses such language as he is said to do; nor does Austin, who made such a bluster about infant-baptism being an apostolical tradition, ever appeal to Origen's testimony of it; which one would think he would have done, had there been any such testimony: our author, because I have said that many things may be observed from the Greek of Origen in favor of adult-baptism, hectors most manfully; "the assertion, he says, is either *false*, or very *impertinent*;" but surely he must be a little too premature to pass such a censure before the things are produced. I greatly question whether he has ever read the writings of Origen, either the Latin translations of him, or his works in Greek; and indeed there are scarce any of his quotations of the fathers throughout his whole work, but what seem to be taken at second hand from Dr Wall, or others: I say more than I should have chose to have said, through his insulting language. I am quite content he should have all the credit his performance will admit of; only such a writer, who knows his own

weakness, ought not to be so *pert* and *insolent*: however, to stop the mouth of this *swaggering blade*, whoever he is, I will give him an instance or two out of the Greek of Origen, in favor of adult-baptism, to the exclusion of infant-baptism, and as manifestly against it. Now, not to take notice of Origen's^[31] interpretation of Matthew 19:14 as not of infants literally, but metaphorically; which, according to his sense, destroys the argument of the Paedobaptists from thence, in favor of infant-baptism: "It is to be observed, says Origen, that the four evangelists saying that John confessed he came to baptize in water, only Matthew adds *unto repentance*; teaching, that he has the profit of baptism who "is baptized of his own will and choice:"

Now if the profit of baptism is tied to "a person baptized of his own will and choice," according to Origen, then baptism must be unprofitable and insignificant to infants, because they are not baptized of their own will and choice: and a little after he says; "The laver by the water is a symbol of the purification of the soul washed from all the filth of wickedness; nevertheless also of itself it is the beginning and fountain of divine gifts, because of the power of the invocation of the adorable Trinity, "to him that gives up himself to God;"^[32] which last clause excludes infants, since they do not and cannot give up themselves to God in that ordinance. Let this Gentleman, if he can, produce any thing out of those writings of Origen, in favor of infant-baptism; the passage Dr. Wall^[33] refers to has not a syllable of it, nor any reference to it; and though he supposes Jerome must some where or other have read it in his writings, what Jerome says^[34] supposes no such thing; since the passage only speaks of Origen's opinion of sins in a pre-existent state, being forgiven in baptism, but not a word of the baptism of infants, or of their sins being forgiven them in their baptism: and now where is the clear testimony of the great Origen, not only for the practice of infant-baptism in his own days, but for the continual use of it all along from the time of the apostles? and where is our author's vaunt of the superior antiquity of infant-baptism to infant-communion? which, as we shall see presently, began together.

Cyprian is the next, and the only remaining writer of this century, quoted in favor of infant-baptism; who lived about the middle of it, and is the first pleader for it that we know of. We allow it was practiced in his time in the African churches, where it was first moved; and at the same time infant-communion was practiced also, of which we have undoubted and incontestable evidence; and it is but reasonable that if infants have a right to one ordinance, they should be admitted to the other; and if antiquity is of any weight in the matter, it is as early for the one as for the other: but though infant-baptism now began to be practiced, it appears to be a novel business; not only the time of its administration, being undetermined; which made Fidus, a country bishop, who had a doubt about administering it before the eighth day, apply to the council under Cyprian for the resolution of it; but the exceeding weakness of the arguments then made use of for baptizing newborn infants, of which the present Paedobaptists must be ashamed, shew that Paedobaptism was then in its *infant-state*: the arguments used by Cyprian, and his brethren for it, were taken from the grace of God being given to all men; and from the equality of the gift to all; and this proved from the spiritual equality of the bodies of infants and adult persons; and both from the prophet Elisha's stretching himself on the Shunamite's child; they argue the admission of all to baptism from the words of Peter, who says he was shewn, that *nothing is to be called common or unclean*; and reason, that infants ought to be more easily admitted than grown persons, because they have less guilt; and their weeping and crying are to be interpreted praying; yea, they suggest that baptism gives grace, and that a person is lost without it: but that it may appear I do not wrong them, I will transcribe their own words; and that as they are translated by Dr. Wall, so far as they relate to this

matter: "All of us judged that the grace and mercy of God is to be denied to no person that is born; for whereas our Lord in his gospel says, *the Son of Man came not to destroy men's souls*, (or lives) but to save them; as far as lies in us, no soul, if possible, is to be lost. The scripture gives us to understand the equality of the divine gift on all, whether infants or grown persons: Elisha, in his prayer to God, stretched himself on the infant-son of the Shunamite woman, that lay dead, in such manner, that his head, and face, and limbs, and feet, were applied to the head, face, limbs, and feet of the child; which, if it he understood according to the quality of our body and nature, the infant would not hold measure with that grown man, nor his limbs fit to reach to his great ones; but in that place a spiritual equality, and such as is in the esteem of God, is intimated to us by which persons that are once made by God are alike and equal; and our growth of body by age, makes a difference in the sense of the world, but not of God; unless you will think that the grace itself which is given to baptized persons, is greater or less according to the age of those that receive it; whereas the holy Spirit is given, not by different measures, but with a fatherly affection and kindness, equal to all; for God, as he accepts no one person, so not his age; but with a just equality shews himself a Father to all, for their obtaining the heavenly grace—so that we judge that no person is to be hindered from the obtaining the grace by the law that is now appointed; and that the spiritual circumcision ought not to be restrained by the circumcision that was according to the flesh; but that all are to be admitted to the grace of Christ; since Peter, speaking in the *Acts of the Apostles*, says, *the Lord has shewn me, that no person is to be called common or unclean*. If any thing could be an obstacle to persons against their obtaining the grace, the adult, and grown, and elder men, would be rather hindered by their more grievous sins. If then the graceless offender, and those that have grievously sinned against God before, have, when they afterwards come to believe, forgiveness of their sins; and no person is kept off from baptism and the grace; how much less reason is there to refuse an infant, who, being newly born, has no sin, save the being descended from Adam according to the flesh: he has from his very birth contracted the contagion of the death anciently threatened; who comes, for this reason, more easily to receive forgiveness of sins, because they are not his own, but others sins that are forgiven him. This therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the assembly, that it is not for us to hinder any man from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and affectionate to all; which rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants, and persons newly born; to whom our help, and the divine mercy, is rather to be granted; because by their weeping and wailing, at their first entrance into the world, they do intimate nothing so much as that they implore compassion."^[35]

Every one that compares what Cyprian and his colleagues say for infant-baptism, and what Tertullian says against it, as before related, will easily see a difference between them, between Tertullian the Antipaedobaptist, and Cyprian the Paedobaptist; how manly and nervous the one! how mean and weak the other! no doubt, as is known, being railed about infant-baptism at this time, or any objection made to it, does not prove it then to be an ancient custom; since the same observation, which may be made, would prove infant-communion to be equally the same. Now as we allow that henceforward infant-baptism was practiced in the African churches, and prevailed in,

The fourth century, here the controversy might stop: and indeed all that we contend for in this century, is only that there were some persons that did call it in question and oppose it; and if this will not be allowed, we are not very anxious about it, and shall not think it worth while to contest it. This writer would have it observed, that I have given up the greatest lights of the church in this century as vouchers for infant-baptism, and particularly St Jerom, Ruffinus, and Augustin; they are

welcome to them; they have need of them to enlighten them in this dark affair: we do not envy their having them, especially that persidious interpolater Ruffinus; nor that arch-heretic Pelagius, whom this Gentleman takes much pains to retain, as ignorant as he either was, or would be, or is thought to be; as that he never heard that any one whatever denied baptism to infants, and promised the kingdom of heaven without the redemption of Christ, or refused that unto them. This ignorance of his was either affected or pretended, in order to clear himself from the charge of those things against him; as men generally do run into high strains and extravagant expressions, when they are at such work; or it was real ignorance, and who can help that? It does not follow that therefore none had, because he had never heard of it; one would think his meaning rather was, that he had never heard of any that denied the kingdom of heaven and the common redemption to infants, who *think* they ought to be baptized, *dum putat*, while he is of opinion, that in baptism they are regenerated in Christ; but about this I shall not contend; truth does not depend upon his hearing and knowledge, judgment and observation. I think it is not insisted upon that Austin should say, he never heard or read of any catholic, heretic, or schismatic, that denied infant-baptism; however, it seems he *could* say it if he did not, and that notwithstanding the reasons I alledged; as,

1. Austin must know that Tertullian had opposed it. Here our author quibbles about the terms *opposing* and *denying*, and distinguishes between them; and observes, that whatever Tertullian said *against* it, he did not properly deny it. He may say the same of me, or any other writer against infant-baptism, that though we speak against it, contradict and oppose it, and use arguments against it, yet we do not deny it. Dr Wall indeed thinks neither Austin nor Pelagius had seen Tertullian's book of baptism, or they could not have said what he thinks they did.

2. Austin presided at the council of Carthage, when a canon was made that anathematized those who denied baptism to new-born infants; and therefore mull know there were some that denied it. This Gentleman says, it is demonstrably certain, that this canon was not made against persons that denied infant-baptism, because it was made against Pelagius and Celesius. It is true, the latter part of the canon was made against them; but the former part respected a notion or tenet of some other persons, who denied baptism to new-born infants. Dr Wall saw this, and says, this canon mentions the baptism of infants, condemning two errors about it; the one respecting the baptism of new-born infants; the other the doctrine of original sin, and the baptism of infants for forgiveness of sins, denied by the Pelagians; but the former he supposes was the opinion of Fidus, embraced by some persons now, which he had vented a hundred and fifty years before, that infants should not be baptized till they were eight days old; whereas Fidus is represented as having been alone in his opinion; and if he retained it, which is doubtful, it does not appear he had any followers; nor is there any evidence of there being any of his sentiment in this age;^[36] and were there, it is unreasonable to imagine, that a council of all the bishops in Africa should agree to anathematize them, because they thought proper to defer the baptizing of infants a few days longer than they did; and besides, infants only eight days old may be properly called newly-born infants; and therefore such could not be said to deny baptism to them; and it would have been a marvelous thing, had they been anathematized for it: though this writer says, wonder who will; a council, consisting of all the bishops of Africa, did in fact agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves." It is true, they did anathematize the Pelagians, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves in general; though I question whether they reckoned them *their own brethren*; but then not on account of any difference about the time of baptism, a few days odds between them, the thing to be wondered at;

but their denial of original sin, and the baptism of infants to be on account of that: and now since the Pelagians are distinct from those in the canon that denied baptism to new-born infants; and it is unreasonable to suppose any who were of the sentiments of Fidus are intended; it remains, that there must be some persons different both from the one and the other, who denied baptism to babes, and are by this canon anathematized for it, which Austin must know.

3. It is observed by me, that Austin himself makes mention of some that argued against it, from the unprofitableness of it to infants; since for the most part they die before they have any knowledge of it. These men our author does not know what to make of; sometimes it is questionable whether they were Christians, and suggests that they were men of atheistical principles; and then again they are supposed to be Christians, and even might be Paedobaptists, notwithstanding this their manner of arguing. I am content he should reckon them what he pleases; but one would think they could not be any good friends to infant-baptism, that questioned the profitableness of baptism to infants, and brought so strong an objection to it.

4. It is further observed by me, that according to Austin the Pelagians denied baptism to the infants of believers, because they were holy. This is represented by this Gentleman as a mistake of mine, understanding what was spoken *hypothetically*, to be *absolutely* spoken. I have looked over the passage again, and am not convinced upon a second reading of it, nor by what this writer has advanced, of a mistake: the words are absolutely expressed and reasoned upon; "but, says the apostle, your children would be unclean, but now they are holy; therefore, say they (the Pelagians) the children of believers ought not now to be baptized." The observation our author makes, though he does not insist upon it, is very impertinent; that not infants but children are mentioned, and so may include the adult children of believers, and consequently make as much against adult-baptism as infant-baptism; since children in the text, on which the argument is grounded, are always by themselves understood of infants. Austin wonders that the Pelagians should talk after this manner, that holiness is derived from parents, and reasons upon it, when they deny that sin is originally derived from Adam: it is true, indeed, he presses them with an argument this Gentleman calls *ad hominem*, taken from their shutting up the kingdom of God to unbaptized infants; for though they believed that unbaptized infants would not perish, but have everlasting life, yet not enter the kingdom of God; absurdly distinguishing between the *kingdom of God*, and *eternal life*. What they were able to answer, or did answer to this, it is not easy to say; "it is a disadvantage, as our author says, that we have none of their writings entire, only scraps and quotations from them:" Perhaps as they had a singular notion, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized, though the infants of others should; they would, in answer to the above argument, say, that the infants of believers unbaptized enter the kingdom, though the unbaptized infants of others do not. I only guess this might be their answer, consistent with their principles: however, if I am mistaken in this matter, as I think I am not, it is in company with men of learning I am not ashamed to be among. The learned Daneus says^[37] "the Pelagians deny that baptism is to be administered to the children of *believers*," having plainly in view this passage of Austin's; and the very learned Forbesius^[38] brings in this as an objection to his sense of 1 Corinthians 7:14, "the Pelagians abused this saying of the apostle, that they might say, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized, as we read in Augustin."^[39]

5. The words quoted by me out of Jerome, I own, are spoken by way of supposition; but then they suppose a case that had been, was, and might be again; and it should be observed, that the supposition Jerome makes, is not a *neglect* of the baptism of infants, as this Gentleman suggests,

but a denial of it to them, a *refusing* to give it to them; which is expressive of a rejection of it, and of an opposition to it. So that from all these instances put together, we cannot but conclude that there were some persons that did oppose and reject infant-baptism in those times, and think it may be allowed, which is all we contend for; however, as I have said before, we are not very anxious about it. Mr. Marshall^[40] a favorite writer of our author's, says, some in those times questioned it (infant-baptism) as Augustin grants in his sermons *de verbis Apostol*, but does not refer us to the particular place; it seems to be his fourteenth sermon on that subject, entitled, *Concerning the baptism of infants, against the Pelagians*; where Austin tells us how he was led to the subject; and though he had no doubt about it, "yet some men raised disputes, which were now become frequent, and endeavored to subvert the minds of many;"^[41] by whom he seems to mean persons distinct from the Pelagians, since he represents them as having no doubt about it: and this is further confirmed by a passage out of the same discourse; "that infants are to be baptized, *let no one doubt* (which is an address to others, and implies, that either they did doubt of infant-baptism, or were in danger of it) since they doubt not, who in some respect contradict it;" which our author has placed as a motto in his title-page.

Austin, we allow, in this age, frequently speaks of infant-baptism as an ancient usage of the church, and as an apostolical tradition; but what proof does he give of it? what testimonies does he produce? does he produce any higher testimony than Cyprian? not one; who, it is owned, speaks of infant-baptism, but not as an apostolical tradition; Cyprian uses no such language: those phrases, which were understood and believed *from the beginning*, and what the church *always thought*, or anciently, held, are Austin's words, and not Cyprian's; and only express what Austin inferred and concluded from him: and besides, his testimony is appealed to, not so much for infant-baptism, the thing itself, as for the reason of it, original sin, which gave rise unto it in Cyprian's time: and it is for the proof of this, and not infant-baptism, that Austin himself refers to the *manifest faith of an apostle*; namely, to shew that not the flesh only, but the soul would be lost, and be brought into condemnation through the offense of Adam, if not quickened by the grace of Christ, for which he refers to Romans 5:18 and yet our author insinuates, that by this he did not consider the baptism of infants for original sin as a novel thing in Cyprian's time, but refers it to the authority of an apostle: and by the way, since Cyprian, the only witness produced by Austin, speaks not of infant-baptism as an ancient usage of the church, or an apostolic tradition, there is no agreement between his language and that of Origen, he is made to speak in his Latin translations, as this author elsewhere suggests; and it confirms the proof of his having been dealt unfairly with, since Cyprian, coming after him, uses no such language, nor does Austin himself ever refer unto him.

I have observed that there are many other things, which by Austin; and other ancient writers, are called apostolic traditions; such as infant-communion, the sign of the cross in baptism, the form of renouncing the devil and all his works, exorcism, trine immersion, the consecration of the water, anointing with oil in baptism, and giving a mixture of milk and honey to the baptized persons: and therefore if infant-baptism is received on this foot, these ought likewise; since there is as early and clear proof of them from antiquity, as of that: and my further view in mentioning these, was to observe, not only how *early*, but how *easily* these corruptions got into the church, as infant-baptism did.

This writer has thought fit to take notice only of one of these particulars, namely, infant-communion; and the evidence of this, he says, is not so full and so early as that of infant-baptism.

Now, let it be observed, that there is no proof of infant-baptism being practiced before Cyprian's time; nor does Austin refer to any higher testimony than his for the practice of it for original sin; and in his time infant-communion was in use beyond all contradiction: there is an instance of it given by himself, which I have referred to; and that is more than is or can be given of infant-baptism, which can only be deduced by consequences from that instance, and from Cyprian and his colleagues reasoning about the necessity of the administration of it to new-born children, he suggests that Austin expresses himself differently, when he is speaking of the one and of the other as an apostolic tradition; but if he does, it is in higher strains of infant-communion; for thus begin the passages, "if they pay any regard to the *apostolic authority*, or rather to the *Lord and Master of the apostles*, etc. and no man that remembers that he is a Christian, and of the catholic faith, *denies or doubts* that infants, without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in them, etc."

The *Punici Christiani*, which Austin speaks of, are not to be restrained, as they are by our author, to the Christians of Carthage, but take in other African Christians, particularly at Hippo, where Austin was bishop, and where they spoke the Punic language, and in many other places: and surely if Austin is a good witness for an apostolical tradition, who lived at the latter end of the *fourth* century; he must know what was the sense of the African Christians in his time, among whom he lived, and upon what they grounded their practice of infant-communion; which he says was upon an ancient and apostolic tradition.

The other rites and usages, he says, I make mention of, are spoken of by Basil as *unwritten traditions*; and infant-baptism is not mentioned among them, and so was considered as standing upon a better evidence and testimony: now, not to observe that I produce earlier authorities than Basil, for there apostolical traditions so called, even as early as Tertullian, the first man that spoke of infant-baptism; neither are infant-communion, sponsors at baptism, exorcism in it, and giving milk and honey at that time, mentioned by Basil among them; does it therefore follow that they stand upon a better foot than the rest? besides, since Apostolic tradition is distinguished from Scripture, by the author of *The baptism of infants a reasonable Service*, with whom I had to do; it can be considered in the controversy between us, no other than as an *unwritten tradition*. This writer further observes, that it does not appear that there unwritten traditions were ever put to the test, and stood the trial, particularly in the Pelagian controversy, as infant-baptism: it is manifest that the exorcisms and exsufflations used in baptism, and the argument from them, as much pinched, puzzled, and confounded the Pelagians, as ever infant-baptism did: and it is notorious, that signing with the sign of the cross has stood the test in all ages, from the beginning of it, and is continued to this day; and prevails not only among the Papists, but among Protestant churches. Upon the whole then, it is clear there is no *express mention* of infant-baptism in the *two first* centuries, no nor any *plain hint* of it, nor any *manifest reference* to it; and that there is no evidence of its being practiced till the *third* century; and that it is owned, it prevailed in the *fourth*: and so rests the state of the controversy.

A REPLY TO

**A DEFENSE OF THE DIVINE RIGHT
OF INFANT BAPTISM,**

By

Peter Clark, A.M. Minister at Salem

In A Letter To A Friend At Boston In New-England. To Which Are Added, Some Strictures On A Late Treatise, Called, A Fair And Rational Vindication Of The Right Of Infants To The Ordinance Of Baptism.

Written by David Bostwick, A.M.

Late Minister of the Presbyterian Church in the City of New-York

The Preface

It is necessary that the reader should be acquainted with the reason of the republication of the following treatise. In the year 1746, a pamphlet was printed at *Boston* in *New England*, called, "A brief Illustration and Confirmation of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism," written by Mr. *Dickinson*; which being industriously spread about in great numbers, to hinder the growth of the Baptist-Interest in those parts, it was sent over to me by some of our friends there, requesting an answer to it; which I undertook, and published in the year 1749, entitled, "The Divine Right of Infant-baptism examined and disproved." Upon which *Peter Clark*, A.M. Minister at *Salem* in *New England*, was employed to write against it, and which he did; and what he wrote was printed and published at *Boston* in 1752, called, "A Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism." This being sent over to me, I wrote a Reply, in a letter to a friend at *Boston*, in the year 1753, as the date of my letter shews, giving leave to make use of it, as might be thought fit; and which was printed and published at *Boston* in 1754, together with a Sermon of mine on Baptism preached at *Barbican*, 1750. The controversy lying beyond the seas, I chose it should continue there, and therefore never reprinted and republished my Reply here, though it has been solicited; but of late Mr. *Clark's* Defense has been sent over here, and published, and advertised to be sold; which is the only reason of my reprinting and republishing the following Reply; to which I have added some scriptures on a treatise of Mr. *Bostwick's* on the same subject, imported from *America*, with the above Defense, and here reprinted. The Paedobaptists are ever restless and uneasy, endeavoring to maintain and support, if possible, their unscriptural practice of Infant-baptism; though it is no other than a pillar of Popery; that by which antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations; is the basis of national churches, and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and the world, and keeps them together; nor can there be a full separation of the one from the other, nor a thorough

reformation in religion, until it is wholly removed: and though it has so long and largely obtained, and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when Infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world; when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive luster and purity; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper will be administered as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; all which will be accomplished, when *the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord, and his name one.*

A REPLY, ETC.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

SIR,

I Acknowledge the receipt of your Letter on the 22d of last *March*, and with it Mr. *Clark's Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism*, etc. which I have since cursorily read over; for I thought it a too great waste of time to give it a second reading. Nor will my engagement in a work of greater importance permit me to write a set and labored answer to it; nor am I willing to bestow so much time and pains as are necessary to cleanse that Augean stable, and remove all the dirt and rubbish this writer has collected together. The remarks I made in reading, I here send you. At first setting out, I soon found I must expect to be dealt *rudely* and *roughly* with, and accordingly prepared myself for it; and I assure you, Sir, I was not disappointed.

The first chapter of my book, which the above Gentleman has undertook to answer, is short, and only an *introduction*, observing the author's title, method, and occasion of writing the pamphlet before me. In Mr. *Clark's* Reply to which I observe;

1. That he is displeas'd at calling the ordinance of baptism as truly and properly administered, Believer's-baptism, and the pretended administration of it, to infants, Infant-sprinkling; whereas this is calling things by their proper names: it is with great propriety, we call baptism as administered to believers, the proper subjects of it, Believer's-baptism; and with the same propriety we call that which is administered to infants, Infant-sprinkling; from the nature of the action performed, and the persons on whom it is performed. Does this Gentleman think, we shall be so complaisant to suit our language and way of speaking to his mistaken notion and practice? though indeed we too often do, through the common use of phrases which obtain.

2. He is unwilling to allow of any increase of the Baptist interest in *New England*, either at *Boston* or in the country; whereas I am credibly informed, and you, Sir, I believe, can attest the truth of it, that there have been considerable additions to the Baptist interest at *Boston*; and that many hundreds in the country have been baptized within a few years

3. He says, it is an egregious mistake, that the ministers of *New England* applied to Mr. *Dickinson* (the author of the pamphlet I wrote against) to write in favor of Infant-sprinkling; and he is certain that not one of the ministers in *Boston* made application to him, (which was never affirmed,) and is persuaded it was not at the motion of any ministers in *New England*, that he wrote his Dialogue, but of his own mere motion; and yet he is obliged to correct himself by a marginal note, and acknowledge that it was wrote through ministerial influence.

4. This writer very early gives a specimen of his talent at reasoning; from the rejection of Infant-baptism, as an human invention, he argues to the rejection of baptism itself, as such; that if Infant-baptism is entirely an human invention, and a rite not to be observed, then baptism itself is an human invention, and not to be observed: this is an argument drawn up *secundum artem*, like a master of arts; and to pretend to answer so strong an argument, and set aside such a masterly way of reasoning, would be weakness indeed!

5. It being observed of the Dialogue-writer, "that he took care, not to put such arguments and objections into the mouth of his antagonist as he was not able to answer;" this Gentleman rises up, and blusters at a great rate, and defies the most zealous, learned, and subtle of the Antipaedobaptists to produce any other arguments and objections against Infant-baptism, for matter or substance, different from, or of greater weight, than those produced in the Dialogue; but afterwards lowers his topsail, and says, that the design of the author of that pamphlet was to represent in a few plain words, the most material objections against Infant-baptism, with the proper answers to them; and at last owns, that a great deal more has been said by the Antipaedobaptists.

The *second* chapter, you know, Sir, treats of "the consequences of embracing Believer's-baptism; such as, renouncing Infant-baptism, vacating the covenant, and renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel;" that Christ must have forsaken his church for many ages, and not made good the promise of his presence, and that there now can be no baptism in the world. In Mr. *Clark's* Reply to what I have said on those heads, I observe the following things.

The first consequence is the renunciation of Infant-baptism; which consequence, to put him out of all doubt and pain, about my owning or not owning it, I readily allow, follows upon a person's being sprinkled in infancy, embracing adult-baptism by immersion; in which he is to be justified, the one being an invention of man's, the other according to the word of God; nor is there any thing this Gentleman has said, that proves such a renunciation to be an evil.

1. He is very wrong in supposing it must be my intention, that the age of a person, or the time of receiving baptism, are essential to the ordinance. The Antipaedobaptists do not confine this ordinance to any age, but admit old or young to it, if proper subjects; let a man be as old as *Methuselah*, if he has not faith in Christ, or cannot give a satisfactory account of it, he will not be admitted to this ordinance by reason of his age; on the other hand, if a little child is called by grace, and converted, and gives a reason of the hope that is in it, of which there have been instances; such will not be refused this ordinance of baptism. The essentials to the right administration of baptism, amongst other things, are, that it be performed by immersion, without which it cannot be baptism; and that it be administered upon a profession of faith; neither of which are to be found in Infant sprinkling.

2. It is in vain and to no purport in this writer to urge, that infants are capable of baptism; so are bells, and have been baptized by the Papists. But it is said, infants are capable of being cleansed by the blood of Christ; of being regenerated; of being entered into covenant, and of having the seal of it administered to them. And what of all this? are they capable of understanding the nature, design, and use of the ordinance, when administered to them? are they capable of professing faith in Christ, which is a pre-requisite to this ordinance? are they capable of answering a good conscience towards God in it? are they capable of submitting to it in obedience to the will of Christ, from a love to him, and with a view to his glory? they are not. But,

3. It seems, in baptism, infants are dedicated unto God; wherefore to renounce Infant baptism, is for a man to renounce his solemn dedication to God; and much is said to prove that parents have a Right to dedicate their children to him. It will be allowed, that parents have a right to devote or dedicate their children to the Lord; that is, to give them up to him in prayer; or to pray for them, as *Abraham* did for *Ishmael*, that they may *live in his light*; and it is their duty to *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*; but they have no direction to baptize them, nor warrant to dedicate them by baptism; nor is baptism an ordinance of dedication, either of a man's self, or of others; a dedication ought to be previous to baptism; and Believers first give up themselves to the Lord, and then are baptized in his name.

4. After all, a renunciation of baptism in infancy must be a matter of great impiety, because witches are solicited by the Devil to renounce it, in order to their entering into confederacy with them. I thought, Sir, your country of *New-England* had been cured of these fooleries about witchcraft, and diabolical confederacies long ago, but I find the distemper continues. This argument, I own, is unanswerable by me; I must confess myself quite a stranger to this dark business.

5. What the story of Mr. *Whiston* is told for, is not easy to say; since it seems, he did not renounce his Infant-baptism: it looks, by the reference, as if it was intended to suggest, that an Antitrinitarian could not so well shelter himself among a people of any denomination, as the Baptists; whereas the ordinance as administered by them, as strongly militates against such a principle, as it does by being administered by Paedobaptists: but it may be, it is to recommend a spirit of moderation among us, to receive unbaptized persons into our communion by this example; but then unhappy for this writer, so it is, that the congregation Dr. *Foster* was pastor of, and Mr. *Whiston* joined himself to, is, and always was of the Paedobaptist denomination, and have for their present minister one of the Presbyterian persuasion. The *second* consequence of receiving the principle of adult-baptism, and acting up to it, is, vacating the covenant between God and the person baptized in infancy, into which he was brought by his baptism. Now you will observe, Sir,

1. That Mr. *Clark* has offered nothing in proof of infants being brought into covenant with God, by baptism; and indeed I cannot see how he can consistently with himself undertake it; since he makes covenant relation to God, the main ground of infants right to baptism; and therefore they must be in it before their baptism, and consequently are not brought into it by it; wherefore since they are not brought into covenant by it, that cannot be vacated by their renouncing of it.

2. It being observed, that no man can be brought into the covenant of grace by baptism, since it is from everlasting, and all interested in it were so early in covenant, and consequently previous to their baptism; this writer lets himself with all his might and main to oppose this sentiment, that the

covenant of grace was from everlasting; this, he says, is unscriptural, irrational, and contrary to scripture. But if Christ was set up from everlasting as mediator; for only as such could he be set up (Prov. 8:12); if there was a promise of eternal life made before the world began, and this promise was in Christ, who then existed as the federal head and representative of his people, in whom they were chosen so early, to receive all promises and grace for them (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1); and if grace was given to them in him before the world was, and they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him so early (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3, 4); then, surely, there must be a covenant transaction between the Father and the Son on their account so early; for could there be all this and no covenant subsisting? The distinction between a covenant of redemption and a covenant of grace, is without any foundation in the word of God. Nor is this notion irrational; two parties were so early existing, when the covenant was made; *Jehovah the Father* was one, and *the Son of God* the other, in the name of his people; who, though they had not then a personal, yet had a representative being in Christ their head; and this was sufficient for them to have grace given them in him before the world was.

His metaphysical arguments from eternal acts being imminent, will equally militate against eternal election, as against an eternal covenant; and perhaps this writer has as little regard to the one, as he has to the other: nor is this notion contrary to scripture; for though the covenant is called a *new* and *second* covenant, yet only with respect to the former administration of it, under the legal dispensation; and both administrations of it, under the law and under the gospel, are only so many exhibitions and manifestations of the covenant under different forms, which was made in eternity. The scriptures which promise the *making* of a covenant, only intend a clearer manifestation and application of the covenant of grace to persons to whom it belongs; things are said in scripture to be *made*, when they are made manifest or declared (Acts 2:36): it is a previous interest in the covenant of grace that gives persons a right to the blessings of it; and the application of these blessings, such as pardon of sin, etc. flows from this previous interest: nor does this notion render the ministry of the word and the operation of the Spirit for that end useless, and superfluous; but on the contrary so early an interest in the covenant of grace is the ground and reason of the Spirit being sent down in time to make the word effectual to salvation. Nor is the state of unregeneracy, the elect of God are in by nature, inconsistent with this eternal covenant; since that covenant supposes it, and provides for, promises, and secures the regeneration and sanctification of all interested in it; assuring them that *the heart of stone shall be taken away, and an heart of flesh given them; a new heart and a new Spirit, yea the Spirit of God shall be put into them, and the laws of God written in their minds.*

The text in Ephesians 2:12. describes the Gentiles only, who were strangers from the covenants of promise; the covenant of circumcision, and the covenant at *Sinai*; covenants peculiar to the Jews; as well as strangers to the scriptures, which contain the promise of the Messiah; all which might be, and was, and yet be interested in the covenant of grace. If this is to be an Antinomian, I am quite content to be called one; such bug-bear names do not frighten me. It is not worth while to take notice of this man's Neonomian rant; of the terms and conditions of the covenant; of its being a rule of moral government over man in a flare of unregeneracy, brought hereby into a state of probation; which turns the covenant into a law, and is what the Neonomians call a *remedial* law, (as this writer calls the covenant a *remedial* one) a law of milder terms; nor of his Arminian strokes in making the endeavors and acts of men to be the turning point of their salvation, and conversion, as being foreign to the controversy, in hand.

3. This writer makes a distinction between a man's being in covenant in respect of the spiritual dispensation of the grace of it, and in respect of the external administration of it: by the spiritual dispensation of it, I apprehend, he means the application of spiritual blessings in the covenant to persons regenerated and converted, by which they must appear to be in it; and in this sense, all the persons, I have instanced in, must be manifestly in the covenant of grace, previous to baptism: and consequently not brought into it by it. By the external administration of it, I suppose, he means the administration of the ordinances of the gospel, particularly baptism; and then it is only saying a man is not baptized before he is baptized; which no body will contest with him.

4. No man, I observe, is entered into the covenant of grace by himself, or others; this is an act of the sovereign grace of God, who says, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*; which this writer owns, though not exclusive of human endeavors; as if God could not take any into his covenant without their own endeavors; such wretched divinity deserves the utmost contempt. Since the above phrase, *I will be their God*, etc. is a proof of the sovereign grace of God in bringing men into covenant; he hopes it will be allowed that a like phrase, *I will be the God of thy seed*, will be admitted as strongly to conclude the reception of the Infant-children of believers into covenant. I answer, whenever it appears that there is such an article in the covenant of grace, that so runs, that God will be the God of the natural Seed of believers as such, it will be admitted; and whereas I have observed, that the phrase of *bringing into the bond of the covenant*, which the Paedobaptists often make use of, is but once mentioned in scripture, and then ascribed to God; this, as it no ways contradicts a being in covenant from everlasting, so it fails not of being a proof of the sovereign grace of God in that act. By the *bond of the covenant*, is not meant faith and repentance on man's part; which some stupidly call the terms and conditions of the covenant, when they are parts and blessings of it; but the everlasting love of God, which is the force and security of it, and which says men under obligation to serve their covenant-God; and to be brought into it, is to be brought into a comfortable view of interest in it, and to an open participation of the blessings of it; which is all according to, and consistent with the eternal constitution of it.

5. The covenant of grace can never be vacated, since it is everlasting, *ordered in all things and sure*: this is owned by our author in respect of its divine constitution, and of the immutability of the divine promise, to all under the spiritual dispensation of it; but there are others who are only in it by a visible and baptismal dedication; and these may make void the covenant between God and them; and this it seems is the case of the greatest part of infants in covenant. Now let me retort this Gentleman's argument upon himself, which he makes use of against the covenant being from everlasting. "Those, whom God admits into the covenant of grace, have an interest in the benefits of that covenant, pardon of sin, the gift of the Spirit, reconciliation, adoption, etc. for it is a sort of contradiction to say, that any man is admitted into the covenant, and yet debarred from an interest in all the privileges of it." Now, either infants are admitted into the covenant of grace, or they are not; if they are, then they have an interest in the benefits of it, pardon of sin, and the other blessings, and so shall all certainly be saved with an everlasting salvation, and not apostatize, as it seems the greatest part of them do; for to say they are in the external, but not in the spiritual part of the covenant, is to make a poor business of their covenant-interest indeed. The instance of *Simon Magus*, which he thinks I have forgot, will not make for him, nor against me; it is a clear proof, that a man is not brought into covenant by baptism; since though baptism was administered to this person in the pure, primitive way, by an apostolic man, yet he was *in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity*.

3dly, The other *three* consequences following upon the renouncing of Infant-baptism, as renouncing all other ordinances, the promise of Christ's presence not made good, and no baptism now in the world, are in some fort given up, and are allowed not to be clear, at least not alike clear; and are only adverted to in a general way, and some expressions of mine catched at, and remarked upon, and these mistaken or perverted.

1. I observe, this author repeats his former mistake, that we make age essential to baptism, which is but circumstantial; and then uses an argument from the lesser to the greater, as he thinks, that if a defect in such a circumstance nullifies the ordinance, then much more the want of proper administrators: but it is not age that we object to, but a want of understanding, and faith, and an incapacity to make a profession of it, as well as the mode of administration; things of greater importance in this ordinance; at least they are so with us. However, it is kind in this Gentleman to direct us how we may avoid this inconvenience his argument has thrown us into, by exercising a little more moderation and charity for Infant-baptism; and upon this foot he seems to be willing to compound the matter with us.

2. As to the presence of Christ with his church and ministers, it is sufficient to make that good, that he grants it where his Church is, and wheresoever he has a people, be they more, or fewer, and wheresoever his ordinances are administered according to his direction; but he has no where promised, that he will have a continued succession of visible congregated churches. Certain indeed it is, that he will have a number of chosen ones in all ages; that his invisible church, built on Christ the rock, shall not fail; and he will have a seed to serve him, or some particular persons, whom he will reserve to himself from a general corruption; but that there shall be gathered always into a visible gospel church-state, is no where promised; and for many hundreds of years it will be hard to find any one such church, unless the people in the valleys of *Piedmont* are allowed to be such.

3. This writer is not willing to admit such a supposition, that any of the laws and institutions of Christ have failed, ceased, or been annulled in any one age, and much more for several ages together; but, besides the ordinance of baptism, which through the change of mode and subjects, together with the impure mixtures of salt, oil, and spittle, and other superstitious rites, which became quite another thing than what was instituted by Christ, and practiced by his apostles; the ordinance of the Lord's-supper was so sadly perverted and corrupted, as to be a mere *mass* indeed of blasphemy and idolatry; in the communion of which the gracious presence of Christ cannot be thought to be enjoyed: and yet this continued some hundreds of years; only now and then some single persons rose up, and bore a testimony against it, who for a while had their followers.

4. He seems to triumph from Dr. *Wall's* account of things, that there never was, nor is, to this day, any *national church* in the world but Paedobaptists, either among the Greeks, or Roman Catholics, or the Reformed; and that Antipaedobaptism never obtained to be the established religion of any country in the world. We do not envy his boast; we know that national churches are good for nothing, as not being agreeable to the rule of the divine word; one small church or congregation, gathered out of the world by the grace of God, according to gospel-order, and whole principles and practices are agreeable to the word of God, is to be preferred before all the national churches in the world.

5. According to this Gentleman's own account of the English Antipaedobaptists, there could be none to administer the ordinance to them in their way; since those that came from *Holland*, it seems, gained no proselytes, but were soon extinct, being cruelly persecuted and destroyed; so that it was necessary they should send abroad for an administrator, or make use of an unbaptized one: but which way soever they took, they are able to justify their baptism on as good a foundation as the Reformers are able to justify theirs received from the Papists, with all the fooleries, corruptions, and superstitious rites attending it.

My *third* chapter, you will remember, Sir, is concerning *The Antiquity of Infant-baptism*, and the practice of the Waldenses.

I. The enquiry is, whether Infant-baptism constantly and universally obtained in the truly primitive church, which truly pure and primitive church must be the church in the times of Christ and his apostles; since towards the close of those times, and in the two following Ages, there arose such a see of impure men, both for principle and practice, under the Christian name, as never were known in the world: now by an induction of particular instances of churches in this period of time, it does not appear, that Infant-baptism at all obtained. In Mr. *Clark's* reply to which, I observe,

1. That he says, the evidence of Infant-baptism is not pretended to lie in the history of fact, or in any express mention of it in the New Testament. That the penman of the *Acts of the Apostles* did not descend to so minute a particular, as the baptizing of infants,—and that the baptism of the *adult* was of the greatest account to be recorded.

2. Yet he thinks there are pretty plain intimations of it in most of the characters instanced in, and particularly in the church at *Jerusalem*; which he endeavors to make good by a criticism on Acts 2:41. And it is pleasant to observe, how he toils and labors to find out an antecedent to a relative not expressed in the text; for the words, *to them*, are not in the original; it is only *and the same day there were added about three thousand souls*; or, the same day there was an addition of about three thousand souls; and all this pains is taken to support a whimsical notion, that this addition was made, not to the church, but to the new converts; and by a wild fancy he imagines, that infants are included among the three thousand souls that were added: his argument from verse 39. and the other instances mentioned, as well as some other passages alleged, such as Luke 18:16; Acts 15:10 and 1 Corinthians 7:14 as they come over in the debate again, are referred to their proper places. But,

3. It must not be forgotten, what is said, that this may be a reason why Infant-baptism is so sparingly mentioned, (not mentioned at all) because the custom of the Jews to baptize the children of proselytes to their religion with their parents, was well known; and there can be little doubt, that the apostles proceeded by the same rule in admitting the infants of Christian proselytes into the Christian covenant by baptism. This is building Infant-baptism on a bog indeed; since this Jewish custom is not pretended to be of divine institution; and so a poor argument in *the Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism*; and at most and best, is only a tradition of the elders, which body of traditions was inveighed against by Christ and his apostles; and besides, this particular tradition does not appear to have obtained so early among the Jews themselves, as the times of the apostles, and therefore could be no rule for them to proceed by; and about which the first reporters of it disagree, the one affirming there was such a custom, and the other denying it; and had it then

obtained, it is incredible the apostles should make this the rule of their procedure in administering an ordinance of Christ and after all, was this the case, this would be a reason for, and not against the express mention of Infant-baptism by the divine historian; since it is necessary that in agreement with this Jewish custom, some instance or instances of Christian proselytes being baptized with their children should be recorded, as an example for Christians in succeeding ages to go by. But,

4. A supposition is made of some Paedobaptists sent into an heathen country to preach, and giving an account of their success, declaring that some families were baptized, such a man and all his, such another and his household; upon which a question is asked, who could raise a doubt whether any infants were baptized in those several families? To which I answer, there is no doubt to be made of it, that Paedobaptists would baptize infants; and if the apostles were Paedobaptists, which is the thing to be proved, they no doubt baptized infants too; but if no other account was given of the baptizing of households, than what the apostles give of them, Infant-baptism would still remain a doubt. For who can believe, that the brethren in *Lydia's* house whom the apostles comforted, and of whom her household consisted, or that the Jailor's household, that believed and rejoiced with him, or the household of *Stephanas*, who addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, were infants? however it seems, as there is no evidence of fact for Infant-baptism in the New Testament, it is referred to the testimony of the ancient fathers; and to them then we must go.

II. The testimony of the fathers of the three first centuries is chiefly to be attended to; and whereas none in the first century are produced in favor of Infant-baptism, we must proceed to the second. In it, I observe, there is but one writer, that it is pretended speaks of Infant-baptism, and that is *Irenaeus*, and but one passage in him; and this is at best of doubtful meaning, and by some learned men judged spurious; as when he says, Christ "came to save all, all, I say, who are regenerated (or born again) unto God; Infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." Now, admitting the chapter in which this passage stands, is genuine and not spurious, which yet is not a clear case; it is objectionable to, as being a translation, as the most of this author's works are, and a very foolish, uncouth and barbarous one it is, as learned men observe; wherefore there is reason to believe that justice is not done him; and it lies not upon us, but upon our antagonists that urge this passage against us, to produce the original in support of it: but allowing it to be a just translation, yet what is there of Infant-baptism in it? Not a word. Yes, to be *regenerated*, or *born again*, is to be baptized; this is the sense of the ancients, and particularly of *Irenaeus*, it is said; but how does this appear? Dr. *Wall* has given an instance of it out of Lib. 3 chap. 19 where this ancient writer says, "when he gave the disciples the commission of regenerating (or rather of regeneration) unto God, he said unto them, *Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,*" where the commission of regenerating, adds Dr. *Wall*, plainly means the commission of baptizing; whereas, it more plainly means the commission of teaching the doctrine of regeneration by the spirit, and the necessity of that unto salvation, and in order to baptism; and which was the first and principal part of the apostles' commission, as the very order of the words shews; and certain it is, that *Irenaeus* uses the word *Regeneration* in a different sense from baptism,^[1] as an inward work, agreeable to the scriptures; and besides, such a sense of his words contended for, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false, as if Christ came to save all, and only such, who are baptized unto God; whereas he came to save baptized and unbaptized ones, Old and New Testament saints; and many no doubt are saved by him who never were baptized at all, and some baptized not saved; but on the other hand nothing is more true than

that he came to save all, and only those, who are regenerated by the spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age; and which is clearly this ancient writer's sense, and so no proof of Infant-baptism. To support this notion of regeneration signifying baptism so early, our author urges a passage cited by me from *Justin*; who, speaking of converted persons, says, "they are brought by us where water is, and they are regenerated in the same way of regeneration as we have been regenerated; for they are then washed in water *in the name of the Father*, etc."

Now, it is evident, that those persons are not represented as regenerated by baptism; because they are spoken of before as believers and converted ones; and it is as clear, that their baptism is distinguished from their regeneration, and not the same thing; for *Justin* uses the former, as an argument of the latter; which, if the same, his sense must be, they were baptized, because they were baptized; which is making him guilty of what Logicians call proving *Idem per Idem*: whereas, *Justin's* sense, consistent with himself, and the practice of the primitive churches, is, that those persons when brought to the water, having made a profession of their regeneration, were owned and declared regenerated persons, as is manifest from their being admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism: and that *Justin* speaks of the baptism of the *adult*, is owned by this writer; though he thinks it is unquestionable, that he speaks only of such who were converted from Heathenism; and is sure of it, that there were none among them born of Christian parents; this he will find a hard talk, with all his confidence, to prove. And he has ventured to produce a passage out of *Justin*, as giving suffrage to Infant-baptism in the second century; and it is this from Dr. *Wall*; "We also, who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which *Enoch* and those like him observed; and we have received it by baptism, by the mercy of God, because we were sinners, and it is enjoined to all persons to receive it the same way."

Now let it be observed, that this spiritual circumcision, whatever *Justin* means by it, can never design baptism; since the patriarch *Enoch*, and others like him, observed it; and since with Christians it is received *by* baptism, he says; and therefore must be different from it: and, after all, not a word of infants in the passage; nor is baptism called a spiritual circumcision; nor, as our author elsewhere stiles it, Christian circumcision, in Colossians 2:11 since the circumcision there spoken of, is called *a circumcision made without hands*, which surely cannot be said of baptism. In short, I must once more triumph, if it may be so called, and say, this is all the evidence, the undoubted evidence of Infant-baptism from the fathers of the two first centuries. Proceed we to

The third century; and the fathers of this, brought into the controversy about baptism are *Tertullian*, *Origen*, and *Cyprian*. The first of these, is the first writer we know of that ever made mention of Infant-baptism; and he dissuades from it, and advises to defer baptism to riper years; and is therefore claimed on our side of the question: nor can he be made to unsay what he has said; and therefore is traduced as a man of heterodox notions, and of odd and strange opinions; and, it seems, afterwards turned Montanist; and all this is said, to weaken the credit of his testimony, when not a word is said of *Origen's* gross errors and monstrous absurdities: the reason is, because it seems he was a Paedobaptist, and *Tertullian* an Antipaedobaptist; though it is some comfort to this writer, that he was not quite so bad as the present Antipaedobaptists are. As to *Origen*, there are *three passages* quoted out of him; to which we object, not only, that they are *translations*, the fidelity of which cannot be depended upon, when there is much of this writer still extant in the language in which he wrote, and yet nothing from thence produced; but that there are *interpolated*, and

confessedly so. His homilies on *Leviticus* and exposition of the epistle to the *Romans*, from whence two of the passages are taken, were translated by *Ruffinus*, who owns he took liberty to *add* of his own to them; so that, as *Erasmus*^[2] *observes*, it is uncertain whether one reads *Origen* or *Ruffinus*; and *Scultetus*^[3] says the same thing; and *Huetius*, who has given us a good edition of the Greek commentaries of this father, and well understood him, says,^[4] that "his writings are so corrupted by him, that you are at a loss to find *Origen* in *Origen*, and so deformed and unlike the original, they can scarce be known;" and one of these particular passages *Vossius*^[5] takes to be an interpolation, and so of the greater force against the Pelagians, because *Ruffinus* the translator and interpolator was inclined to them: the homilies on *Luke*, out of which is the other passage, are said to be translated by *Jerom*, of whom *Du Pin* says,^[6] that his versions are not more exact than the other's; so no credit is to be given to them, nor are they to be depended on. *Cyprian* is the next that is produced, and it will be allowed that Infant-baptism began to be practiced in his time in some churches, though it seems to be an upstart notion; since it was not till then determined at what time it should be administered; and also at the same time, and in the same churches, Infant-communion was practiced; of which *Cyprian* gives an instance; and that is more than is, or can be given of the practice of Infant-baptism so early; and if his testimony is of any weight for the one, it ought to be of the same for the other; and if infants are admitted to baptism, it is but reasonable they should partake of the Lord's-supper, and especially as there is as early antiquity for the one as for the other.

The quotations out of *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Optatus*, *Ambrose*, *Chrysostom*, and *Austin*, fathers of the fourth century, which Mr. *Clark* has collected from Dr. *Wall*, might have been spared; seeing this does not come into his own account of the truly primitive church; and since it is not denied, Infant-baptism obtained in it; and yet it is certain, there were persons in this age against it, as will be observed hereafter; nor was *Pelagius*, in this age, so pressed and puzzled with the argument taken from it in favor of original sin; since it was not contrary to his doctrine, who allowed baptism to be administered to them "on account of the kingdom of God, but not for forgiveness of sin;" and the controversy did not lead to dispute about *the subject*, but the *end* of baptism.

The next thing, you will remember, Sir, brought into the controversy, is, whether the practice of Infant-baptism was called in question before the mad-men of *Munster* let themselves against it. As to the troubles in *Germany*, and in *Munster* itself, it is certain beyond all contradiction, that they were begun by Paedobaptists, and whilst they were such; and as for the German Anabaptists, as they are called, who joined with them, they were Sprinklers, and not Baptists, and so belong rather to this writer's party, than to us; but be this as it will, nothing in the controversy, depends upon that; the state of the case is, whether Infant-baptism was called in question, or made matter of doubt of before there men opposed it; and here I observe,

1. That it is allowed there were debates about Infant-baptism before the affair of *Munster*, and between that and the reformation; by which it appears that it was quickly opposed after the reformation begun.
2. The letter to *Erasmus* out of *Bohemia* shews, that there were a people there near one hundred years before the reformation, who baptized anew, in mere water, such as came over to their sect: this those people did, as our author would have it, not because they judged baptism in infancy invalid, but what was received in the corrupt way of the church of *Rome*. This he says after Dr.

Wall, (though with the Doctor it is uncertain which was the case) inclining to the latter. But it should be observed, that there is no proof from any ancient history, that these people, or any Protestants and reformers that retained Infant-baptism, did, upon leaving the church of *Rome*, reject the baptism of that church, and receive a new one; and besides, *Thomas Waldensis*,^[7] who lived and wrote at this very time, affirms, that there were a people in *Bohemia* then, that maintained that "believers children were not to be baptized, and that baptism was to no purpose administered to them;" to which I would add the testimony of *Luther*,^[8] who says, "the *Waldenses* in *Bohemia*, ground the sacrament of baptism upon the person's faith; and for that reason, they annihilate the baptizing of children; for they say, children must be taught before they be baptized."

2. This Gentleman is not well pleased with Dr. *Wall* in making this concession, that the Petrobrusians were Antipaedobaptists; though it is some comfort to him, that he tells him, that their opinion seems to have been in a short time extinguished and forgotten. But this opinion of theirs not only continued among *Henry* and his followers, who succeeded the Petrobrusians, but among the people afterwards called Waldenses; who to this day own *Peter Bruis* for one of their Barbs or Parrots, as will be seen hereafter. However, that we may have no credit from these people, they are branded as denying the other ordinance of the Lord's Supper; and as saying, it is not to be administered since Christ's time. But what Dr. *Wall*^[9] afterwards cites from the abbot of *Clugny*, will serve to explain this, and shew, that their meaning is only, that the real presence of Christ in the supper, was only at the time when it was administered by him to the disciples; who makes them to say, "the body of Christ was only once made by himself the supper, before his passion, and was only, namely at this time, given to his disciples; since that time it was never made by any one, nor given to any one;" or as it is expressed from the same popish writer by Dr. *Allix*,^[10]

"The fourth (article ascribed by the abbot to the Petrobrusians) consisted not only in denying the truth of the body and blood of our Lord, which is offered up every day, and continually by the sacrament of the church; but also in maintaining, that it was nothing, and ought not to be offered." Upon which the Doctor makes this remark: "The fourth heresy is expressed in very odious terms, and after the popish manner, who own nothing to be real in the sacrament, if the flesh of Jesus Christ and his blood be not there in substance; and who do not believe he is present at the sacrament upon any other account, but as he is offered up to God before he is eaten." It was the *real presence* in the supper, and not that itself, these people denied; so that they were brave champions for the purity of both ordinances, equally rejecting Infant-baptism and the doctrine of transubstantiation.

3. As for the other instances of persons denying Infant-baptism after *Peter Bruis*, produced by me; this writer, from Dr. *Wall*, would fain fasten the charge of Manicheism upon them, and so as denying all water-baptism; I say, from Dr. *Wall*, for what he here says, and indeed there is scarce any thing in this whole chapter about the antiquity of Infant-baptism, but what is borrowed from him, this Gentleman having no stock of his own; that, in fact, instead of answering Mr. *Clark*, I am answering Dr. *Wall*. As for those *Evervinus* writes of to *Bernard*, about the year 1140, there he observes, from Dr. *Wall*, held a tenet which shews them to be Manichees; though *Evervinus*^[11] distinguishes them from the Manichees, namely, "all marriage they call fornication, except that which was between two virgins;" but this was not one of the principles of the Manichees, who condemned all marriage; whereas these allowed of the marriage of persons who had never been married before; they only condemned second marriage; a notion which had prevailed with some of

the Christian fathers before the Manichees were in being; and this was the notion of some of the *apostolics*, and very probably of them all, the same *Bernard* makes mention of; and who, very likely, as I have observed, were the followers of *Henry*; and against these, this author has nothing of Manicheism: Here Dr. *Wall* fails him; and here it may be remarked what *Mezeray* says, "in the year 1163, there were two sorts of heretics; the one ignorant and loose, who were a sort of Manichees; the other more learned, and remote from such filthiness, who held much the same opinions as the Calvinists, and were called Henricians;" so that the followers of *Henry* were a distinct people from the Manichees; but as for those the Bishop of *Arles* takes notice of, our author's remark upon them is, "it *may be said*, these heretics *might be* some of "the Manichean sect;" fine proof indeed! what he farther adds is more probable, "as perhaps they were some remains of the Petrobrusians;" so that it appears, that their opinion, which seems to have been in a short time extinguished and forgotten, continued however to the year 1215. As for the Gascoiners, that came over into *England* in the year 1158, and asserted, that infants ought not to be baptized till they come to the age of understanding; this, our author says, is no more than what a Manichee might say then, and a Quaker *now*; though they both disown all water-baptism. What! to say, that infants ought not to be baptized *till* they come to the age of understanding? is this talking like a Manichee or a Quaker? Does not this suppose that they may be baptized, when they come to the age of understanding, and know what they do? But this writer adds, it appears that these rejected both the sacraments of the New Testament, detecting *holy baptism*, and the *Eucharist*: so they did, they detested Infant-baptism as an human invention, and transubstantiation as an idol of the Pope of *Rome*.

4. To what I have said concerning *Bruno* and *Berengarius*, and their opposition to Infant-baptism 100 years before the Petrobrusians, I would only add; that *Peter Bruis* was not the author of a new sect, though his followers were so called by the Papists, to suggest that they were so; whereas, they were the same with the Berengarians, and held the same principles as the Berengarians did, both with respect to baptism and the Lord's-Supper; and what were their sentiments concerning these are well known.

5. *Gundulphus* and his followers, another instance of persons denying Infant-baptism as early as the year 1025, are represented as Manichees and Quakers, in the point of baptism; and both Mr. *Stennett* and myself are charged with great unfairness, partiality and disingenuity, in leaving out what Dr. *Allix* has said concerning these men, namely, "that in the same examination, being further interrogated, these men confessed, that they thought water-baptism of no use or necessity to any one, infants or adult."[\[12\]](#) This is cited from Dr. *Wall*, an author not always to be depended upon, and particularly here; for Dr. *Allix* gives no account of any further interrogation of these men, by *Gerard* bishop of *Cambray*, as is suggested; nor are these words to be found in him; for though the men at their first, and only interrogation, speak of the non-necessity and unavailableness of baptism to salvation; and, as Dr. *Allix* observes, said some things slightly of baptism, in opposition to the prevailing notions of those times, about the absolute necessity and efficacy of baptism to salvation; yet he is quite clear, that they were for the thing itself: "It is easy to judge, says he,[\[13\]](#) that they looked upon baptism only as a mystical ceremony, the end of which was to express the engagement of him who is baptized, and the vow he makes to live holy." *Gundulphus*, adds he, "seeing them, (the popish priests) assert, that whosoever was baptized could never be damned, falls to an indifference for baptism; thinking it sufficient to keep to the essentials of that sacrament." From

whence it is plain, he did not deny it, nor disuse it; and upon the whole it is evident, Dr. *Wall* has abused Mr. *Stennett*, and this Gentleman both him and myself.

6. It is observed, that a large stride is taken by me from the *Eleventh* to the *Fourth* century, not being able in the space of more than 600 years to find one instance of an opposer of Infant-baptism: this will not seem so strange to those who know what a time of ignorance this was; partly through the prevalence of popery, and partly through the inundation of the barbarous nations, which brought a flood of darkness upon the empire; and very few witnesses arose against the superstitions of the church of some; yet there were some in the valleys of *Piedmont*, even from the times of the apostles, and during this interval, as learned men have observed, that bore their testimony against corruptions in doctrine and practice; among which, this of Infant-baptism must be reckoned one; and whole successors, as we have seen already in the *Berengarians*, and the *Petrobrusians*, and will be seen again in the *Waldenses*, bore witness against this innovation.

7. Though I did not insist upon the *Pelagians* and others being against Infant-baptism, which some have allowed; this writer is pleased to reproach me with a good-will to admit such heretics, as our predecessors; and this is not the only instance of this sort of reflection; whereas truth is truth, let it be espoused by whom it will; and it might be retorted, that Infant-baptism has been practiced by the worst of heretics, and retained by the man of sin and his followers in all the *Antichristian* states; and this writer thinks it worth his pains to rescue the above heretics and schismatics out of our hands; and yet, after all, some of the followers of *Pelagius* at least argued, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized; and that for this reason, because they were holy, as [\[14\]](#) *Austin* affirms; and who also observes, [\[15\]](#) that some other patrons argued against it, and the unprofitableness of it to infants, who for the most part died before they knew any thing of it; and *Jerom.* [\[16\]](#) his contemporary, supposes it, and reasons upon it, that some Christians refused to give baptism to their children. So that even in the *fourth* century, though Infant-baptism greatly prevailed, yet it was not so general, as that not one man contemporary with *Austin* can be produced, as setting himself against it, as our author avers; nay *Stephen Marshall*, a great stickler for Infant-baptism, in his famous sermon on this subject, [\[17\]](#) owns, that some in the times of *Austin* questioned it, and refers to a discourse of his in proof of it; and the canon of the council at *Carthage*, produced by me, notwithstanding all that this writer says, is a full proof of the same. For surely, no man in his senses can ever think, that a council consisting of all the bishops in *Africa*, should agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion with them about Infant-baptism; only thought it should not be administered to them as soon as born, but be deferred till they were eight days old; they that can believe this, can believe any thing; and besides, is not a child of eight days old a child newly born? Lastly, after all, *Tertullian*, in the beginning of the *third* century, as he was the first we know of that made mention of Infant-baptism, did oppose it, and dissuade from it; so that it must be once more said, it was called in question, debated and opposed twelve or thirteen hundred years before the madmen of *Munster*, as well as in some of the intervening centuries. It remains now, Sir, to defend what I have said concerning the *Waldenses*; and it should be observed,

1. That these people had not their name from *Waldus*, as the first founder of their sect: this Dr. *Allix* has undertook to make out beyond all possible contradiction, and he has done it. These people were before his time called *Vaudois*, *Vallenses* or *Wallenses*, from their inhabiting the valleys; which name was afterwards changed to *Waldenses*, when the design was said to make men believe that

Valda or *Waldus* was their first founder, that they might be taken for a new and upstart people; whereas they were in being long before *Waldus*, who received his light and doctrine from them, and whose followers joined them; and this observation sets aside the exceptions of our author to the testimonies of *Peter Bruis*, their confession of faith in 1120, and their noble lesson 1100, as being before the times of the Waldenses; that is, before the times of *Waldo*, more properly speaking; and by how much the more ancient these testimonies are, by so much the greater is their evidence in point of antiquity, as to these peoples denial of Infant-baptism; and more strongly prove that the ancient Vallenses, afterwards corruptly called Waldenses, were against it, and for *adult baptism*. These people were not divided into various sects, but were a body of people of one and the same faith and practice, which they retained from father to son, as their usual phrase is, time out of mind.

2. It is true, they were called by different names, by their adversaries; some given them by way of reproach, others from their leaders and teachers, as Petrobrusians, Henricians, Arnoldists, Waldensians, Etc. from *Peter Bruis*, *Henry*, *Arnold*, *Waldus*; but still they were the same people; just as the Papists, at the Reformation, made as many heads of distinct parties, as these were men of note in that work. Thus for instance, the Petrobrusians were not a distinct sect of this people, but the very people called Vallenses, afterwards Waldenses; and the same may be said of the rest: nor were there any sect among them of the Manichean principle, or any of them tintured with that heresy, as *Dr. Allix* has abundantly proved. The care, as he makes it appear, was this; that there were Manichees in the places where the Valdenses and Albigenses lived, but not that joined them; their enemies took the advantage of this, and called them by the same name, and ascribed the same opinions to them, especially if they could find any thing in them familiar to them: thus for instance, because they denied Infant-baptism, therefore they were against all Water-baptism, and so Manichees; for as *Dr. Allix*[\[18\]](#) observes, "in those barbarous and cruel ages, a small conformity of opinions with the Manichees, was a sufficient ground to accuse them of Manicheism, who opposed any doctrine received by the church of some: Thus would they have taken the Anabaptists for downright Manichees, says he, because they condemned the baptism of infants:" and *Mr. Clark* cannot object to this observation, since he himself argues from the denial of Infant-baptism, to the denial of baptism itself; and has represented me as a Manichee, or a Quaker, for no other reason, but for the denial of Infant-baptism; and if his book lives to the next age, and is of any authority, and can find people foolish enough to believe it, I must be set down for a Manichee or a Quaker. Indeed I must confess, I once thought, giving too much credit to *Dr. Wall*, that there were different sects among the Waldenses, and some of them Manichees, and of other erroneous principles, which I now retract.

3. It is not true what this writer from *Dr. Wall* affirms; "This is certain, that no one author, that calls the people he writes of Waldenses, does impute to them the denial of Infant-baptism;" for *Claudius Couffard*, writing against them, under this name, gives an extract of their errors out of *Raynerius*, and this is one of them; "They say, then first a man is baptized, when he is received into their sect; some of them hold that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot yet actually believe;" and concludes this extract thus, "from whence you may see, courteous reader, that this sect of the Waldenses, and the chief, yea almost all heretics now in vogue, are not of late invention, etc." and were this true, yet it is a mere evasion, and a foolish one; since the names of Henricians, Arnoldists, Cathari, Apostolici, etc. under which they are represented, as opposers of Infant-baptism, are the names of the Waldensians, as *Perrin*[\[19\]](#) observes, a writer whom our author says he has read.

4. It is a most clear case, that the ancient barbs or pastors of the Waldensian churches, so called, were opposers of Infant-baptism. Sir *Samuel Moreland*, as I have observed, reckons *Peter Bruis* and *Henry* among their ancient pallors; to does *Perrin* likewise, though he is mistaken in making them to follow *Waldo*; and these are allowed to be Antipaedobaptists by several Paedobaptists themselves. *Arnoldus*, another of their parrots, according to the above writer, from whence they were called Arnoldists, was out of all doubt a denier of Infant-baptism, for which he was condemned by a council, as Dr. *Wall* owns. *Lollardo* was another of their pastors, according to the same authors, and from whole name, *Perrin* says, the Waldenses were called Lollards; and so *Kilianus* says,[\[20\]](#) a Lollard is also called a Waldensian heretic. These were not the followers of *Wickliff*, as our author wrongly asserts; for they were, as Dr. *Allix*[\[21\]](#) observes, more ancient than the Wicklifites; and though this name was afterwards given to the latter, *Lollardo* was here in *England*, and had his followers before *Wickliff's* time; and so he had in *Flanders* and *Germany*; and of the Lollards there, *Trithemius*[\[22\]](#) says, they derided the sacrament of baptism; which cannot be understood of their deriding baptism in general, but of their deriding Infant-baptism; which was common among the Papists to say; and the same is the sense of the Lollards in *England*, who are charged with making light of the sacrament of baptism. Now since these were the sentiments of the ancient pastors of the Waldenses, it is reasonable to believe the people themselves were of the same mind with them; nor are there any confessions of their faith, which make any mention of Infant-baptism; nor any proofs of its being practiced by them until the sixteenth century, produced by our author, or any other.

5. The Albigenses, as *Perrin*[\[23\]](#) says, differ nothing at all from the Waldenses, in their belief; but are only so called of the country of *Albi*; where they dwelt, and had their first beginning; and who received the belief of the Waldenses by means of *Peter Bruis*, *Henry* and *Arnold*; who, as it clearly appears, were all Antipaedobaptists; and Dr. *Allix*[\[24\]](#) observes, that the Albigenses have been called Petrobrusians; owned to be a sect of the Waldenses, that denied Infant-baptism: and that the Albigenses denied it, at least some of them, yea the greatest part of them, is acknowledged by some Paedobaptists themselves. *Chassanion* in his history of these people says;[\[25\]](#) "some writers have affirmed, that the Albigeois approved not of the baptism of infants. —I cannot deny that the Albigeois for the *greatest part* were of that opinion. —The truth is, they did not reject this sacrament, or say it was useless, (as some, he before observes, asserted they did) but only counted it unnecessary to infants, because they are not of age to believe, or capable of giving evidence of their faith." Which is another proof of the ancient Waldenses being against Infant-baptism, these being the same with them. Upon the whole, if I have been too modest, in saying that the ancient Waldenses practiced Infant-baptism, wants proof, I shall now use a little more boldness and confidence, and alarm, that the ancient Vallenses, or as corruptly called Waldenses, were opposers of Infant-baptism; and that no proof can be given of the practice of it among them till the sixteenth century; and that the author of the dialogue had no reason to say, that their being in the practice of adult baptism, and denying Infant-baptism, was a mere chimaera and a groundless figment.

My *fourth* chapter, you know, Sir, respects the argument for Infant-baptism, taken from the covenant made with *Abraham*, and from circumcision. Here our author runs out into a large discussion of the covenant of grace, in his way; in which he spends about fourscore pages, which I take to be the heads of some old sermons, he is fond of, and has taken this opportunity of publishing them to the world, without any propriety or pertinence. For, 1. not to dispute the point with him, whether there are two distinct covenants of redemption and grace, or whether they are

one and the same, which is foreign to the argument; be it that they are two distinct ones, the spiritual seed promised to Christ, or the people given him in the one, are the same that are taken into the other; they are of equal extent; there are no more in the one, than there are concerned in the other; and this writer himself allows, "that the salvation of the spiritual *seed of Christ* is promised in both covenants." Now let it be proved, if it can, that there are any in the covenant of grace but *the spiritual seed of Christ*; and that the natural seed of believers, and their infants as such, are the spiritual seed: and if they are, then they were given to Christ, who undertook to save them, and whose salvation was promised to him, and to whom in time the communications of grace according to the covenant are made; then they must be all of them regenerated, renewed, and sanctified, justified, pardoned, adopted, persevere in grace, and be eternally saved; all which will not, cannot be said of all the infants of believers; and consequently cannot be thought to be in the covenant of grace.

2. As to what he says concerning the conditionality of the covenant, it is all answered in one word; let him name what he will, as the condition of this covenant, which God has not absolutely promised, or thrift: has not engaged to perform, or to see performed in his people, or by them. Are the conditions, faith and repentance? These are both included in the *new heart*, and *spirit*, and *heart of flesh*, God has absolutely promised in the covenant, Ezekiel 36:26. Is new, *spiritual*, and *evangelical* obedience, the condition? This is absolutely promised as the former, verse 27. Or is it actual consent? *Thy people shall be willing* (Ps. 110:3). And after all, if it is a conditional covenant, how do infants get into it? Or is it a conditional covenant to the *adult*, and unconditional to them? If faith and repentance are the conditions of it, and these must be, as this author says, "the sinner's own voluntary chosen acts, before he can have any actual saving interest in the privileges of the covenant;" it follows, that they cannot be in it, or have interest in the privileges of it, till they repent and believe, and do these as their own voluntary chosen acts; and if "man's consent and agreement bring him into covenant with God," as this writer says; it should be considered, whether infants are capable of this consent, or no; and if they are not, according to this man, they stand a poor chance for being in the covenant.

3. Whereas the covenant of grace, as to the essence of it, has been always the same, as is allowed, under the various forms and administrations of it, both under the Old and New Testament; so the subjects of it have been, and are the same, the spiritual seed of Christ, and none else; and not the carnal seed of men as such: and if the conditions of it are the same, faith and obedience, as our author observes, then infants must stand excluded from it, since they can neither believe nor obey.

4. That the covenant of grace was made with *Abraham*, or a revelation and application of it to him; that the gospel was revealed to him, and he was justified in the same way believers are now; and that he had spiritual promises made to him, and spiritual blessings bestowed upon him; and that *gospel-believers*, be they Jews or Gentiles, who are the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, are heirs of the same covenant-blessings and promises, are never denied; —this man is fighting with his own shadow. What is denied and should be proved, is, that the covenant of grace is made with *Abraham's* carnal seed, the Jews, and with the carnal seed of *gospel-believers* among the Gentiles; and that spiritual promises are made to them; and that they are heirs of spiritual blessings, as such: and let it be further observed, that the covenant in Genesis 17 is not the covenant referred to in Galatians 3:17 said to be *confirmed of God in Christ*, and which *could not be disannulled by the*

law 430 years after; since the date does not agree, it falls short twenty-four years; and therefore must refer, not to the covenant of circumcision, but to some other covenant, and time of making it.

5. It is false, that children have been always taken with their parents into the covenant of grace, under every dispensation. The children of *Adam* were not taken into the covenant of grace with him, which was made known to him immediately after the fall; for then all the world must be in the covenant of grace. The covenant made with *Noah* and his sons, was not the covenant of grace; since it was made with the beasts of the field as well as with them; unless it will be said, that they also are in the covenant of grace. Nor were all Abraham's natural seed taken into the covenant of grace with him. *Ishmael* was by name excluded, and the covenant established with *Isaac*; and yet *Ishmael* was in the covenant of circumcision; which by the way proves, that, that and the covenant of grace are two different things: nor were all Abraham's natural seed in the line of *Isaac* taken into the covenant of grace, not *Esau*; nor all in the line of *Jacob* and *Israel*; for as the apostle says, they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Rom. 9:6-8). The covenant at *Horeb* was indeed a national covenant, and took in all, children and grown persons; and which was no other than a civil contract, and not a covenant of grace, between God and the people of *Israel*; he asking, and they as subjects; he promising to be their protector and defender, and they to be his faithful subjects, and obey his laws; which covenant has been long ago abolished, when God wrote a *Loammi* upon them: nor is there any proof of infants under the New Testament being taken into covenant with their parents. Not Matthew 19:14, 1 Corinthians 7:14 which make no mention of any covenant at all, as will be considered hereafter; nor Hebrews 8:8 since the house of *Israel*, that new covenant is said to be made with, are the *spiritual Israel*, whether Jews or Gentiles, even the whole household of faith, and none but them nor are their infants spoken of, nor can they be included; for have they all of them the laws of God written on their hearts? Do they all know the Lord? or have they all their sins forgiven them? which is the care with all those with whom this covenant is made, or to whom it is applied. Nor are there any predictions of this kind in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 30:6, Psalm 22:30, Isaiah 9:21 speak only of a succession of converted persons, either in the gospel-church among the Gentiles, or in the same among the Jews, when that people shall be converted in the latter day.

6. The distinction of an *inward* and *outward* covenant, is an *Utopian* business, mere jargon and nonsense; it has no foundation in scripture, reason, nor common sense. And here I cannot but observe what Mr. *Baxter*, a zealous Paedobaptist, says on this subject.[\[26\]](#) "Mr. *Blake*'s common phrase is, that they are in the *outward* covenant, and what that is, I cannot tell; in what sense is that (God's covenant-act) called outward? It cannot be, as if God did as the dissembling creature, *Oretenus*, with the mouth only, covenant with them, and not with the heart, as they deal with him. I know therefore no possible sense but this, that it is called outward from the blessings promised, which are outward; here therefore, I should have thought it reasonable for Mr. *Blake* to have told us what these outward blessings are, that this covenant promiseth; and that he would have proved out of the scriptures that God hath such a covenant distinct from the covenant of grace. I desire therefore that those words of scripture may be produced, where any such covenant is contained. And let Mr. *Clark* tell us what he means by the *outward covenant*, or the outward part of it, in which infants are; if any thing can be collected from him, as his meaning, it is, that it designs the outward administration of the covenant by the word and ordinances: but if it means the outward

ministry of the word, newborn infants are not capable of that to any profit; if it designs the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper, then they should be admitted to one as well as the other; and if baptism only is intended by this outward covenant, or the outward part, here is the greatest confusion imaginable; then the sense is, they are under the outward administration of the covenant, that is baptism; and this gives them a right to be baptized, that is to be baptized again, or in other words to be made Anabaptists of; and after all it is a poor covenant, or a poor part of it assigned for infants, in the bond of which, as this author says, are many real hypocrites.

7. That covenant-interest, and an evidence of it, give right to the real of the covenant, which was circumcision formerly, and baptism now, is false; and this writer has not proved it, nor infants covenant-interest, as we have seen already. He should have first proved that circumcision was a seal of the covenant of grace formerly, and baptism the real of it now, before he talked of covenant-interest giving a right to either. Admitting that circumcision was a real of the covenant of grace formerly, (though it was not) yet interest in that covenant and evidence of interest in it, did not give right to all in it to the seal of it, as it is called; since there were many who had evidently an interest in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was first appointed, and yet had no right to it; as *Shem, Arphaxad, Lot*, and others; and even many who were in the covenant made with Abraham, as this writer himself will allow, who had no right to this seal, even all his female offspring: to say, they were *virtually circumcised in the males*, is false and foolish; to have a thing virtually by another, is to have it by proxy, who represents another; but were the males the proxies and representatives of the females? had they been so, then indeed when they were circumcised, the females were virtually circumcised with them; and so it was all one as if they had been circumcised in their own persons; which to have been, would have been unlawful and sinful, not being by the appointment of God: as for its being unlawful for uncircumcised persons to eat of the passover, this must be understood of such who ought to be circumcised, and does not affect the females, who ought not, and so might eat, though they were really uncircumcised; nor had the males themselves any right to it till the eighth day; and so it was not covenant-interest, but a command from God, that gave them a right; and such an order is necessary to any person's right to baptism.

Again, admitting for argument-sake, that baptism is a seal of the covenant, does not this Gentleman also believe, that the Lord's-supper is a seal of it likewise? and if covenant-interest gives a right to the seals, why not to one seal as well as the other? and why are not infants admitted to the Lord's table, as well as to baptism? Moreover, it is *evidence* of interest, this writer says, that gives a right to the seal; and what is that evidence? Surely if faith and repentance are the conditions of the covenant, as before asserted, they must be the evidence? and therefore, according to his own argument, it should first appear, that infants have faith and repentance as the evidence of their covenant interest, before they are admitted to the seal of it; and such only according to the injunction of Christ, and the practice of his apostles, were admitted to baptism; as the passages below shew (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 39; 10:47), which our author refers us to. And now, Sir, after a long ramble, we are come to *Abraham's* covenant itself, and to the questions concerning it; as, of what kind it is; with whom made; and whether circumcision was the real of the covenant of grace; and whether baptism is come in its room, and is the seal of it. Now as to the

I. First of these, of what kind was the covenant with *Abraham*, Genesis 17? I have asserted, that it was not the pure covenant of grace, but of a mixed kind; consisting partly of promises of temporal things, and partly of spiritual ones; and you will easily observe, Sir, that the exceptions of this

writer to the arguments I make use of in proof of it, are for the most part founded on his mistaken notions of the conditionality of the covenant of grace, and on that stupid and senseless distinction of the *inward* and *outward* covenant, before exploded; wherefore since these are groundless conceits and sandy foundations, what is built upon them must necessarily fall.

II. The same may be observed with respect to that part of the question, which relates to the covenant being made with all *Abraham's* seed according to the flesh, as a covenant of grace; by the help of which unscriptural and irrational distinction, he can find a place in the covenant of grace for a persecuting *Ishmael*, a profane *Esau*, and all the wicked Jews in all ages, in all times of defection and apostasy; but if he can find no better covenant to put the infants of believers into, nor better company to place them with, who notwithstanding their covenant-interest, may be lost and damned, it will be a very insignificant thing with considerate persons, whether they are in this *Utopian* covenant or no.

III. As to that part of the question which relates to the natural seed of believing Gentiles being in *Abraham's* covenant, or to that being made with them as a covenant of grace, it is by me denied. This writer says, I add a stroke, as he calls it, that at once cuts off all *Abraham's* natural seed, and all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, from having any share in the covenant; since I say, "That to none can spiritual blessings belong, but to a spiritual seed, not a natural one." But he might have observed, that this is explained in the same page thus, "not to the natural seed of either of them as such." He says, it is not requisite to a person's visible title and claim to the external privileges of the covenant, that he should be truly regenerate, or a sincere believer;" and yet he elsewhere says, "that to repent and believe must be the sinner's own voluntary chosen acts, before he can have any actual saving interest in the privileges of the covenant:" let him reconcile these together. He has not proved, nor is he able to prove, that the natural seed of believing Gentiles, as such, are the spiritual seed of *Abraham*; since only they that are Christ's, or believers in him, or who walk in the steps of the faith of *Abraham*, are his spiritual seed; which cannot be said of all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, or of any of them as such. That clause in *Abraham's* covenant, *A father of many nations have I made thee* (Gen. 17:4, 5) is to be understood only of the faithful, or of believers in all nations; and not of all nations that bear the Christian name, as comprehending all in them, grown persons and infants, good and bad men; and only to such who are of the faith of *Abraham* does the apostle apply it (Rom. 4:16); the stranger, and his male seed, that submitted to circumcision, may indeed be said to be in the covenant of circumcision; but it does not follow, that these were in the covenant of grace; there were many of *Abraham's* own natural seed that were in the covenant of circumcision, who were not in the covenant of grace; and it would be very much, that the natural seed of strangers, and even of believing Gentiles, should have a superior privilege to the natural seed of *Abraham*. Those, and those only, in a judgment of charity, are to be reckoned the spiritual seed, who openly believe in Christ, as I have expressed it; about which phrase this man makes a great pother, when the sense is plain and easy; and that it designs such who make a visible profession of their faith, and are judged to be partakers of the grace of the covenant; which certainly is the best evidence of their interest in it; and therefore it must be best to wait till this appears, before any claim of privilege can be made; and is no other than what this writer himself says in the words before referred to. Though, after all, I stand by my former assertion, that covenant-interest, even when made out clear and plain, gives not right to any ordinance without a positive order or direction from God; and he may call it a conceit of mine if he pleases; he is right in it, that according to it, no person living is capable of (that is, has a right unto) the ordinances and

visible privileges of the church upon any grounds of covenant-interest, without a positive direction from God for it; as there was for circumcision, so there should be for baptism; as, with respect to the former, many who were in the covenant of grace had no concern with it, having no direction from the Lord about it; so though persons may be in the covenant of grace, yet if they are not pointed out by the Lord, as those whom he wills to be the subjects of it, they have no right unto it. To say, that *Lot* and others were under a former administration of the covenant, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, is saying nothing; unless he can tell us what that former administration of it was, and wherein it differed from the administration of it to *Abraham* and his seed; to instance in circumcision, would be begging the question, since that is the thing instanced in; by which it appears that covenant-interest gives no right to an ordinance, without a special direction; and the same holds good of baptism. His sense of Mark 16:16 is, that infants are included in the profession of their believing parents, and why not in their baptism too? and so there is no necessity of their baptism; the text countenances one as much as it does the other, and both are equally stupid and senseless.

IV. The next inquiry is, whether circumcision was the *seal* of the covenant of grace to *Abraham's* natural seed. It is called a *token* or *sign*, but not a seal; this writer says, though a token, simply considered, does not necessarily imply a seal, yet the token of a covenant, or promise, can be nothing else: if it can be nothing else, it does necessarily imply it; unless there is any real difference between a token simply considered, and the token of a covenant, which he would do well to shew circumcision was nothing else but a sign or mark in the flesh, appointed by the covenant; and therefore that is called *the covenant in their flesh*; and not because circumcision was any confirming token or seal of the covenant to any of *Abraham's* natural seed: it was a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith to *Abraham*; that that righteousness which he had by faith before his circumcision, should come upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; but was no seal of that, nor any thing else, to any others: and according to our author's notion of it, it was neither a seal of *Abraham's* faith, nor of his righteousness; then surely not of any others; and yet in contradiction to this, he says, it is "a seal of the covenant of grace, wherein this privilege of justification by faith is confirmed and conveyed to believers;" and if to believers, then surely not to all *Abraham's* natural seed, unless he can think they were all believers; though his real notion, if I understand him right, is, that it is no confirming sign, or seal of any spiritual blessings to any; since the subjects of it, as he owns, may have neither faith nor righteousness; but of the truth of the covenant itself; that God has made one; but this needs no such sign or seal; the word of God is sufficient, which declares it and assures of it.

V. The next thing that comes under consideration, is, whether baptism succeeds circumcision; and is the seal of the covenant of grace to believers, and their natural seed.

1. This author endeavors to prove that baptism succeeds circumcision from Colossians 2:11, but in vain; for the apostle is speaking not of corporal, but of spiritual circumcision, of which the former was a typical resemblance; and so shewing, that believing Gentiles have that through Christ which was signified by it; and which the apostle describes, by the manner of its being effected, *without hands*, without the power of man, by the efficacy of divine grace; and by the substance and matter of it, which lay in *the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*; and without a tautology, as this writer suggests, by the author of it, Christ, who by his Spirit effects it, and therefore is called the *circumcision of Christ*; and is distinguished from baptism, described in the next verse: and as weak

and insignificant is his proof from the analogy between baptism and circumcision; some things said of baptism and circumcision are not true; as that they are sacraments of admission into the church: Not so was circumcision; not of the Gentiles, who had it not, nor were admitted by it, and yet were in the church; nor even of the males, for they were not circumcised till eight days old, yet were of the Jewish church, which was national, as soon as born; and persons may be baptized, and yet not be entered into any visible church: Nor are they badges of relation to the God of *Israel*; since on the one hand, persons might have one or the other, yet have no spiritual relation to God; and on the other hand, be without either, and yet be related to him: nor are either of them seals and signs of the covenant of grace, as before shewn: nor is baptism absolutely requisite to a person's approach to God with confidence and acceptance in any religious duty, private or public. Baptism serves not to the same use and purpose in many things that circumcision did; it is not the middle wall of partition; nor does it bind men to keep the whole law, as circumcision; and though there may be some seeming agreement, arguments from analogy are weak and dangerous: so from the priest's offering a propitiatory sacrifice, wearing the linen ephod, and one high priest being above all other priests, the Papists argue for a minister's offering a real propitiatory sacrifice, for wearing the surplice, and for a Pope, or universal Bishop; and others from the same topic argue for tithes being due to ministers, and for the inequality of bishops and presbyters, there being an high priest and inferior ones: and to this tends our author's third argument, that either baptism succeeds circumcision, or there is nothing at all instituted in its room; nor is there any necessity that there should, any more than that there should be a Pope in the room of an high priest, or any thing to answer to Easter, Pentecost, etc. all which, as circumcision, had their end in Christ nor does the Lord's-supper come in the room of the passover; what answers to that is, *Christ the passover sacrificed for us*; and did it, by this argument from analogy, infants ought to be admitted to the Lord's-supper, as they were to the passover: by this way of arguing, and at this door, may be brought in all the Jewish rites and ceremonies, under other names: and after all, what little agreement may be imagined is between them, the difference is notorious in many things; some of which this author is obliged to own; as in the subjects of them, the one being only males, the other males and females; the one being by blood, the other by water; and besides they differ as to the persons by whom, and the places where, and the uses for which, they are performed; wherefore from analogy and resemblance is no proof of succession, but the contrary. My argument from baptism being in force before circumcision, to prove that the one did not succeed the other, is so far from being allowed by our author a proof of it, that he will not allow it to be a bare probability, unless I could prove they had been all along contemporary: but if I cannot do it, he and his brethren can, who give credit to the Jewish custom of baptizing their proselytes and children; and which they make to be a practice, for which the Jews fetch proof as early as the times of *Jacob*; and I hope, if he will abide by this, he will allow that baptism could not come in the room of circumcision.

2. He next attempts to prove that baptism is a real of the covenant of grace to believers and their seed, by a wretched perversion of several passages of scripture (John 3:33; Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:19; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 Cor. 12:13), in which no mention is made of the covenant of grace, and much less of baptism as a real of it; and which only speak of believers, and not a syllable of their infants; and all of them clear proofs, that believers, and they only, are the proper subjects of baptism; as may easily be observed by the bare reading of them.

3. My sentiment of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper not being seals of the covenant of grace, he thinks, is borrowed from the Socinians. These have no better notion or' the covenant of grace than himself, nor of the efficacy of the blood of Christ for the ratification of it, nor of the sealing work of the spirit of God upon the hearts of his people. My sentiment is borrowed from the scriptures, and is established by them; the blood of Christ confirms and ratifies the covenant, the blessings and promises of it, and is therefore called *the blood of the everlasting covenant*; the blessed spirit is the sealer of believers interest in it, or assures them of it (Heb. 13:20; Eph. 1:13) So that there are not two seals of the covenant of grace, as he wrongly observes. The blood of Christ makes the covenant itself lure, and is in this sense the seal of that; the spirit of God is the seal of interest in it to particular persons; and in neither sense do or can ordinances seal.

4. Upon the whole, what has this author been doing throughout this chapter? has he proved that the natural seed of believers, as such, are in the covenant of grace? he has not. The covenant he attempts to prove they are in, according to his own account of it, is no covenant of grace. Does it secure any one spiritual blessing to the carnal seed of believers? it does not. Does it secure regenerating, renewing, sanctifying grace, or pardoning grace, or justifying grace, or adopting grace, or eternal life? it does not. And if so, I leave it to be judged of by such that have any knowledge of the covenant, if such a covenant can be called the covenant of grace; or what spiritual Caving advantage is to be had from an interest in such a covenant, could it be proved. He would have his readers believe, that the covenant, he pleads infants have an interest in, is the same under all dispensations, and in all ages: the covenant of grace is indeed the same, but the covenant he puts the infant-seed of believers into, is only an external administration; and this, he himself being judge, cannot have been always the same. This external administration, according to himself, was first by sacrifices, and then by circumcision, and now by baptism; for what else he means by an external administration, than an administration of ordinances, cannot be conceived; and then by infants being in the covenant, is no other than having ordinances administered to them; and so their being in the covenant now, is no other than their being baptized; and yet he says, "the main foundation of the right of infants to baptism, is their interest in the covenant;" that is, the external administration they are under, or the administration of baptism to them, is the main foundation of their right to baptism. They are baptized, therefore they are and ought to be baptized; such an account of covenant-interest, and of right to baptism from it, is a mere begging the question, and proving *idem per idem*, yea is downright nonsense and contradiction: and so, when baptism is said to be the seal of the covenant, that is, of the external administration, which administration is that of baptism, the sense is, baptism is the seal of baptism. This senseless jargon is the amount of all the reasonings throughout this chapter: Such mysterious stuff, such glaring contradictions, and stupid nonsense, I leave him and his admirers to please themselves with.

5. From hence it appears, that the clamorous out-cry of cutting off infants from their covenant-right, and so abridging and lessening their privileges, is all a noise about nothing; since it is in vain to talk about cutting off from the covenant of grace, when they were never in it; as the natural seed of believers, as such, never were, under any dispensation whatever; and even what is pleaded for, is only an external administration, which neither conveys grace, nor secures any spiritual blessings; wherefore what privileges are infants deprived of by not being baptized? Let it be shewn if it can, what spiritual blessings infants said to be baptized have, which our infants unbaptized have not; to instance in baptism itself, would be begging the question; it would still be asked, what spiritual privilege or profit comes to an infant by its baptism? If our infants have as many, or the same

privileges under the gospel-dispensation, without baptism, as others have with it; then their privileges are not abridged or lessened, and the clamor must be a groundless one. To say, that baptism admits into the Christian church, as circumcision into the Jewish church, are both false, as has been proved already; our author, it seems, did not know, that a national church was a carnal one; whereas a national church can be no other, since all born in a nation are members of it, and become so by their birth, which is carnal; for, *whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh*. Whereas a gospel-church, gathered out of the world, does, or should consist, only of such who are born again, and have an understanding of spiritual things. This writer seems to suggest, that if infants are not admitted to this external administration, and real of the covenant he pleads for, their condition is deplorable, and there is no ground of hope of their eternal salvation; and does their being admitted into this external administration make their condition better with respect to everlasting salvation? not at all; since, according to our author, persons may be in this, and yet not in the covenant of grace, as hypocrites may be; and he distinguishes this visible and external administration from the spiritual dispensation and efficacy of the covenant of grace; so that persons may be in the one, and yet be everlastingly lost; and therefore what ground of hope of eternal salvation does this give? or what ground of hope does non-admission into it deprive them of? Is salvation inseparably connected with baptism? or does it ensure it to any? How unreasonable then, and without foundation, is this clamorous outcry? And now, Sir, we are come to

The *fifth* chapter of my treatise, which considers the several texts of scripture produced in favor of Infant-baptism; and the first is Acts 2:38, 39. Now, not to take notice of this author's foolish impertinencies, and with which his book abounds, and would be endless to observe; for which reason I mention them not, that I might not swell this letter too large, and impose upon your patience in reading it; you will easily observe, Sir, the puzzle and confusion he is thrown into to make the exhortation to *repent*, urged in order to the enjoyment of the *promise*, to agree with infants; and which is mentioned as previous to baptism, and in order to it. That this passage can furnish out no argument in favor of Infant-baptism, will appear by the plain, clear, and easy sense of it; *Peter* had charged the Jews with the sin of crucifying Christ; their consciences were awakened, and loaded with the guilt of it; in their distress, being pricked to the heart, they inquire what they should do, as almost despairing of mercy to be shewn to such great sinners; they are told, that notwithstanding their sin was so heinous, yet if they truly repented of it, and submitted to Christ and his ordinances, particularly to baptism, the promise of life and salvation belonged to them, nor need they doubt of an interest in it: and whereas they had imprecated his blood, not only upon themselves, but upon their posterity, more immediate and more remote, for which they were under great concern; they are told this promise of salvation by Christ reached to them also, provided they repented and were baptized; and which is the reason that mention is made of their children; *yea, even to them that were afar off*, their brethren the Jews in distant countries, that should hear the gospel, repent and believe, and be baptized; or should live in ages to come in the latter day, and should *look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn*; and so has nothing to do with the covenant with *Abraham* and his natural seed, and much less with the Gentiles and theirs: and be it so, that the Gentiles are meant by those *afar off*, which may be admitted, since it is sometimes a descriptive character of them; yet no mention is made of their children; and had they been mentioned, the limiting clause, *even as many as the Lord our God shall call*, plainly points at, and describes the persons intended; not among the Gentiles only, but the Jews also, as agreeable to common sense and the rules of grammar; and is to be understood only of the Jews that are called by grace, and of their children, that are effectually, called, and of the Gentiles called with an holy

calling, as the persons to whom the promise belongs; and which appears evident by their repentance and baptism, which this is an encouraging motive to; and therefore can be understood only of adult persons, and not of infants; and of whole baptism not a syllable is mentioned, nor can it be inferred from this passage, or established by it.

II. The next passage of scripture produced in favor of Infant-baptism, and to as little purpose, is Matthew 19:14 it is owned by our author, that these children were not brought to Christ to be baptized by him; and that they were not baptized by him; these things, he says, they do not affirm. For what then is the passage produced? why, to shew, that infants become proselytes to Christ by baptism; and is not this to be baptized? what a contradiction is this? And afterwards another self-contradiction follows: he imagines these infants had been baptized already, and yet were commanded to become proselytes by baptism, and so Anabaptists; but how does it appear that it was the will of Christ they should become proselytes to him this way? from the etymology of the Greek word, which signifies *to come to*; so, wherever the word is used of persons as coming to Christ, it is to be understood of their becoming proselytes to him by baptism: it is used in Matthew 16:1 the *Pharisees also with the Sadducees*—προσελθοντες, "*came tempting him*." Did they become proselytes to him by baptism? what stupid stuff is this? nay the Devil himself is said to come to him, *and when the Tempter*—προσελθων, *came to him, he said*, etc. Matthew 4:3. our author surely does not think he became a proselyte to him. That it was the custom of the Jews, before the times of Christ, to baptize the children of proselytes, is not a fact so well attested, as is said; the writings from whence the proof is taken, were written some hundreds of years after Christ's time; and the very first persons that mention it, dispute it; one alarming there was such a custom, and the other denying it; and were it far, since it was only a tradition of the elders at best, and not a command of God, it is not credible that our Lord should follow it, or enforce such a practice on his followers: the coming of these children was merely corporal, whatever it was for, and temporary; there is no other way of coming to Christ, or becoming proselytes to him, but by believing in him, embracing his doctrines, and obeying his commands; and when children are capable of these things, and do them, we are ready to acknowledge them the proselytes of Christ, and admit them to baptism: nor does the reason given in the text, *for of such is the kingdom of heaven*, prove their right to baptism; for not to insist on the metaphorical sense of these words, which yet *Calvin* gives into; but supposing infants literally are meant, the *kingdom of heaven* cannot be understood of the gospel-church-state; which is not national but congregational, consisting of men gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and who make a public profession of Christ, which infants are not capable of, and so not taken into it; and were they, they must have an equal right to the Lord's supper as to baptism, and of which they are equally capable; for does the Lord's supper require in the receivers of it a competent measure of Christian knowledge, the exercise of reason and understanding, and their active powers, as this writer says, so does baptism. But by the *kingdom of heaven*, is meant the heavenly glory; and we deny not, that there are infants that belong to it, though who they are, we know not; nor is this any argument for their admission to baptism; it is one thing what Christ does himself, he may admit them into heaven; it is another thing what we are to do, the rule of which is his revealed will: we cannot admit them into a church-state, or to any ordinance, unless he has given us an order so to do; and besides, it is time enough to talk of their admission to baptism, when it appears they have a right unto, and a meetness for the kingdom of heaven.

III. Another passage brought into this controversy is Matthew 18:16; this is owned to be less convictive, because interpreters are divided about the sense of it; some understanding it of children in knowledge and grace, others of children in age, to which our author inclines, for the sake of his hypothesis; though he knows not how to reject the former: my objections to the latter sense, he says, have no *great weight* in them; it seems they have some. I will add a little more to them, shewing that not little ones in a literal, but figurative sense, are meant, even the disciples of Christ, that actually believed in him: the word here used is different from that which is used of little children, verse 3. and is manifestly used of the disciples of Christ (Matthew 10:42), and the parallel text in Mark 9:41, 42 most clearly shews, that the little ones that believed in Christ, which were not to be offended, were his apostles, that belonged to him; quite contrary to what this writer produces it for; who has most miserably mangled and tortured this passage: Moreover there was but one little child, Christ took and set in the midst of his disciples, whereas he has regard to several little ones then present, and whom, as it were, he points unto; one of which to offend, would be resented; and plainly designs the apostles then present, who not only had the principle of faith, but exercised it, as the word used signifies; and who were capable of being scandalized, and of having stumbling-blocks thrown in their way, and taking offense at them; which infants in age are not capable of: that senseless rant of cutting off infants from their right in the covenant of salvation, and from the privileges of the gospel, (I suppose he means by denying baptism to them) being an offense and injury to them, and the whining cant upon this, are mean and despicable: his reasons, why the apostles of Christ cannot be meant, because contending for pre-eminence, they discovered a temper of mind opposite to little children, has no force in it; for Christ calls them *little ones*, partly because they ought to be as little children, verse 3, and in some sense were so; and partly to mortify their pride and vanity, as well as to express his tender affection and regard for them, see verse 10, and since infants are not meant, it is in vain to dispute about their faith, either as to principle or act, and what right that gives to baptism; and especially since profession of faith, and consent to be baptized, are necessary to the administration of that ordinance, and to the subjects of it.

IV. Next we have his remarks on the exceptions to the sense of 1 Corinthians 7:14 contended for: the sense of internal holiness derived from parents to children is rejected by him; but there is another, which he seems to have a good will unto: he says there are some reasons to support it, and he does not object to it; yet chooses not to adhere to it, though if established, would put an end to the controversy; and that is, that the word *sanctified* signifies *baptized*, and the word *holy*, Christians *baptized*; and then the sense is, "the unbelieving husband is baptized by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is baptized by the believing husband; else were your children unbaptized, but now they are baptized Christians;" the bare mention of which is confutation sufficient. The sense our author prefers is a visible federal holiness: but what that holiness is, for any thing he has said to clear it, remains in the dark: covenant-holiness, or what the covenant of grace promises, and secures to all interested in it, is clear and plain, internal holiness of heart, and outward holiness of life and conversation flowing from that (Ezek. 36:25-27); But are the infants of believers, as such, partakers of this holiness? or is such holiness as this communicated unto, or does it appear upon all the natural seed of believers? This will not be said; experience and facts are against it; they *are born in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, as others*; and many of them are never partakers of real holiness, and are as profligate as others; and on the other hand, some of the children of unbelievers are partakers of true holiness: if it be said, and which seems to be our author's meaning, that it is such a holiness the people of the Jews had in distinction from the *Heathens*, and therefore are called an *holy seed*; this cannot be, since the holiness of the Jewish

seed lay in the lawful issue of a Jewish man and a Jewish woman: if a Jewish man married an Heathen woman, their issue was not holy, as appears from *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*; whereas, according to the apostle, if a Christian man married an Heathen woman, or a Christian woman an Heathen man, their issue were holy: should it be said, as it is suggested by our author, that so indeed it was in *Ezra's* times, according to the Jewish law; but now, since the coming of Christ, the national difference is abolished; which he makes to be the sense of the apostle, and therein betrays his ignorance of the apostle's argument and method of reasoning; for the particle *now*, as *Beza* observes, is not in this place an adverb of time, but a conjunction, which is commonly used in assumptions of argument, which destroys our author's argument, and lets aside his method of reasoning, which he seems fond of, and afterwards repeats: it remains therefore, that only a matrimonial holiness is here intended; and surely marriage may be said to be *holy*, as it is by the apostle *honorable*, and for that reason (Heb. 13:4), without savoring strong of popery, or savoring the notion of marriage being a sacrament, as this writer insinuates; who has got a strange nose, and a stranger judgment: whether he is a single or a married man, I know not; he appears to have a bad opinion of marriage. That infants born in lawful wedlock cannot be called holy, being legitimate, without favoring of popery. As he is not able to set aside the sense of the word *sanctified* given by me, as signifying *espoused*; he requires of me to prove that the word holy means *legitimate*; for which I refer him to *Ezra* 9:2 where those born of parents, both Jewish, are called *an holy seed*; that is, a lawful one; in opposition to, and in distinction from a spurious and illegitimate issue, born of parents, the one Jewish and the other Heathen: and this is the same with the *godly seed*, in *Malachi* 2:15. which *Calvin* interprets legitimate, in distinction from those that are born in polygamy: nor will any other sense suit with the care proposed to the apostle; nor with his answer and manner of reasoning about it; who says not one word era covenant whereby an unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified to a believing one, or of the federal holiness of the children of both; but argues, that if their marriage, being unequal, was not valid, which was their scruple, their children *must be unclean*, as bastards were accounted (*Deut.* 23:2); whereas it being good, their children were legitimate, and so might be easy, and continue together as they ought.

The passage out of the *Talmud*, which he has at second-hand from Dr. *Lightfoot*, designs by *Holiness*, Judaism, and not Christianity, and is quite impertinent to the purpose; nor can it be thought to be alluded to, since the holiness the Jews speak of, respects the parents, as both proselytes to Judaism; whereas the apostle's case supposes one an Heathen, and the other a Christian: and he might have observed by a tradition quoted by the Doctor, in the same place, that such a marriage the apostle was considering, is condemned by the Jews as no marriage, and the issue of it as illegitimate; which asserts, that *a son begotten of a Heathen woman is not a son*, his lawful son; just the reverse of what the apostle suggested: and after all, our author himself seems to make this holiness no other than a civil holiness, and which secures a civil relation, by which "the unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified, so far as concerns the believing party; that is, for lawful cohabitation, conjugal society, and the propagation of a holy covenant-seed;" for all which purposes, lawful marriages may be allowed to sanctify, if only instead of *a holy covenant-seed*, a legitimate feed is put. So that upon the whole, this passage does not furnish out the least shew of argument for Infant-baptism. Come we to

V. The next passage produced in favor of Infant-baptism, which are the words of the commission in *Matthew* 28:19, 20, one would think there should be no difficulty in understanding these words; and that the plain and easy sense of them is, that such as are taught by the ministry of the word,

should be baptized, and they only; and if there was any doubt about this, yet it might be removed by comparing the same commission with this, as differently expressed in Mark 16:15, 16 from whence it clearly appears, that *to teach all nations, is to preach the gospel to every creature*; and that the persons among all nations, that may be said to be taught, or made disciples by teaching, are believers, and being so, are to be baptized; *he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved*. It is observed by this writer, that the acts of discipling and baptizing are of equal extent: it is agreed to, provided it be allowed, as it ought, that the word, *teach*, or *make disciples*, describes and limits the persons to be baptized; for such only of all nations are to be baptized, who are made disciples by teaching; not all the individuals of all nations; no, not even where the gospel comes, and is preached; for many hear it, and more might, who are not taught by it; and even when the seventh trumpet shall sound, and *all nations shall serve the Lord*, this will not be true of every individual of all nations, only of such, who are qualified for, and capable of serving the Lord; and so of adult persons only, and not of infants at all: and was this the care, that all nations in the commission are under no limitation and restriction, then not only the children of Pagans, Turks, and Jews, but even all adult persons, the most vile and profligate, should be baptized; wherefore the phrase, *all nations* to be baptized, must be restrained and limited to those who are *made disciples* out of all nations; who are the antecedent to the relative, *them* that are to be baptized, and not all nations; and though there is a frequent change of gender in the Greek language, which is owned; yet as *Piscator*, a learned Paedobaptist, on the text observes, "the syntax (*of them*) is referred to "the sense, and not to the word, since *nations* went before;" and the same observation he makes on the passage our author has produced as parallel (Rom. 2:14), but in order to bring infants to this restrictive and qualifying character for baptism, it is said, they are made disciples with their parents, when they become so, as parts of themselves: and why may they not be said to be baptized with them, when they are baptized, as parts of themselves, and so have no need of baptism? No doubt, if Christ had continued the use of circumcision under the New-Testament, and had bid his apostles *to go and disciple the nations, circumcising them*, they would have needed no direction as to infants, as is suggested; and that for this plain reason, because there had been a previous express command for the circumcision of them; but there is no such command to baptize infants previous to the commission, and therefore could not be understood in like manner. But it seems the known custom of the Jews to baptize the children of proselytes with them, was a plain and sufficient direction as to the subjects of baptism, and is the reason why no express mention is made of them in the commission: But it does not appear there was any such custom among the Jews, when the commission was given; had it been so early, as is pretended, even in the times of *Jacob*, it is strange there should be no hint of it in the Old Testament: nor in the apocryphal writings; nor in the writings of the New Testament; nor in *Josephus*; nor in *Philo* the Jew; nor in the Jewish *Misnah*; only in the *Talmud*; which was not composed till five hundred years after Christ; and this custom is at first reported by a single *Rabbi*, and at the same time denied by another of equal credit and authority: and admitting that this was a custom that then obtained, since it was not of divine institution, but of human invention, had our Lord thought fit (which is not reasonable to suppose) to take it into his New Testament ordinance of baptism; yet it would have been necessary to have made express mention of it, as his will that it should be observed, in order to remove the scruple that might arise from its being a mere Jewish custom and tradition. But to proceed: though this writer may be able to find in the schools within his knowledge, such ignorant disciples and learners, that have learned nothing at all; CHRIST has none such in his school: Christ says, none can be a disciple of his, but who has learned *to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow him* (Luke 14:26, 27, 33), and forsake all for him; and this man says, they may be called disciples, that have learned nothing, and be enrolled among the

disciples of Christ, who are incapable of outward teaching: but who are we to believe, Christ, or this man? He suggests, that it would be impracticable to put the commission in execution, if none but true disciples and believers are to be baptized, since the heart cannot be inspected, and man may be deceived; and observes, that the apostles baptized immediately upon profession, and waited not for the fruits of it, and some of which are not true disciples, but hypocrites: this is what he often harps upon; and to which I answer, the apostles had no doubt a greater spirit of discerning, and so could observe the signs of true faith and discipleship in men, without long waiting; but they never baptized any whom they did not judge to be true disciples and believers, and who professed themselves to be such: and though they were in some few instances mistaken; this might be suffered, that ministers and churches might not be discouraged, when such instances should appear in following times; and this is satisfaction enough in this point, when men keep as close as they can to the divine rule, and make the best judgment of persons they are able; and when, in a judgment of charity, they are thought to be true disciples of Christ, baptize them; in which they do their duty, though it may fall out otherwise; and in which they are to be justified by the word of God; which they could not, were they to administer the ordinance to such who have no appearance of the grace of God, and the truth of it in them. The text in Acts 15:10 is far from proving infants disciples; they are not designed in that place, nor included in the character; for though no doubt the Judaizing preachers were for having the Gentiles, and their infants too, circumcised; yet it was not circumcision, the thing itself, that is meant by the intolerable yoke, attempted to be put upon the necks of the disciples; for that was what the Jewish fathers and their children were able to bear, and had borne in ages past; but it was the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other rites of *Moses* to salvation; and which could not be imposed upon infants, but upon adult persons only. Next we proceed to

VI. The passages concerning the baptism of whole households, as an explanation of the commission, and of the apostles understanding it: Now since Infant-baptism, as we have seen, cannot be established by *Abraham's* covenant, nor by circumcision, nor by any command of Christ, nor by his commission, nor by any instances of infants baptized in the times of *John* the Baptist, or of Christ; if any instances of infants baptized by the apostles are proposed, they should be clear and plain: Since there is no express precept, which might justly be demanded; if any precedent is produced, it ought to be quite unexceptionable; if it is expected, such a practice should be given into by thinking people. Three families or households we read of, that were baptized, and these are the precedents proposed; yet no proof is made of any one infant in these families, or of the baptism of any in them; which should be done, if the former could be proved: but instead of this, the advocates for this practice are drove to this poor and miserable shift, to put us on proving the negative, that there were no infants in them. Our author thinks it utterly incredible, that in three such families there should be no infants, when, in so large a country as *Egypt*, there was not a family without a child (Ex. 12:30); and is so weak as to believe, or however hopes to find readers weak enough to believe, that all the first-born of the Egyptians that were slain were infants; whereas there might be many of them twenty, thirty, or forty years of age; so that there might be hundreds and thousands of families in *Egypt* that had not an infant in them, and yet not an house in which there was not a dead person.

But let us attend to these particular families: as for *Lydia* and her household, so far as a negative in such a care as this is capable of being proved; this is certain, that no mention is made of any infants in her family; it is certain, that there were brethren in her house, who were capable of being

comforted by the apostles, and were; for it is expressly said, that *they entered into the house of Lydia, and comforted the brethren*; which is a proof of what, he says, cannot be proved, that they law the brethren at her house; and nothing appears to the contrary, but that they were of her household; and if there were any other besides them, that were baptized by the apostles, it lies upon those that will affirm it, to prove it; without which, this instance cannot be in favor of Infant-baptism. As for the Jailor's family, it is owned by our author, that there were some adult persons in it, who believed, and were baptized at the same time with the Jailor; but he asks, how does this argue that there were no others baptized in it, who were in the infantile state? It lies upon him to prove it, if there were: The word of God was spoken to all that were in his house, and all his house believed in God, and rejoiced in the conversation of the apostles, who must be *all* of them adult persons; and if he can find persons in his house, besides those *all* that were in it, I will see him down for a cunning man. Who those expositors are, that reader the words, *believing in God, he rejoiced all his house over*, I know not, any more than I understand the nonsense of it. *Erasmus* and *Vatablus* join the phrase *with all his house*, with *believing*, as we do, and *Pricaeus* makes it parallel with Acts 18:8 but however, this writer has found a text to prove, that the children of believers are in their infancy accounted believers, and numbered with them, it is in Acts 2:44 if he can find any wise-acres that will give credit to him. As to the household of *Stephanas*, he says, that it seems probable that it was large and numerous, which renders it more likely that there were some infants in it: how large and numerous it was, does not appear; but be those of it more or fewer, it is a clear case they were adult persons, that we have any account of; since they *addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*: and now upon what a tottering foundation does Infant-baptism stand, having no precept from God for it, nor any one single precedent for it in the word of God? Come we now,

VII. To the last text in the controversy, Romans 11:17, 24 and which is the decisive one, and yet purely allegorical; when it is an axiom with divines, that symbolical or allegorical divinity is not argumentative: there is nothing, says Dr. *Owen*, [\[271\]](#) "so sottish, or foolish, or contradictious in and to itself, as may not be countenanced from teaching parables to be instructive, and proving in every parcel, or expression, that attends them;" of this we have an instance in our author, about engrafting buds with the cyon, and of breaking off and grafting in branches with their buds, which he applies to parents and their children; though the apostle has not a word about it: and indeed he is speaking of an engrafture, not according, but contrary to nature; not only of an engrafture of an olive-tree, which is never done, but of engrafting a wild cyon into a good stock; whereas the usual way is to engraft a good cyon into a wild stock. The general scope and design of the allegory is to be attended to which is to shew the rejection of the unbelieving Jews from, and the reception of the believing Gentiles into the gospel-church; for though God did not call away the people among the Jews whom he foreknew; or the remnant according to the election of grace, of which the apostle was one; yet there was a calling-away of that people as a body politic and ecclesiastic, which now continues, and will till the fullness of the Gentiles are brought in; and then there will be a general conversion of the Jews, of which the conversion of some of them in the times of Christ and his apostles were the root, first-fruits, pledge, and earnest; and which led on the apostle to this allegorical discourse about the olive-tree; which I understand of the gospel church-state, in distinction from the Jewish church-state, now dissolved. This writer will not allow, that the Jewish church, as to its essential constitution, is abolished, only as to its outward form of administration: but God has wrote a *Loammi* upon that people, both as a body politic and ecclesiastic (Hosea 1:9); he has unchurched them; he has broke his covenant with them, and their union with each other in their church state, signified by his breaking his two staffs, beauty and bands (Zech. 11:10, 14); and

if this is not the care, the people of the Jews are now the true church of God, notwithstanding their rejection of the Messiah; and if the Gentiles are incorporated into that church, the gospel-church is, and must be national, as that was, and the same with it; whereas it differs from it, both as to matter and them, consisting of persons gathered out of the world, and enjoying different ordinances, the former being utterly abolished. Our author objects to my interpretation of the good olive-tree being the gospel church state, from the unbelieving Jews being said to be *broken-off*, and the olive-tree called their own *olive-tree*, and they *the natural branches*: to which I answer, that the breaking of them off, verse 17 is the same with the carting away of them, verse 15 and the allegory is not to be stretched beyond its scope. The Jewish church being dissolved, the unbelieving Jews lay like broken, withered, scattered branches, and so continued, and were not admitted into the gospel church state, which is all the apostle means: if I have used too soft a term, to say they were *left out* of the gospel-church, since severity is expressed, I may be allowed to use one more harsh, and severe; as that they were cast away and rejected, they were cut off from all right, and excluded from admission into the gospel church, and not suffered to partake of the ordinances of it: and as to the gospel church being called *their own olive-tree*, that is, the converted Jews in the latter day, of whom the apostle speaks; with great propriety may it be called their own, not only because of their right of admission to it, being converted, but because the first gospel-church was set up in *Jerusalem*, was gathered out from among the Jews, and consisted of some of their nation, which were the first-fruits of those converted ones; and so in other places, the first gospel churches consisted of Jews, into which, and not into the national church of the Jews, were the Gentiles engrafted, and became *fellow-heirs with them*, and of the same body, partaking of gospel-ordinances and privileges: and the *natural branches* are not the natural branches of the olive-tree, but the natural branches or natural seed of Abraham, or of the Jewish people, who in the latter day will be converted, and brought into the gospel-church, as some of them were in the beginning of it. This sense being established, it is a clear and plain case, that nothing from hence can be concluded in favor of Infant-baptism; of which there is not the least hint, nor any manner of reference to it.

This chapter, you will remember, Sir, is concluded with proofs of women's right to the ordinance of the Lord's supper: and which are such, as cannot be produced, and supported, to prove the right of infants to baptism. It is granted by our author, that my arguments are in the main conclusive, and he "must be a wrangler that will dispute them;" and yet he disputes them himself, and so proves himself a wrangler, as indeed he is nothing else throughout the whole of his performance. However, he is confident, there are as good proofs of the baptism of infants; as, from their being accounted believers and disciples (Matthew 8:6; Acts 2:44; 15:10); from their being church-members (Luke 18:16; 1 Cor. 7:14; Eph. 5:15, 26); from the probability of some infants baptized in the whole households mentioned; all which we have seen are weak, foolish, impertinent, and inconclusive. This author does wonderful feats in his own conceit, in his knight errantry way; he proves this, and confutes that, and baffles the other; and though he brings the same arguments, that have been used already; as he owns, and I may add, baffled too already, to use his own language; yet he has added fume *new illustration* and *enforcement* to them, and such as have not occurred to him in any author he has seen; so that he would have his reader believe, he is some extraordinary man, and has performed wonderful well; and in this vainglorious shew, I leave him to the ridicule and contempt of men of modesty and good sense, as he justly deserves, and proceed to The *sixth* and last chapter of my treatise, which is concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, whether by immersion, or sprinkling; and here, Sir, I observe,

1. That our author represents the controversy about this as one of the most trifling controversies that ever was managed: but if it is so trifling a matter, whether baptism is administered by immersion or sprinkling, why do he and his party write with so much heat and vehemence, as well as with so much scorn and contempt against the former, and so heavily load with calumnies those that defend it, and charge them with the breach of the *sixth* and *seventh* commands, as it has been often done? But if it is so indifferent and trifling a matter with this writer, it is not so with us, who think it to be an affair of great importance, in what manner an ordinance is to be administered; and who judge it essential to baptism, that it be performed by immersion, without which it cannot be baptism; nor the end of the ordinance answered, which is to represent the burial of Christ; and which cannot be done unless the person baptized is covered in water.

2. It is allowed that the word βαπτίζω, with the lexicons and critics, signifies *to dip*; but it is also observed, that they render it *to wash*: which is not denied, since dipping necessarily includes washing; whatever is dipped, is washed, and therefore in a consequential sense it signifies washing, when its primary sense is dipping. Our author does not attempt to prove, that the lexicons and critics ever say it signifies *to pour or sprinkle*; which ought to be done, if any thing is done to purpose: indeed he says, with classical writers, it has the signification of *persuasion*, or *sprinkling*; but does not produce one instance of it. He charges me with partiality in concealing part of what Mr. Leigh says in his *Critica Sacra*; which I am not conscious of, since my edition, which indeed is one of the former, has not a syllable of what is quoted from him; and even that is more for us than against us. Hence with great impertinence are those passages of scripture produced (Mark 7:3, 4; Luke 11:30; Heb. 9:10), which are supposed to have the signification of washing; since these do not at all militate against the sense of dipping, seeing dipping is washing; and to as vain a purpose are those scriptures referred to (Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Pet. 1:9; Acts 22:16), which call baptism *a washing of water*, and *the washing of regeneration*, etc. even supposing they are to be understood of baptism; which, at least in several of them, is doubtful; since nobody denies, that a person baptized, may be said to be washed, he being dipped in water.

3. It is affirmed that we do not read of one instance of any person who repaired to a river, or conflux of water, purely on the design of being baptized therein. But certain it is, that *John* repaired to such places for the convenient administration of that ordinance; and many repaired to him at those places, purely on a design of being baptized by him in them; and particularly it is said of Christ, *then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him* (Matthew 3:13); and I hope it will be allowed, that he repaired to *Jordan*, on a pure design of being baptized in it; and though it was in a wilderness where *John* was, yet such an one in which were many villages, full of inhabitants, as our author might have learned from Dr. *Lightfoot*; [\[28\]](#) where *John* might have had the convenience of vessels for bringing water, had the ordinance been performed by him in any other way, than by immersion.

4. The use of the words, *baptize* and *baptism*, in scripture, comes next under consideration; and,

(1.) the word is used in Acts 1:5 of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, which is called *a being baptized with the holy Ghost*; and the house in which the apostles were, being *filled with it*, had in it a resemblance to baptism by immersion; and hence the use of the phrase. The main objection our author makes to this, is, that the disciples were in the house before it was filled with the holy Ghost; whereas it should have been first filled, and then they enter into it,

to carry any resemblance in it to immersion: but it matters not, whether the house was filled before or after they entered, inasmuch as it was filled when they were in, whereby they were encompassed and covered with it; which is sufficient to support the allusion to baptism, performed by immersion; or covering the person in water: it is represented as dissonant from common sense, to say, *Ye shall be poured with the holy Ghost?* and is it not as dissonant from common sense to say, *Ye shall be poured with the Holy Ghost?*

(2.) The sufferings of Christ are called a baptism (Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50); and a very apt word is used to express the *abundance* of them, as that signifies an immersion into water; and though the lesser sufferings of men, and God's judgments on them, may be expressed by the *pouring out* of his wrath, and the vials of it on them; yet since the holy Ghost has thought fit not to make use of such a phrase, but a very peculiar word to express the greater sufferings of Christ, this the more confirms the sense of the word contended for. The phrase in Psalm 22:14. *I am poured out like water*, doth not express the sufferings of Christ, but the effect of them, the faintness of his spirits under them. The passages in Psalm 69:1, 2 which represent him as *overwhelmed* with his sufferings, as in water, do most clearly illustrate the use of the word baptism in reference to them, and strongly support the allusion to it, as performed by immersion, which this writer has not been able to let aside.

(3.) Mention is made in Mark 7:4 of the Jews washing, or baptizing themselves, when they come from market, before they eat; and of the washing, or baptizing of their cups, pots, brazen vessels, tables or beds; all which was done by immersion. This writer says, I am contradicted by the best masters of the Jewish learning, when I say, that the Jews upon touching common people, or their clothes, at market, or in any court of judicature, were obliged by the tradition of the elders to immerse themselves in water, and did. To which I reply, that *Vatablus* and *Drusius*, who were great masters of Jewish learning, affirm, that according to the tradition of the elders, the Jews washed or immersed the whole body before they ate, when they came from market; to whom may be added the learned *Grotius*, who interprets the words the same way; and which seems most reasonable, since washing before eating, verse 4 is distinguished from the washing of hands, verse 3. But not to rest it here; *Maimonides*, [29] that great matter of Jewish learning, assures us, that "if the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled, all one as if they had touched a profluvius person, and needed immersion," and were obliged to it: and though Dr. *Lightfoot*, who was a great man in this kind of learning, yet not always to be depended upon, is of opinion, that the plunging of the whole body is not here understood; yet he thinks, that plunging or immersion of the hands in water, is meant, done by the Jews being ignorant and uncertain what uncleanness they came near unto in the market; and observes, the Jews used the washing of the hands, and the plunging of the hands; and that the word *wash* in the Evangelist, seems to answer to the former, and *baptize* to the latter; and *Pococke* [30] himself, whom this writer refers to, confesses the same, and says, that the Hebrew word מכל to which βαπτίζεθαι answers in Greek, signifies a further degree of purification, than גטל or χερνιπτειν (the words used for washing of hands) though not so as necessarily to imply an immersion of the whole body; since the greatest and most notorious uncleanness of the hands reached but to the wrist, and was cleansed by immersing or dipping up to it; and though he thinks the Greek word used in the text does not only and necessarily signify immersion, which yet he grants, specially agrees to it, as he thinks appears from Luke 11:38. To this may be opposed what the great *Scaliger* [31] says; "the more superstitious part of the Jews, not only dipped the feet but the whole body, hence they were called Hemerobaptists, who every day before they sat down to food, dipped the body; wherefore the Pharisee, who had invited Jesus to

dine with him, wondered he sat down to meat before he had washed his whole body, Luke 11," and after all, be it which it will, whether the immersion of the whole body, or only of the hands and feet, that is meant in these passages; since the washing of either was by immersion, as owned, it is sufficient to support the primary sense of the word contended for: and so all other things, after mentioned, according to the tradition of the elders, of which only the text speaks, and not of the law of God, were washed by immersion; particularly brazen vessels; concerning which the tradition is, [32] "such as they use for hot things, as cauldrons and kettles, they heat them with hot water, and scour them, and *dip* them, and they are fit to be used." This writer says, I am strangely besides my Text, when I add, that "even beds, pillows, and bolsters, when they were unclean in a ceremonial sense, were to be washed by immersion, or dipping them into water;" but I am able to produce chapter and verse for what I affirm, from the traditions of the Jews, which are the only things spoken of in the text, and upon which the proof depends: for beds, their canons run thus; "a bed that is wholly defiled, if a man *dips* it part by part, it is pure." [33] Again, if he *dips* the bed in it, (a pool of water) though its feet are plunged into the thick clay, (at the bottom of the pool) it is clean." [34] As for pillows and bolsters, thus they say; "a pillow or a bolster of skin, when a man lifts up the mouth of them out of the water, the water which is in them will be drawn; what shall we do? he must *dip* them, and lift them up by their fringes." [35] Thus, according to the traditions of the elders, our Lord is speaking of, these several things mentioned were washed by immersion; which abundantly confirms the primary sense of the word used.

(4.) The passage of the Israelites through the Red-sea, and under a cloud, is represented as a baptism, 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2 and very aptly, as performed by immersion; since the waters stood up on both sides of them, and a cloud covered them; which very fitly represented persons immersed and covered with water in baptism: but what our author thinks will spoil this fine fancy, and some others, as he calls them, is, that one observation of *Moses* often repeated; that *the children of Israel went on dry ground through the midst of the sea*. To which I reply, that we are not under any necessity of owning that the cloud under which the Israelites were, let down any rain: it is indeed the sentiment of a Paedobaptist, I have referred to, and therefore am not affected with this observation; besides, it should be considered, that this equally, at least, spoils the fine fancy of the rain from the cloud bearing a much greater resemblance to *sprinkling* or *affusion*, as is asserted by the writer of the dialogue; and our author says, there was a true and proper ablution with water from the cloud, in which the Israelites were baptized, and concludes that they received baptism by sprinkling or affusion; how then could they walk on dry ground?

(5.) The last text mentioned is Hebrews 9:10 which speaks of *diverse washings* or baptisms of the Jews, or *different dippings*, as it may be rendered without any impropriety, as our author asserts; though not to be understood of different sorts of dipping, as he foolishly objects to us; nor of different sorts of washing, some by sprinkling, some by affusion, others by bathing or dipping, as he would have it; but the Jewish washings or baptisms are so called, because of the different persons, or things washed or dipped, as *Grotius* on the place says; there was one washing of the Priests, another of the Levites, and another of the Israelites, when they had contracted any impurity; and which was done by immersion; nor do any of the instances this writer has produced disprove it. Not Exodus 29:4 *thou shalt wash them with water*; but whether by immersion or affusion he knows not. The Jews interpret it of immersion; the *Targum* of *Jonathan* is, "thou shalt *dip* them in forty measures of living water:" nor Exodus 30:19 which mentions the washing of the priest's hands and feet at the brazen laver of the tabernacle; the manner of which our author describes from Dr.

Lightfoot, out of the *Rabbins*; but had he transcribed the whole, it would have appeared, that not only washing the hands and feet, but bathing of their whole body, were necessary to the performance of their service; for it follows, "and none might enter into the court to do the service there, till he hath bathed; yea, though he were clean, he must bathe his body in cold water before he enter." And to this agrees a canon of theirs;[36] "no man enters into the court for service, though clean, till he has dipped himself; the high-priest dips himself five times on the day of atonement." And the Priests and Levites, before they performed any part of the daily service, dipped themselves: nor 2 Chronicles 4:6 which says, the molten sea in *Solomon's* temple was *for the priests to wash in*; where they washed not only their hands and their feet, but their whole bodies, as Dr. *Lightfoot* says;[37] "and for the bathing of which; they went down into the vessel itself; and to which agrees the *Jerusalem Talmud*,[38] which says, "the molten sea was a *dipping-place* for the priests:" Nor Numbers 8:6, 7 which, had the passage been wholly transcribed, it would appear, that not only the water of purifying was sprinkled on the Levites, but their bodies were bathed; for it allows: "and let them shave all their flesh, and wash their clothes, and so "make themselves clean;" that is, by bathing their whole bodies, which, as *the Targum* on the place says, was done in forty measures of water. Sprinkling *the water of purification* was a ceremony preparatory to the bathing, but was itself no part of it; and the same is to be observed of the purification by *the ashes of an heifer*, on the third and seventh days, Numbers 19:19 which was only preparatory to the great purification by bathing the body, and washing the clothes on the seventh day, which was the closing and finishing part of the service; for that it was the unclean person, and not the priest, that was to wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, verse 19 is clear; since it is a distinct law, or statute, from that in verse 21 which enjoins the priest to wash his clothes, but not to bathe himself in water; and indeed, the contrary sense is not only absurd, and interrupts and confounds the sense of the words; but, as Dr. *Gale* also observes, it cannot be reasonably imagined that the priest, by barely purifying the unclean, should need so much greater a washing and purification than the unclean himself; this sprinkling of the ashes of the heifer, therefore, was not part of the Jewish washings, or baptisms, or any exemplification of them; so that from the whole, I see no reason to depart from my conclusion, that "the words *baptize* and *baptism*, in all the places mentioned, do from their signification make *dipping* or *plunging* the necessary mode of administering the ordinance of baptism." I proceed now,

6. To vindicate those passages of scripture, which necessarily prove the mode of baptism by immersion. And, The first passage, is in Matthew 3:6 *and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins*. We argue from hence, not merely from these persons being *baptized*, to their being *dipped*; though this is an argument that cannot be answered, seeing those that are *baptized*, are necessarily *dipped*; for the word *baptize* signifies always to *dip*, or to wash by dipping, and never to pour or sprinkle; but the argument is frill more forcible from these persons being baptized *in the river Jordan*: for either the persons said to be baptized were in the river, or they were not; if they were not in the river, they could not be baptized in it; if they were in it, they went in it in order to be baptized by immersion; since no other end could be proposed, agreeable to the common sense of mankind: to say they went *into* it to have a little water sprinkled or poured on them, which could have been done without it, is ridiculous, and an imposition on common sense; wherefore this necessarily proves the mode of baptizing by immersion; since no other mode is compatible with this circumstance. The instances of the blind man's washing in *Siloam*, and the layers of the temple being to wash in, as disproving the necessity of immersion, I say, are impertinent; since the word *baptize* is used in neither of them; and besides, there is nothing appears to the contrary, that the

blind man dipped himself in *Siloam*, as *Naaman the Syrian* did in *Jordan*; and the things that were washed in the layers, were dipped there, since they held a quantity of water sufficient for that purpose. The author of the *dialogue* asks, "Do not we commonly wash our face and hands in a basin of water without dipping in it?" But common practice proves the contrary; men commonly dip their hands into a basin, when they wash either hands or face; the instance of *Elisha* pouring water on the hands of *Elijah*, doth not prove it was common to wash hands by pouring water on them; since this is not said to be done to wash his hands with; and some interpreters have thought that washing of hands is not intended, but some miracle which followed the action of pouring water, which gave *Elisha* a character, and by which he is described.

The second passage, is John 3:23. *John was baptizing in Enon near Salim, because there was much water there.* Here is not the least hint of *John's* choosing of this place, and being here, for any other reason, but for baptizing; not for drink for men and cattle, as suggested; besides, why did he not fix upon a place where the people could be provided with food for themselves, and provender for their cattle? Why for drink only? This is a wild fancy, a vain conjecture. The reason of the choice is plain, it was for the convenience of baptizing, and that *because there was much water*, suitable to the manner of baptizing used by *John*; and if this reason given agrees with no other mode of baptizing, but by immersion, as it does not, since sprinkling or pouring requires not much water; it follows, that this necessarily proves the mode of baptism by immersion.

The third text is Matthew 3:16. *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.* The author of the *dialogue* suggested, that the Greek preposition $\alpha\pi\omicron$, always signifies *from*, never *out of*: our author is obliged to own, that it may sometimes admit to be rendered *out of*: a great condescension to the learned translators of our Bible! Well, if Jesus came up out of the water, he must have been in it, where it is certain he was baptized; and the evangelist *Mark* says, he was *baptized into Jordan*; not into the banks of *Jordan*; but into the waters of *Jordan*; now seeing such an expression as this will not suit with any other mode of baptism but immersion, and it cannot be said with any propriety, that Christ was sprinkled into *Jordan*, or poured into *Jordan*, but with great propriety may be said to be *dipped* or *plunged* into *Jordan*; it follows, that this necessarily proves the mode of baptism as administered to our Lord, to be by immersion.

The fourth passage, is concerning *Philip's* baptizing the Eunuch in Acts 8:38, 39. *they went down both into the water, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water*, etc. The *dialogue* writer would have it, that this proves no more than that they went down *to* the water, and *came from it*: but that this was not the case, I have observed, that previous to this, they are said to *came to a certain water*, to the water-side; and therefore after this, it cannot be understood of any thing else, but of their going *into* it; and so, consequently, the other phrase, of their coming *out of it*. Here our author has got a new fancy in his head; that turning *to a certain water* is not coming to the water-side, or to the water itself, but to the sight of it; which sense he does not pretend to confirm by any parallel place, either in sacred or profane writings, and is very absurd, improper and impertinent; since a person may come to *the sight* of a water, when he is at a great distance from it, and cannot be said with any propriety to be come so it: what he thinks will add strength to this fancy, and destroy the observation I made, is, that after this, the chariot is still going on, and several questions and answers passed before it was bid to stand still: all which is easily accounted for, supposing them to be come to the water itself; since the road they were now in, might be by the water-side, and so they traveled along by it, while the questions and answers passed, till they came

to a proper and convenient place for baptism, at which they alighted; besides, why should the *sight* of a certain water, or confluence of water, put the Eunuch in mind of baptism, if it was not performed by immersion, of the mode of which he was doubtless acquainted? It is highly probable, that this treasurer was provided both with wine and water for his journey, which, mixed, was the usual drink of those countries; and a bottle of his own water would have done for sprinkling, or pouring, had either of them been the mode of baptism used; nor would there have been any occasion for going out of the chariot and to the water, and much less into it, which the text is express for; and seeing these circumstances of going down into the water, and coming up out of it, at the administration of baptism, agree with no other mode than that of immersion, not with sprinkling, nor pouring water, it necessarily proves immersion to be the mode of baptism.

The last text is Romans 6:4 *we are buried with him by baptism into death*; where baptism is called a burial, a burial with Christ, and a resemblance of his; which only can be made by immersion: but our author says, if it is designed to represent it, there is no necessity it should be a resemblance of it; but how it can represent it without a resemblance of it, is not easy to say: he suggests, that though the Lord's supper represents the death of Christ, it is no resemblance of it. Strange! that the breaking of the bread should not be a resemblance of the body of Christ broken, and the pouring out of the wine not a resemblance of his blood shed. Baptism by immersion, according to our author, is no resemblance of the burial of Christ; since his body was laid in a sepulcher cut out of a rock on high, and not put under ground, or covered with earth: this arises from a mistaken notion of the Jewish way of burial, even in their sepulchres, hewed out of rocks; for in every sepulcher of this kind, according to the nature of the rock, there were eight graves dug, some say thirteen, and which were dug seven cubits deep: [\[39\]](#) in one of these graves, within the sepulcher, lay the body of our Lord. So that it had a double burial, as it were, one in the sepulcher, and another in one of the graves in it: besides, how otherwise could our Lord be said to be three days and nights in the heart of the earth? (Matthew 12:40). Again, our author says, "there is no more resemblance of a common burial in baptism by immersion, than by sprinkling, or pouring on water; since a corpse above ground may be properly said to be buried by having a sufficient quantity of earth cast upon it."

True; but then a corpse can never be said to be buried, that has a little dust or earth sprinkled or poured on its face; from whence it is evident, that sprinkling or pouring cannot bear any resemblance of a common burial. In short, seeing no other mode but immersion, not sprinkling, nor pouring, has any resemblance of a burial, this passage necessarily proves the mode of baptism by immersion: and yet, after all, this writer inclines to that opinion, that both modes were used in scripture-times; though it appears by all accounts that the manner was uniform, one and the same word being always used in the relation of it; and yet he wrangles at every instance of immersion, and will not allow of one; what must be said of such a man! that he must be let down for a mere wrangler; a wrangler against light and conscience; a wrangler against his own opinion and sentiment; and what a worthless writer must this be! I go on,

7. To consider the instances, which, it is said, shew it improbable that the ordinance of baptism was performed by dipping. The first is the baptism of the three thousand, Acts 2:41 which, to be done by immersion, is represented as improbable; from the shortness of the time, and the want of convenience on a sudden, for the baptizing of such a multitude. As to the time, I shall not dispute it with our author, whether *Peter's* sermon was at the beginning of the third hour, or nine o'clock, or at the close of it, and about noon: I am willing to allow it might be noon before the baptism of these

persons came on; nay, I will grant him an hour longer if he pleases, and yet there was time enough between that and night for the twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, in all fourscore and two, to baptize by immersion three times three thousand persons. I pass over his foolish remarks on a person's being ready for baptism, as I have done many others of the same stupid kind, as deserving no notice, nor answer: As to the want of convenience for the baptizing such a number, I have observed the great number of baths in private houses in *Jerusalem*, the several pools in it, and the many conveniences in the temple: this writer thinks, the mention of the last is a piece of weakness in me, to imagine that the Jewish priests, in whose hands they were, the mortal enemies of Christ, should be on a sudden so good-natured as to grant the use of their baths for such a purpose: but how came they to allow the Christians the use of their temple, where they met daily? And besides, it is expressly said, they *had favor with all the people* (Acts 2:46, 47).

The *second* instance, is the baptism of *Paul* (Acts 9:18); here only the narrative is directed to, as representing his baptism to be in the house of *Judas*: but there is nothing in the account that necessarily concludes it was done in the house, but rather the contrary; since he *arose* from the place where he was, in order to be baptized: and supposing it was done in the house, it is not at all improbable that there was a bath in this house, where it might be performed; since it was the house of a Jew, with whom it was usual to have baths to wash their whole bodies in, on certain occasions: So that there is no improbability of *Paul's* baptism being by immersion; besides, he was not only bid to *arise and be baptized*, which would found very oddly, *be sprinkled* or *poured* (Acts 22:16); but says himself, that he was *buried by baptism* (Rom. 6:4).

The *third* instance, is the baptism of *Cornelius* and his household (Acts 10:47). The sense of the words given, "can any man forbid the use of his river, or *bath*, or what convenience he might have, for baptizing;" is objected to, as not being the apostle's words, but a strained sense of them: the same objection may be made to this writer's sense, that the phrase imports the forbidding water to be brought; since no such thing is expressed, or hinted at: the principal thing, no doubt, designed by the apostle, is, that no one could, or at least ought, to object to the baptism of those who had so manifestly received the holy Ghost: but what is there in all this account, that renders their baptism by immersion improbable, for which it is produced?

The *fourth* instance is the baptism of the Jailor and his household; (Acts 16:33) in the relation of which, there is nothing that makes it probable, much less certain, that it was performed by sprinkling or pouring water on them; nor any thing that makes it improbable that it was done by immersion: according to the account given, it seems to be a clear case, that the Jailor, upon his conversion, took the apostles out of prison into his own house, where they preached to him and his family, verse 32, and that after this, they went out of his house, and were baptized; very probably in the river without the city, where the oratory was, verse 13, for it is certain, that after the baptism of him and his household, he brought the apostles into his house, and set meat before them (Acts 16:33, 34), nor is it any unreasonable and incredible thing, that he with his whole family should leave the prison and prisoners, who no doubt had servants that he could trust, or otherwise he must have been always little better than a prisoner himself: and whether the earthquake reached any farther than the prison, to alarm others, is not certain, nor any great matter of moment in this controversy to be determined; and the circumstances of the whole relation shew it more likely, that the Jailor and his family were baptized without the prison, than in it, and rather in the river without the city, than with the water out of the vessel, with which the Jailor had washed the apostle's

stripes: upon the whole, these instances produced fail of shewing the improbability of the mode of baptism by immersion; which must appear clear and manifest to every attentive reader, notwithstanding all that has been opposed unto it.

There remains nothing but what has been already attended to, or worthy of regard; but the untruth he charges me with, in saying that "the dialogue writer only attempts to mention allusive expressions in favor of sprinkling:" our author will be ashamed of himself, and his abusive language, when he looks into the dialogue again; since the writer of that never mentions the words of the institution, for any such purpose, and much less argues from them; nor does he ever shew that the word *baptize* is in the sacred pages applied to sprinkling, or that it so signifies; nor does he any where argue from the good appearance there is of evidence, that in the apostles times, the *mode of sprinkling was used*; he never attempts to prove that the word βαπτίζω, signifies to sprinkle, or is so used; nor mentions any one instance of sprinkling in baptism; what he contends for is, that the signification of the word, and the scripture instances of baptism, do not make *dipping* the necessary mode of administering that ordinance; and what he mentions in favor of *sprinkling*, are only resemblances, and allusive expressions.

There, Sir, are the remarks I made in reading Mr. *Clark's* book; which I have caused to be transcribed, and here send you for the use of yourself and friends, either in a private or in a public way, as you may judge necessary and proper.

I am with all due respects, Yours, etc.

JOHN GILL

LONDON, July 26, 1753.

Some

STRICTURES ON MR. BOSTWICK'S

FAIR AND RATIONAL VINDICATION

OF THE RIGHT OF INFANTS

TO THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM

Along with Mr. Clark's Defense of the divine Right of Infant-baptism, to which what is written above is a Reply, there has been imported from America a treatise called, A fair and rational Vindication of the Right of Infants to the Ordinance of Baptism; being the substance of several discourses from Acts 2:39, by David Bostwick, A.M. late minister of the Presbyterian church in the city of New York, which has been reprinted and published here; and as it comes in company with the former, it is but a piece of civility to take some notice of it, and make some few strictures (severe criticisms, ed.) upon it, though there is nothing in it but what is answered in the above Reply; to which I shall greatly refer the reader. There is scarce a single thought through the whole of it, that I can discern, is new; nothing but *crambe repetita*, old stale reasonings and arguments, which have been answered over and over; and yet this, I understand, has been cried up as an unanswerable performance; which I do not wonder at, that any thing that has but an appearance of reasoning, candor, and ingenuity, as this will be allowed to have, should be so reckoned by those of that party; when the most miserable pamphlet that comes out on that side of the question, has the same epithet bellowed upon it. And,

First, This Gentleman has mistook the sense of his text, on which he grounds his discourse concerning the Right of infants to baptism (Acts 2:39), for the promise is unto you, and to your children; and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call; by which promise, he says, p. 14, 15, must be understood," the covenant-promise made to Abraham, which gave his "infant-children a right to the ordinance of circumcision;" when there is not the least mention made of Abraham, nor of any covenant-promise made to him in it; nor was ever any covenant-promise made to him, giving his infant-children a right to the ordinance of circumcision, but the covenant of circumcision; and that can never be meant here by the promise; since this is said to be to all that are afar off; by whom, according to this Gentleman, Gentiles are meant; to whom the covenant of circumcision belonged not; nor did it give to them any right to the ordinance of circumcision, except they became proselytes to the Jewish religion: besides, be the promise here what it may, it is observed, not as giving any right or claim to any ordinance whatever; but as an encouraging motive to persons in distress under a sense of sin, to repent of their sin, and declare their repentance, and yield a voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism; when they might hope that remission of sin would be applied to them, and they should receive a larger measure of the grace of the Spirit; and therefore can only be understood of adult persons; and the promise is no other than the promise of life and salvation by Christ, and of remission of sins by his blood, and of

an increase of grace from his Spirit: and whereas the persons addressed had imprecated the blood of Christ, they had shed, upon their posterity, as well as on themselves, which greatly distressed them; they are told, for their relief, that the same promise would be made good to their posterity also, provided they did as they were directed to do; and to all their brethren the Jews, in distant parts; and even to the Gentiles, sometimes described as afar off, of the same character with themselves, repenting and submitting to baptism; yea, to all, in all ages and places, whom God should now, or hereafter call by his grace; see my Reply to Mr. Clark, p. 50, 51. [\[1\]](#) This text is so far from being an unanswerable argument for the right of infants to baptism, as it is said to be, that there is not the least mention of Infant-baptism in it; nor any hint of it; nor any thing from whence it can be concluded. The baptism encouraged to by it is only of adult persons convinced of sin, and who repented of it. The passage in Acts 3:25, brought for the support of the author's sense of his text, is foreign to his purpose; since it refers not to the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham (Gen. 17), but to the promise of the Messiah of Abraham's seed, and of the blessing of all nations in him (Gen. 22:18), and which was fulfilled in the mission and incarnation of Christ, and in the ministration of his gospel to Jews and Gentiles; which same promise of Christ, of life and salvation by him, is meant in Acts 13:26, 32, 33, and which is also a proof, that the children to whom it belongs, are to be understood, not of infant-children, but of the adult posterity of the Jews; since the apostle says, God hath fulfilled the same to us their children; for surely the apostle Paul must not be reckoned an infant-child.

Secondly, The ground on which the right of infants to baptism is founded by this author is a false one; which is the covenant made with Abraham, that which gave his infant-children a right to circumcision, and is said to be the covenant of grace, the same under which believers now are. This he looks upon to be the grand turning point, on which the issue of the controversy very much depends; that it is the main ground on which the right of infants to baptism is asserted; and he freely confesses, that if this covenant is not the covenant of grace, the main ground of infants right to baptism is taken away, and consequently, that the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are overturned (pp. 18, 19). Now that this ground and foundation is a false and sandy one, and will not bear the weight of this superstructure laid upon it, will appear by observing,

1. That the covenant of grace gives no right to any positive institution; either circumcision or baptism: not to circumcision; the covenant of grace was in being, was made, manifested, and applied to many, from Adam to Abraham, both before and after the flood, who had no right to circumcision, nor knowledge of it; the covenant of grace did not give to Abraham himself a right to circumcision; he was openly interested in it, it was made, manifested, and applied unto him, many years before circumcision was enjoined him; and when it was, it was not the covenant of grace, but the express command of God, that gave him and his male seed a right to circumcision; I say his male seed, for his female seed, though no doubt many of them were interested in the covenant of grace, yet their covenant-interest gave them no right unto it: as there were also many, at the same time that circumcision was enjoined Abraham and his natural seed, who were interested in the covenant of grace, and yet had no right to circumcision; as Shem, Arphaxad, Lot, and others: and on the other hand, it may easily be observed, that there were many who had a right to circumcision, and on whom it was practiced, who, without any breach of charity, it may be concluded, had no interest in the covenant of grace; not to mention particular persons, as Ishmael, Esau, etc. many of the idolaters and rebels among the Israelites in the wilderness, of those that bowed the knee to Baal in the times of Ahab, and of the worshippers of Jeroboam's calves; those that are called the rulers of

Sodom and Gomorrah in the times of Isaiah, and that worshipped the queen and host of heaven in the times of Jeremiah; and those whose characters are given in the prophecy of Malachi, as then living; with the Scribes and Pharisees, who committed the unpardonable sin in the times of Christ; these cannot be thought to be in the covenant of grace.

In short, all were not Israel that were of Israel, and circumcised: it is therefore clear to a demonstration, that interest in the covenant of grace did not give right to circumcision, but the special, particular, and express command of God: nor does it give right to baptism; it gave the Old Testament-saints no right unto it, who were four thousand years without it, and yet in the covenant of grace; and since baptism is enjoined as an ordinance of the New Testament, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and yet not known to be so by himself or others; and while he is in such a state, and in such circumstances, he cannot be thought to have any right to baptism. It is a command of God, that those that repent and believe, be baptized; the covenant of grace provides faith and repentance for those interested in it, and bestows them on them; whereby they are qualified for baptism according to the divine command. But it is not the covenant of grace, nor these qualifications, that give the right to baptism; but the command of God to persons so qualified, to profess the same, and be baptized: for men may have faith and repentance, yet if they do not make a profession of them, they have no right to baptism, nor a minister any authority to administer it to them. No doubt but the apostle Peter was satisfied that the three thousand pricked in their hearts were truly penitents; yet insisted on the profession of their repentance, as antecedent to baptism; and Philip, I make no question, was satisfied of the Eunuch's being a believer in Christ by the conversation he had with him; yet required a confession of his faith in him, in order to his baptism; for with the mouth confession is to be made unto salvation. Nor even according to our author's sentiment does the covenant of grace give a right to baptism; since, according to him, persons are not in covenant before they are baptized; for he expressly says, pp. 12, 30. that by baptism they enter into the covenant, and are taken into the covenant by baptism; and therefore baptism rather gives them a right to the covenant, than the covenant a right to baptism, according to this Gentleman: so far is it from being true what he elsewhere says (p. 32), that the covenant of grace gave Abraham and his children a right to circumcision under the law; and that this it is that gives parents and children a right to baptism under the gospel.

2. The covenant of circumcision, or the covenant which gave Abraham's infant-children a right to circumcision, is not the covenant of grace; for the covenant of circumcision must be most certainly, in the nature of it, a covenant of works, and not of grace. It will be freely allowed, that the covenant of grace was at certain times made, and made manifest, and applied to Abraham, and he interested in it; and that God was the God of him, and of his spiritual seed; and that the spiritual seed of Abraham, both among Jews and Gentiles, are interested in the same covenant; but not his carnal seed, nor theirs as such: and that Abraham was justified by faith, as believers now are; and that the same gospel was preached to him as now; and that at the same time the covenant of circumcision was given unto him, there was an exhibition of the covenant of grace unto him: the account of both is mixed together; but then the covenant of circumcision, which was a covenant of peculiarity, and belonged only to him and his natural male seed, was quite a distinct thing from the covenant of grace, since it included some that were not in the covenant of grace, and excluded others that were in it: nor is that the covenant that was confirmed of God in Christ 430 years before the law was; since the covenant of circumcision falls 24 years short of that date, and therefore it refers not to that, but to an exhibition of the covenant of grace to Abraham, about the time of his call out of

Chaldea; besides the covenant of circumcision is abolished, but the covenant of grace continues, and ever will; see my reply (pp. 35, 36). Now as this covenant, which gave Abraham's infant-children a right to circumcision, is not the covenant of grace, the main ground on which the right of infants to baptism is asserted, is taken away, and so no foundation left for it; and consequently the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are overturned, as this Gentleman freely confesses; and as everyone should, who is in the same way of thinking and reasoning. If the covenant of circumcision is not the covenant of grace, here of right the controversy should be closed, since this is the turning point on which the issue of it very much depends; for if this be false, all that follows as argued from it, must be so too; for,

Thirdly, If the covenant of circumcision is not the covenant of grace, then circumcision is not the seal of the covenant of grace it is said to be (p. 22). If it was, the covenant of grace must be without such a seal near two thousand years, before the covenant of circumcision was given; and why not then always without one? besides, it must be with a seal and without a seal at one and same time, which is absurd; for there were some interested in the covenant of grace as before observed, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, and so without this seal, when it was enjoined on Abraham and his natural seed, and there were such afterwards; and circumcision also must have been the seal of itself, which is another absurdity. Circumcision was a token and sign, or mark in the flesh, which Abraham's natural posterity were to bear until the coming of the Messiah; but is never called a seal throughout the whole Old Testament; and much less is it any where said to be a seal of the covenant of grace: and indeed what blessing of grace could it seal, assure of, and confirm, to any of Abraham's natural seed as such, or any other man's natural seed? It is indeed in the New Testament called a seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, being yet uncircumcised (Rom. 4:11.) but then it was no seal of that, nor of any thing else to others, but to Abraham only; namely, that that righteousness which he had by faith before he was circumcised, would come upon, or be imputed to the uncircumcised Gentiles; and accordingly this mark continued in the flesh of his posterity, until the gospel, publishing justification by the righteousness of faith, was ordered to be preached to the Gentiles.^[2] Wherefore,

Fourthly., Seeing circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace, baptism, which it is pretended was instituted in the room of it, can be no seal of it neither, and so not to be administered as such to the children of professed believers, as is said (p. 25). The text in Colossians 2:11, falls short of proving that baptism is instituted in the room of circumcision; since the apostle is speaking, not of circumcision in the flesh, but in the Spirit; and by which he means not the outward ordinance of baptism, that is distinguished from it,^[3] but an inward work of grace upon the heart; spiritual circumcision, called the circumcision of Christ; which to understand as the same, is not to make an unreasonable tautology; it makes none at all, and much less nonsense, as this writer suggests; but beautifully completes the description the apostle gives of spiritual circumcision; first, by the manner of its performance, without hands; then by the matter and substance of it, the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; and lastly, by the author of it, Christ, who by his spirit produces it. The argument from analogy is weak and insufficient; though some little agreement between circumcision and baptism may be imagined, and seem to be in the signification of them, yet the difference between them is notorious; they differ in their subjects, uses, manner of administration, and the administrators of them; nor is it true, what is suggested, that they are both sacraments of admission into the church; nor are they badges of relation to God or Christ, nor signs and seals of the covenant of grace. Nor need we be under any concern about any ordinance coming in the room

of circumcision, and answering to that Jewish rite. Nor is there any necessity of any, no more than of a pope in the room of an high priest, or of any festivals to answer to those of the Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles; nor does the Lord's supper answer to the passover, and come in the room of it; it is Christ that answers to it, and is the passover sacrificed for us: but what makes it quite clear and plain, that baptism does not succeed circumcision, or come in the room of it, is, that it was in force and use before circumcision was abolished, which was not until the death of Christ, whereas John administered baptism, and Christ himself was baptized, and many others, some years before that time; and therefore baptism cannot be said, with any propriety, to succeed circumcision, when it was in force before the other was out of date: besides, if it did, it is no seal of the covenant of grace, nor to be administered to infants for such an use; for what spiritual blessing, what blessing of grace in the covenant, does baptism seal, or can seal, assure of, and secure unto the carnal seed of believers? Let it be named if it can.[\[4\]](#)

Fifthly, It is not indisputably evident, as this Gentleman says (p. 29), but indisputably false, that the apostles acknowledged and allowed the covenant-relation and interest of children, under the gospel, as well as under the law; by which I take it for granted he means, their relation and interest in the covenant of grace: that relation and interest, the natural seed of Abraham, as such, had not under the law; nor have the natural seed of believers, as such, the same under the gospel. This is not to be proved from his text, as has been shown already: nor from Romans 11:16, 17, where by the root and branches, are not meant Abraham and his posterity, or natural seed; nor by the olive-tree the Jewish church; but the gospel church-state in its first foundation, out of which were left the Jews that believed not in Christ, meant by the branches broken off; and which church was constituted of those that believed in him; and these were the root and first-fruits, which being holy, are the pledge and earnest of the future conversion and holiness of that people the apostle is speaking of in the context; and into which church state the Gentiles that believed were received, and are the branches grafted in, which partook of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; that is, of the goodness and fatness of the house of God, the ordinances and privileges of it: and in this passage not a word is said of the covenant-relation, and interest of children under the gospel; not a syllable about baptism, much less of Infant-baptism; nor can anything in favor of it be inferred from it;[\[5\]](#) nor can anything of this kind be proved from 1 Corinthians 7:14, real internal holiness is rejected by our author, as the sense of this and the preceding passage; but he pleads for a federal holiness; but what that is, as distinct from real holiness, let it be said if it can: the only holiness which the covenant of grace promises and provides for, and which only is proper federal holiness, is real holiness of heart and life:[\[6\]](#) no other than matrimonial holiness, or lawful marriage, can be meant in the Corinthian text; it is such a holiness with which the unbelieving parent is sanctified, husband or wife; and if it is a federal holiness, the unbeliever ought to be allowed to be in covenant; and if this gives a right to baptism, ought to be baptized, as well as their carnal issue; and have as good a right to it, surely, as they who have their holiness from them, and which even depends upon the sanctification of the unbelieving parent. I am able to prove, from innumerable instances in Jewish writings, that the words sanctify and sanctified, are used for espouse and espoused, and the apostle, being a Jew, adopts the same language; and let men wriggle and wrangle as long as they can, no other sense can be put upon the words, than of a legitimate marriage and offspring; nothing else will suit with the case proposed to the apostle, and with his answer and reasoning about it; and which sense has been allowed by many learned Paedobaptists; and I cannot forbear transcribing, what I have elsewhere done, the honest confession of Musculus: "Formerly, says he, I have abused this place against the

Anabaptists, thinking the meaning was, that the children were holy for the parents faith, which, though true, the present place makes nothing for the purpose."[\[7\]](#)

Sixthly, From what has been observed, it is not proved, as our author asserts (p. 32), that the apostles looked on the children of believing parents as having an interest in the covenant of grace; and false is it, to the last degree of falsehood, what he infers from thence, that "then we have undeniable evidence that "they did in fact baptize the children of all professing believers; and that they "understood their commission as authorizing them so to do" (Matthew 28:19). Let one single fact be produced, one undeniable instance of the apostles baptizing an infant of any, professor or profane, and we will give up the cause at once, and say no more. Nor did the apostles, nor could the apostles understand the commission as authorizing them to baptize infants. What this Gentleman observes, that the word teach is in the original to make disciples, or learn: Be it so, it is not applicable to newborn babes, who are not capable of learning anything, and much less of divine and spiritual things, of Christ and his gospel, and the doctrines of it; of which kind of learning only can the commission be understood: nor are the children of believing parents called disciples (Acts 15:10), adult persons are meant; and by the yoke attempted to be put on their necks, not circumcision, which was not intolerable, but the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other Mosaic rites, and even of keeping the whole law in order to salvation; this was intolerable.

This author further observes, that children must be included in the words all nations, mentioned in the commission. If they are included so as to be baptized, and if this phrase is to be understood without any limitation or restriction, then not only the children of Christian parents, but the children of Pagans, Jews, and Turks; yea, all adult persons, be they who they may, ever so vile and profligate, since these are included in all nations; but the limitation is to those that are taught, and learn to become the disciples of Christ, and believe in him, as appears from Mark 16:15, 16.[\[8\]](#) Nor does it appear from the scripture-accounts, that there is any probability, and much less the highest probability, as this writer says (p. 33), that it was the general practice of the apostles to baptize infants, and which he concludes from Lydia, the Jailor, and Stephanas; which instances do not afford the least probability of it.[\[9\]](#) To make it probable that there might be infant-children in those families, he observes, we read, when God smote the first-born in Egypt, there was not an house in which there was not one dead, consequently not an house in Egypt in which there was not a child: but he did not consider, that all the first-born of Egypt slain, were not infant-children; but many of them might be men grown, of twenty, or thirty years of age, or more; and of these, with those under such an age, and in infancy, it is not strange that there should be found one in every house.[\[10\]](#) Our author adds, "suppose it had been said of one proselyted to the Jewish religion, that "he and his household, or that he and all his were circumcised, would any doubt "whether his infant-children were circumcised? I believe not:" and so do I too; but not for the reason given, which is a false one; for it never was a practice, either before or since Abraham's covenant, to receive children with their parents into a covenant-relation, if by that relation is meant relation to, and interest in the covenant of grace; but for this very good reason, because the Jews and their proselytes were commanded to circumcise their Infant-children; but God has no where commanded any to baptize their Infant-children; and therefore when households are said to be baptized, this cannot be understood of infants, and especially when those in these households are represented as hearers of the word, believers in it, and persons possessed of spiritual joy and comfort.

Seventhly, The evidence this author gives of the practice of Infant-baptism, from those that lived in the first, second, and third centuries (pp. 34-40), comes next. He produces no evidence from any writer of the first century, though there are several whose writings are extant, as Barnabas, Clemens Remanus, Hermas, Polycarp, and Ignatius. He begins with Irenæus, as he is twice called; Irenæus is meant, of whom he says, that he only mentions Infant-baptism transiently; but he does not mention it at all: it is not once mentioned in all his writings, as corrupted as they be; being some spurious, and for the most part translations, and these barbarous, and but few original pieces: the passage produced for his use, of the word regeneration for baptism, is not to the purpose; since by the command of regenerating, Christ gave to his disciples, is not meant the command of baptizing, but of teaching the doctrine of regeneration, and the necessity of it to salvation, and in order to baptism, the first and principal part of the commission of the apostles, as the order of the words shows. The other testimony which, he says, is plain for the baptism of infants, there is not a syllable of it in it: Irenæus only says, "Christ came to save all; all I say, that "are born again unto God; infants, and little ones, and children, and young "men, and old men." Which is most true; for Christ came to save all of every age that are regenerated, and of which persons of every age are capable; but to interpret this of Christ's coming to save all that are baptized, is false; and is to make this ancient writer to speak an untruth: to prove that regeneration is used by him for baptism, a passage is produced out of Justin Martyr, said to be his contemporary, though Justin lived before him, in the middle of the second century, and should have been first mentioned; but will not serve his purpose: for Justin is speaking of the manner of adult-baptism, and not a word of infants; and of adult persons, not as regenerated by or in baptism; for he speaks of them before as converted and believers, and consequently regenerated; and their baptism is plainly distinguished from regeneration. Of the sense of the passages of these two writers, see more in the Reply, p. 16-18. The argument from apostolic Tradition (pp. 13, 14). Antipaedobaptism (pp. 9-20).

The next testimony produced is Origen, placed in the beginning of the third century, though it was rather towards the middle of it that he wrote and flourished in, and should have been mentioned after Tertullian. The passages quoted from him are, the first out of his eighth homily on Leviticus, though the last clause in it does not belong to that, but is in the fourteenth homily on Luke, and the other is out of his epistle to the Romans: Now these are all taken out of Latin translations, full of interpolations, additions, and detractions; so that, as many learned men observe, "one knows not when he "reads Origen, and is at a loss to find Origen in Origen." Now whereas there are genuine works of his still extant in Greek in them there is not the least hint of Infant-baptism, nor any reference to it, much less any express mention of it, not even as an apostolical tradition, as in the last passage produced; for so it should be rendered, not order, but tradition; on which I shall just observe what Bishop Taylor says: "A tradition apostolical, if it be not consigned with a fuller testimony than of one person (Origen) whom all after-ages have condemned of many errors, will obtain so little reputation among those, who know that things have, upon greater authority, pretended to derive from the apostles, and yet falsely; that it will be a great argument, that he is credulous and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation in a matter of so great concernment."^[11] Tertullian is the next writer quoted as giving plain proof that Infant-baptism was the constant practice of the church in his day: he is the first person known to have made any mention of it; who, as soon as he did, argued against it, and dissuaded from it; and though it will be owned, that it was moved in his day, and debated; yet that it was practiced, and much less constantly practiced, has not yet been proved.

The next evidence produced is Cyprian, who lived in the middle of the third century; and it will be allowed that it was practiced in the African churches in his time, where it was first moved, and at the same time Infant-communion was practiced also; of the practice of which we have as early proof as of Infant-baptism; and this furnishes with an answer to this author's questions (p. 42). When Infant-baptism was introduced, and by whom? It was introduced at the time Infant-communion was, and by the same persons. As for the testimonies of Ambrose, Austin, and Pelagius, they might have been spared, since they wrote in the fourth century, when it is not denied that Infant-baptism very much prevailed; of Austin, and particularly of what Pelagius says, see Argument from apostolic tradition (pp. 19-26). Antipaedobaptism (pp. 33-37). And from hence it appears, that it is not true what this author suggests (pp. 42, 52), that infant-baptism was the universal practice of the primitive churches in the three first centuries, called the purest times; when it does not appear to have been practiced at all until the third century, when sad corruptions were made in doctrine and practice.

Eighthly, This author proposes to answer some of the most material objections against Infant-baptism (p. 43), etc. as,

1. "That there is no express "command for it in scripture, and therefore unwarrantable." To which the answer is; that if there is no express command, there are virtual and implicit ones, which are of equal force with an express one, and no less than four are observed; one command is enough, this is over-doing it, and what is overdone is not well done: but let us hear them; the first is God's command to Abraham to circumcise his infant-children, which is a virtual and implicit command to believers to baptize theirs! The reason is, because they are Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs according to the promise; but the command to Abraham only concerned his natural, not his spiritual seed; and if there is any force in the reason given, or the command lays any obligation on the latter, their duty is not to baptize, but circumcise their children; since the sacramental rite commanded, it seems, has never been repealed, and still remains in full force. The next virtual and implicit command is in Matthew 19:14, but Christ's permission of children to come, or to be brought unto him, there spoken of, was not for baptism, or to be baptized by him, but for him to pray for them, and touch them, in order to cure them of diseases.[\[12\]](#) Another implicit, if not express command, to baptize infants, is in Matthew 28:19. This has been considered, and disproved already; (see p. 99). The fourth and last implicit command, the author mentions, is the exhortation in his text, Acts 2:38, 39, in which, as has been shown, there is not the least hint of Infant-baptism, nor anything from whence it can be concluded.

This author observes, that since virtual and implicit commands are looked on as sufficient to determine our conduct in other things, then why not in this? such as keeping the first-day-sabbath, attendance on public worship, and the admission of women to the Lord's-Supper. To which I reply, he has not proved any virtual and implicit command to baptize infants; and as to the cases mentioned, besides implications, there are plain instances in scripture of the practice of them; and let like instances of Infant-baptism be produced, and we shall think ourselves obliged to practice it. As to what this author says of an express, irrepeatable command to children, to receive the seal of the covenant, and the constant practice of the church to administer the seal of it to them; if by the covenant is meant the covenant of grace, it never had any such seal as is suggested, which has been proved; nor has it any but the blood of Christ, called the blood of the everlasting covenant.

2. Another objection to Infant-baptism is; there is no express instance in all the history of the New-Testament of an Infant-child being baptized, and therefore is without any scripture-example. To which is replied, by observing that whole households were baptized; as there were, and which have been already considered; and these were baptized, not upon the conversion of the parent, or head of the family, but upon their own faith; and so were not infants, but adult persons; though this author thinks that such accounts would easily be understood to include children, had the same been said of circumcision. They might so, when circumcision was in force and use; for this very good reason, because there was a previous express command extant to circumcise children, when there is none to baptize infants. He further observes, that from there being no express mention of Infant-baptism in the New Testament, it should not be concluded there was none, anymore than that the churches of Antioch, Iconium, of the Romans, Galatians, Thessalonians and Colossians, were not baptized, because there is no express account of it in the history of the New Testament: but of several of those churches there is mention made of the baptism of the members of them, of the Romans, Galatians and Colossians (Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12), but what this author might imagine would press us hard, is to give a scripture-example of our own present practice. Our present practice, agreeable to scripture-examples, is not at all concerned with the parents of those baptized by us, whether believers or unbelievers, Christians or not Christians, Jews or Heathens, this comes not into consideration; it is only concerned with the persons themselves to be baptized, what they are. It seems, if we give a scripture-example of our practice, it must be of a person born and brought up of Christian or baptized parents, that was baptized in adult years; but our present practice is not limited to such persons. We baptize many whose parents we have no reason to believe are Christians, or are baptized persons; and be it that we baptize adult persons, who are born and brought up of Christian or baptized parents, a scripture-example of such a person might indeed be required of us with some plausible pretext, if the history of the Acts of the Apostles, which this writer says continued above thirty years, had given an account of the yearly or of frequent additions of members to the churches mentioned in it, during that space of time; whereas that history only gives an account of the first planting of those churches, and of the baptism of those of which they first consisted; wherefore to give instances of those that were born of them, and brought up by them as baptized in adult years, cannot be reasonably required of us: But, on the other hand, if Infant-children were admitted to baptism in those times, upon the faith and baptism of their parents, and their becoming Christians; it is strange! exceeding strange! that among the many thousands that were baptized in Jerusalem, Samaria, Corinth, and other places, that there should be no one instance of any of them bringing their children with them to be baptized, and claiming the privilege of baptism for them upon their own faith, or of their doing this in any short time after; this is a case that required no length of time; and yet not a single instance can be produced.

3. A third objection is, that "infants can receive no benefit from baptism, "because of their incapacity; and therefore are not to be baptized." To which our author answers; that they are capable of being entered into covenant with God, of the seal of the covenant, of being cleansed by the blood of Christ, and of being regenerated by his Spirit: And be it so; what of all this! as I have observed in the Reply (p. 4). Are they capable of understanding the nature, design, and use of the ordinance of baptism? Are they capable of professing faith in Christ, which is a prerequisite to it, and of exercising it in it? Are they capable of answering a good conscience to God in it? Are they capable of submitting to it in obedience to the will of Christ, from love to him, and with a view to his glory? They are not: what benefit then can they receive by baptism? and to what purpose is it to

be administered to them? If infants receive any advantage, benefit, or blessing by baptism, which our infants have not without it, let it be named, if it can; if none, why administered? why all this zeal and contention about it? A mere noise about nothing.

4. A fourth and most common objection, it is said, is, that "faith and repentance, or a profession of them at least, are mentioned in the New Testament as the necessary prerequisites of baptism, of which children are incapable, and therefore of the ordinance itself." To this it is answered; that children are capable of the habit and principle of faith: which is not denied, nor is it in the objection; and it is granted by our author, that a profession of faith is a prerequisite to baptism in adult persons, who embrace Christianity; but when they have embraced it, and professed their faith, in the apostles times, not only themselves, but their households, and all that were theirs, were baptized. It is very true, those professing their faith also, as did the household of the Jailor, of whom it is said, that he was believing in God with all his house: His family believed as well as he, which could not have been known, had they not professed it. The instance of a professing stranger embracing the Jewish religion, in order to his circumcision, which, when done, it was always administered to his family and children, makes nothing to the purpose; since it is no rule of procedure to us, with respect to a gospel-ordinance.

Ninthly, The performance under consideration is concluded with observing many absurdities, and much confusion, with which the denial of Infant-baptism, as a divine institution, is attended. As,

1. It is saying the covenant made with Abraham is not an everlasting one; that believers under the gospel are not Abraham's seed, and heirs of his promise; that the engrafted Gentiles do not partake of the same privileges in the church, from which the Jews were broken off; and that the privileges of the gospel-dispensation are less than those of the law: all which are said to be flat contradictions to scripture. To all which I reply, that the covenant of grace made with, and made known to Abraham, is an everlasting covenant, and is sure to all the seed; that is, the spiritual seed; and is not at all affected by Infant-baptism, that having no concern in it. The covenant of circumcision, though called an everlasting covenant (Gen. 17:7), was only to continue unto the time of the Messiah; and is so called, just in the same sense, and for the same reason, the covenant of priesthood with Phineas has the same epithet (Num. 25:13). Believers under the gospel are Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs of the same promise of spiritual things; but these spiritual things, and the promise of them, do not belong to their natural seed as such; the believing Gentiles, engrafted into the gospel church-state, partake of all the privileges of it, from which the unbelieving Jews are excluded, being for their unbelief left out of that state. The privileges of the gospel-dispensation are not less, yea far greater than those of the law; to believers, who are freed from the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the law, have larger measures of grace, a clearer ministration of the gospel, and more spiritual ordinances; nor are they less to their infants, who are eased from the painful rite of circumcision, have the advantage of a Christian education, and of hearing the gospel as they grow up, in a clearer manner than under the law; which are greater privileges than the Jewish children had under the former dispensation; nor are all, nor any of these affected, or to be contradicted, by the denial of Infant-baptism.

2. It is observed, that to deny the validity of Infant-baptism, is saying that "there was no true baptism in the church for eleven or twelve hundred years after Christ; and that the generality of the present professors of Christianity "are now a company of unbaptized heathens" (p. 52, so p. 10). To

which I reply, that the true baptism continued in the church in the first two centuries; and though Infant-baptism was introduced in the third, and prevailed in the fourth, yet in both these centuries there were those that opposed it, and abode by the true baptism. Besides, in the valleys of Piedmont, as many learned men have observed, there were witnesses from the times of the apostles, who bore their testimony against corruptions in doctrine and practice, and among whom Infant-baptism did not obtain until the sixteenth century; so that the true baptism continued in the church till that time, and it has ever since; (see the Reply, pp. 31, 32). As for the generality of the present professors of Christianity, it lies upon them to take care of their character, and remove from it what may be thought disagreeable; and clear themselves of it, by submitting to the true baptism according to the order of the gospel. As to the salvation of persons in or out of the visible church, which is the greater number, this author speaks of, I know nothing of; salvation is not by baptism in any way, but by Christ alone.

3. It is said, if Infant-baptism is a divine institution, warranted by the word of God, then they that are baptized in their adult age necessarily renounce a divine institution, and an ordinance of Jesus Christ, and vacate the former covenant between God and them. If it be; but it is not a divine institution, nor an ordinance of Jesus Christ, as appears from all that has been said about it in the foregoing pages; wherefore it is right to renounce and reject it, as an human invention: and as for any covenant between God and them vacated thereby, it will not, it need not give the renouncers of it any concern; being what they know nothing of, and the whole a chimerical business. Nay, it is farther observed, that renouncing Infant-baptism, and making it a nullity, is practically saying there are no baptized persons, no regular ministers, nor ordinances, in all professing churches but their own, and as elsewhere (p. 41), no gospel-church in the world; and that the administrations of the ministers of other churches are a nullity, and the promise of Christ to be with his ministers in the administration of this ordinance to the end of the world, must have failed for hundreds of years, in which Infant-baptism was practiced. But be it so: to whom is all this owing? to whose account must it be put? to those who are the corrupters of the word and ordinances. Is it suggested by all this, that "God "in his providence would never suffer things to go such lengths?" Let it be observed, that he has given us in his word reason to expect great corruptions in doctrine and worship; and that though he will always have a seed to serve him, more or fewer, in all ages, yet he has no where promised that these shall be always in a regular gospel-church-state; and though he has promised his presence in his ordinances to the end of the world, it is only with those ministers and people among whom the ordinances are administered according to his word; and there was for some hundreds of years, in the darkness of popery, such a corruption in the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, in the administration of which the presence of God cannot be thought to be; nor were there any regular ministers, nor regular ordinances, nor a regular gospel-church, but what were to be found in the valleys of Piedmont; and with whom the presence of God may be supposed to be; who bore a testimony against all corruptions, and among the rest, against Infant-baptism. [\[13\]](#)

This writer further urges, that "if Infant-baptism is a nullity, there can be now no regular baptism in the world, nor ever will be to the end of it; and so the ordinance must be lost, since adult baptism cannot be traced to the apostles times, and as now administered, is derived from those that were baptized in infancy; wherefore if Infant-baptism is invalid, that must be so too" (so in p. 42)." To which it may be answered, that the first English Antipaedobaptists, when determined upon a reformation in this ordinance, in a consultation of theirs about it, had this difficulty started about a proper administrator to begin the work, when it was proposed to send some to foreign churches, the

successors of the ancient Waldenses in France and Germany; and accordingly did send some, who being baptized, returned and baptized others: though others were of opinion this too much favored of the popish notion of an uninterrupted succession, and a right through that to administer ordinances; and therefore judged, that in an extraordinary case, as this was, to begin a reformation from a general corruption, where a baptized administrator could not be had, it might be begun by one unbaptized, otherwise qualified to preach the word and ordinances; which practice they were able to justify upon the same principles the other reformers justified theirs; who without any regard to an uninterrupted succession, let up new churches, ordained pastors, and administered ordinances. Nor is it essential to the ordinance of baptism, that it be performed by one regularly baptized, though in ordinary cases it should; or otherwise it could never have been introduced into the world; the first administrator of it must be an unbaptized person, as John the Baptist was. All which is a sufficient answer to what this writer has advanced on this subject.[\[14\]](#)

INFANT BAPTISM:

A PART & PILLAR OF POPERY

Being called upon, in a public manner, to give proof of what I have said concerning infant-baptism, in a preface to my reply to Mr. Clarke's Defense, etc. or to expunge it, I readily agree to the former, and shall endeavor to explain myself, and defend what I have written; but it will be proper first to recite the whole paragraph, which stands thus: "The Paedobaptists are ever restless and uneasy, endeavoring to maintain and support, if possible, their unscriptural practice of infant-baptism; though it is no other than a pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations; is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and world, and keeps them together; nor can there be a full separation of the one from the other, nor a thorough reformation in religion; until it is wholly removed: and though it has so long and largely obtained, and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world; when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive luster and purity; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be administered as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; all which will be accomplished, when "The Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord and his name one." Now the whole of this consists of several articles or propositions, which I shall reconsider in their order.

That infant-baptism is a part and pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations: I use the phrase infant-baptism here and throughout, because of the common use of it; otherwise the practice which now obtains, may with greater propriety be called infant-sprinkling. That unwritten traditions with the Papists are equally the rule of faith and practice as the holy Scriptures will not be doubted of by any conversant with their writings. The Council of Trent asserts that "Traditions respecting both faith and manners orally delivered and preserved successfully in the Catholic church, are to be received with equal affection of piety and reverence as the books of the Old and New Testaments;" yea the Popish writers prefer traditions to the Scriptures. Bellarmine says, "Scriptures without tradition, are neither simply necessary, nor sufficient, but unwritten traditions are necessary. Tradition alone is sufficient, but the Scriptures are not sufficient." Another of their writers asserts, that "The authority of ecclesiastic traditions is more fit than the scriptures to ascertain anything doubtful, even that which may be made out from scripture, since the common opinion of the church and ecclesiastical tradition are clearer, and more open and truly inflexible; when, on the contrary, the scriptures have frequently much obscurity in them, and may be drawn here and there like a nose of wax; and, as a leaden rule, may be applied to every impious opinion." Bailey the Jesuit, thus expresses himself, "I will go further and say, we have as much need of tradition as of scripture, yea more; because the scripture ministers to us only the dead and mute letter, but tradition, by means of the ministry of the church, gives us the true sense, which is not had distinctly in the scripture; wherein, notwithstanding, rather consists the word of God than in the alone written letter; it is sufficient for a good Catholic, if he understands it is tradition, nor need he to inquire after anything else;" and by tradition, they mean not tradition

delivered in the Scripture, but distinct from it and out of it; unwritten tradition, apostolical tradition, as they frequently call it, not delivered by the apostles in the sacred Scriptures, but by word of mouth to their successors, or to the churches; that we may not mistake them. Andradius tells us, "That of necessity those traditions also must be believed, which can be proved by no testimony of scripture:" and Petrus a Soto still more plainly and openly affirms: "It is," says he, "a rule infallible and catholic, that whatsoever things the church of Rome believeth, holdeth and keepeth, and are not delivered in the scriptures, the same came by tradition from the apostles; also all such observations and ceremonies, whose beginning, author, and original are not known, or cannot be found, out of all doubt they were delivered by the apostles." This is what is meant by apostolic tradition.

Now the essentials of popery, or the peculiarities of it, are all founded upon this, even upon apostolic and ecclesiastic tradition; this is the Pandora from whence they all spring; this is the rule to which all are brought, and by which they are confirmed; and what is it, be it ever so foolish, impious and absurd, but what may be proved hereby, if this is admitted of as a rule and test? It is upon this foot the Papists assert and maintain the observation of Easter, on the Lord's Day following the 14th of March, the fast of Quadragesima or Lent, the adoration of images and relics, the invocation of saints, the worship of the sign of the cross, the sacrifices of the mass, transubstantiation, the abrogation of the use of the cup in the Lord's Supper, holy water, extreme unction or the chrism, prayers for the dead, auricular confession, sale of pardons, purgatory, pilgrimages, monastic vows, etc.

Among apostolical traditions infant-baptism is to be reckoned, and it is upon this account it is pleaded for. The first person that asserted infant-baptism and approved it, represents it as a tradition from the apostles, whether he be Origen, or his translator and interpolator, Ruffinus; his words are, "For this (i.e., for original sin) the church has received a tradition from the apostles, even to give baptism unto infants." Austin, who was a warm advocate for infant-baptism, puts it upon this footing, as a custom of the church, not to be despised, and as an apostolic tradition generally received by the church; he lived in the fourth century, the same Ruffinus did; and probably it was from his Latin translation of Origen, Austin took the hint of infant-baptism being an apostolic tradition, since no other ecclesiastical writer speaks of it before as such; so that, as Bishop Taylor observes, "This apostolical tradition is but a testimony of one person, and he condemned of many errors; so that, as he says, to derive this from the apostles on no greater authority, is a great argument that he is credulous and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation, in a matter of so great concernment.;" and yet it is by this that many are determined in this affair: and not only Popish writers, as Bellarmine and others make it to be an apostolical tradition unwritten; but some Protestant-Paedobaptists show a good will to place infant-baptism among the unwritten sayings and traditions of Christ or His apostles, and satisfy themselves therewith. Mr. Fuller says, "We do freely confess that there is neither express precept nor precedent in the New Testament for the baptizing of infants;" yet observes that St. John saith, (21:25), "And there are also many other things, which Jesus did, which are not written; among, which for ought appears to the contrary, the baptizing of these infants (those whom Christ took in his arms and blessed) might be one of them." In like manner, Mr. Walker argues, "It doth not follow our Savior gave no precept for the baptizing of infants, because no such precept is particularly expressed in the scripture; for our Savior spoke many things to his disciples concerning the kingdom of God, both before his passion, and also after his resurrection, which are not written in the scriptures; and who can say, but that among those many unwritten sayings of his, there might be an express precept for infant-baptism?" And Mr.

Leigh, one of the disputants in the Portsmouth-Disputation, suggests, that though infant-baptism is not to be found in the writings of the apostle Paul extant in the scriptures, yet it might be in some writings of his which are lost, and not now extant; all which is plainly giving up infant-baptism as contained in the sacred writings, and placing it upon unwritten, apostolical tradition, and that too, conjectural and uncertain.

Now infant-baptism, with all the ceremonies attending it, for which also apostolical tradition is pleaded, makes a very considerable figure in the Popish pageantry; which according to pretended apostolical tradition, is performed in a very pompous manner, as by consecration of the water, using sponsors, who answer to the interrogatories, and make the renunciation in the name of the infant, exorcisms, exsufflations, crossings, the use of salt, spittle, and oil. Before the party is baptized, the water is consecrated in a very solemn manner; the priest makes an exorcism first; three times, he exsufflates or breathes into the water, in the figure of a cross, saying, "I adjure thee, O creature of water;" and here he divides the water after the manner of a cross, and makes three or four crossings; he takes a horn of oil, and pours it three times upon the water in the likeness of a cross, and makes a prayer, that the font may be sanctified, and the eternal Trinity be present; saying, "Descend from heaven and sanctify this water, and give grace and virtue, that he who is baptized according to the command of thy Christ, may be crucified, and die, and be buried, and rise again with him." The sponsors, or sureties, instead of the child, and in its name, recite the creed and the Lord's prayer, make the renunciation of the devil and all his works, and answer to questions put in the name of the child: the form, according to the Roman order, is this:

"The name of the infant being called, the presbyter must say, Dost thou renounce Satan? A. I do renounce; and all his works? A. I do renounce; and all his pomps? A. I do renounce: three times these questions are put, and three times the sureties answer." The interrogations are sometimes said to be made by a priest, sometimes by a presbyter, and sometimes by an exorcist, who was one or the other, and to which the following question also was added: "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, etc.? A. I believe." Children to be baptized are first exsufflated or breathed and blown upon and exorcised, that the wicked spirit might be driven from them, that they might be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ: the Roman order is, "Let him (the minister, priest, deacon or exorcist) blow into the face of the person to be baptized, three times, saying, Go out thou unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter." The form, according to St. Gregory, is, "I exorcise thee, O unclean spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou go out and depart from this servant of God." Salt also is put into the mouth of the infant, after it is blessed and exorcised, as a token of its being seasoned with the salt of wisdom; and that it might be preserved from the corruption and ill savor of sin: the priest first blesses the salt after this manner: "I exorcise thee, O creature of salt; and then being blessed, it is put into the mouth of the infant saying, Receive the salt of wisdom unto life everlasting." The nose and ears of infants at their baptism are touched with spittle by the priest, that they may receive the savor of the knowledge of God, and their ears be opened to hear the commands of God; and formerly spittle was put upon the eyes and upon the tongue, though it seems now disused as to those parts; and yet no longer than the birth of King James the First, it seems to have been in use; since at his baptism his mother sent word to the archbishop to forbear the use of the spittle, saying, "She would not have a pocky priest to spit in her child's mouth,;" for it seems the queen knew that the archbishop, who was Hamilton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, then had the venereal disease. And so in the times of the martyrs in Queen Mary's

days; for Robert Smith, the martyr, being asked by Bonner, in what point do we dissent from the word of God? meaning as to baptism; he answered, "First, in hallowing your water, in conjuring of the same, in baptizing children with anointing and spitting in their mouths, mingled with salt, and many other lewd ceremonies, of which not one point is able to be proved in God's word." All which he calls a mingle mangle. Chrism, or anointing both before and after baptism, is another ceremony used at it; the parts anointed are the breast and shoulders; the breast, that no remains of the latent enemy may reside in the party baptized; and the shoulders, that he may be fortified and strengthened to do good works to the glory of God: this anointing is made in the form of a cross; the oil is put on the breast and beneath the shoulders, making a cross with the thumb; on making the cross on the shoulders, the priest says, "Flee, thou unclean spirit, give honor to the living and true God;" and when he makes it on the breast, he says, "Go out, thou unclean spirit, give place to the Holy Ghost:" the form used in doing it is "I anoint thee with the oil of salvation, that thou mayest have life everlasting." The next ceremony is that of signing the infant with the sign of the cross: this is made in several parts of the body, especially on the forehead, to signify that the party baptized should not be ashamed of the cross of Christ, and not be afraid of the enemy Satan, but manfully fight against him. After baptism, in ancient times, honey and milk, or wine and milk, were given to the baptized, though now disused; and infants were admitted to the Lord's Supper, which continued some hundreds of years in the Latin church, and still does in the Greek church. Now for the proof of the use of these various ceremonies, the reader may consult Joseph Vicecomes, a learned Papist as Dr. Wall calls him, in his Treatise de Antiquis Baptismi Ritibus ac Ceremoniis, where and by whom they are largely treated of, and the proofs of them given. All which are rehearsed and condemned by the ancient Waldenses in a treatise of theirs, written in the year 1120. It may be asked to what purpose is this account given of the ceremonies used by Papists in the administration of baptism to infants by them, since they are not used by Protestant-paedobaptists? I answer, it is to show what I proposed, namely, what a figure infant-baptism, with these attending ceremonies, makes in popery, and may with propriety be called a part of it; besides though all these ceremonies are not used, yet some of them are used in some Protestant-paedobaptist churches, as sureties, the interrogations made to them, and their answers in the name of infants; the renunciation of the devil and all his works, and signing with the sign of the cross; and since these and the others, all of them claim apostolic authority, and most, if not all of them, have as good and as early a claim to it as infant-baptism itself; those who admit that upon this foot, ought to admit these ceremonies also. See a treatise of mine, called The Argument from Apostolic Tradition in Favor of Infant-baptism Considered. Most of the above ceremonies are mentioned by Basil, who lived in the 4th century, and as then in use, and which were had from apostolic tradition as said, and not from the scriptures; and says he, "Because this is first and most common, I will mention it in the first place, as that we sign with the sign of the cross; —Who has taught this in Scripture? We consecrate the water of baptism and the oil of unction as well as him who receives baptism; from what scriptures? Is it not from private and secret tradition? Moreover the anointing with oil, what passage in scripture teaches this? Now a man is thrice immersed, from whence is it derived or delivered? Also the rest of what is done in baptism, as to renounce Satan and his angels, from what scripture have we it? Is not this from private and secret tradition?" And so Austin speaks of exorcisms and exsufflations used in baptism, as of ancient tradition, and of universal use in the church. Now whoever receives infant-baptism on the foot of apostolic tradition, ought to receive those also, since they stand upon as good a foundation as that does.

The Papists attribute the rise of several of the above ceremonies to their popes, as sponsors, chrisms, exorcisms, etc., though perhaps they were not quite so early as they imagine, yet very early they were; and infant-baptism itself, though two or three doctors of the church had asserted and espoused it, yet it was not determined in any council until the Milevitan Council in 418, or thereabouts, a provincial of Africa, in which was a canon made for Paedobaptism and never till then: So says Bishop Taylor, with whom Grotius agrees, who calls it the Council of Carthage; and who says in the councils no earlier mention is made of infant-baptism than in that council; the canons of which were sent to Pope Innocent the First, and confirmed by him: And Austin, who must write his book against the Donatists before this time, though he says the church always held it (infant-baptism) and that it is most rightly believed to be delivered by apostolic tradition; yet observes that it was not instituted, or determined and settled in or by councils; that is, as yet it was not, though it afterwards was in the above council confirmed by the said pope; in which council Austin himself presided, and in which is this canon, "Also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized, --- let him be anathema," and which is the first council that established infant-baptism, and anathematized those that denied it; so that it may justly be called a part of popery: besides baptism by immersion, which continued 1300 years in the Latin church, excepting in the case of the Clinicks, and still does in the Creek church, was first changed into sprinkling by the Papists; which is not an indifferent thing, whether performed with much or a little water, as it is usually considered; but is of the very essence of baptism, is that itself, and without which it is not baptism; it being as Sir John Floyer says, no circumstance, but the very act of baptizing; who observes that aspersion, or sprinkling, was brought into the church by the Popish schoolmen, and our dissenters, adds he, had it from them; the schoolmen employed their thoughts how to find out reasons for the alteration to sprinkling, brought it into use in the 12th century: and it must be observed, to the honor of the Church of England, that they have not established sprinkling in baptism to this day; only have permitted pouring in case it is certified the child is weakly and not able to bear dipping; otherwise, by the Rubric, the priest is ordered to dip the child warily: sprinkling received only a Presbyterian sanction in times of the civil war by the Assembly of Divines; where it was carried for sprinkling against dipping by one vote only, by 25 against 24, and then established by an ordinance of Parliament, 1644: and that this change has its rise from the authority of the Pope, Dr. Wall himself acknowledges, and that the sprinkling of infants is from popery. "All the nations of Christians," says he, "that do now, or formerly did, submit to the authority of the Bishop of Rome do ordinarily baptize their infants by pouring or sprinkling; and though the English received not this custom till after the decay of Popery, yet they have since received it from such neighbor-nations as had began it in the times of the pope's power; but all other Christians in the world, who never owned the pope's usurped power, do, and ever did, dip their infants in their ordinary use;" so that infant-baptism, both with respect to subjects and mode, may with great propriety be called a part and branch of popery.

But it is not only a part of popery, and so serves to strengthen it, as a part does the whole; but it is a pillar of it, what serves greatly to support it; and which furnishes the Papists with one of the strongest arguments against the Protestants in favor of their traditions, on which, as we have seen, the essentials of popery are founded, and of the authority of the church to alter the rites of divine worship: they sadly embarrass Paedobaptist Protestants with the affair of infant-baptism, and urge them either to prove it by scripture, both with respect to mode and subjects, or allow of unscriptural traditions and the authority of the church, or give it up; and if they can allow of unwritten traditions, and the custom and practice of the church, as of authority in one point, why not in

others? This way of arguing, as Mr. Stennet observes, is used by Cardinal Du Perron, in his reply to the answer of King James the First, and by Mr. John Ainsworth, against Mr. Henry Ainsworth, in the dispute between them, and by Fisher the Jesuit, against Archbishop Laud; a late instance of this kind, he adds, we have in the controversy between Monsieur Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, and a learned anonymous writer, said to be Monsieur de la Roque, late pastor of the Reformed church at Roan in Normandy. The Bishop, in order to defend the withholding the cup in the Lord's Supper from the laity, according to the authority of the church, urged that infant-baptism, both as to mode and subject, was unscriptural, and solely by the authority of tradition and custom, with which the pretended Reformed complied, and therefore why not in the other case; which produced this ingenuous confession from his antagonist, that to baptize by sprinkling was certainly an abuse derived from the Romish church, without due examination, as well as many other things, which he and his brethren were resolved to correct, and thanked the bishop for undeceiving them; and freely confessed, that as to the baptism of infants, there is nothing formal or express in the gospel to justify the necessity of it; and that the passages produced do at most only prove that it is permitted, or rather, that it is not forbidden to baptize them. In the times of King Charles the Second, lived Mr. Jeremiah Ives, a Baptist minister, famous for his talent at disputation, of whom the king having heard, sent for him to dispute with a Romish priest; the which he did before the king and many others, in the habit of a clergyman: Mr. Ives pressed the priest closely, showing the whatever antiquity they pretended to, their doctrine and practices could by no means be proved apostolic; since they are not to be found in any writings which remain of the apostolic age; the priest, after much wrangling, in the end replied, that this argument of Mr. Ives was as of much force against infant-baptism, as against the doctrines and ceremonies of the church of Rome: to which Mr. Ives answered, that he readily granted what he said to be true; the priest upon this broke up the dispute, saying, he had been cheated, and that he would proceed no further; for he came to dispute with a clergyman of the established church, and it was now evident that this was an Anabaptist preacher. This behavior of the priest afforded his majesty and all present not a little diversion: and as Protestant Paedobaptists are urged by this argument to admit the unwritten traditions of the Papists; so dissenters of the Paedobaptist persuasion are pressed upon the same footing by those of the Church of England to comply with the ceremonies of that church, retained from the church of Rome, particularly by Dr. Whitby; who having pleaded for some condescension to be made to dissenters, in order to reconcile them to the church, adds: "and on the other hand", says he, "if notwithstanding the evidence produced, that baptism by immersion, is suitable both to the institution of our Lord and his apostles; and was by them ordained to represent our burial with Christ, and so our dying unto sin, and our conformity to his resurrection by newness of life; as the apostle doth clearly maintain the meaning of that rite: I say, if notwithstanding this, all our dissenters (i.e. who are Paedobaptists, he must mean) do agree to sprinkle the baptized infant; why may they not as well submit to the significant ceremonies imposed by our church? for, since it is as lawful to add unto Christ's institutions a significant ceremony, as to diminish a significant ceremony, which he or his apostles instituted; and use another in its stead, which they never did institute; what reason can they have to do the latter, and yet refuse submission to the former? and why should not the peace and union of the church be as prevailing with them, to perform the one, as is their mercy to the infant's body to neglect the other?" Thus infant-baptism is used as the grand plea for compliance with the ceremonies both of the church of Rome and of the church of England.

I have added in the preface referred to, where stands the above clause, that infant-baptism is "that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations;" which is abundantly

evident, since by the christening of children through baptism, introduced by him, he has made whole countries and nations Christians, and has christened them by the name of Christendom; and thereby has enlarged his universal church, over which he claims an absolute power and authority, as being Christ's vicar on earth; and by the same means he retains his influence over nations, and keeps them in awe and in obedience to him; asserting that by their baptism they are brought into the pale of the church, in which there is salvation, and out of which there is none; if therefore they renounce their baptism, received in infancy, or apostatize from the church, their damnation is inevitable; and thus by his menaces and anathemas, he holds the nations in subjection to him: and when they at any time have courage to oppose him, and act in disobedience to his supreme authority, he immediately lays a whole nation under an interdict; by which are prohibited, the administration of the sacraments, all public prayers, burials, christenings, etc., church-doors are locked up, the clergy dare not or will not administer any offices of their function to any, but such as for large sums of money obtain special privileges from Rome for that purpose: now by means of these prohibitions, and particularly of christening or baptizing children, nations are obliged to comply and yield obedience to the bishop of Rome; for it appears most dreadful to parents, that their children should be deprived of baptism, by which they are made Christians, as they are taught to believe, and without which there is no hope of salvation; and therefore are influenced to give-in to anything for the sake of what is thought so very important. Once more, the baneful influence spread by Antichrist over the nations by infant-baptism, is that poisonous notion infused by him, that sacraments, particularly baptism, confer grace ex opere operato, by the work done; that it takes away sin, regenerates men, and saves their souls; this is charged upon him, and complained of by the ancient Waldenses in a tract of theirs, written in the year 1120, where speaking of the works of Antichrist, they say, "the third work of Antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the Holy Spirit unto the dead, outward work, baptizing children in that faith, and teaching that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had; and therein he confers and bestows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his Christianity, which is against the Holy Spirit": and which popish notion is argued against and exposed by Robert {Smith} the martyr; on Bonner's saying "if they (infants) die, before they are baptized, they be damned;" he asked this question, "I pray you, my lord, shew me, are we saved by water or by Christ?" to which Bonner replied, "by both;" "then," said Smith, "the water died for our sins, and so must ye say, that the water hath life, and it being our servant, and created for us, is our Savior; this my lord is a good doctrine, is it not?" And this pernicious notion still continues, this old leaven yet remains, even in some Protestant churches, who have retained it from Rome; hence a child when baptized is declared to be regenerate; and it is taught, when capable of being catechized to say, that in its baptism it was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, which has a tendency to take off all concern, in persons when grown up, about an inward work of grace, in regeneration and sanctification, as a meetness for heaven, and to encourage a presumption in them, notwithstanding their apparent want of grace, that they are members of Christ, and shall never perish; are children and heirs of God, and shall certainly inherit eternal life. Wherefore Dr. [John] Owen rightly observes "That the father of lies himself could not easily have devised a doctrine more pernicious, or what proposes a more present and effectual poison to the minds of sinners to be drank in by them."

The second article or proposition in the preface is, as asserted by me, that infant-baptism "is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and world, and keeps them together;" than which nothing is more evident: if a church is national, it consists of all

in the nation, men, women, and children; and children are originally members of it, either so by birth, and as soon as born, being born in the church, in a Christian land and nation, which is the church, or rather by baptism, as it is generally put; so according to the order of the Church of England, at the baptism of a child, the minister says, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock." And by the Assembly of Divines, "Baptism is called a sacrament of the New Testament, whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church." And to which there is a strange contradiction in the following answer, where it is said, that "baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church;" but if by baptism the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church, then before baptism by which they are admitted, they must be out of it: one or other must be wrong; either persons are not admitted into the visible church by baptism, or if they are, then before baptism they are out of it, and have baptism administered to them in order to their being admitted into it; and Calvin says, according to whose plan of church-government at Geneva, that of the Scotch church is planned, that baptism is a solemn introduction to the church of God. And Mr. Baxter argues, that "if there be neither precept nor example of admitting church-members in all the New Testament but by baptism; then all that are now admitted ought to come in by baptism; but there is neither precept nor example in all the New Testament of admitting church members but by baptism; therefore they ought to come in the same way now." So then infants becoming members of a national church by baptism, they are originally of it; are the materials of which it consists; and it is by the baptism of infants it is supplied with members, and is supported and maintained; so that it may be truly said, that infant-baptism is the basis and foundation of a national church, and is indeed the sinews, strength, and support of it: and infants being admitted members by baptism continue such when grown up, even though of the most dissolute lives and conversations, as multitudes of them are; and many, instead of being treated as church members, deserve to be sent to the house of correction, as some are, and others are guilty of such flagitious crimes that they die an infamous death; yet even these die in the communion of the church; and thus the church and the world are united and kept together till death doth them part.

The Independents would indeed separate the church and the world according to their principles; but cannot do it, being fettered and hampered with infant-church-membership and baptism, about which they are at a loss and disagreed on what to place it; some place it on infants' interest in the covenant of grace; and here they sadly contradict themselves or one another; at one time they say it is interest in the covenant of grace that gives infants a right to baptism, and at another time, that it is by baptism they are brought and entered into the covenant; and sometimes it is not in the inward part of the covenant they are interested, only in the external part of it, where hypocrites and graceless persons may be; but what that external part is no mortal can tell: others not being satisfied that their infant-seed as such are all interested in the covenant of grace, say, it is not that, but the church-covenant that godly parents enter into, which gives their children with them a right to church membership and baptism: children in their minority, it is said, covenant with their parents, and so become church members, and this entitles them to baptism; for according to the old Independents of New England, none but members of a visible church were to be baptized; though Dr. [Thomas] Goodwin is of a different mind: hence only such as were children of members of churches, even of set members, as they call them, were admitted, though of godly and approved Christians; and though they may have been members, yet if excommunicated, their children born in the time of their excommunication might not be baptized; but those children that are admitted members and baptized, though not confirmed members, as they style them, till they profess faith

and repentance; yet during their minority, which reaches till they are more than thirteen years of age, according to the example of Ishmael, and till about sixteen years of age, they are real members to such intents and purposes, as, that if their parents are dismissed to other churches, their children ought to be put into the letter of dismission with them; and whilst their minority continues, are under church-watch, and subject to the reprehensions, admonitions, and censures thereof for their healing and amendment as need shall require; though with respect to public rebuke, admonition, and excommunication, children in their minority are not subject to church-discipline, only to such as is by way of spiritual watch and private rebuke. The original Independents, by the covenant-seed, who have a right to church membership and baptism, thought only the seed of immediate parents in church-covenant are meant, and not of progenitors. Mr. Cotton says infants cannot claim right unto baptism but in the right of one of their parents or both; where neither of the parents can claim right to the Lord's Supper, there their infants cannot claim right to baptism; though he afterwards says it may be considered whether the children may not be baptized where either the grandfather or grandmother have made profession of their faith and repentance before the church, and are still living to undertake for the Christian education of the child; or if these fail, what hinders but that if the parents will resign their infant to be educated in the house of any godly member of the church, the child may be lawfully baptized in the right of its household-governor, But Mr. Hooker, as he asserts, that children as children have no right to baptism, so it belongs not to any predecessors, either nearer or farther off removed from the next parents to give right of this privilege to their children; by which predecessors, he says, he includes and comprehends all besides the next parent; grandfather, great grandfather, etc.. So the ministers and messengers of the congregational churches that met at the Savoy declare "that not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized, and those only": and the commissioners for the review of the Common Prayer, in the beginning of the reign of King Charles the Second; those of the Presbyterian persuasion moved on the behalf of others, that "there being divers learned, pious, and peaceable ministers, who not only judge it unlawful to baptize children whose parents both of them are Atheists, Infidels, Heretics, or unbaptized; but also such whose parents are excommunicate persons, fornicators, or otherwise notorious and scandalous sinners; we desire, say they, they may not be enforced to baptize the children of such, until they have made open profession of their repentance before baptism.": but now I do not understand that the present generation of dissenters of this denomination adhere to the principles and practices of their predecessors, at least very few of them; but admit to baptism, not only the children of members of their churches, but of those who are not members, only hearers, or that apply to them for the baptism of their infants, whether gracious or graceless persons: and were only the first sort admitted, children of members, what are they? No better than others, born in sin, born of the flesh, carnal and corrupt, are of the world, notwithstanding their birth of religious persons, until they are called out of it by the effectual grace of God; and as they grow up, appear to be of the world as others, and have their conversation according to the course of it; and many of them are dissolute in their lives, and scandalous in their conversation; and yet I do not understand, that any notice is taken of them in a church-way, as to be admonished, censured, and excommunicated; but they retain their membership, into which they were taken in their infancy, and continue in it to the day of their death: and if this is not uniting and keeping the world and church together, I know not what is.

Moreover all the arguments that are made use of to prove the church of Christ under the gospel-dispensation to be congregational, and against a national church, are all destroyed by the baptism

and membership of infants. It is said in favor of the one, and against the other, that the members of a visible church are saints by calling, such, as in charitable discretion may be accounted so; but are infants who are admitted to membership and baptized, such? The holiness pleaded for as belonging to them, is only a federal holiness, and that is merely chimerical: are they called to be saints, or saints by effectual calling? Can they in charitable discretion, or in rational charity be thought to be truly and really holy, or saints, as the churches of the New Testament are said to be? and if they cannot in a judgment of charity, be accounted real saints, and yet are admitted members of churches, why not others, of whom it cannot be charitably thought, that they are real saints? Besides, it is said by the Independents, "that members of gospel churches are saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing by their profession and walk their obedience to that call; who are further known to each other by their confession of faith wrought in them by the power of God; and do willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of Christ, giving up themselves to the Lord and to one another by the will of God, in professed subjection to the ordinances of the gospel": now are infants such? Do they manifest and evidence by a profession and walk their obedience to a divine call? And if they do not, and yet are admitted members, why not others, who give no more evidence than they do? Do they make a confession of faith wrought in them? Does it appear that they have such a faith? and in a confession made, and so made as to be known by fellow-members? and if not, and yet received and owned as members, why not others that make no more confession of faith than they do? Do infants consent to walk with the church of Christ, and give up themselves to the Lord and one another, and profess to be subject to the ordinances of the gospel? and if they do not, as most certainly they do not, and yet are members, why may not others be also members on the same footing? It is objected to a national church, that persons of the worst of characters are members of it; and by this means the church is filled with men very disreputable and scandalous in their lives. And is not this true of infant members admitted in their infancy, who when grown up are very wicked and immoral, and yet their membership continues? and why not then national churches be admitted of, notwithstanding the above objection? So that upon the whole, I think, I have good reason to say, "that there cannot be a full separation of the one from the other, that is, of the church from the world, nor a thorough reformation in religion, until it (infant-baptism) is wholly removed."

In the said preface, I express my firm belief of the entire cessation of infant-baptism, in time to come: my words are, "though it (infant-baptism) has so long and largely obtained (as it has from the 4th century till now, and over the greater part who have since borne the Christian name) and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world," I mean in the spiritual reign of Christ; for in His personal reign there will be no ordinances, nor the administration of them; and this is explained by what I farther say, "when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive purity and lustre; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be administered as they were first delivered; all which will be accomplished, when 'the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord and his name one;'" that is, when there shall be one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, acknowledged by all Christians; and they will be all of one mind with respect to the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel. And as it becomes every man to give a reason of the faith and hope he has concerning divine things, with meekness and fear; the reasons of my firm belief, that infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the latter day and spiritual reign of Christ, are, some of them suggested in the above paragraph, and others may be added, as

FIRST, Because churches in the time referred to, will be formed on the plan churches were in the time of the apostles; that this will be the case, see the prophecies in Is. 1:25,26; Jer. 30:18,20; Rev. 11:19. Now the apostolic churches consisted only of baptized believers, or of such who were baptized upon profession of their faith; the members of the first Christian church, which was at Jerusalem, were first baptized upon their conversion, and then added to it; the next Christian church at Samaria, consisted of men and women baptized on believing the gospel, preached by Philip; and the church at Corinth, of such who hearing, believed and were baptized; and on the same plan were formed the churches at Rome, Philippi, Colosse, and others; nor is there one single instance of infant-baptism and of infant-church-membership in them; wherefore if churches in the latter day will be on the same plan, then infant-baptism will be no more practiced.

SECONDLY, Because, then the ordinances of the gospel will be administered, as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; this is what is meant by the temple of God being opened in heaven, on the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:19 and 15:5), which respects the restoration of worship, discipline, doctrines and ordinances, to the free use of them, and to their original purity; when, as the ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be administered clear of all corruptions and ceremonies introduced by Papists and retained by Protestants; so likewise the ordinance of baptism both with respect to subject and mode, which as it was first delivered was only administered to persons professing faith and repentance, and that by immersion only; and if this will be universally administered in the latter day, as in the first ages of Christianity, infant sprinkling will be practiced no more.

THIRDLY, Because Christ will then be king over all the earth in a spiritual sense; one Lord, whose commands will be obeyed with great precision and exactness, according to His will revealed in His Word; and as baptism is one of His commands He has prescribed, as He is and will be acknowledged the one Lord and head of the church, and not the pope, who will be no more submitted to; so there will be one baptism, which will be administered to one sort of subjects only, as He has directed, and in one manner only, by immersion, of which His baptism is an example; and therefore, I believe that infant sprinkling will be no more in use.

FOURTHLY, At this same time the name of Christ will be one, that is, His religion; which will be the same, it was at first instituted by Him. Now it is various, as it is professed and practiced by different persons that bear His name; but in the latter day, it will be one and the same, in all its branches, as embraced, professed, and exercised by all that are called Christians; and as baptism is one part of it, this will be practiced in a uniform manner, or by all alike, that shall name the name of Christ; for since Christ's name or the Christian religion in all its parts, will be the same in all the professors of it; I therefore firmly believe, that baptism will be practiced alike by all, according to the primitive institution, and consequently, that infant-baptism will be no more: for

FIFTHLY, As at this time, the watchmen will see eye to eye (Is. 52:8), the ministers of the gospel will be of one mind, both with respect to the doctrines and duties of Christianity; will alike preach the one, and practice the other; so the people under their ministrations will be all agreed, and receive the truths of the gospel in the love of them, and submit to the precepts and institutions of it, without any difference among themselves, and without any variation from the word of God; and among the rest, the ordinance of baptism, about which there will be no longer strife; but all will agree that the proper subjects of it are believers, and the right mode of it immersion; and so infant-

sprinkling will be no more contended for; saints in this as in other things will serve the Lord with one consent (Zeph. 3:9).

SIXTHLY, Another reason why I firmly believe, infant-baptism will hereafter be no more practiced, is, because Antichrist will be entirely consumed with the spirit or breath of Christ's mouth, and with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8), that is, with the pure and powerful preaching of His word, at His coming to take to Himself His power, and reign spiritually in the churches, in a more glorious manner; when all Antichristian doctrines and practices will be entirely abolished and cease, even the whole body of Antichristian worship; not a limb of Antichrist shall remain, but all shall be consumed. Now as I believe, and it has been shown, that infant-baptism is a part and pillar of popery, a limb of Antichrist, a branch of superstition and will-worship, introduced by the 'man of sin, when he shall be destroyed, this shall be destroyed with him and be no more.

SEVENTHLY, Though the notion of infant-baptism has been embraced and practiced, by many good and godly men in several ages; yet it is part of the wood, hay and stubble, laid by them upon the foundation; is one of those works of theirs, the bright day of the gospel shall declare to be a falsehood; and which the fire of the word will try, burn up, and consume, though they themselves shall be saved; and therefore being utterly consumed, shall no more appear in the world: for

EIGHTHLY, When the angel shall descend from heaven with great power, and the earth be lightened with his glory, which will be at the fall of Babylon and ruin of Antichrist (Rev. 18:1,2), such will be the blaze of light then given, that all Antichristian darkness shall be removed, and all works of darkness will be made manifest and cast off, among which infant-baptism is one; and then the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Is. 11:9), even of the knowledge of the word, ways, worship, truths, and ordinances of God, and all ignorance of them vanish and disappear; and then the ordinance of baptism will appear in its former lustre and purity, and be embraced and submitted to in it; and every corruption of it be rejected, of which infant-baptism is one.

NINTHLY, Whereas the ordinances of the gospel, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are to continue until the second coming of Christ, or the end of the world (Matt. 28: 19,20; 1 Cor. 11:26), and whereas there have been corruptions introduced into them, as they are generally administered, unless among some few; it is not reasonable to think, that those corruptions will be continued to the second coming of Christ, but that they will be removed before, even at His spiritual coming, or in His spiritual reign: and as with respect to baptism particularly, there must be a mistake on one side or the other, both with respect to subject and mode; and as this mistake I firmly believe is on the side of the Paedobaptists; so, I as firmly believe for the reason given, that it will be removed, and infant-sprinkling for the future no more used.

TENTHLY, the Philadelphian church-state, which answers to and includes the spiritual reign of Christ in His churches, is what I refer unto in the preface, as the time when the practice of infant-baptism will cease; in which I am confirmed, by the characters given of that church and the members of it; as that it kept the word of Christ; that is, not only the doctrines of the gospel, which will be then purely preached and openly professed, but the ordinances of it, baptism and the Lord's Supper; which have been (particularly baptism) sadly corrupted in almost all the periods of the churches hitherto, excepting the apostolic one; but will in this period be restored to their pristine

purity and glory; hence it is promised to this church, and that it represents, that because it kept the word of Christ's patience, truly and faithfully, it should be kept from the hour of temptation that should come on all the earth; and is exhorted to hold fast what she had, both the doctrines and ordinances, as they were delivered by Christ and His apostles, and as she now held them in the truth and purity of them. These are the reasons why I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is coming, and I hope will not be long, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world.

Since, now at this time, we are greatly and justly alarmed with the increase of popery; in order to put a stop to it, let us begin at home, and endeavor to remove all remains of it among ourselves; so shall we with the better grace, and it may be hoped, with greater success oppose and hinder the spread of it.

POSTSCRIPT

The writer who lately appeared in a newspaper, under the name of Candidus, having been obliged to quit his mountebank-stage on which he held forth to the public for a few days; has, in his great humility, condescended to deal out his packets, in a less popular way; under the title of, The True Scripture-Doctrine of the Mode and Subjects of Christian Baptism, etc., in six letters. It is quite unreasonable that we should be put, by every impertinent scribbler, to the drudgery of answering, what has been answered over and over again in this controversy. However I shall make short work of this writer, and therefore I have only put him to, and shall only give him a little gentle correction at the cart's tail, to use the phrase of a late, learned professor, in one of our universities, with respect to the discipline of a certain Bishop.

The first and second letters of Candidus, in the newspaper, are answered in marginal notes on my sermon upon baptism, and published along with it. His third letter is a mean piece of buffoonery and scurrility; it begins with a trite, vulgar proverb, in low language, fit only for the mouth of a hostler or a carman; and his friends seem to have spoiled one or other of these, by making him a parson. He goes on throughout the whole of the letter, as one that is in great haste, running after his wits, to seek for them, having lost them, if ever he had any; and it concludes with a poor, pitiful, foolish burlesque, mixed with slander and falsehood, on an innocent gentleman; quite a stranger to him, and could never have offended him, but by a conscientious regard to what he believed was his duty. However, by this base and inhumane treatment, it appears that his moral character is unimpeachable, or otherwise it would have been nibbled at. His fourth letter begins with representing the sermon published, as so mangled, changed, altered and added to, that it has scarce any remains of its original; in which he must be condemned by all that heard it: and he has most unluckily charged one clause as an addition, which, there cannot be one in ten but will remember it; it is this, "if any man can find any others in his (the jailer's) house, besides all that were in it, he must be reckoned a very sagacious person;" and he himself, in his first letter published before the sermon was, has an oblique glance at it; calling me, in a sneering way, "the sagacious doctor." What he says in the following part of the letter, concerning the subjects of baptism, and what he intended to say concerning the mode in another letter, which was prevented, I suppose are contained in a set of letters now published; and which are addressed, not to Mr. Printer, who cast him off, but to a candid Anti-paedobaptist, and indeed the epithet of candid better agrees with that sort of people than with himself, of which he seems conscious, if he has any conscience at all; for it

looks as if he had not, or he could never have set out with such a most notorious untruth, and impudent falsehood; affirming that I said in my sermon, that "the ten commandments, styled the moral law, were not binding on Christ's disciples:" a greater untruth could not well have been told: my writings in general testify the contrary, and particularly two sermons I have published, one called "The Law Established by the Gospel," and the other, "The Law in the Hand of Christ;" which are sufficient to justify me from such a wicked calumny; and the paragraph with which my sermon begins, attacked by him, and which I declare, are the words I delivered in the pulpit, that "the ten commandments, are the commands of God, and to be observed by Christians under the present dispensation;" for which I quoted 1 Cor. 9:21, this I say, must stare him in the face, and awaken his guilty conscience, if not seared as with a red hot iron; which I fear is his case. As for his flings at eternal justification, which he has lugged into this controversy, and his grand concluding and common argument against it, that it is eternal nonsense, I despise; he has not a head for that controversy: and I would only put him in mind of what Dr. [John] Owen said to [Richard] Baxter, who charged him with holding it, "What would the man have me say? I have told him, I am not of that opinion; would he have me swear to it, that I am not? but though I am not, I know better and wiser men than myself that do hold it."

Somebody in the newspaper observing that this man was froward and perverse, and fearing he should do hurt to religion in general, in order to divert him from it, and guide him another way; complimented him with being a man of wit, and of abilities; and the vain young man fancies he really is one: and being a witty youth, and of abilities, he has been able to produce an instance of infant-baptism about 1500 years before Christian baptism was instituted; though he must not have the sole credit of it, because it has been observed before him: the instance is of the passage of the Israelites through the sea, at which time, he says, their children were baptized, as well as they: come then, says he, in very polite language, this is one scripture-instance; but if he had had his wits about him, he might have improved this instance, and strengthened his argument a little more; by observing that there was a mixed multitude, that came with the Israelites out of Egypt, and with them passed through the sea, with their children also. And since he makes mention of Nebuchadnezzar's baptism, it is much he did not try to make it out that his children were baptized also, then or at some other time. This is the true scripture doctrine, of the subjects of Christian baptism, according to his title.

That the Jews received their proselytes by baptism, before the times of Christ, he says, I know; but if I do, he does not. I observe, he is very ready to ascribe great knowledge of things to me, which he himself is ignorant of; I am much obliged to him: the great names he opposes to me, don't frighten me; I have read their writings and testimonies, and know what they were capable of producing, and to what little purpose; though I must confess, it is amazing to me, that any men of learning should give into such a notion, that Christian baptism is founded upon a tradition of the baptism or dipping of proselytes with the Jews; of which tradition there is not the least hint, neither in the Old nor in the New Testament; nor in the Apocryphal writings between both; nor in Josephus; nor in Philo the Jew; nor in the Jewish Misnah, or book of traditions; compiled in the second century, or at the beginning of the third, whether of the Jerusalem or Babylonian editions. I am content to risk that little reputation I have for Jewish learning, on this single point; if any passage can be produced in the Misnah, mentioning such a tradition of the Jews, admitting proselytes by baptism or dipping, whether adult or children. I own it is mentioned in the Gemara, both Jerusalem and Babylonian, a work of later times, but not in the Misnah; though Dr. Gale has allowed it without examination. The

only passage in it which Dr. Wall refers to from Selden, though not fully expressed, is this "a female stranger, a captive, a maiden, which are redeemed and become proselytes, and are made free; being under (the next paragraph is above) three years and one day old, are allowed the matrimonial dowry;" i.e., at marriage: but not a tittle is here or anywhere else in the Misnah, of receiving either minors or adult as proselytes by baptism or dipping: and supposing such a Jewish tradition, five hundred, or three hundred, or two hundred years after Christ; or even so many years before Christ, of what avail would it be? He must be strangely bigoted to an hypothesis, to believe that our Lord, who so severely inveighed against the traditions of the Jews, and particularly those concerning their baptisms or dippings; should found His New Testament ordinance of baptism, on a tradition of theirs, without excepting it from the other traditions, and without declaring His will it should be continued, which He has not done; and yet this, as Dr. Hammond suggests, in the basis of infant-baptism: to what wretched shifts must the Paedobaptists be driven for a foundation to place infant-baptism on, as to place it on such a rotten one; a tradition of men, who at other times, are reckoned by them, themselves, the most stupid, sottish, and despicable of all men upon the face of the earth? For the farther confutation of this notion, see Sir Norton Knatchbull on 1 Pet. 3:20,21; Stennett against Ruffen, p. 61; Gale's Reflections on Wall's History of Baptism, letters 9 and 10; Rees on Infant-Baptism, P. 17-29.

I shall not pursue this writer any farther, by giving particular answers to his arguments, objections, and queries, such as they are; but shall only refer the reader to the answers that have been already given to them: as to the threadbare argument, from Abraham's covenant, and from circumcision; for Old Testament times and cases, are chiefly dealt in, to settle a New Testament ordinance, see Ewer's Answer to Hitchin, Rees against Walker, and my answers to Dickinson, Clarke, and Bostwick. Of the unreasonableness of requiring instances of the adult baptism of children of Christian parents, in the scriptures, see my Strictures on Bostwick's Fair and Rational Vindication, etc., p. 106. Of the testimonies of the ancient Christian writers, in favor of infant-baptism, see Gale's Reflections, etc., letters 11, 12, 13; Rees on Infant-baptism, p. 150 and etc.; some treatises of mine, The Divine Right of infant-baptism Examined, etc., p. 20-25; The Argument from Apostolic Tradition, etc.; Antipaedobaptism; Reply to Clarke, p. 18-23; Strictures on Bostwick, p. 100-103.

I called upon this writer, in the notes on my sermon, to name any lexicographer of note, that ever rendered the word baptize by "perfuno" or "aspergo," "pour" or "sprinkle;" and behold! Leigh's Critica Sacra, is the only book quoted! and he the only lexicographer mentioned, if he may be so called! a book which every one of our illiterate lay-preachers, as they are called, are capable of quoting, and of confronting this writer with it; by observing that Leigh says, that "the native and proper signification of the word, is to dip into water, or to plunge under water, Jn. 3:22,23; Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:38." In proof of baptism by immersion, and of the true signification of the word, see Gale's Reflections, etc., letters 3 and 4;

Rees on Infant-baptism, p. 121; and my treatises of The Ancient Mode of Baptizing and the Defense Of It, with The Divine Right of Infant-baptism Examined, etc., p. 90, etc.

I bid this writer adieu: God give him repentance for his sins, and the pardon of them; and this I am sure he cannot charge, neither with uncharitableness, nor with Antinomianism.

When the Paedobaptists write again, it may be expected they will employ a better hand; or should they choose to fix upon one of their younger sort again; let them take care, first to wring the milk well out of his nose, before they put a pen in his hand.

A Dissertation Concerning the BAPTISM OF JEWISH PROSELYTES

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

Psalm 60:4

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CHAPTER 1

OF THE VARIOUS SORTS OF PROSELYTES AMONG THE JEWS

Intending to treat of the admission of proselytes into the Jewish church by baptism, or dipping; it may be proper to consider the different sorts of proselytes among the Jews, and which of them were thus admitted, as is said. The word "proselyte" is originally Greek, and is derived, as Philo^[1] observes, *apo tou proselhluyenai*, "from coming to", that is, from one sect or religion to another, as from heathenism to the Jewish religion; and so Suidas^[2] says, *proselytes* are they *oi proselhluyotev*, "who come from" the Gentiles, and live according to the laws of God; and such an one is called by the Septuagint interpreters of Exodus 12:19, Isaiah 14:1, and by the Greek writers following them, *geiwra*v, which is rightly interpreted by Hesychius, such of another nation who are called proselytes to Israel; and which word comes near to the Hebrew word *ger* and nearer still to the Chaldee word *arwyg* used for a proselyte; and is, by Eusebius, interpreted *epimiktouv*^[3], such as were mixed with Israelites.

There were two sorts of proselytes with the Jews, some say three; a proselyte of the gate; a mercenary proselyte; and a proselyte of righteousness; the first and last are most usually observed.

I. First, One sort was called *r[ç] rg* "a proselyte of the gate"; and in scripture, "the stranger that is in thy gates", (Deut. 14:21, 24:14) being a sojourner, and permitted to dwell there; hence such an one had also the name of *bwçt rg* "a proselyte inhabitant" (see Ex. 12:15; Lev. 25:45,47); one who was allowed to dwell among the Jews on certain conditions; and is generally distinguished from another sort, called a "proselyte of righteousness", of whom more hereafter. Though the Jews, not always consistent with themselves, and so not in this matter, sometimes interpret "the stranger in the gate", of a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte by inhabitation, and sometimes of a proselyte of righteousness. So Nachmanides^[4], having explained the stranger in the gate of a proselyte inhabitant, or one who obliged himself to keep the seven precepts of Noah, according to the usual interpretation of it, observes; "Our doctors interpret it differently, for they say, 'thy stranger within thy gate', simply denotes, a 'proselyte of righteousness'." So that according to them, such a stranger may be taken both for the one and for the other, in different respects; but commonly the proselyte inhabitant is only understood; who in general was obliged to promise, that he would not be guilty of idolatry, or worship any idol^[5]; this he was to promise before three witnesses, for it is asked, "who is *Ger Toshab*; that is, a proselyte allowed to dwell in Israel? (the answer is) Whoever takes upon him, in the presence of three neighbours, that he will not commit idolatry." It follows, "R. Meir, and the wise men say, whoever takes upon him the seven precepts which the sons of Noah obliged themselves to observe." Others say, "these do not come into the general rule of such a proselyte. Who then is one? He is a proselyte who eats what dies of itself; (or) who takes upon him to keep all the commandments in the law, except that which forbids the eating of things which die of themselves^[6];" but the usual account of such a proselyte is, that he agrees to observe the seven precepts enjoined the sons of Noah^[7]; six of which were given to Adam, the first man, and the seventh was added to them, and given to Noah, and are as follow^[8]: a. Concerning idolatry; by this a son of Noah was forbid to worship the sun, moon, and stars, and images of any sort; nor might he erect a statue, nor plant a grove, nor make any image. b. Concerning blaspheming the name of God. Such an one might not blaspheme, neither the proper name of God, Jehovah; nor any of his surnames, titles, and epithets. c. Concerning shedding of blood, or murder, the breach of which command he was guilty of, if he slew one, though an embryo in his mother's womb; and one who pursued another, when he could have escaped from him with the loss of one of his members, etc. d. Concerning uncleanness, or impure copulations; of which there were six sorts forbidden a son of Noah; as, with an own mother, with a father's wife (or stepmother), with another man's wife, with

his sister by the mother's side, with a male, or with mankind, and with a beast. e. Concerning rapine, or robbery and theft; of which such were guilty, whether they robbed a Gentile or an Israelite, or stole money, or men, or suppressed the wages of an hireling; and the like. f. Concerning the member of a living creature, taken from it while alive, and eating it: this is the command, it is said, which was to Noah, and his sons, and of which the Jews interpret Genesis 9:4. g. Concerning judgments or punishments to be inflicted on those who broke the above laws: this command obliged them to regard the directions, judgment, and sentence of the judges appointed to see the said laws put into execution, and to punish delinquents.

Now such Gentiles, who laid themselves under obligation to observe these commands, had leave to dwell among the Israelites, though not in everyone of their cities; not in Jerusalem particularly^[9]; wherefore those devout men and proselytes said to dwell in Jerusalem, Acts 2:5,10 were not proselytes of the gate, but proselytes of righteousness. Nor are such sort of proselytes now received, only while the Jews lived in their own land, and were not under the jurisdiction of another people; or as they express it, while jubilees were in use and observed^[10]. This sort of proselytes, though they did not enjoy the privileges the proselytes of righteousness did, yet some they had; they might worship and pray in the court of the Gentiles, though not in the temple; they might offer burnt offerings, though not other sacrifices; their poor were fed with the poor of Israel, their sick were visited by Israelites, and their dead were buried with them^[11].

Such proselytes as these, as they were not obliged to circumcision, nor to other commands peculiar to the Jews; none but those before observed; so neither were they baptized, or dipped, when made proselytes, which is said of others. Maimonides^[12] affirms of such a proselyte, that he is neither circumcised nor dipped. Bishop Kidder^[13] is therefore mistaken in saying, that proselytes of the gate were baptized, but not circumcised.

II. Secondly, there was another sort of proselytes, which are taken notice of, at least, by some as such; who were called *μυρκ* "mercenary" ones, and are reckoned as between proselytes of the gate and Gentiles. In Exodus 12:44,45 a mercenary, or "hired servant", is distinguished from a servant bought with money; he being hired only for a certain time, as for six years; and also from a foreigner, a stranger in the gate, a proselyte of the gate; and both of them are distinguished from the servant bought with money, who was circumcised, and might eat of the passover, when neither of the other might, being both uncircumcised; and therefore R. Levi Barzelonita^[14] is thought to be mistaken when he says, "a mercenary is a proselyte, who is circumcised, but not dipped; for so the wise men explain it:" but if a stranger or proselyte of the gate was not circumcised, much less a mercenary, who was far below him; besides, if he was circumcised, he might eat of the passover; which is denied him: and so Ben Melech observes^[15] of these two, the foreigner and the hired servant; they are Gentiles, and uncircumcised: and Abendana, in his notes upon him, from the Rabbins, says, the former is a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte of the gate, who takes upon him the seven precepts of the sons of Noah; the latter is a servant whose body is not possessed, that is, is not in the possession of his master, not being bought with his money, is only an hired servant, and so not circumcised. But perhaps Jarchi's note will reconcile this to what Barzelonita says; "Toshab, a foreigner, this is a proselyte inhabitant; and Shacir, or hired servant, this is a Gentile;" but what is the meaning? are they not uncircumcised? (that is, both of them) and it is said, "No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof": but they are as a circumcised Arabian, and a circumcised Gabnunit, or Gabonite^[16], though circumcised yet not by Israelites, but by Gentiles, which gave no right to the

passover. Hottinger^[17] thinks these mercenary proselytes, and with him Leusden^[18] seems to agree, were mechanic strangers, who left their own country, and came among the Jews for the sake of learning some mechanic art; and who, conforming to certain laws and conditions, prescribed by the Jews, were permitted to sojourn with them until they had learnt the art. There are but few writers who speak of this sort of proselytes. However, it seems agreed on all hands, that whether circumcised or not, they were not baptized, or dipped.

III. Thirdly, There was another sort of proselyte, called qdx rg a "proselyte of righteousness"^[19]; see Deuteronomy 16:20 a stranger circumcised, and who is so called when he is circumcised; and sometimes tyrb `b rg "a proselyte, the son of the covenant"^[20], the same as an Israelite; see Acts 3:25. This sort of proselytes were the highest, and had in greatest esteem; who not only submitted to circumcision, but embraced all the laws, religion, and worship of the Jews; and were in all respects as they, and enjoyed equally all privileges and immunities, civil and religious, as they did; except being made a king, though one might if his mother was of Israel^[21]; and being members of the great Sanhedrim, yet might be of the lesser, provided they were born of an Israelitish woman^[22]; nay, even such have been in the great Sanhedrim, as Shemaiah and Abtalion, who were of the posterity of Sennacherib^[23]; but their mothers being Israelites, it was lawful for them to judge, that is, in the great Sanhedrim; for one was the prince, and the other the father of that court^[24]. So the Jews say^[25], the posterity of Jethro sat in Lishcat Gazith, that is, in the great Sanhedrim, which sat in that room; and for which they quote 1 Chronicles 2:55 yet it has been a question, whether a proselyte should be made a public minister, or president of the congregation, called rwbx jylç; but the common opinion was, that he might be one^[26]: of this sort of proselytes, of whom they boast, some were persons of note for learning, or wealth, or worldly grandeur^[27]; but without sufficient ground. Some, they own, were not sincere who became proselytes, either through fear, or to gratify some sensual lust, or for some sinister end or another. Some were called "proselytes of lions"^[28], who became so through fear; as the Samaritans, because of the lions sent among them, and that they might be freed from them, embraced the worship of God, though they retained also the worship of their idols. Others were called "proselytes of dreams"; who were directed and encouraged to become proselytes by such who pretended to skill in dreams, as being omens of good things to them. Though some, in the place referred to, instead of twmlj "dreams", read "windows", and render the words "proselytes of windows", so Alting^[29], meaning the windows of their eyes, who, to gratify the lust of the eyes, became proselytes; as Shechem, being taken with the sight of Dinah, submitted to circumcision for the sake of her; and others were called "proselytes of Mordecai and Esther", who were like those who became Jews in their times (Esther 8:17) through fear of the Jews, as there expressed. Others were true and sincere proselytes, who cordially embraced the Jewish religion, and from the heart submitted to the laws and rules of it; these were called µyrwrg µyrb "drawn proselytes"^[30], who were moved of themselves, and of their own good will, without any sinister bias, and out of real love and affection to the Jewish religion, embraced it. Compare the phrase with John 6:44. And such, they say^[31], all proselytes will be in the time to come, or in the days of the Messiah; and yet sometimes they say, that then none will be received^[32]; and when persons propose to be proselytes, the Jews are very careful to ask many questions, in order to try whether they are sincere or not; and such as they take to be sincere they speak very highly of; they say^[33], "Greater are the proselytes at this time, than the Israelites when they stood on mount Sinai; because they saw the lightning, heard the thunder, and the sound of the trumpet; but these saw and heard none of these things, and yet have taken upon them the yoke of the kingdom, and are come under the wings of the Shechinah" though elsewhere,

and in common, they speak but slightly of them, and say; "They are as grievous to Israel as a scab in the skin, or as a razor to it[34], because they often turn back again, and seduce the Israelites, and carry them off with them; yea, they say they stop the coming of the Messiah[35]." However, they have a saying[36] which shows some regard to them; "A proselyte, even to the tenth generation, do not despise a Syrian, or an heathen before him, he being present, or to his face; because till that time their minds are supposed to incline towards their own people;" and so it is said[37], the daughter of a proselyte may not be married to a priest, unless her mother is an Israelitess, even unto the tenth generation. And there is another saying[38] of theirs, Do not trust a proselyte until the twenty fourth generation, that is, never; not only priests, Levites, and Israelites, but even bastards, and the Nethinim, or Gibeonites, were preferred to proselytes[39]. Some of these sayings do not seem so well to agree with the words of Christ (Matthew 23:15) to reconcile which, it is thought[40], that while the temple was standing, the desire of making proselytes was stronger than after it was destroyed by the Romans; resenting that, they became indifferent about making proselytes, and were unconcerned about the salvation of the Gentiles, and contented themselves with receiving such only who freely came over to them. It never was deemed so honourable to be the descendants of proselytes, as of original Hebrews. Hence the apostle Paul gloried that he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, both his parents being Hebrews. A Rabbi of note among the Jews, whose parents were both proselytes, or Gentiles, is called not by his proper name, Jochanan, but Ben Bag-Bag; that is, the son of a Gentile man, and the son of a Gentile woman; and for the same reason he is called in a following paragraph, Ben He-He, numerically He being the same with Bag; though it is said, these abbreviations were used from reverence to him, and a regard for him[41]; and, indeed, the Jews were not to reproach and upbraid proselytes with what they and their ancestors had been, or had done; they were not to say to a proselyte, Remember thy former works; nor were they to say to the sons of proselytes, Remember the works of your fathers[42]; for this is the affliction and oppression of them, as they understand it, they are cautioned against (Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:33), nay, they were to love them as themselves, because the Lord God loved the stranger (Lev. 19:34; Deut. 10:18), for of proselytes of righteousness they interpret these passages[43].

Now it is of this sort of proselytes, proselytes of righteousness, that it is said, they were admitted into covenant, and into the Jewish church, as the Israelites were; the males by circumcision, by tlybj "baptism", or dipping, and by sacrifice; and the females by baptism, or dipping, and by sacrifice; and it is the baptism or dipping of these proselytes, that will be inquired into, and be the subject of the following Dissertation.

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CHAPTER 2

THE OCCASION OF THIS DISSERTATION

I. Several learned men, and some of our own nation, whom I shall chiefly take notice of, have asserted, that it was a custom or rite used by the Jews before the times of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, to receive proselytes into their church by baptism, or dipping, as well as by

circumcision; and these both adult and infants; and that John and Christ took up the rite of baptizing from thence, and practised, and directed to the practice of it, as they found it; and which, they think, accounts for the silence about infant baptism in the New Testament, it being no new nor strange practice. The writers among us of most note, who make mention of it are, Broughton, Ainsworth, Selden, Hammond, and Lightfoot; men justly esteemed for their learning and knowledge in Jewish affairs. Mr. Hugh Broughton is the first of our nation I have met with who speaks of it. He says^[44], "The Babylonian Talmud, and Rambam (Maimonides) record, that in the days of David and Solomon, when many thousands of heathens became proselytes, they were admitted only by baptism, without circumcision. So now, when the New Testament was to be made for the many, that is, for all nations, baptism was not strange; neither is John an astonishment for that; but demanded whether he be Elijah or Christ, or that special prophet named in Deuteronomy." A little after he observes, that "Christ from baptism used of them (the Jews) 'without commandment, and of small authority', authorizes a seal of entering into the rest of Christ, using the Jews' 'weakness' as an allurements thither." Where, by the way, he makes this usage to be "without commandment", that is, of God, and to be but of "small authority", even from men, and a piece of "weakness" of the Jews, and yet authorized by Christ; which seems incredible. Mr. Henry Ainsworth is the next I shall mention, who takes notice of this custom. His words are^[45], "That we may the better know how they (the Jews) were wont to receive heathens into the church of Israel; I will note it from the Hebrew doctors:" and then gives a large quotation from Maimonides; the substance of which is, that as by three things Israel entered into the covenant, by circumcision, and baptism, and sacrifice; in like manner heathen proselytes were admitted; on which he makes this remark: "Whereupon baptism was nothing strange unto the Jews when John the Baptist began his ministry (Matthew 3:5,6), they made a question of his person that did it, but not of the thing itself (John 1:25)." Dr. Hammond, another learned man, speaks of this same custom or rite with the Jews: he says^[46], that "proselytes born of heathen parents, and become proselytes of justice, were admitted by the Jews, not only by circumcision, (and while the temple stood) by sacrifice; but also with the ceremony or solemnity of washing, that is, ablution of the whole body, done solemnly in a river, or other such great place or receptacle of water." So he says, Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, was made a proselyte in this way; and that this ceremony of initiation belonged not only to those, which being of years, came over from heathenism to the Jews' religion, but also to their children infants, if their parents, or the consessus (the sanhedrim) under which they were, did in the behalf of their children desire it; and on condition that the children, when they came to age, should not renounce the Jewish religion; nay, he says, the native Jews themselves were thus baptized; for all which he refers to the Talmud, Tr. Repud. by which I suppose he means the tract Gittin, concerning divorces. But I have not met with anything relating thereunto in that treatise. For the same purposes it is quoted by Dr. Wall, who, I suppose, goes upon the authority of Dr. Hammond, since he acknowledges he was not so well acquainted with the books to be searched for such quotations. Now Dr. Hammond observes, that "having said thus much of the custom among the Jews, it is now most easy to apply it to the practice of John, and after of Christ, 'who certainly took this ceremony from them';" and further observes, that by this it appears, how little needful it will be to defend the baptism of Christian infants from the law of circumcising the infants among the Jews; "the foundation being far more fitly laid" in that other of Jewish baptism. Yea, in another of his works he suggests that this custom is the "true basis of infant baptism"^[47]. The very learned Mr. Selden is more large in his quotations in various parts of his works^[48], from both Talmuds and other Jewish writers, concerning this rite and custom; which authorities produced by him, and others, will be given and considered hereafter. At the close of which he makes these remarks^[49]; that the

Jewish baptism was as it were a "transition" into Christianity, or however, a shadow of a transition, not to be passed over in silence; and that it should be adverted to, that the rite or sacrament of baptism, used at the beginning of Christianity, and of the gospel by John, and by the apostles, was not introduced as a "new action", and as not before heard of, "even as a religious action", but as well known to the Hebrews, as a rite of initiation, from the use and discipline of their ancestors, and as joined with circumcision. Dr. Lightfoot, who must be allowed to be well versed in Jewish literature, has produced the same authorities Selden has, if not more, in support of the said rite or custom, as in early use with the Jews, and exults and triumphs abundantly over the Antipaedobaptists in favour of infant baptism, on account thereof: he asserts, that "baptism had been 'in long and common use' among them (the Jews) many generations before John the Baptist came; they using this for admission of proselytes into the church, and baptizing men, women, and children for that end:—hence a ready reason may be given why there is 'so little mention' (no mention at all) of baptizing infants in the New Testament; and that there is neither 'plain precept' nor 'example' for it, as some ordinarily plead; the reason is, because there needed none, baptizing infants having been as 'ordinarily used' in the church of the Jews, as ever it hath been in the Christian church:—that baptism was no strange thing when John came baptizing; but the rite was known so well by everyone, that nothing was better known what baptism was, and therefore there needed not such punctual and exact rules about the manner and object of it, as there had needed, if it had never been seen. before:—that Christ took up baptism as it was 'in common and known use', and 'in ordinary and familiar practice' among that nation; and therefore gave no rules for the manner of baptizing, nor for the age and sex of persons to be baptized, which was well enough known already, and needed no 'rule' to be prescribed:—observing how very known and frequent the use of baptism was among the Jews, the reason appears very easy, why the Sanhedrim, by their messengers, inquired not of John, concerning the reason of baptism, but concerning the authority of the baptizer; not what baptism meant; but whence he had a licence so to baptize (John 1:25). Hence also the reason appears why the New Testament does not 'prescribe', by some more 'accurate rule', who the persons are to be baptized:—the whole nation knew well enough that little children used to be baptized; there was no need for a precept for that, which had ever by common use prevailed^[50]." Dr. Wall, upon these authorities, has thought fit to premise an account of this Jewish baptism, to his history of infant baptism, as serving greatly the cause of it, and as throwing light upon the words of Christ and his apostles, concerning it, and the primitive practice of it; and, animated by such authorities, every puny writer, who does not know his right hand from his left in this matter, takes it up, and swaggers with it. And, indeed, scarce any will now venture in the defence of infant baptism without it. This is the last refuge and dernier resort of the Paedobaptists; and, indeed, a learned baronet^[51] of our nation says, he knows not of any stronger argument in proof of infant baptism than this is.

Now since so great a stress is laid upon it, and it is made a matter of such great importance, as to be a "transition" into Christianity, and to be "closely connected" with Christian baptism; that from whence it is taken, and is the "rule" to direct how to proceed, both with respect to the manner and objects of it; yea, is the "basis and foundation" of infant baptism, and the "strongest argument" in proof of it; and which makes other arguments, heretofore thought of great weight, now "unnecessary": it is highly proper to inquire what proof can be given of such a rite and custom being in use among the Jews, before the times of John Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; and if so, what force and influence such a custom can and ought to have on the faith and practice of Christians. The proof of which will next be considered.

CHAPTER 3

THE PROOF OF THE BAPTISM OF JEWISH PROSELYTES INQUIRED INTO; WHETHER THERE IS ANY PROOF OF IT BEFORE, AT, OR QUICKLY AFTER THE TIMES OF JOHN AND CHRIST

The inquiry to be made is, whether there are writings or records before the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, or at or near those times, or in the third and fourth century from the birth of Christ, or before the Talmuds were written; which make any mention of, or refer to any such rite and custom in use among the Jews, as to admit proselytes to their religion by baptism, or dipping, along with other things. Now upon search it will be found,

I. First, That nothing of this kind appears in the writings of the Old Testament, which chiefly concern the Jewish nation. We read of many who either were, or are supposed and said to be made proselytes; as the Shechemites in Jacob's time, the multitude that came out of Egypt with the Israelites[\[52\]](#), Jethro, Moses's father in law[\[53\]](#), Shuah[\[54\]](#), Tamar[\[55\]](#), Rahab[\[56\]](#), and Ruth[\[57\]](#); and many in the times of Mordecai and Esther, who became Jews[\[58\]](#), Esther 8:17 but not a word of their being admitted proselytes by baptism. Dr. Lightfoot indeed says[\[59\]](#), that Jacob admitted the proselytes of Shechem and Syria into his religion by baptism, but offers no proof of it; the Jews[\[60\]](#) pretend, that Pharaoh's daughter was a proselytess, and the Babylonian Talmud[\[61\]](#), quoting the passage in Exodus 2:5. "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself"; R. Jochanan says, she came down to wash herself from the idols of her father's house, and the Gloss on the place is, "to dip on account of proselytism;" but then the Gloss is the work of Jarchi, a writer in the twelfth century; and was it so said in the Talmud itself, it would be no sufficient proof the fact. Dr. Hammond says, that Jethro was made a proselyte this way; but produces no scripture for it; but refers to the Talmud, Tr. Repud; but there it is not to be found, as before observed: and Schindler[\[62\]](#) asserts the same, as said by the Jews, and seems to refer to the same Tract in general, without directing to any particular place: and from him Hammond seems to have taken it upon trust, and some other writers also, without examination; since no such passage is to be found in that Tract. Pfeiffer[\[63\]](#), in proof of it, refers to a book called Zennorena, a commentary on the law, written in Hebrew-German, in the seventeenth century, by R. Jacob Ben Isaac, a German Jew[\[64\]](#). Indeed, in the Talmud[\[65\]](#), Jethro is said to become a proselyte, but no mention is made in what manner he was made one; and elsewhere[\[66\]](#) explaining these words, djyw "and Jethro rejoiced", says Rab, he made a sharp sword to pass over his flesh; that is, according to the Gloss, he circumcised himself, and became a proselyte; but not a word of his baptism, or dipping; and so the Targum on Exodus 18:6,7 is, "And he said to Moses, I Jethro, thy father-in-law, am come unto thee 'to be made a proselyte'; but if thou wilt not receive me for myself, receive me for the sake of thy wife, and her two children, who are with her; and Moses went out from under the clouds of glory to meet his father-in-law, and bowing himself, kissed him, and he made him a proselyte; but nothing is said of the manner of doing it." Mr. Broughton also, as before quoted, says, that the Babylonian Talmud, and Rambam record, that in the days of David and Solomon, many thousands of heathens

were made proselytes, and admitted by baptism only; but this instance is not to be met with in the Babylonian Talmud; yea, that expressly denies it in two different places^[67]; and in which it is asserted that they did not receive proselytes neither in the days of David, nor in the days of Solomon; Solomon's wife, Pharaoh's daughter, is indeed excepted; because the reason for which they say, proselytes were not then received; namely, because they might be desirous of being made proselytes, that they might be admitted to the king's table, could have no influence on her, since she was the daughter of a mighty king; and yet it is said^[68] by some, that though it was Solomon's intention to make her a proselyte, yet he was not able to do it; and she became one of his troublers; and by what is said of her, in 2 Chronicles 8:11 it looks as if she did not become a proselyte; Rambam, or Maimonides, indeed, to reconcile what later writers have said, with those words of the Talmudists, have contrived a distinction between the Sanhedrim and private persons; as if proselytes, though not received in those times by the former, were by the latter. He says^[69], there were many proselytes in those times who were made so before private persons, but not before the Sanhedrim; he owns the Sanhedrim did not receive them, and though they were dipped, yet not by their order, and with their consent; but he produces no passage of scripture to support this private dipping; nor do the scriptures any where speak of such numbers of proselytes in those days, and much less of their baptism; and the strangers, who in the Greek version are called proselytes, whom Solomon numbered and employed at the building of the temple (2 Chron. 2:17), at most could only be proselytes of the gate, not of righteousness, and so there can be no pretence for their admission by baptism, or dipping; nor is there anything of this kind with respect to any persons to be found in the writings of the Old Testament. There is a plain and express law for the admission of proselytes to the Jewish religion, and for what, as a qualification, to partake of the ordinances and privileges of it; particularly to eat of the passover; and that is the circumcision of them, with all their males; and on this condition, and on this only, they and theirs were admitted without any other rite annexed unto it, they were obliged unto; nor does it appear that ever any other was used; no, not this of baptism; there was but one law to the stranger or proselyte, and to the home born Israelite (see Exodus 12:48,49). There were proselytes in the times of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 30:25) who came out of the land of Israel, to eat the passover at Jerusalem, who therefore must be circumcised, according to the said law; but there is no reason to believe they were baptized. There was a law concerning the marriage of a captive woman taken in war (Deut. 21:10-14), previous to which she must become a proselytess; and the law enjoins various particular rites to be observed in order to it, as shaving her head, paring her nails, and putting off the raiment of her captivity; but not a word of her baptism; which one would think could never be omitted, had such a custom prevailed as early as the times of Moses and Jacob, as is pretended. There were various bathings, baptisms, or dippings incumbent on the Israelites, and so upon such proselytes who were upon an equal footing with them, and equally under obligation to obey the ceremonial law; which consisted of various washings, baptisms, or dippings, yet none of them for proselytism; but for purification from one uncleanness or another, in a ceremonial sense: these seem to be what a learned writer^[70] calls "aquilustria", "lustrations by water"; which he thinks it is clear the captive Jews in Babylon observed, from having their solemn meetings by rivers (Ezek. 3:15; Ezra 8:15,21), but it is not so clear they had their abode in such places, whether for a longer or shorter time, on account of them; and it is still less clear what he further says, that these lustrations had a promise of grace annexed to them, were sacraments of the Old Testament, and a type of our baptism. However, though he supposes the returning Jews and proselytes were circumcised, he does not pretend they were baptized; nor does he attempt to prove proselyte baptism from hence. Among the ten families said^[71] by the Jews to come out of Babylon, the proselytes are one sort; but they say nothing of

their baptism (see Ezra 6:21). As for those scriptures of the Old Testament the Rabbins make use of to justify this custom of theirs, they will be considered hereafter.

II. Secondly, whereas there are several books called Apocrypha, supposed to be written between the writing of the books of the Old Testament and those of the New, and are generally thought to be written by Jews, and to contain things which chiefly have respect to them; and though there is sometimes mention made in them of proselytes to the Jewish religion, yet not a syllable of any such rite or custom, as of baptism or dipping at the admission of them; particularly of Achior the Ammonite, in the times of Judith; upon her cutting off the head of Olophernes it is said, that "he, seeing all that the God of Israel did, strongly believed in God, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was added to the house of Israel unto this day;" that is, he and his posterity continued in the Jewish religion. Now here is mention made of his being circumcised, previous to his addition, or his being proselyted to the Jewish church; but not a word of baptism, or dipping, in order to it; see Judith 14:6 in the Apocrypha.

III. Thirdly, mention is made of proselytes in the New Testament (Matthew 23:15; Acts 2:10, 6:5, 13:43), but nothing is said concerning their admission, and the manner of it. Indeed, in the Ethiopic version of Matthew 23:15 the words are rendered, "They baptize one proselyte"; which seems to have respect to the custom under consideration; but then this is but a translation, and not a just one. The Ethiopic version is not only reckoned not very good, but of no great antiquity. Ernestus Gerhard says^[72] of the antiquity of it, he dare not affirm anything certain. And Ludolph, in his history of Ethiopia, relates^[73], that he could find nothing certain concerning the author and time of this version but thinks it probable it was made at the time of the conversion of the Habessines, or a little after, but not in the times of the apostles, as some have affirmed; and in the margin, a little after, he observes, that in an Ethiopic martyrology, St. Frumentius, called abbot of Salama, is said to be the author of it; who, according to another place in the said history^[74], seems to have lived in the fourth century, in the times of Athanasius, and is thought to be the first founder of the Christian religion in Ethiopia, and the first bishop in it. Scaliger takes the Ethiopic version to be a recent one; and Deuteronomy Dieu^[75], from what the author or authors of the version of the evangelist Matthew, add at the end of it, suspects that they were of the Maronites, who became subject to the pope of Rome A. D. 1182, and so this version is too late a testimony for the antiquity of such a custom; and the closing the translation of some of the epistles with desiring the prayers of Peter and others, shows what sort of persons they were who translated them, and in what times they lived. The title of the book of the Revelation in this version, is, "The vision of John, which John was bishop of the metropolis of Constantinople, when he suffered persecution;" by which it appears not to be ancient. Hence Dr. Owen^[76] calls it a "novel" endeavour of an illiterate person; and the translation of the clause itself in Matthew 23:15 is censured by Ludolphus^[77] as ridiculous; the word by which it is rendered being used in the Ethiopic language to convert a man to Christianity, or to make a man a Christian; which is by it absurdly attributed to the Scribes and Pharisees.

IV. Fourthly, as there are no traces of this custom in the writings before, at, or about the times of John, Christ, and his apostles; so neither are there any in those which were written in any short time after; as, not in Philo the Jew, who lived in the first century; who, though he is said by some to be ignorant of Jewish customs, yet one would think he could not be ignorant of such as were used at the admission of proselytes; since he lived at Alexandria, where it may be supposed many proselytes were, more than in Judea, and of the manner of their admission he could not but have

knowledge, both then and in former times; and he makes mention of proselytes, and of them as equally partakers of the same privileges, and to be treated with the same honour and respect as home born citizens^[78], and as they were admitted by Moses; but is altogether silent about this custom of baptizing, or dipping them; nor is there the least trace or hint of this custom in any Rabbinical books, said by the Jews to be written a little before, or after; such as the books of Bahir, Zohar, the Targums of Onkelos on the Pentateuch, and of Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the prophets.

V. Fifthly, Josephus, the Jewish historian, lived in the same age, a little after Philo, was well versed in the affairs of the Jews, even in their religious rites and ceremonies, having been a priest among them. He not only observes, that many of the Gentiles came over to their religion^[79], but even speaks of whole nations who became Jews, and that they were made so by circumcision; as of the Idumaeans, whom Hyrcanus conquered, and suffered to remain in their own land, on condition that they would be circumcised, and conform to the laws of the Jews; and who, out of love to their country, did comply with circumcision, and so became Jews^[80], and of the Ituraeans, whom Aristobulus fought against, and added part of their country to Judaea, and obliged the inhabitants, if they would remain in their country, to be circumcised, and live after the laws of the Jews; and quotes Strabo, who, upon the authority of Timogenes, says, that he enlarged the country of the Jews, and made part of the country of Ituraea theirs, joining them to them by the bond of circumcision^[81]. By which accounts it appears, that both these people were made Jews, or were proselyted to them by circumcision; but not a word is said of their baptism, or dipping; which, according to this custom, as is said, must have been of men, women, and children, which, had it been practised, could not have been well omitted by the historian. He also speaks^[82] of Helena, queen of Adiabene, and of her son Izates, embracing the Jewish religion; and relates how desirous Izates was of being circumcised, that he might be a perfect Jew, without which he could not; but for a time he was dissuaded from it by his mother, and a Jew merchant, who instructed them; but afterwards, being exhorted to perfect the work by one Eleazer, who was more skilful in Jewish affairs, he submitted to circumcision: but neither Josephus nor Eleazer say a word about his baptism, or dipping; which yet, according to the pretended custom as then prevailing, was necessary, as well as circumcision, to make him a complete proselyte. Nor is any mention made of the baptism or dipping of Helena; which, had it been at this time, would not have been omitted by the historian; since it was by that only, according to this notion, that females were then made proselytes. He also speaks^[83] of another son of Helena, Monbaz, embracing the Jewish religion; but says nothing of his baptism.

VI. Sixthly, it may be inquired, whether or no any mention is made of this custom of receiving proselytes among the Jews by baptism, or dipping, in the Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases. The most ancient ones extant are those of Jonathan Ben Uzziel of the prophets, and of Onkelos of the Pentateuch; the one at the beginning, the other toward the end of the first century; in which nothing is met with concerning the admission of Jewish proselytes by dipping. The other paraphrases are by uncertain authors, and of an uncertain age. The Targum of the Megillot, or five books of Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations, and Esther, is written by an unknown author; it is the latest of all the Targums. In that of Esther only the phrase became Jews (Esther 8:17), is rendered, became proselytes; but nothing is said of their manner of becoming such. In that of Ruth 1:16 the requisites of a proselyte are particularly observed; where Ruth is introduced, saying, that she desired to be made a proselyte; when Naomi informs her what commands the Jews were obliged to observe; as to keep the Sabbaths and festivals, and not to walk beyond two thousand cubits (on the

Sabbath day); not to lodge with Gentiles; to observe the three hundred and thirteen commands; not to worship an idol, etc. to all which Ruth is made to agree; but not a syllable is said about baptism, or dipping; whereas, that, with a sacrifice along with it, before the building of the temple, and while the temple stood, and since, without it, is the only thing, according to this notion, by which females were admitted proselytes. In the Targum of Jonathan of Genesis 9:27 the sons of Japheth are said to be made and to dwell in the school of Shem. In the Jerusalem Targum, and in that of Pseudo-Jonathan, the souls that Abraham and Sarah got in Haran (Gen. 12:5), are said to be the souls who were made proselytes by them; and In the same Targum of Genesis 21:33 at Beersheba, where Abraham planted a grove, he is said to make proselytes, and teach them the way of the world, of the world to come; but nothing more is said of the way and manner in which they were made such. In the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan of Genesis 38:2 Judah is said to make the daughter of a Canaanite a proselytess, and then married her; and in the same Targum of Numbers 11:4 the mixed multitude who came with the Israelites out of Egypt, are interpreted proselytes; and no doubt but many of them were such; and Jarchi thinks the son of the Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, was a proselyte, since he was among the children of Israel (Lev. 24:10). And Africanus affirms^[84], that the Jews genealogical tables, in which an account was kept of original Jews and of proselytes; as of Achior the Ammonite, and Ruth the Moabitess, and those who came out of Egypt mixed with the Israelites; and which continued to the times of Herod, who burnt them, that his family might not be known. But to return to the Targums; in the Pseudo-Jonathan's of Exodus 18:6,7, Jethro is made to say to Moses, as before observed, that he was come to be made a proselyte; and Moses is said to make him one; but in what manner it is not said; and so the rest before mentioned; indeed, the same Targum of Exodus 12:44 is, "And every stranger who is sold for a servant to an Israelite, bought with money, then thou shalt circumcise him, and thou shalt 'dip him', and so shall he eat of it," the passover. Now in this Targum of Exodus 26:9 not only mention is made of the Misnah, but it abounds with Talmudic fables and traditions, and so must be written after both the Misnah and Talmud; and in the Targum of Numbers 24:19 mention is made of the city of Constantinople, which shows it to be not ancient, and that it is not the work of the true Jonathan. And besides all this, the case of the servant refers not to a proselyte, who became so of choice, but to a bought servant, who, according to the original law in Genesis 17:12,13, was obliged to be circumcised; and so, according to the Rabbinic custom, to be dipped; but then, according to these writers, baptism, or dipping for servitude, was a different thing from baptism, or dipping for proselytism; the one was on a civil, the other on a religious account; the one was repeated when a servant was made a free man, and the other never^[85]. The same Pseudo-Jonathan in his Targum of Deuteronomy 21:13, to the conditions required of a beautiful captive, in order to be married to an Israelite, this is added, that she should dip herself, and become a proselytess in his house; but the text has nothing of it, nor the Targum of Onkelos; nor is this custom to be met with in the paraphrases of the true Jonathan; only in this, which was written after the Talmud, and does not come within the time under consideration.

VII. Seventhly, nor is there any mention of such a custom in the Jew's Misnah, or Book of Traditions; which is a collection of all the traditions among the Jews, which had been handed down from age to age, and were collected together from all parts, and written in a book of this name, in order to be preserved. This was written by R. Judah Hakkadosh, in the middle of the second century, A. D. 150 or as others in the beginning of the third century, reckoning the date of it one hundred and fifty years from the destruction of the temple; which brings it to the year 220 and here, if anywhere, one might expect to meet with this rite or custom; but no mention is made of it. Dr.

Gale^[86] seems to allow it upon what Dr. Wall has transcribed from Selden, which he granted without examination. The doctor says^[87], It is not only mentioned in the Gemara, but in the text of the Misnah itself; which, as he suggests, speaks of a child becoming a proselyte by baptism, or dipping; but the passage he has from Selden^[88] says no such thing; which runs thus^[89]; "A she stranger, a captive, and a maiden, who are redeemed and become proselytes, and are made free, being 'under' (or, as in the following section, above) three years and one day old, are allowed the matrimonial dowry;" that is, when they come to age, and are married; but not a word is here of their being made proselytes by baptism, or dipping; indeed, the tradition shows, that minors may be proselyted, and that a man's sons and daughters may become proselytes with him; but there is no need to have recourse to a tradition for this; the law is express, that a stranger who desires to be a proselyte to the Jewish religion, and to eat of the passover, must be circumcised, and all his males, and then he and all his children, males and females, may be admitted to eat of it, Exodus 12:48,49 only the circumcision of the males is required, but no baptism, or dipping of any. There is a passage in the Misnah^[90], which perhaps some may think countenances this custom; which is this, "A stranger who is made a proselyte, on the evening of the passover, the house of Shammai say, he 'dips' and eats his Passover in the evening; but the house of Hillell say, he that separates from uncircumcision, is as he that separates from a grave." Now it should be observed, 1. That here is a division about this matter, be it what it may; Shammai, and his party, assert, that a proselyte newly made, might dip and eat his passover that evening; but Hillell, and his party, dissent, for a reason given; and the determination, in all cases, was generally according to Hillell, as it was in this; so we learn from Maimonides^[91]. 2. This baptism, or dipping, was not on account of proselytism, but for ceremonial uncleanness; for it goes along with cases of that kind, instanced in before. The canon begins thus, "A mourner (who was unclean according to the ceremonial law) dips and eats his passover in the evening; but eats not of the holy things: he that hears tidings of the death of his (friend or relation), and who gathers to him bones, dips, and eats of the holy things:" and then it follows, "A stranger who is made a proselyte, etc." 3. This rule, according to Shammai, was concerning one already made a proselyte, and therefore the dipping, or baptism, he prescribes to him, in order to his eating the passover that evening, was not to make him a proselyte; but for some other reason. Wherefore, 4. This strongly makes against admission of proselytes by baptism, or dipping, at that time; for if he had been made a proselyte that way, there would have been no reason for a second dipping to qualify him for the passover. 5. The case of such an one, according to Hillell, is, that being just come out of heathenism, he was unclean, as one that touched a dead man, a bone, or a grave; and therefore could not eat of the passover that evening, but must wait seven days, until he was purified according to the law in Numbers 19:11-19. 6. After all, the view of Hillell, in putting such a person off from eating the passover the evening he became a proselyte for the reason given, was with respect to the next year, and by way of caution; fearing that should he be then in any uncleanness, which required purification, he would say, Last year I did not dip, or purify myself from any uncleanness, and yet I eat, and now I must dip and eat; not considering that the last year he was an heathen, and incapable of uncleanness, according to the law, but now he was an Israelite, and capable of it; and so it is explained in the Gemara^[92] and Gloss on it, and by other interpreters^[93]. Besides, this baptism, or dipping, was not on account of proselytism, but was common to, and obligatory upon, a circumcised Israelite, in order to eat of the passover; as is acknowledged by all. There were several in the times of the Misnic doctors, and before the Misnah was compiled, who were persons of eminence, and said to become proselytes; as Onkelos the Targumist, who, it is said, was made a proselyte in the days of Hillell and Shammai^[94], hence he is called Onkelos the proselyte^[95]; some say^[96] he was a sister's son of Titus the emperor, and by

whom three Roman troops, sent one after another, to take him, were made proselytes also[97]; and Aquila, the author of the Greek version of the Bible, became, as is said[98], a proselyte in the times of Adrian and so the emperor Antoninus Pius, and Ketiah, a nobleman in Caesar's court, as before observed: yea, the famous R. Akiba, a Misnic doctor, was a proselyte[99]; and so was R. Meir[100]. And of the circumcision of most of these we read; but nothing of their baptism; neither in the Misnah, nor in any other Jewish writings. Not to take notice of those very early masters of tradition Shemaia and Abtalion, before observed, who were proselytes of righteousness[101]; there were also women of note within this time, who became proselytes; as queen Helena[102], with her two sons, of whom mention is made in the Misnah[103]; and Beluria, the proselytess, who had a discourse with R. Gamaliel[104]; and the wife of Turnus Rufus, whom R. Akiba married, after she was proselyted[105]. Now though female proselytes were admitted by baptism only, as is pretended, yet nothing is said of the baptism of these women. And as there is no mention of this custom in the Misnah, so neither have I observed any notice taken of it in the Rabbot, which are commentaries on the Pentateuch and five Megillot, before named; and which were written by R. Bar Nachmoni, about A. D. 300, according to Buxtorf[106] in one of which the text in Genesis 12:5 is commented on; "And the souls they had gotten in Haran"; which the Targums of Pseudo-Jonathan and Jerusalem, interpret of the souls they proselyted, before observed; and here it is said[107], "These are the proselytes which they made:—R. Hona said, Abraham proselyted the men, and Sarah proselyted the women;" but not a word is said about the baptism or dipping of either. Yea, Abraham and Sarah are said to be proselytes[108] themselves; but it is not suggested that they were baptized. In these commentaries mention is made of the circumcision of proselytes, particularly of king Monbaz, and his brother, said to be the sons of king Ptolemy[109]; and of Aquila, the Greek translator[110]; but nothing is said of their baptism.

VIII. Eighthly, nor is this rite or custom of receiving Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, once spoken of by any of the Christian fathers of the first three or four centuries; which they could not be ignorant of, if from hence Christian baptism was taken, and especially such who were Jews, or had any connection with them, or were acquainted with them, and with their affairs, as some of them were. Barnabas was a Jew, and an apostolic man, contemporary with the apostles; there is an epistle of his still extant, in which he treats chiefly of Jewish rites, and of their being typical of evangelic things, and of their having their fulfilment in them; and yet says not a word of this initiating baptism, which he could not have failed making mention of had he known anything of it; yea, he sets himself to find out what was beforehand said concerning the ordinance of baptism; he says[111], "Let us inquire whether the Lord has taken any care to make manifest beforehand anything concerning the water;" that is, concerning baptism: and then he adds, "Concerning the water, it is written to Israel, how the baptism that leads to the remission of sins, they would not; but appointed for themselves;" meaning their superstitious worship, our Lord inveighs against; but says not a word here, nor elsewhere, of the baptism of proselytes, for which he had a fair opportunity, had he known anything of it. Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century, was a Samaritan, and had knowledge of Jewish affairs; and had a dispute with Trypho the Jew, the same with Tarphon, a Jewish doctor, frequently mentioned in the Misnah; yet neither he nor Trypho say anything of this custom. In answer to a question put by Justin, what was necessary to be observed; Trypho replies[112], "To keep the Sabbath; to be circumcised; to observe the new moons; to be baptized, or dipped, whoever touches any of these things forbidden by Moses;" meaning, that such should be baptized, or dipped, who touched a dead body, or bone, or grave, etc. but not a syllable is here of the baptism, or dipping of proselytes. And Justin himself makes mention of Jewish proselytes, and

calls them circumcised proselytes [\[113\]](#), but not baptized; by which it seems he knew nothing of any such custom, as to baptize them; yea, he does, in effect, deny there was any such custom of baptizing any, that universally obtained among the Jews, since he speaks of a certain sect, whom he will not allow to be truly Jews, called by him Baptists [\[114\]](#). Whereas, if it was the practice of the whole nation to receive proselytes by baptism, or dipping, a particular sect among them, would not be stigmatized with such a name, since they must be all Baptists, both original Jews and proselytes, if they were all admitted into the Jewish church by baptism, as is affirmed. Origen, who lived in the beginning of the third century, in the city of Alexandria, where were great numbers of Jews, with whom he was acquainted, and must know their customs, says of Heracleon, an heretic, he opposes [\[115\]](#), "That he was not able to show that ever any prophet baptized;" meaning, a common and ordinary one; and if none of these ever baptized, what foundation could there be for the baptism of proselytes before the times of Christ? Epiphanius, in the fourth century, was born in Palestine, lived some time in Egypt, had great knowledge of the Jews, and of their affairs; but seems to know nothing of this custom, as used neither in former nor in later times: he says [\[116\]](#), neither had Abraham baptism, nor Isaac, nor Elias, nor Moses, not any before Noah and Enoch, nor the prophet Isaiah; nor those who were after him and he speaks of the Samaritans, that when they came over to the Jews, they were circumcised again; and gives an instance in Symmachus, who, when he became a proselyte, was circumcised again. So likewise he speaks of Theodotion being proselyted to Judaism [\[117\]](#), and of his being circumcised; but not a word of the baptism, or dipping, of either of them. He also speaks of Antipater [\[118\]](#), the father of Herod the king, that when he became procurator of Judaea, he was made a proselyte, and was circumcised, both he and Herod his son; but says nothing of their baptism, or dipping; so Herod is called by the Jews a Proselyte [\[119\]](#); and his reign, and that of his posterity, $\mu\gamma\rho\eta\ twklm$ "the reign of the proselytes" [\[120\]](#), who became so by circumcision, and that only, for ought appears. And of him, as a proselyte, but not of his baptism, speaks Jerome [\[121\]](#); he lived in the same century, and great part of his time in Judaea, was acquainted with several Jews he had for his teachers, and with their traditions, of many of which he makes mention, but never of this of admitting proselytes by baptism, or dipping. He speaks of proselytes, and of their circumcision; and says [\[122\]](#), that "if strangers received by the law of the Lord, and were circumcised, and were eunuchs, as was he of the queen of Candace, they are not foreign from the salvation of God;" but not a word of their baptism or dipping. The instances given by Dr. Wall [\[123\]](#), from Tertullian, Cyprian, Gregory Nazianzen, and Basil, only respect either the figurative baptism of the Israelites at the Red Sea; or their baptisms and bathings by immersion, for their purification from ceremonial uncleanness; but not for proselytism. So when the same writer [\[124\]](#) quotes Arrianus, an heathen Stoic philosopher of the second century, as speaking of $\tau\omicron\upsilon\ bebamhno\upsilon$, "a baptized Jew" [\[125\]](#), or one that was dipped; by whom the doctor thinks is meant one made a proselyte by baptism; no other may be designed than either a Jew who bathed his whole body, to purify himself from legal pollutions; or an Hemero-baptist, a sect of the Jews, who bathed themselves every day; or rather a Christian, as many learned men are of opinion [\[126\]](#); since it was not unusual with heathen writers to call Christians, who were baptized, Jews; because the first Christians were Jews, and came from Judaea, into other parts of the world, and were reckoned by the heathens a sect of the Jews [\[127\]](#), and were often confounded with them. Now since it appears there is no mention made of any such rite or custom of admitting Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, to the Jewish religion in any writings and records before the times of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; nor in any age after them, for the first three or four hundred years; or, however, before the writing of the Talmuds; it may be safely concluded there was no such custom, which had obtained in that interval of time. It remains

therefore to be considered, what is the true ground and foundation of such a notion and from whence it sprung, which will be done in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER 4

THE PROOF OF THIS CUSTOM ONLY FROM THE TALMUDS AND TALMUDICAL WRITERS

Seeing the rite of receiving proselytes by baptism, or dipping among the Jews, is nowhere mentioned in any writings before the times of John and Christ, nor in any after, nearer than the third and fourth centuries; it is next to be inquired, when and where we first hear of it; and upon inquiry it will be found, that the first mention of it, for ought as yet appears, is in the Jewish Talmuds. The testimonies from thence concerning it, and the whole evidence, as there given of it, will now be laid before the reader. There are two Talmuds, the one called Jerusalem, the other Babylonian; the one written for the Jews at Jerusalem, and in Judaea, after the destruction of the city and temple, and in the Jerusalem dialect. The other for the use of the Jews in Babylon, and in those parts, and in their style. The former is the most ancient, and therefore I shall begin with it, being finished, as generally supposed, in the year 230; but if the Misnah was not compiled till the year 220, being one hundred and fifty from the destruction of Jerusalem, there must be a longer space of time than that of ten years between the one and the other. David Nieto, lately belonging to a Jewish synagogue here in London, says[\[128\]](#), the Jerusalem Talmud was written near a hundred years after the Misnah; but other Jews make it later still, and make a difference of two hundred and thirty three years between the finishing of the one and the other; the one being finished in 189, and the other in 422[\[129\]](#), which is much more probable; and so this Talmud was not earlier than the beginning of the fifth century; nay, sometimes they place it in the year 469, the latter end of that century[\[130\]](#). Scaliger places[\[131\]](#) it in the year 370. Mr. Whiston[\[132\]](#) in 369. And so Elias Levita[\[133\]](#) writes, that R. Jochanan compiled it three hundred years after the destruction of Jerusalem; but Morinus[\[134\]](#) will have it to be after the year 600, which is carrying it down too low. The passages I have met with in it any way relating to the case under consideration; for it will be allowed there are some; and therefore it will be owned, that Mr. Rees[\[135\]](#) was mistaken in saying it was not pretended to be found in it. The passages are as follow. In one place[\[136\]](#), a certain Rabbi is represented as saying to another, "Wait, and we will 'dip' this proselytess tomorrow. R. Zera asked R. Isaac Bar Nachman, Wherefore? because of the glory of that old man, or because they do not dip a proselyte in the night. He replied to him, Why do not they dip a proselyte in the night? Abda came before R. Jose (and said), What is the meaning then of not dipping a proselyte in the night?" And a little after, in the same column, a saying of R. Hezekiah is reported; "A man finds an infant cast out (an exposed infant), and he dips it in the name of a servant;" or for a servant, on account of servitude; but then dipping for servitude, and dipping for proselytism, were two different things with the Jews, as before observed; and yet this is the only clause produced by Dr. Lightfoot out of this Talmud, for the above purpose; or by any other that I have seen. However, there are others which speak of the dipping of adult proselytes; which became a matter of controversy. In another treatise, in the same

Talmud[137], mention is made of a proselyte circumcised, but not dipped; (and it is added) all goes after circumcision; that is, that denominates a proselyte. "R. Joshua says, yea, dipping stays (or retards) it; and Bar Kaphra teaches, that he who is not dipped, this is right (a true proselyte); for there is no proselyte but dips for accidents;" that is, for accidental and nocturnal pollutions; and it seems such a dipping sufficed for proselytism. Of so little account did these Rabbins make of dipping for proselytism, who first mention it, not only make it insignificant, but as a delay of it, and what was an obstruction and hindrance of it: and further on it is said[138], "A proselytess less than three years of age and one day, she has not knowledge for dipping (or when she is dipped); and afterwards returns and is dipped for the name of the Holy One of Israel; every one is a proselytess, and she is a proselytess." This looks like Anabaptism, or rebaptization for want of knowledge when first dipped. And a little further still[139], "A stranger or a proselyte who has children, and says, I am circumcised, but I am not dipped; he is to be believed, and they dip him on the Sabbath."

In another treatise[140], a mention is made of a proselyte who dipped after the illumination of the East, that is, after sunrising. These are all the places I have met with in the Jerusalem Talmud any way relating to this custom. Dr. Wall[141] refers to two or three other passages in this Talmud, through mistake for the Babylonian Talmud; in which he may be excused, because, as he himself says, he was not well acquainted with these books; but he cannot be excused of inadvertency in transcribing from his authors, unless they have led him wrong.

The Babylonian Talmud is next to be considered; from whence testimonies may be brought relating to the custom under consideration. This Talmud was finished, as is usually said, about A. D. 500; according to the account of the Jews it was finished three hundred and sixteen years after the Misnah, and eighty three after the Jerusalem Talmud[142]. Though Morinus thinks it did not appear until the seventh or eighth century. According to the Jewish doctors, as related in this Talmud, the Israelites, and the proselytes, were admitted into covenant in the same way and manner; and which they conclude from Numbers 15:15 "As ye are, so shall the stranger be, before the Lord": on which they thus descant[143]: "As your fathers entered not into covenant but by circumcision and dipping, and acceptance of blood or sacrifice; so they (the proselytes) enter not into covenant, but by circumcision, and dipping, and through acceptance of blood," or sprinkling of blood, as the Gloss is; or by sacrifice, as it is sometimes expressed, which is favourably accepted of God; and without both circumcision and dipping, none were reckoned proper proselytes; this is said two or three times in one leaf[144]; "A man is not a proselyte unless both circumcised and dipped." R. Chiyah Bar Abba went to Gabla, it is said, and he saw the daughters of Israel pregnant by proselytes, who were circumcised but not dipped; he went and told R. Jochanan, who declared their issue bastards, and not children of the law, or legitimate: about this a controversy was raised, related in the same place; "A stranger that is circumcised and not dipped, R. Eliezer says, lo, this is a proselyte; for so we find by our fathers, that they were circumcised, but not dipped; one that is dipped, and not circumcised, R. Joshua says, lo, this is a proselyte; for so we find by our mothers (not maids, or maidservants, as Dr. Lightfoot[145] translates it) that they were dipped and not circumcised." Had the account stopped here, the decision must have been against dipping: for it is a rule with the Jews, that when R. Eliezer and R. Joshua dissent, the decision is according to R. Eliezer[146], whom they often call Eliezer the Great[147], and say many extravagant things of him; particularly, that if all the wise men of Israel were put into one scale, and Eliezer the son of Hyrcanus, into the other, he would weigh them all down[148]; yet here the wise men interpose, and say, "He that is dipped and

not circumcised, circumcised and not dipped, is no proselyte, until he is both circumcised and dipped; for R. Joshua may learn from the fathers, and R. Eliezer from the mothers."

And so in this way they reconciled both; but R. Eliezer continued in the same sentiments, which he afterwards declared for, and affirms, that a proselyte that is circumcised, and not dipped, awh ayl[m rg "he is an honourable proselyte"[149](#)]; so that according to him, dipping was not necessary to one's being a proselyte; and R. Barzelonita[150](#) says, of a sort of proselytes which have been taken notice of, he is a proselyte who is circumcised and not dipped. So that the Jews are not agreed among themselves about this point. The manner of receiving a proselyte, and dipping him, when circumcised and healed of his wound, and of the dipping of women also, is related in the same treatise of the Babylonian Talmud[151](#); "A stranger when he comes to be made proselyte, "at this time", they say unto him, What dost thou see, to become a proselyte? Dost thou not know that the Israelites "at this time" are in distress, and in sorrowful circumstances, driven about and scattered, and are reproached, and chastisements come upon them? If he says, I know this, and I am not worthy (to be joined with them), they receive him immediately; and make known unto him some of the light, and some of the heavy commands (the particulars of which follow); if he receives them, they immediately circumcise him; and if there be anything remains, which hinders circumcision, they return and circumcise him a second time, and when he is healed, they dip him immediately, and two disciples of the wise men stand by him, and make known to him some of the light and some of the heavy commands; then he dips, and goes up, and he is an Israelite. If a woman, the women set her in water up to her neck, and two disciples of the wise men stand by her without, and make known some of the light and some of the heavy commands." Maimonides[152](#) adds, "After that she 'dips' herself before them, and they turn away their faces, and go out, so that they do not see her when 'she goes up out of the water'." Of a woman big with child when she is dipped they have this rule[153](#), "A stranger pregnant, who is made a proselytess, her child has no need of dipping, that is, for proselytism, as the Gloss; is because sufficient for it is the dipping of its mother; and a woman that is dipped as unclean, according to the doctors, that is sufficient to make her a proselytess." Says R. Chiyah Bar Ame, "I will dip this heathen woman, in the name or on account of a woman;" that is, as the Gloss is, for the dipping of uncleanness, she being a menstruous woman, and not for the dipping of proselytism. Says R. Joseph, "I will make it right;" that is, pronounce that she is a perfect proselytess; for though she is not dipped for proselytism, yet being dipped for uncleanness, it serves for proselytism; for a stranger or a heathen is not dipped for uncleanness[154](#). There are various circumstances observed in the same treatise concerning the dipping of proselytes; as the place where they are dipped; "In a place it is said[155](#), where a menstruous woman dips, there a proselyte and a freed servant dip;" that is, as the Gloss is, in a quantity of forty seahs of water: the time of its being done is also signified; as that they do not dip in the night; and it is disputed whether it should be done on the Sabbath day: three witnesses also were required to be present; and where there are three, he (the proselyte) "dips" and goes up, and lo, he is as an Israelite[156](#). It is said[157](#), "It happened in the house of R. Chiya Bar Rabbi, where were present R. Oschaia Bar Rabbi, and R. Oschaia Bar Chiya, that there came a proselyte before him who was circumcised, but not dipped; he said unto him, Wait here till tomorrow, and we will dip thee. Three things are to be learnt from hence. 1. That three persons are required (at the dipping of a proselyte). 2. That he is not a proselyte unless he is circumcised and dipped. 3. That they do not dip a proselyte in the night;" to which may be added, 4. That they must be three Rabbins who are promoted, that is, are famous and eminent ones, who are witnesses, as it seems these three were. There is but one instance in this Talmud, that I have met with, of the dipping of a child or a minor,

made a proselyte; and a male is so called until he is thirteen years of age and one day; of such an one it is said^[158], "A proselyte, a little one (a minor), they dip him by the decree of the Sanhedrim;" that is, as the Gloss is, one that has no father, and his mother brings him to the Sanhedrim, to be made a proselyte, and there are three at his dipping; and they are a father to him, and by their means he is made a proselyte. And in the same place it is observed of a stranger, whose sons and daughters are made proselytes with him, and acquiesce in what their father has done, when they are grown up, they may make it void. There is another instance of the dipping of a minor; but not for proselytism, but for eating the Trumah, or the oblation of the fruits of the earth. So a certain one says^[159], "I remember when I was a child, and was carried on my father's shoulders, that they took me from school, and stripped me of my coat, and dipped me, that I might eat of the Trumah in the evening;" but this was not a proselyte, but an Israelite, the son of a priest, who, it seems, was not qualified to eat of the oblation without dipping. This as one of their various baptisms, or dippings.

This now is the whole compass of the evidence from the Talmuds for the rite of admitting proselytes among the Jews by baptism, or dipping. I have not omitted anything relating to it in them that has fallen under my observation. As for the quotations usually made from Maimonides, who lived in the twelfth century, in proof of this custom; whatever may be said for him as an industrious and judicious compiler of things, out of the Talmud, which he has expressed in purer language, and digested in better order; he cannot be thought to be of greater and higher authority than those writings from whence he has derived them; for his work is only a stream from the Talmudic fountain. And as for later writers; as the authors of Lebus, Schulchan Aruch, and others, they derive from him. So that the Talmuds appear to be the spring and source of what is said of this custom, and from whence the proof and evidence of it is to be fetched; but whether the reasonings, decisions, and determinations therein concerning it, can be judged a sufficient proof of it, without better testimonies, especially from the scriptures, deserves consideration.

It must not be concealed, that it is pretended there is proof of it from scripture; which I shall attend unto. The proof of the Jewish fathers entering into covenant by baptism, or dipping, is fetched from Exodus 19:10 where, two or three days before the giving of the law, the Israelites were ordered to "wash" their clothes; hence it is said in the Talmud^[160], to prove that dipping was used at the entrance of the Israelites into covenant, according to which the baptism, or dipping of proselytes, is said to be; "From whence is it (or a proof of it?) From what is written Exodus 19:10 where there is an obligation to wash clothes, there is an obligation to dip." And again (Ex. 24:8), "Moses 'took it (the blood) and sprinkled it on the people'; and there is no sprinkling without dipping." And in another place^[161], "Sprinkling of blood (or sacrifice, by which also the Israelites, it is said, were admitted into covenant) of it, it is written, 'And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings', etc. But dipping, from whence is it? From what is written; 'And Moses took half of the blood, and sprinkled it on the people'; and there is no sprinkling without dipping."

This is the proof, which surely cannot be satisfactory to a judicious mind; dipping is inferred from sprinkling; but though the blood was sprinkled upon the people, they were not dipped into it surely; nor even into water, from what appears; and though dipping and sprinkling are sometimes used together, as in the cleansing of the leper, and in the purification of one unclean, by the touch of an unclean bone, etc. (Lev. 14:7; Num. 19:19), yet the one was not the other. From washing of clothes dipping is also inferred, without any reason; for these two, in the above places, and in others, are

spoken of as two distinct acts, and are expressed by different words; and yet it is upon this single circumstance the proof depends. Now, as Dr. Owen^[162] observes, "this washing of clothes served that single occasion only of showing reverence of the divine presence, at the peculiar giving of the law; nor did it belong to the stated worship of God; so that the necessity of the baptism of bodies, by a stated and solemn rite for ever, should arise from the single washing of garments, and that depending upon a reason, that would never more recur; of the observation of which no mention is made, nor any trace is extant in the whole Old Testament, and which is not confirmed by any divine command, institution, or direction, seems altogether improbable" And he elsewhere^[163] says, "From this latter temporary occasional institution (ceremonial washing at Sinai) such as they (the Jews) had many granted to them, while they were in the wilderness, before the giving of the law, the Rabbins have framed a baptism for those who enter into their synagogue; a fancy too greedily embraced by some Christian writers, who would have the holy ordinance of the church's baptism to be derived from thence. But this "washing of their clothes", not of their bodies, was temporary, never repeated; neither is there anything of any such baptism or washing required in any proselytes, either men or women, where the laws of their admission are strictly set down." And it may be further observed, that the Talmudists give this only as a proof of the admission of Israelites into covenant; whereas, the solemn admission of them into it, even of the whole body of them, men, women, and children, and also of the proselytes who were in their camp, as all the Targums and the Greek version have it, when on the plains of Moab, at Horeb, before their entrance into the land of Canaan (Deut.29:10-12), was not by "any" of the "three" things they say the admission was, that is, by circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice; of the two latter not the least hint is given, and the former was not practised while the Israelites were in the wilderness, not till Joshua had introduced them into the land of Canaan. The Jews seem to be conscious themselves that the baptism or dipping of proselytes, is no command of God; since at the circumcision of them, in the form of blessing they then use, they take no notice of it, which runs thus^[164]. "Blessed art thou, O Lord God, the King of the world, who has sanctified us by his precepts, and has 'commanded' us 'to circumcise proselytes', and to fetch out of them the blood of the covenant; for if it was not for the blood of the covenant the heaven and earth would not be established; as it is said, 'If my covenant with day and night', etc. Jeremiah 33:25."

Dr. Lightfoot^[165] carries this custom of admitting proselytes by baptism, or dipping, higher than the Jews themselves do. He ascribes the first institution and use of it to Jacob, when he was going to Bethel to worship, after the murder of the Sechemites by his sons; when, the doctor says, he chose into his family and church, some of the Shechemites and other heathens. But some learned men of the Paedobaptist persuasion, have thought the notion is indefensible, and judged it most prudent to leave it to himself to defend it, or whomsoever may choose to undertake it^[166]; and he himself was in doubt about the first institution of this sort of baptism; for he afterwards says, "We acknowledge that circumcision was of divine institution; but by whom baptism, that was inseparable from it, was instituted, is doubtful." Certain it is, it has no foundation in what Jacob did, or ordered to be done, when he was about to go to Bethel, and worship there; previous to which he ordered his family to "put away the strange gods" that were among them, which they had brought with them from Shechem; and he likewise ordered them to be "clean", and "change their garments"; which cleanness, whether to be understood of abstaining from their wives, as some interpret it; or of washing of their bodies, as Aben Ezra, as a purification of them from the pollutions of the slain, as the Targum paraphrases it, and after that Jarchi: and which change of garments, whether understood of the garments of idolaters, which the sons of Jacob had taken and put on, when they

stripped them; or of their own garments, defiled with the blood of the slain; or of their meaner or more sordid garments, for more pure and splendid ones. All that can be concluded from hence is, and is by the Jews concluded, that when men come before God, they should come with clean bodies, and with clean garments; as an emblem of the more inward purity of their minds, which is necessary to every religious service and act of devotion, such as Jacob and his family were now about to perform, and which the very heathens themselves had a notion of; "Casta placent superis, pura cum veste venito"[\[167\]](#). But not a word is here of any covenant Jacob and his family entered into, and much less of any proselytes from Shechem and Syria being brought into it with them, by baptism, or dipping, as is pretended.

I have met with another learned man[\[168\]](#), who carries up this custom higher still; and asserts, that Jacob did not feign out of his own brain this practice of washing the body, and of change of garments; but took it from the history of Adam, and from his example; and he supposes that Adam, at the solemn making the covenant with him, was washed in water, before he put on the garments given him of God; and that as he was the first who sacrificed, he was the first who was baptized by the command of God; and so baptism was the most ancient of all the sacred rites. But let the history of Adam be carefully read over by any man, and he will never find the least hint of this, nor observe the least shadow or appearance of it; but what is it that the imagination of man will not admit and receive, when once a loose is given to it? Pray, who baptized Adam, if he was baptized? Did God baptize him? Or did an angel baptize him? Or did Eve baptize him? Or did he baptize himself?

Since then this rite or custom of admitting into covenant, whether Israelites or proselytes, by baptism or dipping, has no foundation but in the Talmuds; and the proof of it there so miserably supported from scripture, surely it can never be thought that Christian baptism was borrowed from thence; or that it is no other which is continued in the Christian church, being taken up as it was found by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; the folly and falsehood of which will be evinced in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER 5

THE REASONS WHY CHRISTIAN BAPTISM IS NOT FOUNDED ON, AND TAKEN FROM, THE PRETENDED JEWISH BAPTISM OF ISRAELITES AND PROSELYTES

Having traced the admission of the Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, to the spring head of it, the Jewish Talmuds; I shall now proceed to give reasons, why Christian baptism cannot be thought to be taken from such a custom; nor that to be a rule according to which it is to be practised.

I. First, the Talmuds are of too late a date to prove that such a custom obtained before the times of John and Christ, since they were written some centuries after those times, as has been shown; and besides, there is in them a plain chronological mark, or character, which shows that this custom took place among the Jews since they were driven out of their own land, and scattered among the nations, and suffered reproach and persecution; for among the interrogatories put to persons who came to them to be made proselytes, this question was asked^[169], "What dost thou see to become a proselyte? dost thou not know, or consider, that the Israelites are 'now' hzh ^mzb 'at this time', in sorrowful circumstances, driven about and scattered, and loaded with reproaches and afflictions? If he says, I know this; and I am not worthy (that is, to be joined to them) they receive him immediately." Many are the surmises and conjectures of learned men concerning the original and rise of this custom. It is scarce worth while, to take notice of the notion of Grotius^[170], that this custom was taken up on account of the flood, and in commemoration of the world's being purified by it: nor of Sir John Marsham's^[171], that it was taken up by the Israelites, in imitation of the Egyptian's manner of initiating persons into the mysteries of their goddess Isis, by washing them; for which he cites Apuleius. A goodly pattern of Christian baptism this! it is much it never entered into the thoughts of these learned men, or others, that the Jews took up this rite of dipping their proselytes, as they found it among the Medes and Persians, when they lived in their countries, and so brought it into Judaea, some hundreds of years before the coming of Christ, and his forerunner John the Baptist; since of the eighty rites the Persians used in the initiation of men into the mysteries of Mithras, their chief deity, the first and principal was baptism. They "dipped" them in a "bath", and "signed" them in their "foreheads", and had a sort of an "Eucharist", an oblation of bread, as Tertullian has it, and an image of the resurrection (that is, in their baptism); promising the expiation of sins by the laver; and also had an imitation of martyrdom^[172]. Some say^[173], this custom of the Jews was taken up by them out of hatred to the Samaritans, and was added to circumcision, to distinguish them from them: but if so, it is very much that Symmachus the Samaritan, when he came over to the Jews, was not only circumcised again, as he was, but also baptized, or dipped; of which Epiphanius, who gives an account of his becoming a proselyte to them, and of his being circumcised, but not of his being baptized, as before observed. Dr. Owen thinks^[174] this custom was taken up by some Antemishnical Rabbins, in imitation of John the Baptist; which is not very probable, though more so than anything before advanced. To me it seems a clear case, that this custom was framed upon a general notion of the uncleanness of heathens, in their state of heathenism, before their embracing the Jewish religion; and therefore devised this baptism, or dipping, as a symbol of that purity, which was, or ought to be, in them, when they became Jews, of whom they might hope to gain some, they being now dispersed among the nations; and of some they boast, even of some of note: and this was first introduced when they digested the traditions of the elders into a body, or pandect of laws; and were finishing their decisions and determinations upon them, to be observed by their people in future time. Since I wrote the preceding chapters, I have met with a quotation; for I will not conceal anything that has occurred to me in reading, relative to this custom of dipping Jewish proselytes; I say, I have met with a quotation by Maimonides^[175], out of a book called Siphri, an ancient commentary on Numbers and Deuteronomy, which has these words: "As the Israelites did not enter into covenant but by three things, by circumcision, dipping, and acceptance of sacrifice; so neither proselytes likewise." Now if this is the ancient book of Siphri, from whence this passage is taken, as may seem, which is a book of an uncertain author and age; and is allowed to be written after the Misnah^[176]; yet if it is the same that is referred to in the Babylonian Talmud^[177], it must be written before that was published, though it might be while it was compiling, and it may be, by some concerned in it; since

the rite referred to is expressed in the same words in the one as in the other^[178]; and is founded upon and argued from the same passage of scripture (Num. 15:15), and seems to be the language and reasoning of the same persons. However, "if" the passage quoted by Maimonides stands in that book, which is a book I never saw, though printed; "if", I say, these several things can be made plain; it is indeed the earliest testimony we have of this custom; especially if the book was written before the Jerusalem Talmud, which yet is not certain: but be it as it may, it is a testimony of the same sort of persons, and of no better authority than what has been before produced, and serves to confirm, that this custom is a pure device of the Jewish doctors, and is merely "Rabbinical"; and besides, at most, it can only carry up this custom into the "fifth" century, which is too late for John Baptist and Christ to take up the ordinance from it; and on account of these testimonies not being early enough for such a purpose, the late Dr. Jennings^[179] has given up the argument from them, in favour of infant baptism, as insufficient. His words are, "After all, it remains to be proved, not only that Christian baptism was instituted in the room of proselyte baptism; but that the Jews had any such baptism in our Saviour's time: the earliest accounts we have of it, are in the Mishna (but in that we have none at all) and Gemara." And again he says, "here wants more evidence of its being as ancient as our Saviour's time, than I apprehend can be produced to ground an argument upon it, in relation to Christian baptism."

II. Secondly, this custom, though observed as a religious action, yet has scarce any appearance of religion and devotion in it; but looks rather like a civil affair, it being in some cases under the cognizance and by the direction of the Sanhedrim, or court of judicature. There was no divine solemnity in the performance of it. It was not administered in the name of the God of Israel, whom the Jews professed; nor in the name of the Messiah to come, expected by them, as was the baptism of John; nor in the name of the Three divine Persons in the Trinity, which yet the ancient Jews believed. They dipped their proselytes indeed, according to their account, $\mu\epsilon\beta$ "in the name" of a proselyte, or as one; and a servant, "in the name" of a servant, or on account of servitude; and a free man, "in the name" of a free man; but neither of them in the name of any divine Person, or with the invocation of the name of God; so that it had no appearance of a religious solemnity in it. To which may be added, that this custom gave a licence to things the most impure and abominable, things contrary to the light of nature, and not to be named among the Gentiles, and which must make it detestable to all serious persons. According to the Jews, it dissolved all the ties of natural relations, which before subsisted among men; for according to them, "As soon as a man is made a proselyte, a soul flies out of a (celestial) palace, and gets under the wings of the Shechinah, (or divine Majesty) which kisses it, because it is the fruit of the righteous, and sends it into the body of a proselyte, where it abides; and from that time he is called a proselyte of righteousness^[180]; so that now he has a new soul, and is a new man, another man than he was before;" not a better man, but, to use our Lord's words, he is made "twofold more the child of hell". For, according to them, all his former connections with men are broken, and all obligations to natural relations are dissolved; and he may, without any imputation of crime, be guilty of the most shocking incest, as to marry his own mother or his own sister. But hear their own words, "When a Gentile is made a proselyte, and a servant made free, they are both as 'a newborn babe'; and all the relations which they had when a Gentile or a servant, are no more relations to them;" or their kindred and relation by blood is no more; as brother, sister, father, mother, and children, these are no more to be so accounted; insomuch, that, "when one becomes a proselyte, he and they (his quondam kindred) are not guilty, by reason thereof, on account of incest, at all; so that it is according to law (the civil law of the Jews) that a Gentile may marry his own mother, or his sister, by his mother's side (his own sister),

when they become proselytes." But though they allow it to be lawful, they have so much modesty and regard to decency, or rather to their own character, that it is added; "But the wise men forbid this, that they (the proselytes) may not say, we are come from a greater degree of holiness to a lesser one; and what is forbidden today is free tomorrow; and so a proselyte who lies with his mother or his sister, and they are in Gentilism, it is no other than if he lay with a stranger^[181]." Now can any man, soberly thinking, judge that the New Testament ordinance of baptism was taken up by John and Christ from such a wretched custom, which gave licence to such shocking immorality and uncleanness; or that Christian baptism is built on such a basis as this?

III. Thirdly, to suppose that John took up the practice of baptizing as he found it among the Jews, and from a tradition and custom of theirs, greatly detracts from the character of John, his divine mission, and the credit of baptism, as administered by him; and is contrary to what the scriptures say concerning him. They represent him as the first administrator of baptism, and, for a while, the sole administrator of it; for, for what other reason do they call him the Baptist, and distinguish him by this title, if it was then a common thing, and had been usual in time past, to baptize persons? The scriptures say he was a man sent of God, and sent by him "to baptize with water" (John 1:6,33). But what need was there of a mission and commission to what was in common use, and had been so time out of mind? The Jews hearing of John's baptizing persons, sent messengers to him, to know who he was that took upon him to baptize; who asked, "Why baptizest thou, if thou art not that Christ, nor Elijah, nor that prophet?" As if it was a new thing; and that it was expected he should be some extraordinary person who baptized. But why should such questions be put to him, if this was in common use, and if any ordinary person, however any common doctor or Rabbi, had then, and in former times, been used to baptize persons^[182]? The scriptures speak of John's baptism as the "counsel of God": but according to this notion, it was a device and tradition of men; and had this been the case, the Jews would not have been at a loss, nor under any difficulty, to answer the question Christ put to them, nor indeed, would he ever have put such an one; "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or from men?" for his putting the question thus, supposes the contrary, that it was not from men, but from God: and if it was not of God, but a tradition of men, they could have readily said, "Of men"; without being confuted by him, or exposed to the people; but being thrown into a dilemma, they took the wisest way for themselves, and answered, "We cannot tell". Dr. Wall^[183] says, If John had been baptizing proselytes, and not natural Jews, the Pharisees would not have wondered at it, it being so well known to them; and he suggests, that the wonder was, that natural Jews should be baptized: but why so! for according to this notion, the original natural Jews were received into covenant by baptism; they as the proselytes, and the proselytes as they; the case, according to them: was similar. But let us examine this affair, and see how the fact stands. When John first appeared baptizing, the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were natural Jews, came to his baptism, and were not admitted to it, but rejected from it, as unfit and improper persons; and others of the same nation and profession, in their turn, "rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized by John" (Matthew 3:7; Luke 7:30). On the other hand, publicans, the Roman tax gatherers, of whom some indeed were Jews, others heathens, both equally odious, and therefore joined together, these "justified God", being baptized with the baptism of John; and these "went into the kingdom of God", into the gospel state, before the Pharisees, and embraced its doctrines, and submitted to its ordinances (Luke 7:29, 3:12; Matthew 21:31), and even soldiers, Roman soldiers, for no other soldiers were then in Judea, were among the multitude who came to be baptized by him, to whom he gave good instructions, but did not refuse to baptize them (Luke 3:7,14), and our Lord Jesus Christ, whose forerunner John was in his

ministry and baptism, gave orders to his disciples to baptize indiscriminately persons of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, who believed in him; and who accordingly did baptize them: so that baptism, in those early times of John, Christ, and his apostles, was not confined to natural Jews; the wonder and the question upon it, as above, were not about the persons baptized, whether Jews or Gentiles, but about baptism itself, and the administrator of it, as being altogether new. The account which Josephus[184], the Jewish historian, who lived soon after the times of John, gives of him, and his baptism, agrees with the sacred scriptures; and which testimony stands not only in the common editions of that historian, but is preserved by Eusebius[185], as a choice piece of history; in which, he not only says John was a religious and good man, but, with the scriptures, that he was surnamed the Baptist, to distinguish him from others; and that he ordered the Jews who lived righteous and godly lives to come to baptism, and such only did John admit of; and that baptizing was acceptable to God, when used not for removing some sins (by which his baptism is distinguished from Jewish baptisms, which were used to purge from sin in a ceremonial sense) but for the purity of the body, the soul being before purified by righteousness. Also he observes, with the scriptures, that multitudes flocked to him; and that Herod, fearing that by his means his subjects would be drawn into a revolt, put him to death. But why such flockings to him, if baptism had been a common thing? And what had Herod to fear from that? He might reasonably conclude, that if this was no other than what had been usually practised, the people would soon cease from following him. Nay, Josippon Ben Gorion[186]; the Jew's Josephus, the historian whom they value and prefer to the true Josephus, says of that hlybj hç["he made", instituted, and performed baptism, as if it was a new thing, founded by him; and for which later Jews express their resentment at him. One of their virulent writers says[187], "Who commanded John to institute this baptism? in what law did he find it? neither in the old nor in the new." Now this would not be said by the Jews, if John had taken up his baptism from a custom of theirs; nor would they speak of the ordinance of baptism in such a scandalous and blasphemous manner as they do, and in language too shocking to transcribe[188].

IV. Fourthly, the Jews will not allow that any proof of baptism can be produced out of the writings of the Old Testament, nor out of their Talmuds. Such passages in the Old Testament which speak of washing, and in which men are exhorted to "wash" and be "clean", as Isaiah 1:16 it is said, are to be understood of men cleansing themselves from their sins, and not of plunging in water; "To plunge a man in water, is no where written; why therefore did Jesus command such baptism," or dipping[189]? and whereas the passage in Ezekiel 16:9 "Then washed I thee with water", is by some interpreted of baptism; the Jew observes[190] the words are not in the future tense; "I will wash thee": but in the past tense; "I have washed thee"; and so cannot refer to baptism. And whereas the promise in Ezekiel 36:25 "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness", etc. is brought by some, I suppose he means some popish writers, as another proof of baptism the Jews replies[191], "What sin and uncleanness does baptism take away? and what sin and uncleanness are there in newborn babes? Besides, says he, you do not do so; you do not sprinkle, but you are plunged into water:" which, by the way, shows that sprinkling was not used in baptism when this Jew wrote, which was in the twelfth century, as Wagenseil, the editor of his work, supposes. The same Jewish writer[192] asks, "If the law of Jesus, and his coming, were known to the prophets, why did not they observe his law? and why did not they 'baptize themselves', according to the law of Jesus?" And he represents[193] David as praying (it must be supposed, under a prophetic spirit) for those who should, in this captivity of the Jews, be forced, against their wills, to baptism, and that they might be delivered from it, Psalm 69:1,15 144:7. Nor does this writer take any notice of receiving proselytes by baptism; though he makes

mention of receiving men proselytes[194], yet by circumcision only; and also of women proselytes, but not a word of baptism of either; and had he thought the baptism their Talmud speaks of, had any affinity with our baptism, and was the ground of it, he would not have been so gruelled with an objection of the Christians, as he was; which is put thus[195], "We baptize male and female, and hereby receive them into our religion; but you circumcise men only, and not women:" to which he appears to be at an entire loss to answer; whereas he might have readily answered, had the case been as suggested, that we baptize women as well as men, when they are received proselytes among us. But that the Jews had no notion that Christian baptism was founded upon any prior baptism of proselytes, or others, among them, as related in their Talmud, is manifest from a disputation had between Nachmanides, a famous Jew, and one brother Paul, a Christian, in the year 1263[196]. Brother Paul affirmed, that the Talmudists believed in Jesus, that he was the Messiah, and was both God and man: the Jew replied, after observing some other things, "How can brother Paul say so, that they believed in him; for they, and their disciples, died in our religion? and 'why were they not baptized', according to the command of Jesus, as brother Paul was? And I would be glad to hear," says he, "'how' he learned baptism from them (the Talmudists) and 'in what place' (of the Talmud)? did not they teach us all our laws which we now observe? and the rites and customs they gathered together for us, as they were used when the temple was standing, from the mouths of the prophets, and from the mouth of Moses, our master, on whom be peace? And if they believed in Jesus, and in his law, they would have done as brother Paul has; does he understand their words better than they themselves?"

V. Fifthly, to say, as Dr. Lightfoot does, that Christ took baptism into his hands as he found it, that is, as practised by the Jews, is greatly to derogate from the character and authority of Christ; it makes him, who came a Teacher from God, to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, which he himself condemns. It makes that "all power in heaven and in earth", said to be given him, in consequence of which he gave his apostles a commission to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"; I say, it makes it to dwindle into this only, a power to establish a tradition, and commandment of men long in use before he came. Again, who can believe that Christ, who so severely inveighed against the traditions of the Jews, could ever establish any one of them, and make it an ordinance of his; and particularly, should inveigh against those, respecting the baptisms, or dippings of the Jews then in use among them; and especially without excepting that of their baptism of proselytes from the rest, and without declaring it his will that it should be continued and observed; neither of which he has done.

VI. Sixthly, such a notion as this highly reflects dishonour on the ordinance of baptism; that one of the principal ordinances of the New Testament, as that is, should be founded on an human tradition, an invention of men; it must greatly weaken the authority of it, as well as disparage the wisdom of the Lawgiver; and must have a tendency to bring both the author and the ordinance into contempt. Nothing can make an ordinance a Christian ordinance, but its being instituted by Christ. If baptism is an institution of men, and received and retained from men, and regulated according to their device, it is no Christian ordinance: and, as Witsius says[197], "Whatever may be said of the antiquity of that rite (proselyte baptism, which yet with him was dubious and uncertain) there can be no divine institution of it (of baptism) before John, the forerunner of Christ, was sent of God to baptize; for to him that was expressly commanded; 'The word of God came unto John', Luke 3:2 John 1:33, etc."

VII. Seventhly, if it was the custom of the Jews before the times of John and Christ, to receive young children as proselytes by baptism, or dipping, and this was to be as a rule according to which Christian baptism was to be practised; then most surely we should have had some instances of children being baptized by John, or by the apostles of Christ, if "baptizing infants had been as 'ordinarily used' in the church of the Jews, as ever it hath been in the Christian church," as Dr. Lightfoot says; and yet we have not one instance of this kind; we no where read of any children being brought to John to be baptized, nor of any that were baptized by him; nor of any being brought to the apostles of Christ to be baptized, nor of their being baptized by them; from whence it may be concluded there was no such custom before their times; or if there was, it never was intended it should be observed by Christians in later times; or otherwise there would have been some precedents of it, directing to and encouraging such a practice: many things would follow on such a supposition, that Christian baptism is borrowed from and founded on proselyte baptism, and the latter the rule directing the practice of the former; for then,

VIII. Eighthly, Self-baptizing, or persons baptizing themselves, without making use of an administrator, might be encouraged and established; which is what the Paedobaptists charge, though wrongly, some of the first reformers of the abuses of baptism with; since it is plain, from the quotations before made, that though it is sometimes said, "they", that is, the doctors or wise men, "baptize", or "dip", yet it is also said, both of men and women, that they "dipped themselves"; as of a man *lkj* *awh* "he dipped himself", and went up from the water; and of a woman, being placed by women in the water, *lkj* "she dipped", that is, herself; and so Leo of Modena says^[198], of a Jew proselyte, that after he is circumcised, and well of his sore, "he is to wash himself all over in water", in the presence of three Rabbins, or other persons in authority, and from thenceforth he becomes as a natural Jew; and, indeed, all the Jewish baptisms, or bathings, commanded in the law, were done by persons themselves (see Lev. 14:8,9; Num.19:7,8). And Dr. Lightfoot^[199] thinks that John's baptism was so administered; he supposes, that men, women, and children came unto it; and that they standing in Jordan, were taught by John, that they were baptized into the name of the Messiah, ready to come, and into the profession of the gospel, about faith and repentance; and that "they plunged themselves into the river", and so came out.

IX. Ninthly, if this Jewish custom is to be regarded as a rule of Christian baptism, it will tend to establish the Socinian notion, that only the first converts to Christianity in a nation, they and their children are to be baptized, but not their posterity in after ages; for so both Lightfoot and Selden, with others, say, who were sticklers for Christian baptism being taken from the custom of baptizing, or dipping Jewish proselytes, and their children; that only the children of proselytes, born before their parents became such, were baptized, or dipped; but not those born afterwards: baptism was never repeated in their posterity; the sons of proselytes, in following generations, were circumcised, but not baptized^[200]; and, as Dr. Jennings^[201] rightly observes, "it was a maxim with the Rabbins, 'Natus baptizati, habetur pro baptizato'." This "restriction of baptism to children born before their parents' proselytism, rests on the same authority as the custom of baptizing any children of proselytes." So that if the one is to be admitted, the other is also; and so the children of Christian parents are not to be baptized, only the converts from another religion; and these the first, and their then posterity, but not afterwards.

X. Tenthly, if this custom, said to be practised before the times of John and Christ, is the rule to direct us in Christian baptism, there were several circumstances attending that, which should be

observed in Christian baptism, to make it regular; it must be done before three witnesses, and these men of eminence; but who, of such a number and character were present at the baptism of the apostle Paul? (Acts 22:16, 9:18). Nor was it to be performed in the night; what then must be said of the baptism of the jailor, and his family? (Acts 16:33) nor on a Sabbath day; nor on a feast day; yet Lydia, and her household, were baptized on a Sabbath day (Acts 16:13,15), and the three thousand Christian converts were baptized on the day of Pentecost? and which was also the first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath (Acts 2:1,41). Wherefore, if this Jewish custom was the rule of baptism, and from whence it was taken, and by which it should proceed; (for if in one case, why not in others?) these instances of Christian baptism were not rightly performed.

XI. Eleventhly, if the Ethiopian eunuch Philip baptized, was a proselyte, as Grotius and others say, he must be either a proselyte of the gate, a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte of righteousness; not the former, for he was no inhabitant in any part of Judea; but most probably he was the latter, since he was a very devout and religious man, had an high opinion of the worship of God among the Jews, and had travelled from a far country to worship at Jerusalem; and so Dr. Jennings^[202] justly observes, that "he seems to be rather a proselyte of the covenant, or completely a Jew; not only from his reading the scripture, but because he had taken so long a journey to worship at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost, one of the three grand festivals; when all the Jewish males, who were able, were, according to the law, to attend the worship of God at the national altar." He appears to have thoroughly embraced the religion of the Jews, even their whole law, and was conversant with their sacred writings; he was reading in one of their prophets when Philip joined his chariot, and was taken up into it by him: whereas a son of Noah, as the Jews called a proselyte of the gate, might not study in the law, according to their canons^[203], which they say he had nothing to do with; only with the seven precepts of Noah; and, indeed, no Gentile or uncircumcised person^[204]. And if the eunuch was a proselyte of righteousness, according to the pretended custom of dipping such, he must have been baptized, or dipped, when he became a proselyte; and since, according to this notion, he must have been baptized with a baptism which John and Christ took up as they found it among the Jews, and which is the basis and foundation of Christian baptism, and the rule to direct in the performance of it, it is much he should desire baptism again! and that Philip, who is thought to be a proselyte also (Acts 6:5), and must know the custom of making proselytes, should administer it to him: and if he had been baptized before, must he not then be an Anabaptist? And so the proselytes in Acts 2:10 were, as Drusius and others think, proselytes of righteousness, who had embraced the Jewish religion, and were circumcised, and, according to this notion, baptized. Besides, none but proselytes of righteousness might dwell in Jerusalem; as has been observed, Chap. 1. And also proselytes of the gate were never called Jews, as these were; only proselytes of righteousness: and if any of these were among the three thousand converted and baptized by the apostles, which is not improbable, must not they be also Anabaptists? The Grecians, or Hellenists, whose widows were neglected in the daily ministrations, are thought by Beza, and others, to be widows of Jewish proselytes, and therefore it is highly probable, that their husbands had been members of the Christian church at Jerusalem, and so must have been rebaptized; and most certain it is, that Nicholas of Antioch, who was one of the seven appointed to take care of these widows, was a proselyte, and as Grotius truly thinks, a proselyte of righteousness; and so, as he must have been baptized according to this notion, when he became a proselyte, he must have been rebaptized when he became a member of the Christian church at Jerusalem, of which he most certainly was, being chosen out of it, and appointed to an office in it (Acts 6:1,5).

XII. Twelfthly, it may be observed, in a quotation before made, that if a proselytess big with child was baptized, or dipped, her child needed not baptism, or dipping, the mother's baptism, or dipping, was sufficient for it: but this is not attended to by Paedobaptists; it seems, in the beginning of the fourth century, there were some of the same opinion with the Jews; but a canon in the council of Neocaesarea was made against it; which, as explained, declared that the child of such a person needed baptism, when it came to be capable of choosing for itself^[205]; which canon should not have been made, if this Jewish custom is to be regarded as a rule.

XIII. Lastly, As an argument "ad hominem", it may be observed, that if this custom is to be considered as a rule of Christian baptism, then sprinkling ought not to be used in it; for the baptism of Jewish proselytes, men, women, and children, was performed by dipping; as all the above quotations show. To which may be added, that one of their rules respecting proselyte baptism is, that a proselyte must dip in such a place (or confluence of water) as a menstruous woman dips herself in^[206], or which is sufficient for such an one; and that, as the Gloss is, was what held forty seahs of water; and to this agrees the account Maimonides^[207] gives of such a confluence of water, that it must be "sufficient for the dipping of the whole body of a man at once; and such the wise men reckon to be a cubit square, and three cubits in depth; and this measure holds forty seahs of water." And he further says^[208], "that wherever washing of the flesh, and washing of clothes from uncleanness, are mentioned in the law, nothing else is meant but the dipping of the whole body in a confluence of water—and that if he dips his whole body, except the top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness:—and that all unclean persons, who are dipped in their clothes, their dipping is right, because the waters come into them (or penetrate through them) and do not divide," or separate; that is, the clothes do not divide, or separate between the water and their bodies, so as to hinder its coming to them; so the menstruous woman dipped herself in her clothes; and in like manner the proselyte. Let such observe this, who object to the baptism of persons with their clothes on. Again, as an argument of the same kind, if baptism was common in all ages, foregoing the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, as is said, then it could not succeed circumcision, since it must be contemporary with it. Upon the whole, what Dr. Lightfoot^[209], and others after him, have urged in favour of infant baptism from hence, is quite impertinent; that "there was need of a plain and open prohibition, that infants and little children should not be baptized, if our Saviour would not have had them baptized; for since it was most common in all ages foregoing, that little children should be baptized, if Christ had been minded to have had that custom abolished, he would have openly forbidden it; therefore his silence, and the silence of the scripture in this matter, confirms Paedobaptism, and continues it unto all ages" But first, it does not appear that any such custom was ever practised before the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, as to admit into the Jewish church by baptism, proselytes, whether adult or minors. No testimony has been, and I believe none can be given of it. And, as some very learned men have truly observed^[210], and as Dr. Owen^[211] affirms, there are not the least footsteps of any such usage among the Jews, until after the days of John the Baptist, in imitation of whom, he thinks, it was taken up by some Ante-Mishnical Rabbins; and, as he elsewhere says^[212], "The institution of the rite of baptism is no where mentioned in the Old Testament; no example is extant; nor during the Jewish church, was it ever used in the admission of proselytes; no mention of it is to be met with in Philo, Josephus, nor in Jesus the son of Syrach; nor in the evangelic history." What testimony has been given of this custom, falls greatly short of proving it; wherefore Christ could have no concern about abolishing a custom which had not obtained in his time; nor was there any room nor reason for it, since it had never been practised, for ought appears: his silence about what never existed, can give no existence

to it, nor to that which is founded on it, Paedobaptism; and which is neither warranted and confirmed by any such custom, nor by the word of God, in which there is an high silence about both. This custom of baptizing little children was so far from being common in all ages foregoing the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, that not a single instance can be given of anyone that ever was baptized; if there can, let it be produced; if not, what comes of all this bluster and harangue? With much more propriety and strength of reasoning might it be retorted; that since it is plain the children of the Jews, both male and female, did eat of the passover, which was not an human custom and tradition; but an ordinance of God, common in all ages foregoing the times of John, etc. and since, according to the hypothesis of the Paedobaptists, the Lord's supper came in the room of the passover; for which there is much more reason in analogy, than for baptism coming in the room of circumcision; it should seem, if our Saviour would not have had children eat of the Lord's supper, as they did of the passover, he would have openly forbidden it. A plain and open prohibition of this was more needful than a prohibition of the baptism of infants, if not his will, had there been such a custom before prevailing, as there was not; since that could only be a custom and tradition of men; and it was enough that Christ inveighed against those of the Jews in general, which obtained before, and in his time; and against their baptisms and dippings in particular. And after all, it is amazing that Christian baptism should be founded upon a tradition, of which there is no evidence but from the Rabbins, and that very intricate, perplexed, and contradictory, and not as in being in the times referred to; upon a tradition of a set of men blinded and besotted, and enemies to Christianity, its doctrines and ordinances; and who, at other times, reckoned by these very men, who so warmly urge this custom of theirs, the most stupid, sottish, and despicable, of all men upon the face of the earth! If this is the basis of infant baptism, it is built upon the sand, and will, ere long, fall, and be no more. I conclude this Dissertation in the words of Dr. Owen^[213], "That the opinion of some learned men concerning transferring the rite of Jewish baptism, by the Lord Jesus, which, indeed, did not then exist, for the use of his disciples, is destitute of all probability." And after all, perhaps, the Paedobaptists will find their account better in consulting the baptism of the ancient heathens, and its rites, than that of the Jews; said^[214] to be in use before the times of Moses, and in ages since, and that among all nations; and being more ancient than Christian baptism, a learned writer referred to, says, it is as a sort of preamble to it. And from whom the Paedobaptists may be supplied with materials for their purpose.

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The
DUTY OF A PASTOR

To His People

*Preached At The Ordination Of The Reverend George
Braithwaite, M.A.*

March 28, 1734.

2 TIMOTHY 4:16

Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

The part of the work of this day assigned to me, is to give a word of exhortation to you, my Brother; who have been at this time solemnly ordained a pastor or overseer of this church, Your long standing, and usefulness in the ministry, might justly excuse every thing of this kind, did not: custom, and the nature of this day's service, seem to require it. You will therefore suffer a word of exhortation, though it comes from a junior minister, since you know in what situation we are; our senior ministers are gone off the stage of this world, who used to fill up this place, and whose years best became it: *Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?* Give me leave to address you in the words of the great apostle of the Gentiles to *Timothy*, *Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and than that hear thee*; since this epistle was written, not for his sake only, but for the use and service also of other ministers of the gospel in succeeding ages; that they might *know how they ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth*. In it the apostle gives a large account of the proper qualifications of the officers of churches, bishops, and deacons; and in this chapter descends to some particular advice and directions to *Timothy*, and which are designed for the benefit and advantage of other preachers of the word, and pastors of churches. I shall not take any notice of them here, seeing I shall have occasion to make use of them in some parts of the following discourse; and shall therefore immediately attend to the words of my text, in which may be observed,

I. A charge or exhortation given to *Timothy*.

II. Some reasons to support it, and engage his regard unto it.

I. Here is a charge or exhortation given, which consists of three parts:

First, To take heed to himself.

Secondly, To take heed to his doctrine.

Thirdly, To continue therein.

First, The apostle exhorts *Timothy* to *take heed to himself*. This is not to be understood of him merely as a man, that he should take care of his bodily health, his outward concerns of life, or make provision for his family, if he had any; not but that these things are to be equally regarded by a minister of the gospel, as by any other person. Though he ought to be diligent in his studies, laborious in his work, and preach, the gospel *in season and out of season*; yet he ought to be careful of the health of his body, and not destroy his natural constitution. The words of the wise man are applicable to our present purpose, be not righteous over-much, neither make thyself over-wise, why shouldst thou destroy thyself? (Eccl. 7:16). The apostle *Paul*, in this epistle, advises *Timothy* to take care of himself in this sense, seeing he had much work upon his hands, and but of a weakly constitution; he exhorts him, that he would drink no longer water, but use a little wine, for his stomach's sake, and his often infirmities (1 Tim. 5:23); and it is alike true of a minister as of any other man, what is elsewhere said, If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel (1 Tim. 5:8). But this is not what the apostle has here in view, when he says *take heed to thyself*.

Nor is this exhortation, given to *Timothy* under the character of a believer, or private Christian. There are some things which are common to ministers, and private Christians; their cases, in some respects, are alike, and cautions to them are equally necessary: they have the same corruptions, are subject to the same temptations, and liable to the same daily failings and infirmities; and therefore such, whether ministers or people, who think they stand, should *take heed lest they fall*. Unbelief, and distrust of divine providence, presence, power, and assistance, have a place in the hearts of ministers as well as others, and sometimes rise to a considerable pitch, and do very much prevail; when such advice as this must be needful, *take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God*. There are many instances which might be produced, in which this exhortation would appear to be suitable to *Timothy*, and so to any other gospel minister, considered as a believer and a Christian.

But I apprehend, that the apostle regards him in his ministerial capacity, as a preacher of the word; and is desirous, that he would take heed to himself, as a minister, and *to the ministry which he had received in the Lord, that he fulfill it*. It becomes a minister of the gospel to take heed to his gifts bestowed upon him, by which he is qualified for his work, that he does not lose, but use and improve them; to his time, that he spends it aright, and does not squander it away; of the errors and heresies which are in the world, that he is not infected by them; to his spirit, temper, and passions, that he is not governed by them; to his life and conversation, that it be exemplary, becoming his office, and makes for the glory of God; and to the flock committed to his care, which is the other part of himself.

1. A minister ought to take heed to his gifts bellowed upon him, whereby he is qualified for the work of the ministry. Jesus Christ, when he ascended on high, received gifts for men, such as were proper to furnish, and fit them for ministerial service; and he has given them to men, he gave some

apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and teachers (Eph. 4:11): that is, he gave gifts, to qualify them for these several offices; and he still continues to give gifts to some, by which they become capable of discharging the work and office of pastors of churches; and where these are given, they ought to be taken care of. Now, a minister of the gospel should take heed to his gifts, that he does not lose them. The gifts, and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:29). Gifts of special and saving grace are irreversible; God never repents of them, or revokes them, or calls them in; where they are once bestowed, they are never taken away; but gifts fitting men for public work and usefulness, as they may be where true grace is not, so they may be removed, when saving grace never will. This we may learn from the parable of the talents, where our Lord says, Take therefore the talent from him, and give it to him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance. But from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath (Matthew 25:29, 30). Wo therefore to the Idol Shepherd (Zech. 11:17), the shepherd of no account, who is good for nothing; for *an idol is nothing in the world*; who *leaveth the flock*, makes no use of his gifts, deserts his station, forsakes the flock; *the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye; his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened*. All his light and knowledge, his abilities and usefulness, shall be taken from him. Hence the apostle exhorts *Timothy*, *to keep by the holy Ghost the good thing which was committed to him*; by which he means, not grace, but either the gospel, or the gift of preaching it; grace cannot, gifts may be lost.

Moreover, a gospel minister should take heed to his gifts, that he uses them. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, says the apostle to Timothy; which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery (1 Tim. 4:14). A minister may be tempted to neglect, lay aside, and disuse his gifts, for want of success in his work, or because of the flight and contempt which may be cast upon him, or by reason of the rage, fury, and persecutions of men; something of this nature was discouraging to *Timothy* in the exercise of his gifts, which occasioned the apostle to put him in remembrance, that, says he, thou stir up the gift of God: which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God (2 Tim. 1:6-8). As if he should say, "Let not that gift which God has bestowed upon thee lie dormant, and be neglected by thee, through a timorous and cowardly spirit; but boldly and bravely preach the gospel of the grace of God, though thou art sure to endure much affliction and persecution." Wo to that man, who, from any consideration whatever, wraps up his talent in a napkin, and hides it in the earth; such an one Christ, at the great day of account, will call *wicked and slothful*; and give orders to cast such an unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25:26, 30).

Besides, a minister ought not only to take heed that he uses his gifts, but also that he improves them; and indeed, they are generally improved by using. Gifts, like pieces of armor, through disuse, grow rusty,¹¹ but the more they are worn the brighter they are. There are several things, which have a tendency to improve, and, with the blessing, of God, do improve spiritual gifts, such as prayer, meditation, and reading. These the apostle directed *Timothy* to, for the improvement of his mind: Till I come says he, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine (1 Tim. 4:15); *meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them*, (Υς τουτοις ιοδει) or, be thou in them; be constantly intent upon them, *that thy profiting may appear to all*, (Ες πασιν) or in all things, that

is, in all parts of useful knowledge. It is the duty of ministers to *stir up the gift of God which is in them* (2 Tim. 1:6). Gifts are sometimes like coals of fire, covered and buried in ashes, to which there is an allusion in this passage,^[2] which must be stirred up, or blown off, that they may revive and be re-inflamed, and so communicate more light and heat. It is true, ministers cannot procure gifts for themselves, nor increase them of themselves; but God is pleased to give to his servants greater abilities, more light and knowledge, in the diligent use of means, *for unto every one that hath*, that is, that has gifts, and makes use of all proper methods to improve them, *shall be given, and he shall have abundance*.

2. A minister ought to take heed to his time, that he spends it aright, and does not squander it away. Time is precious, and ought to be redeemed, and diligently improved, by all sorts of men; but by none more than the ministers of the gospel, who should spend it in frequent prayer, constant meditation, and in daily reading the scriptures, and the writings of good men; which are transmitted to posterity for the benefit and advantage of the churches of Christ. They should give themselves up wholly to these things, and daily, and diligently study *to shew* themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:25). They ought not to spend their time in an unprofitable manner, or in needless and unnecessary visits. It is a mistake which prevails among church-members, that they must be visited, and that very often: if ministers are not continually calling on them they think themselves neglected, and are much displeased; not considering, that Ouch a frequency of visits, as is desired by them, must be the bane and ruin of what might otherwise be a very valuable ministry; and at the same time furnishes an idle and lazy preacher with a good excuse to neglect his studies, and that with a great deal of peace and quietness of conscience, whilst he fancies he is about his ministerial work. I would not be understood, as though I thought that visits were needless things, and that they are no part of a minister's work: I am sensible, that he ought to *be diligent to know the state of his flock*; and that it is his business to visit the members of the church, at proper times, and on proper occasions; what I complain of, is the too great frequency of visits as is desired, and when they are unnecessary.

3. A minister ought to take heed to himself, that he is not infected with the errors and heresies which are in the world. There always have been, and still are, heretics among men, and there must be; *that they which are approved*, are faithful and approved ministers of Christ, might be *made manifest*, to the churches, and the world, by their zeal for truth, and against error. And whereas ministers, as well as others, are liable to have their *minds corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*, and to be *led away with the error of the wicked*, and *for all from their own stedfastness*; it becomes them therefore, to take heed to themselves. This was the reason of the apostle's advice to the elders of the church at *Ephesus*, at his taking his leave of them; when he said to them, *take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock*: — *for*, says he, *I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them*. Take heed, beware therefore, of these perverse men and things, lest you also be drawn after them, and be carried away by them. Our Lord Jesus Christ thought it necessary to exhort his own disciples, to *beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees*; and to take heed, that they were not deceived by false Christs, and false prophets. Ministers, of all men, ought to be most careful to shun error, and avoid false doctrines; since their seduction may be the means of a greater spread of them, and of the ruin of multitudes of souls.

4. A minister ought to take heed to his spirit, his temper, and his passions, that he is not governed by them. The preachers of the gospel are men of like passions with others: Some of Christ's disciples were very hot, fiery, and passionate; they were for calling for *fire from heaven* to consume such who had displeased them; hence our Lord said unto them, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of (Luke 9:55). One that has the government of his passions, and can rule his own spirit and temper, is very fit to rule in the church of God. He that is flow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh, a city (Prov. 16:32). But if a man is influenced and governed by his passions, he will be led by them to take indirect and imprudent steps; and to manage affairs with partiality, to the prejudice of the church, and members of it.

5. A minister ought to take heed to his life and conversation, that it be exemplary to those who are under his care. Private Christians may, and ought to be examples one to another; they should be *careful to maintain*, (Προϊωαοθαι, Titus 3:8) or go before each other in *good works*; but more especially, ministers ought to be *examples to the flock*. This is the advice the apostle gave *Timothy*; be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (1 Tim. 4:12). They ought to be careful how they behave themselves in their families, in the church, and in the world; that they give *no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed*, and so become useless and unprofitable. This was what the apostle *Paul* was careful of, with respect to himself, and his ministry; I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection (1 Cor. 9:27).

I do not indulge, but deny myself all carnal lusts and pleasures, left that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away; that is, not one rejected of God, or a reprobate; for he knew whom he had believed, and was *persuaded, that nothing could separate him from the love of God*; he had no fearful apprehensions of this kind; though he was jealous and cautious, left: he should be guilty of misconduct in his outward conversation among men; and so become *αδοκιμος* rejected, and disapproved of by men, and be useless in his ministry. Every Christian ought to *adorn the doctrine of God our Savior*, but most especially the preachers of it their *lights* should so shine *before men, that they seeing their good works, may glorify their father which is in heaven*. The name of God, the ways of Christ, and the truths of the gospel, are blasphemed, and spoken evil of, through the scandalous lives of professors, and especially ministers. Nothing is more abominable^[3] than that one, whose business it is to instruct and reprove others, is himself notoriously culpable; to such a person and case, the words of the apostle are very applicable, Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest, a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest, a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit, adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God? for the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you (Rom. 2:21-24).

6. A minister ought to take heed to the flock, committed to his care; which is but the other part of himself. There is a mutual relation, a close union, between a pastor and, a church; they are in some, sense one, and, their interests are one; so that. a pallor, by *taking heed to himself* takes heed to his flock, and by *taking heed to his flock* takes heed to himself, Hence these two are joined together in the apostle's advice to the elders of the church at *Ephesus*, Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church (Acts 20:28). Pastors of churches should be careful that they feed the saints with knowledge and understanding; that they feed. the flock, and not themselves; that they perform the whole office of faithful

shepherds to them; that they strengthen the diseased, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again that which was driven away, and seek up that which was lost; all which they should take diligent heed unto, since they must be accountable to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, for all those who are under their care. But so much for the *first* branch of the exhortation; I proceed to consider,

Secondly, The *second* part of the charge, which is *to take heed to his doctrine*, that is, to the doctrine to which he has attained, which he has a knowledge of, and ought to preach to others; otherwise the doctrine is not his own but another's; as Christ says of himself as man, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me (John 7:16).

Christ received his doctrine from his Father, and his ministers receive it from him, and deliver it to the people. The doctrine which a gospel minister preaches, is in the same sense his, in which the apostle *Paul* calls the gospel, *my gospel*, or *our gospel*; not that it was a system of doctrines drawn up, and composed by him; but what was given him by the revelation of Christ, was committed to his trust, what he ought to preach, and in which he was made useful to the souls of many.

Now a minister ought to take heed to his doctrine, that it be according to the scriptures, all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16). True doctrine springs from it, is agreeable to it, and may be confirmed and established by it; therefore if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11). He should be careful, that his doctrine has a place in the word of God, that it takes its rise from it, is consonant to it, and capable of being proved by it: To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isa. 8:20). Whatever doctrines do not spring from these fountains of light and truth, or are disagreeable to them, must be accounted *divers and strange doctrines*.

Care should also be taken by a minister of the gospel, that his doctrine be the doctrine of Christ; that is, such as Christ himself preached, which he has delivered out by revelation to others, and of which he is the sum and substance. We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness (1 Cor.1:23). This doctrine is most likely to be useful for the conversion of sinners, and comfort of saints; and a man that does not bring this with him is to be discouraged and rejected Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed (2 John 9,10).

Moreover, a minister should take heed that his doctrine be the same with that of the apostles. It was the glory of the primitive Christians, that *they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine*; and it must be the excellency of a man's ministry, that it is agreeable to *that faith which was once delivered to the saints*. *Jesus* Christ received his doctrine from his Father, which he delivered to his apostles: I have given unto them says he, the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them (John 17:8); who also were guided by the spirit of truth into all truth, as it is in *Jesus*; and under the inspiration of the same spirit have left the whole of it in writing to the churches of Christ; which should be the standard of a gospel-ministry throughout all generations. Besides, it becomes a preacher of the Word to be careful that the doctrine he teaches be *according to godliness*; that it is not contrary to the moral perfections of God, or has a tendency to promote a loose and licentious life; but that it is agreeable to, and may be a means of increasing, both internal and external

holiness. Sin, as it is a transgression of the law, so it is *contrary to sound doctrine*; which sound doctrine is according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1 Tim. 1:10, 11).

The gospel no more countenances sin, than the law does; the *grace of God*, the doctrine of the grace of God, *that bringeth salvation*, the news of it to sinners, *hath appeared to all men, Gentiles as well as Jews; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*. Whatever doctrines are subversive of true piety, or strike at the life and power of godliness, are to be rejected: if any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strife of words, whereof cometh envy, strifes, railings, evil furnishings, etc. (1 Tim. 6:3-5). Again, it is highly necessary, that a pastor of a church should be careful that his doctrine be such as makes for the edification of the people; it ought to be solid and substantial, suited to their capacities, and what is food convenient for them; he should nor, therefore, *give heed to fables, and endless genealogies*; he ought, in his ministry, to *shun profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of silence, fairly so called*. He should *not strive about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers*; and should carefully and diligently *avoid foolish and unlearned questions, knowing that they do gender strifes* (1 Tim. 1:4; 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:14, 16, 23).

In a word, he should take heed, that his doctrine be found and incorrupt, pure. and unmixed, and that it be all of a piece, and consistent with itself. He ought to speak *the things which become sound, doctrine*; that is, such things as are agreeable to it, and consistent with it, and which are wholesome and healthful to the souls of men. In his doctrine he ought to shew *incorruptness, gravity, sincerity*, and use sound speech, which cannot be condemned (Titus 2:1, 7, 8); he should not teach *for doctrines the commandments of men*, or join, or mix divine truths with human inventions. The chaff and the wheat should be kept separate; nor should he blend law and gospel, grace and works together; and so be like them that *corrupt the word of God, κατακελευοντες τον λογον του θεου*, "adulterate it, by mixing it with their own fancies;" as unfair dealers in liquors mix water with them, which is the sense of the word here used; *but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God,*¹⁴¹ should a gospel-minister *speak in Christ*. He ought to take heed that what he preaches is consistent with itself; that it has no *yea and nay*, no contradiction in it, and does not destroy itself; and so bring a reproach upon him, and he become useless to his hearers; for if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? (1 Cor. 14:8); consistence, harmony, and connection of things with each other, are the beauty and glory of a man's ministry; which must needs recommend it, and make it most useful, profitable and pleasant. It is also very advisable that he take heed that he express his doctrine in the best manner, and to the best advantage. He ought to be careful about the manner as well as the matter of his ministry; that he speak plainly, intelligibly, and boldly, the gospel, as it ought to be spoken: Elocution, which is a gift of utterance, a freedom of expression, with propriety of language, is one of the gifts fitting for public usefulness in the work of the ministry; and which may be improved by the use of proper means. The example of the royal preacher is worthy of our imitation, because the preacher was wise he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs: the preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Eccl. 12:9, 10): he not only fought for proper and agreeable truths, but was careful to express them in the most acceptable manner.

To conclude this head; when a minister has used his care and diligence about his doctrine, that it be according to the scriptures, agreeable to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; that it be according to godliness, and makes for the use of edifying; that it be found and incorrupt, pure and unmixed, and consistent with itself; and that it be expressed in the best manner, and to the best advantage, he ought to take heed to defend it whenever opposed; for ministers are not only set to preach the gospel, but for the defense of it; they should by *sound doctrine both exhort and convince gainsayers* (Titus 1:8); for which purpose; they should use the two-edged sword, *the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God*; and is both an offensive and defensive weapon, by which, at once, error is refuted, and truth established, I go on to consider,

Thirdly, The *third* part of this exhortation, which is *to continue in them*. Some read the words, *Continue with them*, (Επιμενε αυτοις) that is, with the people at *Ephesus*, where *Timothy* was, and where the apostle would have him remain; as appears from what he says to him at the beginning of this epistle, I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus (3:14). But I choose rather to consider them as they are in our translation rendered, *continue in them*; that is, in the doctrines which thou dost well to take heed unto. Much such advice does the apostle give to *Timothy*, in his second epistle to him, *continue thou*, says he, *in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them*. It is very unbecoming ministers of the word, to be *like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine*; daily shifting sides, and changing sentiments.

He that would be a preacher of the gospel to others, ought so to study the scriptures, and learn the doctrines of grace, as to be assured of them, to beat a point, at a certainty concerning them; that he may be able to speak them boldly, as they ought to be spoken; and when he has so done, he ought to adhere to them, abide by them, and continue in them; even though a majority may be against them, for we are not to *follow a multitude to do evil* (Ex. 23:2). Truth is not to be judged of by the number of its admirers; if this was a sure and safe rule to go by, the church of Rome would have the best pretensions to the truth of doctrine, discipline, and worship; for *all the worm wondered after the beast* (Rev. 13:3). It should be no discouragement to a gospel-minister to observe, that there are but few that receive the doctrines of grace. Yea, he should abide by them, though they are opposed by men of learning and reputation. Truth does not always lie among men of that character; God is pleased to hide the mysteries of the gospel from *the wise and prudent*, and reveal them unto *babes*; and by *the foolishness of preaching* confound the wise, and save them that believe. It was an objection to our Lord's ministry, that not any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him; but this people who knoweth not the law are cursed (John 7:48, 49).

Ministers of the gospel should abide by, and continue in the doctrines of it, though it is only received by the poor and ignorant, and opposed by the rich and wise: Nay, they ought to do so, though there are some things in them which cannot be comprehended by corrupt and carnal reason; this should be no objection to a reception of them, or continuance in them. There are some things in the gospel which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man*, that is, a natural man, to conceive of; wherefore it is no wonder, that the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:9-14). Nor should the charges and imputations of novelty and licentiousness frighten and deter the ministers of Christ from abiding by the doctrines of grace, since there were the very reproaches and calumnies that the doctrines of Christ and his apostles

were loaded with, *What thing is this? What new doctrine is this?* Say some concerning Christ's ministry (Mark 1:27; Acts 17:19); and so the Athenians to *Paul*, *May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is?* They looked upon the more substantial truths of the gospel as novelties, upstart notions, such as were never heard of before; nay, they were accounted by some as having a tendency to open a door to all manner of wickedness and looseness of life; which occasioned the apostle to say, And not rather; as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm, that we say, Let us do evil that good may come; whose damnation is just (Rom. 3:8). In a word, it becomes Christ's ministers to, abide by, and continue in the doctrines of grace, though they risk their good name, credit, and reputation, are in danger of losing their outward maintenance, or worldly substance, yea, life itself; for whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it (Mark 8:35).

I now hasten briefly to consider,

II. The reasons given by the apostle to support the whole of this charge or exhortation; and to engage *Timothy's*, and so every other gospel-minister's, regard unto it.

First, His first reason is, *For is doing this thou shalt save thyself*. Jesus Christ is the only efficient and procuring cause of salvation: There is no salvation in any other; say there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). *Ministers* cannot save themselves by any *works of righteousness* done by them; no, not by their ministerial, services; it is in vain to expect salvation, by any, or from any other than Christ Jesus: But ministers, by taking heed to themselves, may, through a divine blessing, and the influences of the Spirit of *God*, *save themselves from an untoward generation*, and be preferred from the *pollutions of the world*; may *keep their garments*, their outward conversation garments, so that they do not *walk naked*, and others *see their shame*. By taking heed to their doctrine they may save themselves from being infected with false doctrines, errors and heresies: those *roots of bitterness*, which springing up in churches, *trouble same*, and *defile* others, And by continuing in their doctrines, may save themselves from *the blood of all men*, with whom they are concerned. The work of a minister is an awful, solemn, and weighty one; if he does not warn and instruct both the righteous and the wicked, their blood will be required at his hand; but if he perform his office faithfully, he *delivers his soul*, that is, he saves himself from such a charge against him; as did the apostle *Paul*, who could say, I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God (Acts 20:26, 27). Thus, by a minister's taking heed to himself and to his doctrine, and continuing therein, he saves himself from all just blame in his character and office; and may be truly accounted a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine, whereunto he hath attained (1 Tim.3:6).

Secondly, His other reason is, thou shalt also save *them that hear thee*; that is, by being an example to them both in word and conversation, thou shalt be the means of preferring them both from erroneous principles and immoral practices; or, thou shalt be instrumental in their eternal salvation. Ministers are instruments by whom souls believe, and so are saved; the word preached by them being, by the grace of the spirit, an *engrafted word*, *is able to save them*; and the gospel being attended *with the demonstration of the spirit*, *is the power of God unto salvation*. What can, or does, more strongly engage ministers to take heed to themselves, to their doctrine, and abide therein, than this? That they may be useful in the conversion, and so in the salvation of precious

and immortal souls, which are of more worth than a world: He that converteth a firmer from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins (Jam. 5:20).

A hopeful view of this supports ministers in their work, and carries them cheerfully through many difficulties that attend it; for such souls whom they have been useful to, will be their *joy, and crown of rejoicing*, in the great day of the Lord. These reasons, I trust, will engage you, my Brother, who have been this day set apart to the pastoral office in this church, in take heed to yourself, your gifts, time, temper, life and conversation, and to the flock now committed to your care: And I conclude, that these will also engage you to take heed to your doctrine; that it be according to the scriptures, the doctrine of Christ, his apostles, and true godliness; and such as will be profitable to them that hear it; that it be found and incorrupt, pure and unmixed, and consistent with itself; that it be delivered out in the best manner you are able, and defended, to the utmost of your ability, by which you will abide, and in which you will continue: In doing this you will be most likely to be instrumental in the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints. God give success to all your ministrations.

The
WORK OF A GOSPEL MINISTER

Recommended To Consideration.

A Charge Delivered At The Ordinations Of The Reverend

MR. JOHN GILL,

MR. BONNER STONE,

MR. JAMES LARWILL,

MR. ISAAC GOULD,

MR. WALTER RICHARDS.

2 TIMOTHY 2:7

Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

That part of the service of this day; which is assigned to me, being to give a word of exhortation to the pallor of this church, now appointed and ordained to that office, and invested with it; I have chosen to do it in the words read; in which may be observed,

I. An exhortation of the apostle Paul to Timothy, to consider what he had said, was saying, or about to say to him; to attend to it, revolve it in his mind, and lay it up in his memory.

II. A prayer, or wish for him, that the Lord would give him understanding, in all that was, or should be said; and in everything else that might be serviceable and useful to him.

I. An exhortation to consider well what had been, or should be said unto him; for it may refer both to what goes before, and to what follows after; to what goes before, to the advice given to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; to have recourse to Christ for gifts and grace to fit him more and more for his work, and carry him through it; and strongly to believe that there is a fullness of them in Christ, and that he should receive a sufficient supply from him to help him in every time of need; and also to the instructions delivered to him, to commit the doctrines of the gospel he had heard of him to faithful men, and such as were of capacity to teach others; and likewise to the characters he himself bore, as a soldier, a soldier of Jesus Christ, a good soldier of his; and therefore should

patiently and constantly endure hardships, reproaches, and persecution, for the sake of him and his gospel; and should not unnecessarily entangle himself with the affairs of this life, but attend to military ones, that so he might please him that had chosen him to be a soldier; and as he was a combatant, that he must not expect the crown, unless he strove lawfully; and as a husbandman, bearing the precious seed of the word, that he must labor before he could partake of the fruits of it: or this may have respect to what follows after; that he would consider the sum and substance of the gospel he was to preach, and for which the apostle suffered, which was a risen Savior, and includes his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, with all the doctrines of grace in connection with them; as also that it became him to be very studious and diligent in the use of means, that he might acquit himself with honor in the discharge of his ministerial work; that he might appear approved of God, a workman not to be ashamed of his work, at all times rightly dividing the word of truth, shunning every thing contrary to faith and holiness; likewise, that he ought to flee youthful lusts, his age inclined unto, and follow righteousness, faith, charity and peace; and meekly to instruct those who contradicted themselves and their profession, that, if it was possible, they might be recovered out of the snare they were fallen into; to these this exhortation may refer, with other things that may be observed in the context. What farther improvement I shall make of it, will be to lay before you, the pastor of this church, for your consideration, various things relative to the work you have been chosen, and called unto, and the office you have been invested with.

First, Consider the work itself, and what a work it is you are engaged in: it is a work, and not a sine-cure, but a service; there is business to be done, and a great deal of business too; it is called the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:12), from the subject-matter of it, the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances; and the work of the Lord and of Christ (1 Cor. 16:10; Philip. 2:30), from the concern the Lord Jesus Christ has in it; he is the sum and substance of it, he calls unto it, and qualifies for it, assists in it, and when it is rightly done, it makes for his glory. Consider that it is a laborious work; ministers of Christ are not to be loiterers, but laborers in his vineyard; it requires much reading of the scriptures, frequent prayer; constant meditation, and study to prepare for it; and much study is a weariness to the flesh (Eccl. 12:12): and in the performance of this service, with that zeal, fervor, and affection, which are necessary to it, a man, to use the apostle's phrase, may spend and be spent (2 Cor. 12:15); spend his animal spirits until they are quite exhausted and gone; for this work, followed with close application, will try the best constitution in the world, and at length waste and consume it: Epaphroditus, a faithful and laborious minister of the word, was nigh unto death, for, or through the work of Christ (Philip. 2:30): but then consider, for your encouragement, it is an honorable work; if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work (1 Tim. 3:1): which is pleasantly, profitably, and honorably good; for what is more honorable than to be the servants of the most high God, and to be employed in such service of his, as to shew unto men the way of salvation? Than to be the ambassadors of Christ, and stand in his stead, and beseech men to be reconciled to God? Than to be stewards of the mysteries of Christ, and of the manifold grace of God? Than to be the lights of the world, stars in Christ's right hand, the messengers or angels of the churches, and the glory of Christ? Moreover, consider that this work well performed, is deferring of esteem from men; they that labor in the word and doctrine are worthy of double honor (1 Tim. 5:17), of an honorable maintenance, and of honorable respect; they are to be received with gladness, and had in reputation; and to be known, owned, and acknowledged by those over whom they are as fathers, guides, and governors: and to be highly esteemed for their works sake: add to all this, that this is a work in which God is with his ministers, and they with him; for, says the apostle (1 Cor. 3:9), we are laborers together with God, ye are

God's husbandry, ye are God's building; the churches are God's husbandry, and to be manured and cultivated, planted and watered; which is a laborious work, and constantly to be attended to; and nothing can be done to any purpose, and with any effect, but through the presence and blessing of God; neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, which to do is the work of gospel-ministers, but God that giveth the increase (1 Cor. 3:7); and as the people of God, in a church-state, are his building, and who are to be edified and built upon their most holy faith; except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; (Ps. 127:1); but when his ministers go forth in his name and strength, preaching his gospel, and he grants his gracious presence and assistance, and he, the Lord, is working with them (Mark 16:20), they go on in their work with cheerfulness and success.

Secondly, Consider the several parts of this work you are called unto and engaged in, which are to be performed by you, and are as follow;

1. The ministration of the word, which is a principal part of the work of a minister of Christ; the apostles, and first preachers of the gospel, besides the spiritual, had the secular affairs of the church upon their hands; which lying too heavy on them, they desired to be eased, by appointing proper persons to take care of the latter; that so they might give themselves up wholly and constantly to prayer, and to the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4): Now consider what that is, that is to be ministered, it is the word of God, and not man; which, as it demands the attention of the hearer, so the assiduous application of the preacher: it is the gospel that is to be preached, the good news and glad tidings of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; it is the gospel, which is given in commission to preach; it is the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which ministers are entrusted with; and there is a woe upon them, if they preach it not; they are appointed ministers of the new testament; not of the law, the killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death; but of the gospel, the quickening spirit, the ministration of the spirit, of righteousness and of life: consider, that only the pure unmixed gospel of Christ is to be preached, the sincere milk of the word, unadulterated, and clear of all human mixtures; it is not to be blended and corrupted with the doctrines of men: the word of God is not to be handled craftily; the hidden things of dishonesty are to be renounced, and the manifestation of the truth is to be made to every man's conscience, in the fight of God: and the whole of the gospel is to be delivered; no truth of it is to be dropped, concealed, or kept back, upon any pretense whatsoever, though it may be displeasing to some; such a question is never to be admitted and reasoned upon one moment in your private studies and preparations, whether such a truth you are meditating upon will be pleasing or displeasing? for if you seek to please men, you will not be the servant of Christ; the only thing to be considered is, is it truth? If it is, speak it out, without fear of man; and though it may be traduced as irrational, or licentious, and be loaded with reproach, and charged with dangerous consequences; yea, it may be urged, that admitting it to be truth, since an ill use may be made of it, it should not be preached; but let none of these things move you; preach truth, every truth, and leave it with the God of truth, who will take care of it, and use it to his own ends and purposes.

Consider, that Christ is the sum and substance of the gospel-ministry; and that he, as to his person, offices, and grace, is chiefly to be insisted upon; we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord (2 Cor. 4:5); as the anointed prophet, priest, and king; as Jesus the alone Savior; as the Lord our righteousness, even Christ crucified, and slain for the sins of men; though such preaching may be a stumbling-block to some, and foolishness to others (1 Cor. 1:23). The great apostle Paul, who well

understood the nature and import of the gospel-ministry, declares, that he determined not to know any thing, that is, not to make known, or preach anything, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2); and as Christ is the alpha and omega of the scriptures, so he should be of all your discourses and sermons; whatever subject you are upon, keep Christ in your eye, and let it appear, some way or other, it has a connection with him, and centers in him. The gospel to be preached, is the gospel of the grace of God; and it is sometimes called the grace of God itself; the doctrines of it are the doctrines of free grace, and declare, that the salvation of men, from first to last, and in all the parts of it, is of grace, and not of works; and these are to be faithfully dispensed, as that the first step to the salvation of men, the choice of them to it, is of grace, and not of works; that men are justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and not by the works of the law; that the full forgiveness of sins, though by the blood of Christ, is according to the riches of God's grace; and that eternal life is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: Yea, every truth that is contained in the scriptures, and is agreeable to them, is to be preached; for all scripture is profitable for doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16); from thence it is to be fetched, and by it to be supported and maintained; this is the standard of faith and practice; and as it is by this the hearers of the word are to try what they hear, and judge whether things are right or wrong, they hear; so this should be the rule to ministers to preach by; to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isa. 8:20).

The doctrinal part of the scripture is more especially to be attended to, because that is the food with which the flock and church of God is to be fed, by those who are the pastors and overseers of it; and therefore, as they should take heed to themselves, and to the flock under their care, so to their doctrine; that it be found doctrine, pure, and incorrupt; that it be entirely agreeable to the sacred writings; that it be the doctrine of Christ, which comes from him, and is concerning him; that it be such as was preached by his apostles, and is contained in their discourses and epistles; and that it be according to godliness: though not the doctrines of the gospel only are to be preached, but the duties of religion are also to be inculcated in their proper place and course, and to be pressed on believers upon gospel principles and motives; the churches are to be taught to observe all things which Christ has commanded, every ordinance of his, and every duty enjoined, both with respect to God and men; saints are to be put in mind to be ready to every good work; and those that have believed in God, are to be charged to be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses; every doctrine and every duty, in their turns, are to be insisted on, throughout the circle of the evangelic ministry.

Let controversy, as little as may be, be brought into the pulpit; controversial sermons, when best managed, are generally unedifying ones to the people in common; tend to damp the true spirit of religion and devotion, which it is the design of preaching the word to excite; and serve to entangle, perplex, and confound weak minds; objections are often started to be solved, which are not easily done; by which means captious persons, and such as are disinclined to receive the truth, are furnished with them, who otherwise would not; and sometimes the solutions of such objections are not quite satisfactory to the friends of truth, and so rather tend to stagger than to establish: Upon the whole, it is best to preach the pure truths of the gospel in the plainest manner, and endeavor to illustrate and confirm them by scripture-testimonies, and by reasonings drawn from thence, and leave them with their native evidence upon the minds of men.

Now consider, that all this is to be done completely, constantly, and consistently; the gospel is to be preached fully, as it was by the apostle Paul (Rom. 15:19), according to the measure of the gift of grace given; and when a man preaches the whole gospel of Christ, and delivers out all the doctrines of it, and urges to all the duties relative to it, and declares the whole counsel of God; then may he be said to do the work of an evangelist, and to make full proof of his ministry, and to fulfill the ministry which he has received of Christ: and this is to be done constantly; these things, says the apostle, I will that thou affirm constantly (Titus 3:8); the truths, before spoken of, concerning the state of God's people in unregeneracy, the loving-kindness of God to them in their redemption by Christ, the saving them by the washing of regeneration, the justification of them by the free grace of God, and their heirship and title to eternal life, upon that; the word must be preached in season, and out of season, as often as opportunity offers; and the ministers of Christ must be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing their labor is not in vain in the Lord: and care should be taken, that this work is done consistently; that the ministry is uniform, and all of a piece; that there is no contradiction, no yea and nay in it; otherwise great confusion will be created in the minds of hearers, and they will be thrown into the utmost perplexity, not knowing what to believe, or receive; for if the trumpet given an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? (1 Cor. 14:8).

2. Another part of the work to be performed by you, is the administration of gospel-ordinances, and they are principally Baptism and the Lord's supper: the administration of baptism goes along with the ministry of the word; such, who have a commission from Christ to teach and instruct men in divine things, have a commission also to baptize those who are taught and instructed by them, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; nor have any other a right to do it: some have thought that Philip who baptized the eunuch and others, was Philip the deacon; but be it so, he was an evangelist also, a preacher of the gospel, as it is plain he was; and therefore he baptized, not by virtue of his office as a deacon, but as a teacher and a preacher of the word of God. The apostle Paul indeed says, Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel (1 Cor. 1:17); but then his meaning is, that he was not sent only to baptize, or this was not the principal part of his ministry; it was chiefly to preach the gospel, though not to the exclusion of the administration of ordinances; nor does he say this, as thinking, or speaking meanly of the ordinance of baptism; but because some persons had made an ill use of their being baptized by him; and were ready to boast of it, as if they were baptized in his name. It is incumbent on you, to administer this ordinance to the persons which are described in the word of God, and of which there are examples in it, and in the manner therein directed to, and practiced. The ordinance of the Lord's supper, being an ordinance in the church, is to be administered by the pastor of it; such who break the bread of life in the ministry of the word, are to break the bread in the ordinance of the supper: the apostle Paul broke bread to the disciples, to whom he preached; and this ordinance is to be administered frequently, as is suggested in those words, as often as ye eat this bread, etc (1 Cor. 11:26); in it the sufferings of Christ should be described, and his love set forth in the most moving and pathetic strains; and he be represented as crucified and slain, in as lively a manner, as the administrator is capable of.

3. Another part of your work, is to take care of the discipline of the house of God; for though everything is to be done by the vote and suffrage of the church, the power of discipline being lodged in it by Christ, the head of it; yet the executive part of it will lie chiefly upon you; though none are to be admitted to, or excluded from the communion of the church, but according to its voice, and with its consent: yet it should be greatly your concern, to examine things closely,

whether the persons are fit to be received or rejected; and to take care, that nothing be done through favor or affection, and with partiality. Pastors of churches have a rule and government committed to them; they are set over others in the Lord; they are not indeed to lord it over God's heritage, to rule them in an haughty and imperious manner, but according to the laws of Christ: which they are carefully to observe, and point out to the church, and see that they are put in execution; in doing which their government chiefly lies; you are therefore to take care, that everything in the church be done decently, and in order, and according to the rule of the divine word: particularly, care should be taken that no case in difference, of a private nature, be brought into the church, before the rule is observed, which Christ has given in reference to such a case; that the offended brother should first tell the offender of his fault alone, and endeavor to convince him of it; and if he should not succeed, then to take one or two more, and try by them to bring him to an acknowledgment of it; but, if after all he is obstinate and incorrigible, then bring it to the church (Matthew 18:15-17). But as for those that sin openly, that are guilty of notorious and scandalous crimes, in a public manner, to the great disgrace of religion, as well as grief of the church, these are to be rebuked before all, without anymore to do, that others may fear (1 Tim. 5:20): the several rules to be attended to, with respect to church-discipline, you are to inculcate to the church, at proper times, and on proper occasions; as to admonish persons guilty of immorality and error, to withdraw from those that walk disorderly, after all methods taken to reclaim them are vain and fruitless; and to reject an heretic, after the first and second admonition (2 Thess. 3:6; Titus 3:10), when without effect.

4. Another part of your work, is to visit the several members of the church, as their cases may require, especially when distressed, either in body or mind; then to pray with them, and for them, to speak a word of comfort to them, and give them your best counsel and advice; and this will introduce you into divers families; but take care not to meddle with family-affairs; what you hear and see in one family report it not in another; this may be attended with bad consequences: and whatever differences may arise between one and another, interfere as little as possible; choose rather that differences between members be composed by other persons, the officers of the church, than by you, that no prejudices be entertained against your ministry; and particularly be careful to avoid that scandalous practice, the disgrace of the pulpit, bringing matters of difference into it, whether between yourself or others, or whether between one member and another, one side of which you may incline to take; for why should the peace and edification of a whole community be destroyed, through the noise and din of private quarrels? As this is a practice exceeding mean, it is very unbecoming the gospel of peace, and the ministers of it. Moreover, you will be called upon sometimes to visit sick persons, who are not members of the church; and who may be strangers to the grace of God, and the way of salvation by Christ; and who have been either profane persons, or resting upon their civility and morality, pleasing themselves, that they have wronged no man, and have done that which is right between man and man; and now in dying circumstances, hope, on this account, things will be well with them; and whose relatives may be afraid of your saying anything to interrupt this carnal peace; yet, be faithful, labor to show the one and the other their wretched and undone state by nature; the necessity of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, in his blood, righteousness, and atoning sacrifice, for peace, pardon, justification, and salvation. This is a case, I assure you, will require a good deal of care, judgment, and faithfulness. And now, I doubt not, but by this time you will be ready to say, who is sufficient for these things? (2 Cor. 2:16). Wherefore,

Thirdly, Consider the qualifications necessary to the performance of the ministerial work; and what things are requisite and useful for the due discharge of it: and here let it be observed, that there are some things which are serviceable and useful in it, which, properly speaking, are not the qualifications for it; as for instance, the grace of God is a prerequisite to this work; it is highly proper that those who are engaged in it, should be partakers of it in truth: yet grace is not the ministerial qualification; for this is what all the saints have in common, the graces of the spirit, faith, hope, and love; they all obtain like precious faith, for nature, kind, and object, though not to the same degree, one as another; they are all called in one hope of their calling, by the same grace, to the same glory; and they are all taught of God to love God, Christ, and one another; yet this does not qualify them for ministers of the word; if grace was a ministerial qualification, all the Lord's people would be what Moses wished they were, even all of them prophets. Human learning is very useful and serviceable to a minister of the gospel; to have such a share of it, as to be capable of reading the scriptures in the original tongues in which they were written; and by means of knowledge of languages, to be able to read the writings of many excellent good men, written therein, to their profit and advantage; as well as to know the use of words, and the propriety of speech: and such who are called to the work of the ministry, who have not had a liberal education, and yet have time and leisure, are not easily to be excused, if they do not make use of their time, and those means that may be had, to improve themselves in useful knowledge; and yet, after all, the highest attainments in human literature are not ministerial qualifications; for a man may be able to read the Bible in the languages in which it was written, and yet not understand the things contained in it; for it is a sealed book, which when put into the hands of a learned man to read and interpret, he cannot, because it is sealed. Good natural parts are of great service and use to a minister of the word; as to have a clear understanding, a solid judgment, a lively fancy, a fruitful invention, and a retentive memory; but these a man may have, and yet not be fit to be a minister of the gospel; yea, men may have all the above things, grace, learning, and natural parts, and not be qualified for this work. The apostle Paul had all of them; he was a man of good natural parts, which his adversaries perceived and owned; his letters, say they, are mighty and powerful (2 Cor. 10:12), wrote in a masculine style, and full of strong reasonings, and nervous arguments; he had a large share of human literature, being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, in all the learning of the Jews, and of other nations; and he also was called by the grace of God; yet he does not ascribe his being a minister of the gospel to either, or all of their, but to a gift which he had received; a peculiar gift, fitting and qualifying him for this important work; for, speaking of the gospel, he says, whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me (Eph. 3:7); with which agree the words of the apostle Peter, as everyone has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another (1 Pet. 4:10): in some this gift may be greater, in others lets; but in all where it is, it more or less qualifies for the service of the ministry: having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given unto us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion or analogy of faith (Rom. 12:6); that is, let us interpret the scriptures, or preach the word, agreeable to the tenor of it: Now this gift lies in a competent knowledge of the scriptures, and of the things contained in them, and of a faculty of interpreting them to the edification of others; for the work of evangelical pastors or teachers, is to feed the churches with knowledge and understanding (Jer. 3:15); which, unless they have a considerable share of themselves, they will not be able to do with any profit and advantage to others: these are spiritual men, who having spiritual gifts, are capable of making judgment of all things necessary to be known unto salvation; of this knowledge and of this gift the apostle is speaking, when he says, whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:4).

But now, besides this share of knowledge and furniture of the mind, there must be a capacity of expressing it to others, to make up the ministerial qualification; a man must not only have wherewith to teach others, or matter to instruct them in, but he must be capable of doing it in an apt and suitable manner, that tends to edification; which the apostle means by utterance, which is a gift, and by men being able to teach others also, and by being apt to teach (Eph. 6:19; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 3:2); for it signifies little what a man knows, or how great soever is the furniture of his mind, or the largeness of his ideas, and the compass of his knowledge, if he is not capable of clothing his ideas with apt and suitable words to convey them to the understanding of others. So then this gift consists of knowledge and elocution; and on whomsoever this gift is bestowed, whether on a gracious or a graceless person, on a John or a Judas,ⁱⁱⁱ or whether on a learned or unlearned man, on a Paul or a Peter; on a man of good natural parts or one of a meaner capacity; that is it that qualifies for the ministry; where indeed grace, learning, and natural parts all meet together in a man with this gift, they make him a very considerable and distinguished man. Now, there are various things that are requisite, in order to the due and regular exercise of this gift to usefulness.

1. There must be a call to the exercise of it: besides the inward call or disposition of the mind to such service, and which must be submitted to others; for the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets (1 Cor. 14:32); there must be an outward call by the church: it being notified to it by some means or another, that such an one is thought to have a gift for the ministry, the church calls him to the exercise of it, tries his gift, and judges of it; and upon approbation, such are separated and sent forth into the ministry, as Saul and Barnabas were; for no modest man will take this honor to himself, or thrust himself into this work, unless he is called to it; though in this rambling age of ours, there are many run who were never sent, and take upon them this work, without having a gift qualifying them for it, or a call from God or men unto it.

2. Where there is a gift, diligence and industry must be used to improve it; for otherwise it may decline, become less, and in length of time useless; yea, may be entirely lost or taken away; for gifts are not like grace; grace, though it may decline as to exercise, can never be lost; but gifts may, as appears from the parable of the talents, by which I understand ministerial gifts; the man that had one talent wrapped it up in a napkin, and hid it in the earth, that is, he neglected it, and made no use of it; wherefore orders are given to take it from him, and give it to others; for unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; everyone that hath a gift, and is diligent and constant in the use of it, that shall increase; but from him that hath not, who, though he has a gift, is as if he had none, neglecting to cultivate it, and make use of it, shall be taken away even that which he hath (Matthew 25:29). Gifts, like some metals, unless frequently used, become rusty and good for nothing; hence the exhortation of the apostle to Timothy, not to neglect, but to stir up the gift of God that was in him (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6), as you stir up coals of fire, that they may give more light and heat; so gifts by use become brighter and brighter, and more beneficial.

3. Faithfulness is necessary to the due exercise of this gift; those that have it, are, or should be, good stewards of the manifold grace of God; and now it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful (1 Pet. 4:10; 1 Cor. 4:2); to dispense the mysteries of God, of which they are stewards, unto others; and when God has counted a man faithful, putting him into the ministry (1 Tim. 1:12), he ought to continue faithful to him that has put him into it, to the souls of men committed to his care, and to the gospel, and the truths of it he is entrusted with. For he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully, what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord of hosts (Jer. 23:28).

4. Wisdom and prudence are also very requisite in the exercise of this gift, both in the choice of subjects, and in the manner of treating them; a man that is a steward must be wise as well as faithful, to give to every one of the household their portion of meat in due season (Luke 12:42;) and a man that labors in the word and doctrine should be skillful in the scriptures, that he may rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15); and he that has to do with persons in various cases, and different circumstances, had need to have the understanding and tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to him that is weary (Isa. 1:4).

5. Ministers of the word ought to be careful of their lives and conversations; or otherwise, let their gifts be what they may, they will become useless and unprofitable; they therefore should take heed to themselves (Acts 20:28), to conduct and behave becoming their work and office; and so to walk as to an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (1 Tim. 4:12), and to take care they give no offense to the church, nor to the world, that the ministry be not blamed (2 Cor. 6:3); for it is a most shameful thing, that they which teach others not to sin, but to guard against it, should be guilty of the same themselves; see >Romans 2:23, 24, where the apostle enlarges on this subject. Fourthly, Consider the means that are to be made use of for the cultivation and improvement of the ministerial gift; and for the better discharge of the work and office to which you have been called and ordained. The directions the apostle gives to Timothy on this head, are well worthy of your notice, and should be closely pursued; give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. — Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all (1 Tim. 4:13, 15): in the first and chief place study the Bible, read that attentively, compare one passage with another, spiritual things with spiritual, parallel places together; and particularly those that are more dark and obscure with those that are more clear and plain; that thereby you may know more of the mind of the Spirit of God and Christ in the sacred pages; for the inspired writings are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16, 17): for these will furnish out sufficient matter, both for things doctrinal and practical, to be insisted on in the ministry of the word; and with whatsoever may be necessary for the discharge of the ministerial office. Read also the writings of good men, for these are not preferred and transmitted to posterity for nothing, but for use; but then read them with care and caution, as human writings, liable to mistakes, and having their imperfections; compare them with the word of God, and so far as they agree with that, and are consistent with themselves, regard them, and not otherwise. Meditate much on divine things, on the scriptures, and the doctrines contained in them: it is the character of every good man, that he meditates in the law (Ps. 1:2), or doctrine of the Lord continually; and he finds his account in it; his meditation of God, of Christ, and of spiritual things, is sweet (Ps. 104:34), and delightful to him; and much more should it be the constant work and employment of a minister of the word. Luther, as I remember, it is said of him, that he used to say, "Meditation, temptation, and prayer, make a "divine." For prayer is also very necessary to be frequently repeated, since this goes along with the ministry of the word, and is so very useful in respect of it. The apostles desired to be eased of the worldly concerns of the church, that they might give up themselves to prayer, as well as to the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4); and to the former in order to the latter. Ministers of the gospel should pray often, not only in public, but in private; not only for others, but for themselves; that they might be more qualified for their work, as well as be more successful in it; that they might have more spiritual light, knowledge, and understanding, and be more capable of instructing and feeding the people under their care; that they

might have the eyes of their understandings more enlightened, to behold the wonderful things that are in the law, or doctrine of the Lord; and be better able to point them out to others.

Fifthly, Consider on the one hand the difficulties and discouragements that attend the ministerial work; and on the other hand, the encouragements to proceed on in it.

1. The difficulties and discouragements that attend it; these, I would observe, not to distress you in, or deter you from your work; but that, when you meet with them, they may not seem as though some strange or uncommon thing had happened unto you. There are some, which come from within a man's self; from in-dwelling sin, from a law in the members warring against the law of the mind; you will find when you would do good, evil is present with you, as particularly to hinder you in the pursuit of your studies; you will find a kind of slothfulness and disinclination to the work; nay, sometimes when the spirit is willing the flesh will be weak (Matthew 26:42), and wilt make excuses to put off preparation for it to another time. Sometimes you will be in darkness, and under divine desertions, and be in very uncomfortable frames; yet still you must go on, and prepare, in the best manner that you can, for instructing and comforting others; this is hard and difficult work, but it must be done: and difficulties and discouragements sometimes arise from Satan's temptations, who is very busy with all good men, especially with ministers of the gospel: he desired to have Peter in his hands; he buffeted the apostle Paul; he levels his arrows at those who are the most fruitful, flourishing, and useful; as the archers that shot at Joseph, that fruitful bough by a well, and grieved him, though his bow abode in strength, the arms of his hands being made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. You must expect Satan's temptations; he will tempt you to that which is unbecoming your character and office; he will tempt you perhaps to entertain groundless jealousies of one or other of the members of the church; he will tempt you to drop your ministry, or however, in this place, and to do it in a pet and humor: these, and such like temptations, should be guarded against. Other discouragements will arise from the world, and the men of it, from their revilings and reproaches, wrath, rage, and persecutions in one shape or other; but none of these things should move you from your work, or cause you to desert it. Remember you are chosen, and called to be a soldier of Jesus Christ; and, as a good one, should endure hardness, hard words, and hard usage, for his sake: yea, the difficulties and discouragements of gospel-ministers are increased by professors of religion themselves; not only by those of other communities, who may traduce and speak ill of such, who are not altogether of the same principles with themselves, but by the members of the churches over which they are pastors; some of which are very weak and imprudent, and oftentimes make a minister very uncomfortable and uneasy by their words and actions; though these things should be considered as their weakness and infirmities, and to be bore with; for we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please ourselves (>Rom. 15:1); yet these must be reckoned among a minister's difficulties and discouragements; but,

2. You are to consider the encouragements to go on in your work, notwithstanding what may be met with in it which is difficult and discouraging; and which is a superabundant counterbalance to that. Remember the gracious promises Christ has made of his presence with his ministers, and of his protection of them, and of his assistance in their work, and of a reward, though not of debt, yet of grace, that shall be given them: he has promised he will be with his ministers in successive generations, unto the end of the world, to supply and support them; he holds them in his right hand, and will not suffer any to set upon them, to hurt them, until they have done the work he has called them to, and is designed to be done by them; his power and grace are sufficient to bear them up in,

and carry them through whatever service he engages them in; his strength is made perfect in their weakness, and as their day is, their strength is; so he has promised, and so he performs. Remember and consider, that they that be wise, and teach and instruct others, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament in the kingdom-state; and they that turn many to righteousness, or justify many, by teaching the doctrine of justification, or directing souls to the righteousness of Christ alone for it, shall be as the stars forever and ever (Dan. 12:4); that those who have taken good heed to their flocks, over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers, and have faithfully fed them, and carefully watched over them, when the chief shepherd shall appear, shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (1 Pet. 5:4) and will hear from Christ, well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord (Matthew 25:21). But I proceed to observe,

II. The prayer or wish of the apostle for Timothy, that the Lord would give him understanding in all things; and upon this I shall be very short; only drop a few things by way of explanation of it: and by all things, in which he desires he might have an understanding, he does not mean all things natural and civil; indeed the understanding of all such things comes from God; every good and perfect gift in nature, or in providence, as well as in grace, comes from the Father of lights (Jam. 1:17); all the wisdom and knowledge which Bezaleel and Aboliab, had for devising and working curious works for the tabernacle, were of God; he put it into their hearts, and filled them with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in these things; yea, even all the understanding the plowman has in plowing the ground, and breaking the clods, and harrowing them, and in sowing his seed, is all from God; he instructs him to discretion; this comes from him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working; and so the same may be said of knowledge of all natural and civil things, of all arts and sciences, liberal and mechanic: and indeed a minister of the word had need to be acquainted with all things in nature and civil life, thoroughly to understand all things contained in the scriptures of truth; since there are such a variety of metaphors, and so many allusions to things natural and civil; and such an adorable fullness in them, as Tertullian expresses it. But the apostle, no doubt, means understanding in spiritual things, in the scriptures, in the doctrines and mysteries of grace. The understanding of man is naturally dark as to those things; it is the Lord that gives men an understanding to know them, that opens their hearts, and enlightens their minds by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of them; for whatever understanding natural men may have of natural things, they have none of spiritual ones; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God (Rom. 3:12).

Now, besides the understanding of spiritual things, which God gives in common to his people, he gives to his ministers a larger understanding of divine things, and of the scriptures and the truths of them; he opens their understandings, as Christ did his disciples, that they may understand the scriptures; he gives unto them to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to a greater degree than he does to others; and he enlarges their understandings, and increases their gifts, their light, and knowledge; which is what the apostle in a more especial manner prays for here, on the account of Timothy; that he might be better instructed in everything relative to his office, as an evangelist and minister of the word, and know how to behave in the church of God, which is the house of God, the pillar and ground of truth; and which is the principal end of his writing this; and the former epistle to him. I have only one observation more to make, and that is, that the clause may be considered as an assertion, or a promise, and the Lord will give thee understanding in all things; and so is used as an encouragement to consider well what had been said, and to expect a richer furniture of knowledge, and a larger measure of spiritual light and understanding; and as Christ

gives more light to his people, who are made light by him; and there is such a thing as growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, and of all spiritual things, in common Christians; and the path of the just is as the shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day; so faithful ministers of the word, who are diligent and industrious in their work, may expect, and be assured, that God will give them an enlarged knowledge and understanding of divine truths, and of everything necessary to the due performance of that sacred work they are called unto, and holy office they are invested with. I shall close, as I begun, with the words of my text, Consider what I say, or have been saying; consider the work of the ministry, that it is a work, and a laborious one, yet honorable and deserving of esteem from men; and that God will never leave his servants in it: consider the several parts of it, as the ministration of the gospel, the administration of ordinances, the care of the discipline of Christ's house, and visiting the afflicted and distressed: consider the necessary qualifications for it, and the things that are useful to the performance of it: consider the means to be made use of to enable for the better and more regular exercise of spiritual gifts; and the difficulties and discouragements that, on the one hand, attend this work; and, on the other, the encouragements to go on in it; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things; in all divine and spiritual things, in the truths of the gospel, and in everything relative to your office, and the due discharge of it, you have this day been invested with. May the blessing of God rest upon you, and may you have success in your work.

ENDNOTES:

1[1] Judas had the same call and mission from Christ to preach the gospel with the rest of the apostles; and had the same gifts, ordinary and extraordinary qualifying for it; and behaved so well in his office, that the rest of the disciples rather distrusted themselves than him, on Christ's declaring, one of them should betray him, saying each, Is it I? (Matthew 10:1-8; 26:21, 22). And, though I am of opinion, that for the most part, God gives special grace to those on whom he bestows gifts for the ministry, yet not always; as the instances in Matthew 7:22, 23 and Philippians 1:15, 16, show, and is a case the apostle supposes (1 Cor. 9:27; 13:1, 2), and such may be the means of the conversion and edification of men: the reason of which is, it is the word of God they preach, and God can and does make use of his own word, to such purposes, by what instruments he pleases.

THE
DOCTRINE OF THE CHERUBIM
OPENED AND EXPLAINED.

A Sermon at the Ordination of the Reverend Mr. John Davis, at Waltham Abbey.

Preached August 15, 1764.

EZEKIEL 10:20

This is the living creature, that I saw under the God of Israel, by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the Cherubim.

Being desired to say something to you, my Brother, on this occasion, relative to the ministerial character you bear, and to the work you have been called to, and to the office you have been at this time invested with; my thoughts have been led to this passage of scripture, *This is the living creature*; or creatures, the singular for the plural for there were four living creatures which *Ezekiel* saw in the vision he refers to; these he *saw under the God of Israel*, under a firmament over the heads of these creatures; above which was the appearance of a man in a most glorious and illustrious form; and who was no other than the Son of God, who was to be incarnate, and here called *the God of Israel*; and which is no inconsiderable proof of our Lord's proper Deity, for *the God of Israel* must be the true God: this vision the prophet had *by the river of Chebar*; a river in *Chaldea*, where the captive Jews assembled, and *Ezekiel* with them; and when he had the vision, as now repeated to him, the objects in it became more familiar to him; and he more wistly looked at them, and perceived and was well assured, that the living creatures he saw were the cherubim; or were of the same form and figure with the cherubim in the tabernacle of *Moses* and the temple of *Solomon*; for though he was not a high priest, only a common priest, and so could never have seen the cherubim in the most holy place himself yet he might have had an account of them from a high priest who had seen them and besides there were figures of the cherubim carved upon the walls of the temple all around, and upon the doors of it; which, as his business was to be frequently in the temple, he must have often seen, and full well knew them. See also verse 15, where the same is affirmed as here.

It may seem strange to you at first, that I should read such a passage of scripture on such an occasion; but it will not appear so long, when I inform you that my intention is, by opening and explaining the emblems of the cherubim, to lay before you the qualifications, duties, work, and usefulness of the ministers of the gospel; to make way for which, it will be proper to inquire what the cherubim were, and what they signified; in order to which we must look both backwards and forwards, to the account of them in scripture, both before and after these visions of *Ezekiel*. The

account begins early, proceeds gradually, and by degrees becomes more clear, distinct, and perfect. The first mention of the cherubim is in Genesis 3:24, quickly after the fall of man, and at his expulsion from the garden of *Eden*; when *Jehovah placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life*; but we are not told what these cherubim were, whether real creatures or only figures, nor what their form, nor their number, only their position at the east end of the garden of *Eden*, and their use, to *keep the way of the tree of life*, the meaning of which will be given hereafter; only it may be observed, that *Moses* calls them *the cherubim*, for the word in the original has the pre-positive and emphatic article; as if they were well known, as they were to *Moses*, and might be to the people of *Israel* through him, who could inform them of them for the book of *Genesis* was written after *Moses* had the order to make the cherubim, and place them with the mercy-seat over the ark in the holy of holies, as related in *Exodus 25:18-22*, from whence we learn, that the cherubim were figures of winged creatures; that they were in number two; that they were made of gold, of the same mass with the mercy seat; that they stood at both ends of it, looking to one another and to that, and overshadowed it with their wings; and were so placed as to make a seat for the divine Majesty, who took up his residence here, and therefore afterwards is often described by him *that dwelleth between the cherubim*. The same figures were set in the most holy place in *Solomon's* temple; and where also were, two others of a larger size, made not of gold, but of olive-wood gilded, and whose wings extended, and touching each other, reached from one side of the holy of holies to the other; but still we are at a loss for the exact form of these figures: this is supplied in the visions of *Ezekiel*, related in this and in the first chapter; in which, four living creatures, he asserts to be the cherubim, are particularly described by their faces, their wings, their hands, and their feet, and by the shining appearance of the whole; but still we are left in the dark what these creatures were emblems of, until the gospel-dispensation took place, which brings dark things into light; when *John* had a vision similar to those of *Ezekiel*, with a very little variation, in which he had a more perfect view of the living creatures, and which gives a more exact description of them, of their situation and employment; that they were round about the throne of God, were rational creatures, and spiritual and constant worshippers of the divine Being, or however, emblems of such; with other marks and circumstances, by which it may be known with some certainty, who they were or who are intended by them. The vision is related in *Revelation 4:6-9*, and as the key to the interpretation of the cherubim. From whence it appeal's.

First, That these were not emblems of the divine persons in the Godhead, It is a fancy that some of late have embraced and are greatly elated with it, as a wonderful discovery; that the cherubim are an hieroglyphic, the three faces of the ox, lion, and eagle, of the Trinity of persons in the Deity, and the face of a man joined to them, of the incarnation of the Son of God; and would have the word *cherubim* pronounced *ce-rubbim*, and translated *as the mighty ones*; but this is a mere fancy and false notion: For,

1. *John's* four beasts, or rather *living creatures*, as the word should be rendered, for that of *beasts* is an uncomely translation, the same with *Ezekiel's* living creatures, and which he affirms to be the cherubim, are represented as worshippers of the divine Being, and therefore cannot be emblems of the object of worship. They are said not only to be about the throne of God, and to admire and adore the attribute of holiness, and ascribe it to the almighty Being; but to give glory, honour, and thanks to him; to fall down and worship God, yea, to fall down before the Lamb in a worshipping

posture, and to give the lead to others in divine worship. See Revelation 4:8-10 and verse 8:14, and 19:4.

2. The cherubim are in many places most manifestly distinguished from the divine Being; they are represented as the seat and throne on which he sits, and as a vehicle in which he rides; so they are described at the first mention of them in Genesis 3:24, where the words may be rendered *he, Jehovah, inhabited the cherubim*, or dwelt with, over, or between them; and so he did in the cherubim over the mercy-seat, from between which he promised to commune with *Moses*; and therefore, as before observed, is often described as dwelling between the cherubim, and on which he is said to ride. See Exodus 25:22, Psalm 80:1 and 18:10, and here the living creatures in my text are said to be *under the God of Israel*, and so distinct from him and in *John's* vision are described as about the throne of God, and as distinct from him that sat upon it; and the *seraphim* in *Isaiah's* vision, the same with the *cherubim* here, are also distinguished from the Lord *sitting on a throne high and lifted up*; and are represented as attendants on him, and worshippers of him, Isaiah 6:1-3.

3. If the cherubim could be thought to be emblems of a plurality in the Deity, they would be emblems, not of a trinity of persons, but rather of a quaternity, since the cherubim had four faces, each distinct from one another: yea, *John's* four living creatures were four distinct animals, each having a distinct head and face; and the face of a man, both in his and *Ezekiel's* living creatures, is as a distinct a face as any of the rest; and if they were emblems of persons; that must be so too; whereas the human nature of Christ; this is said to be an emblem of, is no person; Christ did not take an human person, but an human nature into union with his divine person, for reasons that might be given much less is it a person in the Godhead, as this supposed emblem would make it to be. Besides, the human nature in Christ is his inferior nature, whereas the face of a man in the cherubim is the superior face, the rest being faces of irrational animals.

4. If the cherubim were an hieroglyphic of the Trinity, this would give a similitude of the divine Being, and of that in him which is the most incomprehensible to us, a Trinity of persons in the Deity; and would furnish with an answer to such a question, suggested as unanswerable, *To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare with him?* Isaiah 40:18, 25, and 46:5, for then it might be replied, To the cherubim; but there is no likeness of God, nor any to be made of him; though the Son of God often appeared in an human form, and in the fulness of time became incarnate; and the holy Ghost once descended as a dove; yet the Father's shape was never seen at any time, John 5:37. This notion also is repugnant to the second command, which forbids the making any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, Exodus 20:4, and then most certainly forbids the making of any likeness of the divine Being. Supposing the cherubim at the garden of *Eden* were made by God himself, as those in the tabernacle and temple were made by his order; yet he would never make, nor order to be made, such as he forbid, which he must, if they bore the similitude of him; but the truth is, the cherubim were not a likeness of any thing above in heaven, nor of any thing on earth; there never having been seen nor known by any man on earth, as *Josephus* affirms, any such creature whom they describe; and a certain Jewish writer observes, the making of them came not under the interdict or prohibition of the second command; which if made in the likeness of God it would.

5. To all which may be added, if the cherubim were known emblems of the Trinity, it can hardly be thought that any man would take the name of Cherub to himself, or impose it upon any of his

family, or should be so called by others; yet we find a man with his family of this name, Ezra 2:59; Nehemiah 7:61, and still less would it be given as it is, to Antichrist, the antitype of the king of Tyre, the man of sin and son of perdition, Ezekiel 28:14, where he is called *the anointed cherub*; which can never be in allusion to the divine Being, and the persons in the Godhead; but may be in allusion to the ministers of the word, the cherubim are the emblems of; as will be presently seen; since he is an ecclesiastical person, calls himself a bishop, an universal Bishop, Christ's anointed Vicar, and Head of the church, the sole and infallible interpreter of the sacred scriptures. Nor,

Secondly, Are the angels meant by the cherubim; though this is a much better sense than the former, and has been generally received by the Jews and Christians: and what has led many to embrace this sense is, the supposed allusion to the cherubim looking to the mercy-seat, 1 Peter 1:12, where mention is made of angels being desirous to look into the mysteries of grace though it may be observed that ministers of the word are sometimes so called, and may be there meant: however, *John's* four living creatures cannot be angels, since they are so often distinguished from them not only by their names, the one being called *angels* and the other *living creatures* in the same place; but also by their situation, the living creatures are represented as nearest to the throne of God, and round about it, then the four and twenty elders next to them, and round about them, and then the angels as round about both; but what puts it out of all doubt is, that these living creatures are by themselves owned to be *redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb, out of every kindred and tongue, people and nation*: which cannot be said of angels; for as they never sinned, they never stood in need of the blood of Christ to redeem them. See Revelation 5:8, 9, 11, and 7:11, and 15:7. Wherefore,

Thirdly, Since the four and twenty elders in the visions of *John* are the representatives of the gospel-churches, so called in allusion to the twenty-four courses of the priests, and the twenty-four stations of the Levites, fixed in the times of *David*; who, as they in turn attended the service of the temple, represented the whole body of the people of *Israel*; so these twenty-four elders before the throne, and the temple of God, represent the whole *Israel* of God, all the members of the gospel-church-state from first to last; and since the four living creatures are clearly distinguished from them both by name and by situation, and by giving the lead to them in divine worship, as ministers of the word do to the churches: it remains, that the ministers of the gospel only can be meant by *the living creatures*, or *the cherubim*. See Revelation 4:4, 6, 9, 10 and 5:8, 11, 14, and 7:11, and by considering the several places where they are made mention of; this will appear to be the truth of the matter. As,

1. Genesis 3:24, where they are first spoken of; and are said to be placed *at the east of the garden of Eden*, with a flaming sword, *to keep the way of the tree of life*; I am quite content to have the phrase rendered, *to observe the way of the tree of life*, as the word is often translated by us. (see Ps. 107:43; Eccl. 11:4; Isa. 42:20; Jonah 2:8) The flaming sword may be an emblem of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and which is sharper than a two-edged sword, and has itself two edges, *law* and *gospel*; by the one, when it enters and cuts deep, is the knowledge of sin, and of the sad consequences of it, and leaves a sense of wrath and fiery indignation; and by the other, the knowledge of Christ and salvation by him, and is called the gospel of salvation; and the flame of it may denote the light, heat and glory, which are in the word, when accompanied with a divine influence; so the cherubim may be an hieroglyphic of the ministers of it; and it is the sense of some, both Jews and Christians, that the ministry of the word is referred to and intended by the whole.

When *Adam* had sinned, he was driven out of the garden of *Eden*, to prevent his eating of the tree of life, lest he should imagine that by that action of his, his life was preserved and continued, and would be for ever; teaching him thereby, that he was not to expect salvation and eternal life by any acts and works of his own, nor by any creature, nor by any outward means: and cherubim were placed without the garden, not to guard the way of the tree of life, literally understood, or to prevent *Adam's* access unto it; that was sufficiently done by his being driven out of it; but to observe and point out to him, for his comfort and relief, the way to a nobler tree of life than that in the garden; to the true and antitypical tree of life, Jesus Christ, that tree of life that stands in the midst of the paradise of God, the church, of which every overcomer of sin, Satan, and the world, may take and eat, Revelation 2:7. Christ, the Wisdom and Word of God, who is a tree of life, the author and giver of life eternal to all those that lay hold by faith upon him; and happy is every one that so doing retains him, Proverbs 3:18, even Christ the way, the truth, and the life, the true way to eternal life. Now the cherubim were in this emblems of ministers of the gospel, *the servants of the most high God; whose work it is to shew unto men the way of life and salvation by Jesus Christ.*

And this is the business that you, my Brother, should be constantly employed in, in instructing men that they are not to be saved by their own works, duties and services; that God saves and calls men, not according to their works, but according to his purpose and grace; that men are to expect the pardon of sin, not on the account of their repentance and humiliation, but through the blood of Christ, and according to the riches of God's grace; that *by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified* in the sight of God but that a man is justified *by faith in the righteousness of Christ, without the deeds of the law*; that men are not saved by the best works of righteousness done by them, but by the abundant mercy and free grace of God, through Christ. You are to acquaint all that you are concerned with, that salvation is by Christ alone; that God has chosen and appointed him to be his salvation to the ends of the earth; and that he has appointed men to salvation alone by him; that he has sent him into the world to be the Saviour of them; this is the *faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation*, you are to publish and proclaim, that Christ *came into the world to save the chief of sinners*; and that by his obedience, sufferings, and death, he is *become the author of eternal salvation* to them; and that there is salvation in him, and in no other; and that *there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby they can be saved*. Souls sensible of sin and danger, and who are crying out, *What shall we do to be saved?* you are to observe, and point out Christ the tree of life unto them; and say, as some of the cherubs did to one in such circumstances, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, Acts 16:31. Your work is to lead men, under a sense of sin and guilt, to the blood of Christ, shed for many for the remission of sin; and in his name you are to preach the forgiveness of it to them; you are to direct believers, under your care, to go by faith daily to Christ the mediator, and deal with the blood of sprinkling for the remission of their sins, and the cleansing of their souls; which sprinkled on them speaks peace and pardon, purges the conscience from dead works, and cleanses from all sin. You are to point out the righteousness of Christ, as the only justifying righteousness of men, by whose obedience only men are made righteous; the ministration of the gospel is a ministration of righteousness, even of the righteousness of Christ, which is revealed in it from faith to faith; and such should be your ministration. You are to acquaint men, that this righteousness is unto all, and upon all that believe; and that, such are justified from all things by it, *from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses*; and that the acceptance of men with God, is only in Christ the beloved. You are to observe to men the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God and to direct them, as one of the cherubs did, pointing to him, and saying, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!* John

1:29, to bid them view the sin-bearing and sin-atonement Saviour, and look to the Lamb in the midst of the throne as though he had been slain; by whose slain sacrifice sin is put away, and they perfected for ever that are sanctified. But more of this may be observed.

2. In the account of the cherubim over the mercy-seat in Exodus 25:18, &c. there they are said to be *two*, and were emblems of the prophets of the Old Testament, and of the apostles of the New, with their successors, the ministers of the word in all generations; between whom there is an entire harmony and agreement; the prophets spoke of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; and the apostle *Paul*, and the other apostles, said no other things than what *Moses* and the prophets did say, that Christ should suffer, and be the first that should rise from the dead; they both agreed in laying ministerially Christ as the foundation, and in directing men to build their faith and hope upon him, as well as they themselves were laid on him; and therefore he is called *the foundation of the apostles and prophets*, Ephesians 2:20, even as the mercy-seat was the basis on which the two cherubim stood, and by which they were supported: and it may be observed, in agreement with the number of the cherubim, that the seventy disciples of Christ were sent forth by him *two by two* to preach his gospel; and the ministers of the word that prophesy in sackcloth during the reign of antichrist, are called the *two* witnesses, Luke 10:1; Revelation 11:3, and the addition of two other cherubim of a larger size in *Solomon's* temple, may signify the greater perfection of the gospel ministry, and the larger number of gospel ministers, in the gospel church of the New Testament, of which *Solomon's* temple was a type. The matter of which the cherubim over the mercy-seat were made, was pure *gold*, and of the same mass with the mercy-seat; denoting the rich gifts and graces of the spirit, with which ministers of the gospel are qualified for their work; and which are of the same kind and nature with those of Christ, as man; only in measure, his without; and the rich treasure put into these earthen vessels, and the precious truths of the gospel, comparable to gold, silver and precious stones, committed to their trust to minister. The use of the cherubim was to overshadow the mercy-seat, and therefore they are called the *cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat*, Hebrews 9:5, which they did with their wings; denoting in ministers their ministrations, the readiness and cheerfulness of them; the cherubim looked towards one another, and towards the mercy-seat, and pointed to that.

And this, my Brother, is a principal part of your work, as one of the cherubs, to direct to Christ the mercy-seat, the channel of the grace and mercy of God to the souls of men; as God *set forth Christ* in his eternal purposes and decrees *to be a propitiation*, *ἰλαζήθιον*, Romans 3:25, the same word the Greek interpreters use for the mercy-seat in Exodus 25, so you are to set him forth in your ministrations as the propitiation, propitiatory, and mercy-seat: let the mercy-seat be ever in view; keep in sight in all your ministrations the doctrine of atonement and satisfaction by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; let this be the pole-star by which you steer the course of your ministry; direct souls to the throne of grace, to the mercy-seat, to God in Christ, where they may hope to find grace and mercy to help them in time of need: and, for your encouragement, observe the situation of the cherubim, they were upon the mercy-seat, at the ends of it, being beaten out of the same mass of gold with that; denoting the nearness of ministers to Christ, their union to him, and dependence on him, and support by him, who holds the stars in his right hand: and also his presence with them; for between the cherubim, the shekinah, or glorious majesty of God, dwelt; and Christ has promised to be with his ministers unto the end of the world. But I go on,

3. To consider the *living creatures* in the visions of *Ezekiel* and *John*, called the *cherubim*; and who will appear. to be proper emblems of the ministers of the gospel, by considering their names and numbers, their form in general, and the several parts by which they are described in particular.

Ist, Their names and number.

(1.) What both *John* and *Ezekiel* saw are called *living creatures*; for the ζῶα in *John's* vision exactly answer to the חיות in *Ezekiel's*, and both signify animals that have life and breath: ministers of the word are *creatures*, both as men and as ministers; as men they are the creatures of God, as others; though they are the ambassadors of God, and stand in his stead, yet they are men and not gods, frail, mortal men; *the prophets, do they live for ever?* no: they are also sinful men, as the apostle *Peter*, one of the cherubs, owned himself to be; and men of like passions with others, as the apostle *Paul*, another of the cherubs, acknowledges; and therefore allowances must be made for their weaknesses and infirmities: and they are creatures as ministers, they are made so, not by themselves nor by other men: *Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father*, Galatians 1:1, he did not thrust himself into the ministry, but God put him into it; nor did he become a minister of the word by his own attainments, not by all the learning he acquired at the feet of *Gamaliel*, or elsewhere; but he was *made a minister*, as he himself says, *according to the gift of the grace of God given unto him*, Ephesians 3: 6, 7, and so all that are *made able ministers of the New Testament*, are made so of God; for they are not sufficient of themselves, but *their sufficiency is of God*, 2 Corinthians 3:5, 6. And they are *living creatures*, they are regenerated, quickened, and have spiritual life in them; and so say the things which they have seen, and heard, and felt; which, if unregenerate, they would not be able to do: and it is requisite they should be lively in their ministrations; it is most comfortable to themselves, and best for those to whom they minister, when they are lively in their frames, lively in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty; when *they are fervent in spirit*, while they are *serving the Lord* their God; and under a divine influence, they are *the savour of life unto life*; the instruments and means of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving and refreshing drooping saints; and happy are those that sit under the ministry of the living creatures, regenerate men, the living and lively ministers of the gospel.

(2.) These living creatures are called *cherubim*. *Ezekiel* affirms they were the cherubim, and he knew them to be so. Many are the etymologies given of this word, and it is difficult to come at the true meaning of it. I shall not trouble you with every thing that is said, only what may seem proper, suitable, and pertinent. And, 1. *Philo* the Jew says, the cherubim signify *much knowledge*; and in which sense he is followed by many ancient writers, who interpret the word of *large knowledge*; and *fulness* of it; but for what reason, I must own, I cannot see; but be it so, this I am sure of; the ministers of the gospel have need of a large share of knowledge, both of things natural and spiritual; knowledge of themselves, and of their state by nature and by grace, and an experience of the work of the spirit of God upon their hearts; knowledge of Christ, his offices, and grace; knowledge of the scriptures, which *Timothy knew from a child, which are able to make men wise to salvation, are profitable for doctrine and instruction*, and to fit and furnish ministers for the work they are employed in; knowledge of the mysteries of grace, of God, and of Christ; all which are quite necessary for them, since their business is to feed men with knowledge and understanding, and to train them up in it, till they come to the unity of the faith, to a perfect knowledge of the Son of God, and *to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*.—2. Others think the word has the

signification of *might, power, and strength*; in which sense the root of it is used in the Syriac language: the ministers of the gospel are called strong; *we that are strong*, Romans 15:1, and they have need of all the strength they have, as to bear the infirmities of weak saints, so the insults, indignities, reproaches and persecutions of sinful men; they have need to be strong in the grace that is in Christ, that they may be able to do the duties of their office, and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ; they have need to *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; that they may be able to *wrestle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world*; they ought to be strong to labour in the word and doctrine, to do the work of the Lord as it should be done: but *who is sufficient for these things?*—3. Others observe that the word *Cherub*, by a transposition of letters, is the same with *recub*, which signifies a *chariot*; in which form the cherubim are supposed to be, hence we read of *the chariot of the cherubim*, 1 Chronicles 28:18, and nothing is more common in Jewish writers than the *mercavah*, the chariot of *Ezekiel*, meaning the cherubim; and the living creatures, and the wheels might he in such a form as to resemble a chariot; and those who plead for angels being meant by them, with pertinency enough to their hypothesis, apply the words in Psalm 68:17. *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, the Lord is among them as in Sinai*. But why may not the cherubim, admitting this sense of the word, be applied to the ministers of the gospel; since they are represented as vehicles, as chosen vessels to bear the name of Christ, to carry and spread his gospel in the world? and, which conveys the same sentiment, are signified by the white horse on which Christ is said to sit, and go *forth conquering and to conquer*. See Acts 9:15; Revelation 6:2.—But, 4. What I am most inclined to give into is, that the word cherubim is derived from *Carab*, which in some of the eastern languages signifies to *plow*; and in plowing, oxen were used formerly, and so they are in some places at this day; now not only one of the faces of the cherubim is the face of an ox, but that face particularly is called the face of the cherub, as may be observed by comparing Ezekiel 1:10. with chapter 10:14. See also 1 Kings 7:29. So that the cherubim seem to have their denomination from this particular face of theirs: and that oxen were emblems of ministers of Christ, as will be considered more particularly hereafter, is evident from the apostle *Paul*, who having quoted the law concerning not muzzling the ox when it treads out the corn, adds, *Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? for the sake of us ministers? for our sakes, no doubt, this is written*: and from oxen he catches at once the idea of plowing, and applies it to ministers, *that he that ploweth should plow in hope*, that is, enjoying the fruit of his labour, 1 Corinthians 9:9, 10. There is a prophecy of gospel-times, and of ministers in them, which runs thus, *Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen*; that is, Gentiles should be pastors of christian churches, and feed them as flocks are fed; and that some of such who are aliens from the commonwealth of *Israel* should be employed in the Lord's husbandry, and be instruments in breaking up the fallow ground of men's hearts, and of sowing the seed of the word in them, Isaiah 61:5.

(3.) To these names of the living creatures, the *cherubim*, may be added that of *seraphim* in Isaiah 6:2. The Jewish writers are generally agreed that the visions of *Isaiah* and *Ezekiel* relate to the same thing; and whoever closely compares them, will see a likeness between them: and have no doubt remain, but the Cherubim and Seraphim design the same persons; the ministers of the gospel may be called by the latter name, which signifies *burning*, because of their ministerial gifts, comparable to coals of fire; and because of their fervent love to Christ and the souls of men, and because of their flaming zeal for the cause and interest of their Master.

(4.) The number of the living creatures, both in the visions of *Ezekiel* and *John*, being four, as the four chariots and the four spirits of the heavens, in the visions of *Zechariah* chapter 6:1, 5, may have respect to the four parts of the world; the commission of gospel-ministers being *to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*.

2dly, The form of the living creatures, and the several parts by which they are described, agree with the ministers of the word. The general form is not agreed upon on all hands: some think that it inclined mostly to that of the ox or calf: to which they are induced by what has been observed, the face of the ox and of the cherub being the same; and some suppose that the golden calf made by *Aaron* and the calves of *Jeroboam*, were made after the model of the cherubim upon the mercy-seat; but this is without foundation. Others suppose them of a mixed form, and that their faces are not to be understood of their faces strictly taken, but of their general forms and appearances; as that they had the face of a man, the breasts and mane of a lion, the shoulders and wings of an eagle, and the feet of an ox or calf; which seems not probable: rather the general form of them was human, and most resembled that, except in the parts which are otherwise described; for it is expressly said, *they had the likeness of a man*, *Ezekiel* 1:5, and the ministers of the gospel are men: they are redeemed from among men; their business lies with men; they are sent to teach all nations of men, to preach the gospel to every human creature, and to and among the Gentiles *the unsearchable riches of Christ*. But this will appear by considering the several parts by which the living creatures or cherubim are described.

(1.) By their faces, which are four.—1. *The face of a man*; intimating, that the ministers of the word should be humane, courteous, and civil to all men they are concerned with; pitiful and compassionate to wounded consciences, tempted souls, troubled and distressed minds, as well as to backsliders, in restoring them; and be men in understanding, knowing, rational, wise and prudent; and be manly and courageous, quit themselves like men, and be strong and valiant in the cause and interest of their Master.—2. *The face of a lion*, the *strongest among beasts*, *Proverbs* 30:30, the strength of ministers has been hinted at already: the lion is remarkable for its boldness and intrepidity; *the righteous* are said to be *bold as a lion*, *Proverbs* 28:1, to be bold and intrepid, and not fear the faces of men, is a proper qualification of the ministers of the gospel; such were *John* and *Peter*, and the apostle *Paul* was not inferior to them in boldness and courage; though to shew how necessary such a qualification was, he desires the *Ephesians* to pray for him, that utterance might be given him, that he might *open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, and therein speak boldly, as he ought to speak*, *Ephesians* 6:19, 20. Yet this was not wanting in him; for he elsewhere says, *We were bold in our God to speak of the gospel of God with much contention*, *1 Thessalonians* 2:2.—3. *The face of an ox*; a creature made for labour, and when in a good state and plight, fit and strong for labour, and used to be employed in plowing the ground and treading out the corn; and is a fit emblem of gospel-ministers, employed in tilling God's husbandry, plowing the fallow ground of men's hearts, and treading out the corn of the word for their use, labouring in the word and doctrine; and, it may be, an emblem of them not only in labour but in patience; the ox that is accustomed to the yoke, patiently bears it; and which is seen not only in bearing the yoke of the ministry, but the weaknesses of the saints, and the reproaches of wicked men; in *meekly instructing those that oppose themselves*, and in waiting for the fruit and success of their labours.—4. *The face of an eagle*; a creature that soars high, has a strong and clear sight, and can look steadfastly on the sun; it spies its prey at a great distance, scents the carcass where it is, and gathers itself and its young to it; *for wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be*

gathered also, Matthew 24:28, fitly represents gospel-ministers, who have a clear sight into the sublime mysteries of grace, and see things which eye has not seen, the vulture's eye, the most sharp-sighted among carnal men: and who make it their business to preach a slain crucified Christ, and direct souls to him to feed by faith upon him; *we preach Christ crucified*, &c. 1 Corinthians 1:23, and 2:2.—5. These faces were stretched upwards, for so the words may be rendered in Ezekiel 1:11, *thus their faces and their wings were stretched upwards*, towards heaven; signifying that ministers of the gospel look upwards to Christ in heaven for fresh supplies of gifts and grace, an increase of light and knowledge, of wisdom and strength, to fit them more for their work, and to enable them to perform it; being sensible that without him, his grace and strength, they can do nothing; but through him strengthening them they can do all things, Philippians 4:13.

(2.) The living creatures, who are the cherubim, are described by their eyes; particularly in *John's* vision of them, where they are said to be *full of eyes before, and behind and within*, Revelation 4:6, 8, see also Ezekiel 10:12. The eye is the light of the body; and what the eye is to the natural body, the ministers are to the church, the body of Christ; yea, they are *the light of the world*; and *if the eye be single*, if ministers be sincere, and have a single view to the glory of Christ and the good of souls, *the whole body will be full of light*, the church will be illuminated by them, Matthew 5:14, and 6:22, they are *Argos-like*, have many eyes; and they have need of all they have to look into the sacred scriptures, which are a sealed book to learned and unlearned men, destitute of the Spirit of Christ; only to be looked into so as to be understood by such who have their eyes enlightened, their understandings opened by Christ, as were the disciples; the scriptures are to be diligently searched into, and explored for the rich treasure that is in them; and those that search into them, as for hid treasure, shall find knowledge of great and excellent things; but these escape the sight of all but those who have spiritual eyes to see. Ministers of the gospel had need to be full of eyes, to look to themselves, and to the flocks committed to them; to take the oversight of them, and feed them with the words of faith and sound doctrine; to take heed to themselves and to their doctrine, that it be wholesome, pure and incorrupt; and to their lives and conversations, that they give no offence to Jew or Gentile, nor to the church of God, that the ministry may not be blamed and rendered useless; and also to espy dangers, and give warning and notice of them, arising whether from without or from within; to look diligently lest any *root of bitterness*, of error or heresy, or of immorality and profaneness, spring up in the churches, and trouble some and defile others; and to watch against false teachers, and to be careful to keep up the discipline of Christ's house. They have, as they should have, *eyes before and behind*; *eyes behind*, to observe things past, the fulfillment of prophecies, promises, and types in Christ: *before*, to look to predictions yet to be fulfilled relating to the church and kingdom of God; *behind* them to watch against Satan, who *goes about seeking whom he may devour*, and who comes upon the back of them at unawares; and *before* them, to watch over the flocks they have the oversight of; *behind* them, to the twenty-four elders, the members of the churches to whom they minister, so situated with respect to the four living creatures; and *before* them, to the throne of God and the Lamb, on whom is their dependence, from whom they expect supplies, and whose glory they are concerned for: and they have also *eyes within*, to look into the sinfulness and corruption of their nature, and which is a means of keeping them humble under all their attainments, gifts and usefulness; and into the state and ease of their own souls, and their inward experience; which qualifies them to speak to the cases of others, and by which they can make better judgment of the truth of doctrines, having a witness of them within themselves; and to look into the treasure that is put into them, in order to bring forth from thence things new and old, both for the profit and pleasure of those that hear them.

(3.) The living creatures, or cherubim, are described by their wings, The cherubim over the mercy-seat had wings, but how many is not expressed; but it is the opinion of some, both ancient and modern, that they had six, and so many had the Seraphim in Isaiah's vision, chapter 6:2, and the same number had the living creatures in Ezekiel's vision; for though they are said to have four, chapter 1:6, yet not four only from verses 11, 23, it seems as if they had two more, and it is certain the living creatures in *John's* vision had six, Revelation 4:8 and, —1. With two of them particularly they flew, as *Isaiah's* Seraphim did; which in ministers denote their swiftness, readiness and cheerfulness to do the work of God, to minister the word, and to administer ordinances, to visit the members of the churches when needful, and to do all good offices for the saints, that lay in their power. The Greek version of Ezekiel 1:7, is, *their feet were winged*; expressive of the same thing, particularly of their readiness to preach the gospel, their feet *being shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*; and for the same reason, a set of gospel-ministers are represented by an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to all nations, Revelation 14:6.—2. With other two wings they covered their face; ministers, sensible of the purity and holiness of God, and the spirituality of his law, in comparison of which they see themselves unholy, carnal and sold under sin, blush at their sins and imperfections, and are conscious of their unworthiness to be employed in such service, looking upon themselves to be less than the least of all saints, the chief of sinners, and unfit to be ministers of the word; and are ashamed of their poor performances, and acknowledge that they have nothing but what they have received, and therefore have nothing to glory of at best.—3. With other two wings the living creatures covered their feet: however beautiful the feet of gospel ministers may appear to others, to whom they come running with the good tidings of peace, life, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; yet they, sensible of their deficiencies, confess, that having done all they can, and in the best manner they could, they are but unprofitable servants. So *Isaiah's* Seraphim covered their feet with two of their wings, but *Ezekiel's* living creatures covered their bodies with them, and seem to have made use of four for that purpose, chapter 1:11, 23.—4. Their wings were stretched upwards, verse 11, so ministers look towards heaven, up towards Christ, from whence are all their expectations of grace to help them to perform their works, and of all success in it: and their wings were also *joined one to another*; that is, the wings of one living creature to that of another; denoting ministers affection to each other, their giving mutual assistance to one another, their concern in the same work of the Lord, preaching the same truths, and administering the same ordinance, having the same zeal for the glory of God, love to Christ and to the souls of men, and being of the same mind and judgment and specially they will be so in the latter day, when they shall *see eye to eye*, Isaiah 52:8.—5. The sound of their wings is worthy of notice, and is repeated once and again, that it might be observed, said to be *like the noise of great waters; as the voice of the almighty, when he speaketh*, chapter 1:24, 3:13. and 10:5, which is no other than the gospel ministered by them, a joyful sound, a sound of love, grace and mercy, peace, righteousness and salvation; and which, like the sound of waters, was heard at a distance, when by the ministry of the apostles it went into all the earth: the voice of Christ, and which is the gospel also, is compared to the same, Romans 1:15, for its rapidity and force, under the divine influence; and which is not the voice, sound and word of man, but of God himself; which appears by its powerful effects on the hearts of saints and sinners, when attended with a divine energy; and indeed it is the Lord God almighty that speaks in ministers, and speaks powerfully by them, 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Corinthians 13:3.

(4.) These living creatures, or the cherubim, are described by having *the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides*, Ezekiel 1:8, and 10:8, this denotes the activity of gospel-ministers, who

have not only the theory and knowledge of things, but are men of practice and business; they have much work to do all around them, on every side preaching the gospel, administering ordinances, visiting their people, praying with them, and giving them counsel and advice, instruction and exhortation, when needful; and they have hands to work with and strength given them, and which they employ, and are *steadfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*; and they do it with judgment, acting like men of understanding and reason: and their hands being *under their wings*, shew, that besides their public work they do much in private, in their studies and closets, in meditation and prayer, where no eye sees them but the eye of God; and also in private houses where they pray, instruct, counsel and advise, as the nature of cases that present require; and whatever they do, whether in private or public, they do it not to be seen of men; or in an ostentatious way, as the Scribes and Pharisees; they boast not of their own performances, they ascribe all to the grace of God which is with them, and own that it is by that they are what they are, and do what they do; such is their modesty and humility, which this phrase is expressive of.

(5.) The living creatures, or cherubim, are described by their *feet*, which are said to *be straight*; and with them *they went every one straight forward, and they turned not when they went*, Ezekiel 1:7, 9, 12, they made straight paths for their feet, and went not into crooked paths; they turned not, neither to the right hand nor the left; their eyes looked right on, and their eyelids right before them, and steered their course accordingly: thus faithful ministers of the word walk uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and go in the paths of truth and righteousness; and neither turn to error on the one hand, nor to immorality on the other; and having put their hand to the plough of the gospel, neither look back nor turn back; for such that do so, are not fit for the kingdom of God, Luke 9:62. Moreover, it is said of the living creatures, the cherubim, that *the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot*; round, the hoof divided, and fit for treading out the corn, and which is more firm and sure than the sole of a man's foot, which is apt to slip and turn aside; and so may denote the firmness, steadiness, and constancy of faithful ministers in their work, particularly in treading out the corn of the word for the nourishment of souls to whom they minister: and it is also added of the cherubim, that their feet *sparkled like the colour of burnished brass*; which may not only signify the strength and firmness of ministers to support under all the weight of work and sufferings, expressed by brass; so Christ's feet are said to be *like unto fine brass, as they burned in a furnace*, Revelation 1:15, but also the brightness of their conversations, and the shining purity and holiness of their lives; and when the light of their works, as well as of their doctrines, shine before men, they look as bright as polished brass, and become *examples of the believer, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*, 1 Timothy 4:12. Moreover, the living creatures were directed by the Spirit, *whither the Spirit was to go, they went*, Ezekiel 1:12, 20, so, as the prophets of the Old Testament spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the ministers of the New Testament are led by the Spirit, and guided by him in their ministrations into all truth as it is in Jesus; as well as they are influenced by him in their conversations, to walk as becomes the gospel of Christ; and as they are qualified by him with gifts and graces for the work of the ministry, so he disposes of them where he pleases, and makes them overseers of such and such flocks in such and such places, according to his will; and they go as they are led by him, where he has a work for them to do. A remarkable instance of this see in Acts 16:6-10. where the apostles were forbid by the Holy Ghost preaching in one country; and, assaying to go into another, the Spirit suffered them not; but they were directed to steer their course another way, and to another place, where souls were to be converted, and a gospel-church planted. Once more when and where the living creatures went, the wheels went; and according to the motion and position of the one, were the motion and position of

the other: *when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; and when the living creatures were lift up from the earth, the wheels were lift up; when those went, these went, and when those stood, these stood*, Ezekiel 1:19, 21 and 10:16, 17, the wheels signify the churches; and where there is the ministry of the word by the living creatures, the ministers of the gospel, there generally churches are raised and formed by them; and as the ministry of the word is continued or removed, so is a church-state fixed or changed; it is in this way and by this means that the candlestick is either continued or removed out of its place: and it may be observed in *John's* vision, agreeably to this, that when the four living creatures gave glory to God, the four and twenty elders fell down before him and worshipped him, Revelation 4:9, 10 and verse 14. Ministers begin the worship of God, move first in acts of devotion, and then the churches and the members of them follow and join with them; and as they receive their doctrine, and are guided by them in matters of worship, so they copy after them in their conversations; and, generally speaking, as ministers be, churches are; if ministers have raised affections and elevated frames, so it often is with the churches, and the members of them, that sit under their ministrations; if ministers are active and lively, the churches are so too; but if dull, indolent, and inactive, so are church-members; if ministers are evangelical in their preaching, so are the people that hear them; but if they minister in a legal manner, of the same complexion, spirit, and temper, will the members and hearers be.

(6.) The living creatures, or cherubim, are described by the appearance of them, *like burning coals*, and *like lamps*, Ezekiel 1:13, 14. Ministers of the gospel may be thus described, because of their ministerial gifts; the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit are signified *by cloven tongues as of fire*, Acts 2:3, and ordinary gifts for the ministry are represented as *coals of fire*, which are to be stirred up and inflamed, and not lie neglected, disused, or quenched, 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:19. And the cherubim or ministers may be set forth hereby, because of the clear light of truth that shines in them, and because of their ardent love to Christ and the souls of men, which is one qualification for the ministry; hence says Christ to *Peter*, when he had affirmed once and again that he loved him, and appealed to his omniscience for the truth of it, *Feed my lambs, feed my sheep*, John 21:15-17, intimating, that such a lover of him was a fit person to feed the flock or church of God; even one whose love is so ardent that *the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame, that many waters cannot quench*; even waters of afflictions, reproaches, persecutions, and sufferings for the sake of Christ and his gospel: and by coals of fire may they be described, because of their burning zeal for the glory of God and the interest of a Redeemer; hence they are called Seraphim, fiery or burning, as before observed; and it is not unusual for ministers of the gospel to be compared to *lamps*; the apostles are called the lights or lamps of the world; and *John the Baptist was a shining and burning light* or lamp; and so others have been, holding forth the word of light and life to men: and whereas it is said that *it, the fire, went up and down among the living creatures*; this is true of the word of God, compared to fire, Jeremiah 20:9 and 23:29, by which the minds of ministers are enlightened, their hearts warmed, and are filled with zeal for God, and become the means of enlightening and warming others; which *fire was bright*, clear, as the word of God is; and *out of the fire went forth lightning*; denoting the quick and penetrating efficacy of the word, and the sudden increase of the kingdom and interest of Christ by it, which, like lightning, has been spread from east to west. Thus I have opened and explained the doctrine of the cherubim in the best manner I could, and have shewn the agreement between them and the ministers of the gospel.

And now, my Brother, from these emblems you may discern what is your principal work and business as a minister of the gospel; that it is to preach salvation by Christ, the doctrines of pardon by his blood; of justification by his righteousness, and of atonement and satisfaction for sin by his sacrifice, with other truths of the gospel; that you are to be laborious in this work, diligent and industrious, constant and immoveable in it; that you are to be bold and intrepid in it, not fearing the faces of men; and to be watchful over yourself and others that are your charge, to be tender and compassionate to all in distress, whether of body, mind or estate, and to be humane in your deportment to all; that you are to walk uprightly, and be an example to the flock in your life and conversation; that you are to look up to heaven for fresh supplies of grace to carry you through your ministrations in all the branches of it; and through the whole express fervent love to Christ and the souls of men, and a zeal for his glory: and may you be a shining and burning light in your day and generation, and successful in the work of the Lord, and have many to be your joy and crown of rejoicing at the Coming of Christ.

The
FORM OF SOUND WORDS
To Be Held Fast

A Charge,

Delivered At The Ordination Of The Rev. Mr. John Reynolds.

2 TIMOTHY 1:13

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.

That part of the work of this day; which I have been derived to take, is to give the Charge to you, my Brother, who have been at this time ordained pastor of this church; and which I have chore to do in the above word's of the apostle Paul to Timothy, to whom this epistle is directed.

The connection between the apostle and Timothy was such, that betides his being an apostle, and an inspired one, it gave him a just claim to use the authority and freedom he does in giving him this charge; and was such as laid Timothy under an obligation to pay a regard unto it; which was this, he had been an hearer of the apostle; and it is observed in the charge itself, which thou haft heard of me; and is used as a reason and argument why he should attend unto it; he had been instructed by him in the mysteries of grace and doctrines of the gospel; and besides, was a son of his after the common faith. Now, though, my Brother, there is no such connection between you and me, to give me a like claim, and lay you under a like obligation; yet, what is here urged and pressed, being an incumbent duty on every one that is engaged in the sacred work of the ministry, you will suffer this exhortation kindly, and take it in good part: in which may be observed,

I. The principal thing it is concerned about, the form of sound words.

II. The exhortation respecting it, to hold it fast.

III. The manner in which it is to be held, unless it should be rather a reason why it should be held fast, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.

I. The principal thing this charge is about, the form of sound words. By words are not meant mere words, of there we should not be tenacious, when one may as well be used as another, to express the sense and meaning of any doctrine; when words are synonymous, signify the same thing, and

convey the same idea, to wrangle and dispute about them would be vain and trifling; such mere logomachies and strivings about words to no profit, are condemned and dissuaded from, by our apostle (1 Tim. 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:14.) Yet when words and phrases have long obtained in the churches of Christ, and among the faithful dispensers of the word; the sense of which is determinate and established, and well known, and they fitly express the meaning of those that use them; they should not be easily parted with, and especially unless others and better are substituted in their room; for there is often truth in that maxim, *qui singit nova verba, nova gignit dogmata*, "he that coins new words, coins new doctrines." Should any man require of me to drop certain words and phrases in treating of divine truths, without offering to place others and better in their room; I could consider such a man in no other view, than that he had an intention to rob me, to rob me of what is more precious than gold and silver, that is, truth. There are certain words and phrases excepted to by the adversaries of truth, because they are not, as said, syllabically expressed in scripture; but be it so, if what they signify is contained in scripture, they may be lawfully and with propriety used, and retained in use: some concern the doctrine of the divine Being, and others the work of Christ; some relate to the divine Being, as essence, unity, trinity in unity, and person. Essence is no other than that by which a thing or person is what it is, and may with great propriety be attributed to God, who is $\tau\omicron\upsilon\omicron\upsilon$, the being, who is, exists, and which his glorious name JEHOVAH is expressive of, deciphered by the apostle John, who is, and was, and is to come (Rev. 1:4).

Nor need we scruple the use of the word unity with respect to him, since our Lord says, I and my Father are one (John 10:30); one in nature and essence, though not in person; nor the phrase trinity in unity, since the apostle John says, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost; and these three are one (1 John 5:7): as for the word person, that is used in scripture both of the Father and of the Son; the Son is said to be the *express image of his person* (Heb. 1:3), that is, of the person of God the Father; and the Son must be a person, too, or he would not be the express image of his Father's person; besides, the word is used of him also, for we read of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6); or in the person of Christ, and so the phrase is rendered in the same epistle (2 Tim. 2:10); for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ. Such phrases as concern the work of Christ objected to, are the imputation of his righteousness to his people, and the imputation of their sins to him, and the satisfaction made by him for them; as for imputed righteousness, that is nearly syllabically expressed, even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works (Rom. 4:6); and as for the imputation of sin to Christ, though it is not in so many syllables expressed, the thing itself is plain and clear: he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21); that is, God made him sin by imputing sin to him, for in no other way could he be made sin, since no sin was inherent in him; and this agrees with the language of the Old Testament, the Lord hath laid on him, or made to meet on him, the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:6); that is, by imputing it to him. And though the word satisfaction is not used of the work of Christ in scripture, yet what is meant by it is plentifully declared in it; as that Christ has done and suffered in the room and stead of his people, every thing with well-pleas'dness to God, and to the full content of law and justice; as when it is said, The Lord is well-pleas'd for his righteousness sake (Isa. 42:21); the reason follows, he will magnify the law, and make it honorable; and also Christ hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor (Eph. 5:2); so that it may be truly said, God is fully satisfied with the obedience, righteousness, sufferings, death and sacrifice of Christ, But after all, the apostle in the charge given does not design mere words but doctrines; so the words of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 6:3), he somewhere speaks of, are no other

than the doctrines preached by Christ, or the doctrines concerning his person, offices and grace; and the words of the apostles of Christ, are no other than their doctrines; *their found went into all the earth*, and their words, that is, their doctrines, *unto the ends of the world* (Rom. 10:18): and these are *the words of faith and good doctrine*, in which *Timothy was nourished* (1 Tim. 4:6): and these are found words or doctrines; so we often read of sound doctrine, as, if there be any other thing, that is contrary to found doctrine; and the time will come, when they will not endure, sound doctrine; and that he may be able by sound doctrine to exhort, etc. and speak thou the things which become sound doctrine (1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1); and which may be called sound, in opposition to the doctrines of false teachers, the perverse disputings men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, and reprobate concerning the faith (1 Tim. 6:5; 2 Tim. 3:8); whose words or doctrines eat as doth a canker (2 Tim. 2:17), prey upon the vitals of religion; and are said to be pernicious, ruinous, and destructive to the souls of men; and some of which the apostle, without any breach of charity, borrows the epithet of damnable upon (2 Pet.2:1,2): and good doctrines may be called sound, because they are in themselves salutary and healthful; pleasant words, as the wise man says (Prov. 16:24), and such evangelical doctrines be; they *are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones*: the words or doctrines of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles are wholesome ones, salubrious and nourishing; the words of faith and good doctrine have a nutritive virtue in them, under a divine blessing, to nourish persons up unto eternal life; they contain milk for babes, the sincere milk of the word, which they desire that they may grow thereby; and meat for strong men, who have their spiritual senses exercised, to discern between good and evil; and there being found by believing souls, are eaten, and prove to be the joy and rejoicing of their hearts, and are more esteemed of by them than their necessary food.

Now there is a form of these sound words or doctrines: by which may be meant the form or manner of teaching them; as the Jew, who was an instructor of others, had his form of knowledge and of truth in the law (Rom. 2:20), a method of instructing in the knowledge of it, and of teaching the truths contained in it; so a Christian teacher has *the form of godliness* (2 Tim. 3:5), a form of knowledge of it, and a method of teaching the mysteries of godliness, though sometimes without the power of it: or rather, here it signifies a brief luminary or compendium of truths; the Jew had his creed, which contained the fix principles, the beginning of the doctrine of Christ, the author of the epistle to the Hebrews speaks of; which the believing Christian was not to stop at and stick in, but to go on to perfection; to embrace and profess doctrines more sublime and perfect. [u](#)

The apostle Paul, that complete, exact, and accurate preacher of the gospel, reduced the subject of his ministry and the doctrine he preached, to two heads, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21); he gives a most excellent form of sound words, and a summary of the gospel in Romans 8:29,30. Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate: — moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified; and which some, not improperly, have called the golden chain of man's salvation; every link in it is precious, and not to be parted, and the whole is not to be departed from: the word $\upsilon\pi\omicron\tau\upsilon\pi\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$, here used, may signify a pattern, and so it is rendered 1 Timothy 1:16, the allusion is thought to be to painters, who first form a rough draught, or draw the outlines of their portrait, which is as a pattern to them, within the compass of which they always keep, and beyond which they never go. A scheme, a system of gospel-truths may be extracted from the scriptures, and used as a pattern for ministers to preach by, and for hearers to form their judgments by, of what they hear; which seems to be what the apostle calls the analogy or

proportion of faith (Rom. 12:6), which should not be deviated from: if any man teach otherwise, and continue not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing (1 Tim. 6:3): and again, says the apostle, though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, and he adds, than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:9,10); and this is the *τυπος*, or form of doctrine (Rom. 6:17), which is delivered to the saints, or into which they are delivered, as into a form or mold, and become evangelized by it; and according to this they are to form their judgment of preachers, and shape their conduct and behavior towards them; for if they bring not the doctrine of Christ with them, they are not to receive them, nor bid them God-speed (2 John 1:10): if ministers, when they have formed and digested from the scriptures a scheme and system of gospel-truths, would be careful to say nothing contradictory to it; there would not be that want of consistency, so justly complained of, in the present ministry in common, nor that confusion in the minds of hearers.

I have hitherto dealt chiefly in generals, I shall now descend to the particulars of this form of sound words or doctrines, which you, my Brother, should hold fast; and shall begin,

First, With the doctrine of the Trinity of persons in one God, which is the foundation of revelation, and of the economy of man's salvation; it is what enters into every truth of the gospel, and without which no truth can be truly understood, nor rightly explained: it consists of various branches; as that there is but one God, and that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead, Father, Son and holy Spirit, and that there are equally and truly God. There is but one God; this is the voice both of reason and revelation; it is the doctrine of the Old and of the New Testament; it is the doctrine of Moses and the prophets; hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord (Deut. 6:4): and it is the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; of Christ, who calls the above words, the first of all the commandments (Mark 12:39); and of the apostles, who declare, there is one God and one Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5), to believe and profess this truth is right and well, thou believest that there is one God, thou dost well (Jam. :19): all professing Christianity are Unitarians in a sense, but not in the same sense; some are Unitarians in opposition to a trinity of persons in one God; others are Unitarians in perfect consistence with that doctrine. Those of the former sort stand ranked in very bad company; for a Delft: who rejects divine revelation in general, is an Unitarian; a Jew that rejects the writings of the New Testament, and Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah, is an Unitarian; a Mahometan is an Unitarian, who believes in one God, and in his prophet Mahomet; a Sabellian is an Unitarian, who denies a distinction of persons in the Godhead; a Socinian is an Unitarian, who asserts that Christ did not exist before he was born of the virgin, and that he is God, not by nature, but by office; an Arian may be said, in a sense, to be an Unitarian, because he holds one supreme God; though rather he may be reckoned a Tritheist, since along with the one supreme God, he holds two subordinate ones. Those only are Unitarians in a true and found sense, who hold a trinity of distinct persons in one God. This is the doctrine of divine Revelation, the doctrine of the Old and of the New Testament, the doctrine of that famous, text before mentioned, *hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*; the word for our God is plural, the word used is *Elohim*, a word of the plural number, and expressive of a plurality of persons; and the sense of the words is, and it is the sense of the ancient Jews,¹²¹ our God, *Elohenu*, the three divine persons are one Jehovah, one Lord; and with this perfectly agrees what the apostle John says, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one,(1 John 5:7), are one God. The authenticity of this. passage has been disputed, but not disproved; the knowledge and use of it may

be traced up to the times of Tertullian, who lived within a hundred years or thereabouts of the writing of the autograph itself by the apostle John; but could it be disproved, the doctrine is to be defended without it, as it was by the ancient Christians against the Arians: the proof of it is abundant; not to take notice of any other but the baptism of Christ, and the form of the administration of baptism prescribed by him; at the baptism of Christ, all the three divine persons appeared; there was the Son of God clothed in human nature, submitting in that nature to the ordinance of baptism, being baptized of John in Jordan's river; and there was the Father, who by a voice from heaven declared, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17); and there was the Spirit of God, who descended upon him as a dove; this was reckoned so clear a proof of a trinity of persons, that the ancients used to say, "Go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the trinity:" and the form of the administration of baptism prescribed by our Lord, which was to baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19); is such a testimony of a trinity of persons in unity, that the whole herd of Antitrinitarians, of whatsoever name, are not able to destroy; a proof this of the divinity of each person, since baptism administered in their name, is a lateran act of religious worship, and which otherwise would be idolatry; and of the equality of each person, since it is ordered to be administered equally in the name of the one, as in the name of the other; not in the name of one supreme God, and in the name of two inferior ones; and of the distinction of there by the relative properties in the divine nature, paternity, filiation and spiration; and of their unity as the one God, since the order is to administer baptism not in the names, but in the name of Father, Son and Spirit. And now it is to be believed and to be held fail, that there are equally and truly God: of the Father there is no dispute; and of the deity of the Son there need be no question, since of the Son of God it is expressly said, this is the true God and eternal life (1 John 5:20); and again, unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever (Heb. 1:8); the divine names he bears, and the divine nature and perfections, and the fullness of them he is possessed of; the divine works which are attributed to him, and the divine worship paid him, are full proofs of his true and proper deity: and that the holy Spirit is truly and properly God, is manifest in that, lying to him is called lying to God: the name Jehovah is given him which belongs only to the most High; he is described as a person, having understanding and will, and to whom personal actions are ascribed, and as a divine person, possessed of eternity, immensity, omnipresence, omniscience, etc. and the do, fine of the deity of there persons should be held fast, since this has an influence on the works ascribed to them, and without which they could not have been performed by them: and along with this is to be taken the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God, and which, with the rest, my Brother, you ape to hold fail; since this is the hinge on which the doctrine of the trinity defends, without this it cannot be supported; take away this, and it falls to the ground; this the Antitrinitarians of every name are sensible of, and therefore bend all their force and spite against: it, and is a reason why it should be held fall: by us: that Christ is the Son of God, is attested by the divine persons themselves; and has been acknowledged by angels and men, good and bad but the thing is, in what sense he is so: not in any of the Socinian senses; I say, not in any of them, because they are many, which shows the wretched puzzle and uncertainty they are at about it; for there can be but one true sense in which Christ is the Son of God: he is not called the Son of God, because of some likeness in him to God, as they sometimes say; nor because of the affection of God to him, as at other times; nor is he so by adoption; nor on account of his miraculous incarnation; nor of his resurrection from the dead; nor of his mediatorial office: but since he is said to be the begotten Son of God, and to be the only begotten of the Father, and the Father is laid to be his own Father, his proper Father, and so not in an improper, figurative and metaphorical sense, he appears to be the Son of God by the generation

of him, who said, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Ps. 2:7): how and in what manner the Son is begotten of the Father, I do not pretend to explain, nor ought any; but I firmly believe he is, and that for this very good reason, because the scripture asserts it; we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father (John 1:14); we know but little of our own nature, and still less of the nature of God, and should be content with the account which he himself has given of it, who best understands it. For what is his name? that is, his nature, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell? (Prov. 30:4). I have said, that "the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence, depends upon the article of the son's generation, and therefore if this cannot be maintained, the other must fall of course;" and for my own part, could I be prevailed upon to part with this article of faith, I would at once give up the doctrine of the trinity, as quite indefensible; and indeed it would be the height of folly^[3] to talk of a distinction of persons in the Deity, when the foundation of such distinction is removed; for we pretend to no other distinction in it, but what arises from the internal relative properties in God, as paternity, filiation and spiration, the ground of which is, the eternal generation of the Son; for without that there can be neither Father, nor Son, nor Spirit. The works of God done by him, such as those of creation, redemption and grace, and offices bore, serve to illustrate the distinction made, but could never make any: the works of God are ad extra, and are common to the three persons, and therefore do not distinguish them; for though some works are more peculiarly attributed to one than to another, each has a concern in them all: besides they come too late, they are wrought in time, whereas the nature of God, be it what it may, is eternal; and if there is any distinction in it, it must be natural, original and eternal; and indeed the Father was never without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, but was the eternal Son of the eternal Father and neither of them without their breath or spirit, the Spirit which proceedeth from the Father, and is the Spirit of the Son: besides, as what God is, and he is what he always was, he is, and was so necessarily; and if there is any distinction in his nature, it is of necessity, and not of will; whereas the works of God are arbitrary things, which might or might not have been, according to the will and pleasure of the divine Being; but God would have been what he is, and if there is any distinction in him, it must have been, if these had never had been; if there never had been an angel created, nor a man redeemed, nor a sinner sanctified, nor any office sustained by Christ as mediator, which is arbitrary also. This then being the case, if the article of the Son's generation cannot be maintained, as then there can be no distinction of persons, we must unavoidably sink into the Sabellian folly; therefore, my Brother, hold fast: this part and branch of the form of sound words.

Secondly, Another part of this form of sound words to be held fast, is the doctrine of the everlasting love of the three persons to the elect; the love of the Father in choosing them in Christ, providing a Savior for them, and sending him in the fullness of time to work out their salvation; the love of the Son in becoming a surety for them, in the assumption of their nature, and in suffering and dying in their room and stead, to obtain their eternal redemption; and the love of the Spirit in applying grace unto them, implanting it in them, in being their Comforter, the Spirit of adoption to them, and the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them up unto the day of redemption: this love is to be held, and held fast, as being sovereign and free; nor arising from any cause or causes in men, from any motives and conditions in them; not from their loveliness, being defiled and loathsome as others, and by nature children of wrath; nor from their love to God, since he loved them first, and when they did not love him; nor from their obedience and good works, since while they were foolish and disobedient, the love and kindness of God the Savior towards man appeared; but from the will and pleasure of God, who loved them because he would love them. And this doctrine of the

love of God is to be held, and held fast, as being special and discriminating; not as a love of all, but of some only; for though the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord, and all the inhabitants of it partake thereof, and share the bounties of his providence; his tender mercies are over all his works, and he causes his sun to shine, and rain to descend on the just and unjust; yet he has a peculiar people whom he has chosen for himself, and to whom he bears a peculiar love; hence David desired (Ps. 106:4), that he would remember him with the favor he bore to his own people. This should be held, and held fast, as being what commenced from everlasting, and continues to everlasting; it was taken up in the heart of God before the world was, and he rests and abides in his love, and nothing is able to separate from it: it is as immutable and invariable as himself; as he is the Lord that changes not such is his love, yea, he himself is love, God is love (1 John 4:16); the states and conditions of men are various, but the love of God is the same in all; he may change his dispensations, but he never changes his love; when he hides his face, he still loves; and when he chides, chastises and corrects, he does not utterly take away nor at all take away his loving, kindness. This doctrine in this light is to be held fast, because the everlasting love of God is the bond of union to him, and is the source and spring of all the blessings of grace, which are exhibited and held forth in the several doctrines of grace.

Thirdly, The doctrine of eternal, personal, and particular election, is another part of the form of sound words to be held fast; as that election is eternal, was from the beginning, as the apostle tells the Thessalonians (2 Thess. 2:13); not from the beginning of the gospel coming unto them, or from the beginning of their conversion and faith, but from the beginning of time, or before time: for the phrases, from the beginning, and from everlasting, are the same, as appears from Proverbs 8:23. Besides, the apostle expressly says, this choice was made *before the foundation of the world* (Eph. 1:4). It is also personal and particular; not a choice of propositions and characters, but of persons, he hath chosen us, as in the same place; not a choice of whole bodies of men, of nations, and churches, but of particular persons, known to the Lord by name; the Lord knows them, that are his (2 Tim. 2:19); *I know whom I have chosen*, says Christ (John 13:18): they are as if they were particularly named: hence their names are said (Philip. 4:3; Rev. 13:8; 17:8; 20:15): to be *written in the Lamb's book of life*. This choice is of pure grace; not on the foresight of faith; for faith is the fruit of it, flows from it, and is secured by it; as many as were ordained unto eternal life, believed (Acts 13:48): nor on the foresight of holiness, or on account of that; for God chose his people, not because they were holy, but that they might be so: he chose them through sanctification before time, and therefore calls them to holiness in time: nor because of their good works; for the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth (Rom. 9:11). And here it is called the *election of grace* (Rom. 11:5,6), and strongly argued not to be of works, but of the pure sovereign grace of God: and it is both to grace and glory, to special blessings of grace, of faith, and holiness, to conformity to the image of Christ now, and, to eternal glory and happiness hereafter, which is ensured by it; for, *whom he predestinates; he also glorifies*. Now, this part of the form of sound words is to be held fast, because it stands foremost in the blessings of grace, and is the standard and rule according to which God proceeds in dispensing the rest; for he blesses his people with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in him (Eph. 1:3).

Fourthly, The doctrine of the covenant of grace is to be held fast, made between the eternal three, when there were none in being but themselves; no creature, neither an angel, nor a man, nor the soul of a man; none but God, Father, Son and Spirit, between whom and them alone the covenant-

transactions were; even before the world was, or any creature whatever in being; hence it is called an everlasting covenant (2 Sam. 23:5.) being from everlasting; as well as it will continue to everlasting; which appears from Christ's being set up so early as the mediator of it, from the provision of blessings of grace in it so early, which were given to the elect in Christ, and they were blessed with them in him before the world was; and from promises made in it so early, particularly the promise of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began (Titus 1:2). It is absolute and unconditional; no conditions in it but what were engaged to be performed, and have been and are performed by the Son of God, and by the Spirit of God: with respect to the persons on whose account the covenant was made; all the promises run in this stile, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people; I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me: I will take away the stony heart, and give them an heart of flesh; a new heart and a new spirit will I give them, and I will put my spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes; and they shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Jer. 32:38-40; Ezek. 36:26,27). It is a covenant of pure grace to the elect; and is sure, firm, and inviolable: it is ordered in all things and sure; its blessings are the sure mercies of David, and its promises are all yea and amen in Christ (2 Sam. 23:5; Isa. 55:3; 2 Cor. 1:20). It is a covenant God will not break, and men cannot: it is immovable, and more so than rocks and mountains; the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but the covenant of peace shall never be removed (Isa. 54:10). Now the doctrine concerning this is to be held fall, because it is the bails of the works done by the Son and Spirit of God; of the Son's work in redemption, according to his suretyship-engagements in this covenant; and of the Spirit's work in sanctification, according to his own agreement in it.

Fifthly, The doctrine of original sin, which opens and describes the state and condition of men by nature, is another part of the form of found words to be held fall; as that all men sinned in Adam, in whom they were federally as their covenant-head; in which respect he was the figure or type of him that was to come (Rom. 5:14); that is, of Christ. Hence the apostle gives the parallel between these two covenant-heads; the one, as conveying grace, righteousness, and life, to his feed; and the other, as conveying sin, condemnation, and death, to all his posterity. Besides, all men were in Adam seminally, in like sense as Levi was in the loins of Abraham, when he paid tithes to Melchizedek (Heb. 7:9,10): so all men were in the loins of their first father, and when he sinned, sinned in him, and were made, constituted, reckoned, and accounted sinners, by his disobedience. The guilt of his sin is imputed to them, so as that judgment comes upon them all to condemnation; and death reigns over them, and all die in him, and a corrupt nature is propagated from him to them: they are all, like *David, shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin*: and indeed how can it otherwise be? for who can bring, a clean thing out of an unclean? not one (Job 14:41). There never was but one instance of Adam's race free from his sin, and that was the human nature of Christ: but then that did not descend from him by ordinary generation, but was brought into the world in a supernatural way, and so escaped the contagion of sin. Now it is necessary that this doctrine should be held fast, since it accounts for the corruption of human nature; shows the reason of men being so prone to sin, and biased to it; so impotent to that which is good; and so averse to it: and also shows the necessity of redemption, regeneration, and sanctification.

Sixthly, The doctrine of redemption by Christ, is another part of the form of sound words to be held fast; as that it is special and. particular; though, Christ gave his life a ransom for many, yet not for all: those that are redeemed by him are redeemed from among men, *out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation*: they are Christ's special people he came to save: his sheep the Father gave him,

and he undertook the care or, he laid down his life for: the children of God, that were scattered abroad, he came to gather together by his sufferings and death; and his church he gave himself for, even *the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven*: and that this redemption is procured by way of satisfaction to the justice of God; he redeemed his people by paying a price for it, even his, precious blood. Redemption was obtained by Christ through his sufferings, the just for the unjust; by his being wounded, bruised, and stricken, for the transgressions of his people; by bearing their iniquities, and the punishment of them; by his being made sin and a curse for them, thereby redeeming them from sin and the curses of the law; and this doctrine of redemption by the blood of Christ, and atonement by his sacrifice, should be held fast, it being the foundation of a sinner's peace, joy, and comfort.

Seventhly, The doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, is another branch of the form of sound words to be held fast: this proceeds from the free grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ; the matter of it is what is commonly called the active and passive obedience of Christ, which, with the holiness of his nature, are imputed, for justification, being what is required to it by the holy law of God; and hence sometimes men are said to be made righteous by the obedience of Christ, and sometimes to be justified by his blood (Rom. 5:9,10), which is put for his whole sufferings and death; by the one Christ has fulfilled the preceptive part of the law; and by the other has bore the penalty of it; and by both has given full satisfaction to it: the form of it is the imputation of righteousness without works, by an act of God's grace: this righteousness is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith; and faith is wrought in the soul, to lay hold on it, receive it, and plead it as its justifying righteousness, from whence much peace and comfort flow. Justification may be considered as a sentence conceived in the divine mind from eternity; and as pronounced on Christ, the head and surety of his people, when he rose from the dead, and upon them in him; and as it is again pronounced in the conscience of a believer, when the righteousness of Christ is revealed to him, and received by him; and as it will be notified, and be openly and publicly pronounced before angels and men, when all the seed of Israel, or the whole elect in a body, shall be justified and shall glory. This is to be held fast; for, as Luther called it, it is *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*, "the article by which the church stands or falls."

Eighthly, The doctrines of pardon, peace, and reconciliation by the blood of Christ, are parts of this form of sound words to be held fast; that the pardon of sin is through the blood of Christ, which, as it was shed for the remission of sin, through it we have it, and through that only, and not on account of repentance, humiliation and confession, as meritorious or procuring causes of it; and that peace is made by the blood of Christ, from whence peace of conscience flows; and that both reconciliation for our sins, and reconciliation of our persons to God, is made by the death of Christ; hence the gospel which publishes this is called the word of reconciliation, and the gospel of peace (2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 6:15), which therefore should be held fast.

Ninthly, The doctrines of regeneration, effectual calling, conversion, and sanctification by the spirit, power, and grace of God, are parts of the same form and system; the necessity of regeneration, without which there is no seeing nor entering into the kingdom of God, must be asserted; and that it is not of man, of the power and will of man, but of the power and will of God: that effectual vocation is by the grace of God, and not according to the works of men; that conversion is not of him that willeth nor runneth, but of the mighty power of God, who works in men both to will and to do; that sanctification is absolutely necessary to salvation, for without

holiness no man shall see the Lord; that this is the work of the Spirit Of God, and is therefore called the sanctification of the Spirit (1 Pet. 1:2.), and which he gradually carries on, and will perform until the day of Christ. Wherefore,

Tenthly and lastly, and which bring up the rear, the doctrine of the saints final perseverance is a part of this form of sound words to be held fast; even that all that are chosen by the Father, and redeemed by the Son, and sanctified by the Spirit, shall persevere in faith and holiness to the end; being encircled in the arms of everlasting love, secured in the everlasting covenant, united to Christ their head, surety, and savior, built on him the rock of ages, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, and so are like mount Zion, which can never be removed; and being in the hands of Christ, out of whose hands none can pluck, and who is able to keep them from failing; and being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. These are at least some of the principal things which make up the form of sound words, which you, my Brother, are to hold fast, maintain and publish in your ministry. What remains now to be considered are the exhortation to hold it fast, and the manner in which it is to be done, on which I shall not long dwell.

II. The exhortation respecting the form of sound words, hold fast. This supposes a man to have it, as all such exhortations suppose persons to have what they are exhorted to hold, and hold fast; and which is sometimes expressed; as, *that which ye have already, hold fast till I come*; and again, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown (Rev. 2:25; 3:14): and Timothy, to whom the exhortation in the text is given, was in possession of the form of sound words; it was a sacred depositum committed to his trust. Hence it follows, *that good thing, which was committed unto thee, keep by the holy Ghost which dwelleth in us*; it was in his hand, in his head, and in his heart; the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach (Rom. 10:8); and what is had should be held; it should be held forth, holding forth the word of life (Philip. 2:16); and the word of light. Ministers are lights, and have light communicated to them, which should shine forth, and not be put under a bushel; what they have freely received they should freely give; what is told them in private in their studies, they should publicly declare, and affirm those things constantly; they should hold fast the faithful word, as they have been taught, and have taught others, and tenaciously abide by it; so Timothy was exhorted to do, and which will serve more fully to confirm and explain the exhortation here, continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them (2 Tim. 3:14).

This exhortation to *hold fast the form of sound words*, is opposed to dropping or departing from it, which may be done by those who have had it; men may receive the grace of God in vain; that is, the doctrine of the grace of God; they may first receive it with seeming pleasure and satisfaction, and afterwards reject it; they may fail of the grace of God in this sense, and fall from it partially or totally; so such that seek for and hold justification by the law, are fallen from grace (2 Cor. 6:1; Heb. 12:15; Gal. 5:4); from the doctrine of grace, and particularly from the doctrine of justification by the grace of God through the righteousness of Christ: and as private professors may drop and depart from the doctrines of the gospel formerly received and held by them, so may ministers of the word drop and depart: from found words and doctrines they have formerly professed and preached. And it is opposed to wavering about the form of sound words, and instability in it; and suggests, that such who have it should not be like children, tossed about with every wind of doctrine, nor be carried about, like meteors in the air, with divers and strange doctrines, doctrines various in themselves and foreign to the word of God; but should affirm constantly with boldness, confidence

and courage, the truths of the gospel; for this also stands opposed to timidity, cowardice and pusillanimity; when they should be valiant for the truth, stand fast in the faith, quit themselves like men, and be strong; and not give way, no not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with the faints.

Moreover this exhortation, considered in this light, supposes that Timothy, and so other gospel-ministers, may at times be under temptations to let go the form of found words, or drop the truths of the gospel, through fear of men, and because of the obloquy, reproaches and persecutions of men, see verses 7, 8, 12, they may be tempted hereunto, as on the one hand to escape being censured as bigots, enthusiasts, narrow-spirited men, and void of common-sense and reason; and on the other hand to obtain the characters of men of sense, of moderate principles, of candor and ingenuity, and of being polite and rational preachers. And it also suggests that there might be such persons who fought every opportunity to wring this form of found words out of the hands of Timothy, and so of any other minister of the word, as well as of those under their ministry; men that lie in wait to deceive, to beguile and corrupt the minds of men from the simplicity in Christ, and therefore to be guarded against.

III. The manner in which the form of found words is to be held fast; *in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus*: which words may be connected with the phrase *which thou hast heard of me*. Timothy had heard the apostle preach those found doctrines with great faithfulness; for he was a faithful minister of the gospel, who *kept back nothing that was profitable, and shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God*; he had heard him speak the truth in love, with great warmth of affection, with much vehemence and fervency of spirit; and he himself had heard and received the word preached in faith, and had mixed it with faith, and digested it by it, and was nourished with it; he had received the love of the truth, and the truth in the love of it: and the phrase, viewed in this light, contains a reason why therefore he should hold fast: the form of found words he had received in such a manner: or they may be considered as connected with the form of found words; as if faith and love were the subjects of it; that it lay in things to be believed, as the gospel does; and therefore called the word of faith, the faith of the gospel, and the faith once delivered to the faints; and in duties and ordinances to be observed from love to God and Christ; and so is a reason as before, why it should be held fast: or else it is to be connected with the exhortation hold fast; and so directs to the manner in which it is to be held; the faithful word, the word to be believed, is to be held, held forth, and held fast in faithfulness; *he that hath my word*, this form of sound words in his head, and in his mouth and heart, let him speak my word faithfully; what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord (Jer. 23:28), and this word of truth is to be held fast and spoken in love; in love to God, to Christ, to the word, and to the souls of men. It follows, which is in Christ Jesus; either the form of found words is in him; all truth is in him, he is full of that as well as of grace; all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, of the mysteries of grace, are hid in him (1 Tim. 4:12-16), and they come from him; the words or doctrines of wisdom and knowledge are given from one shepherd (Col. 2:3), Christ, to his under shepherds, to feed his churches with knowledge and understanding: or else this is to be understood of the graces of faith and love, in the exercise of which the word is to be preached, heard and held fast; there are originally in Christ, and come from him; the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus (Eccl. 12:11); as well as they are exercised on him as the object of them.

Thus have I considered this charge of the apostle to Timothy, in the method proposed; and you, my Brother, should receive it as if it had been delivered to you, it being what concerns and is obligatory upon every minister of the gospel: I shall close with some other branches of the apostle's charge, to Timothy, which you would do well also to advert unto; Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. — Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine—neglect not the gift that is in thee — meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. — Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee (1 Tim. 1:14). I have done; God give success to your ministrations.

ENDNOTES:

1[1] See my Comment on Hebrews 6:1.

1[2] Zohar in Genesis 1:3, and in Exodus 18:3,4, and in Numbers 67:3.

1[3] Of such absurdity and inconsistency the late Dr. Ridgley was guilty; exploding the doctrine of the generation of the Son of God, and adopting the Socinian notion of sonship by office; and yet at the same time declaring for a distinction of three divine persons in the Godhead. A strange paradox this! and it is a disgrace to that body of men of whole denomination the Doctor was, that none of his brethren attempted to refute him, though they in general disliked his opinion and dissented from him; perhaps they thought the contradiction was so glaring, that his own notions confuted themselves; this is the best apology I can make for them

The
**FAITHFUL MINISTER OF CHRIST
CROWNED.**

**Occasioned by the Death of Mr. William Anderson, Baptist
Minister.**

Preached September 20, 1767.

2 TIMOTHY 4:6, 7

I have fought a (or the) good fight, I have finished my (the) course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

These words are read unto you on account of the death of Mr. William Anderson, late minister of the gospel. It was the latter of these two verses the deceased took notice of on his death-bed, and repeated with a singular appropriation to himself, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, etc. for which reason it is judged a proper subject of a funeral discourse. I have read both verses, because there is a close connection between them, and they depend one on another; and the sense of the one cannot be understood so fully and clearly without the other; and the beauty of the passage would otherwise be greatly lost. The apostle, in the preceding part of the chapter, gives a strict charge to Timothy, in a very solemn manner, before God and his son Jesus Christ, whom he describes as judge of quick and dead: the charge is, to perform diligently the several parts of his ministerial office, the particulars of which you may read at your leisure; and to urge him the more strongly to attend to this charge, he suggests to him, that it was delivered by him as a dying man; and that this was the last time he might expect to have any charge, counsel, directions, and instructions from him; for, says he, I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; phrases very significant, and very expressive of his death: the former of them represents his death as a sacrifice, I am ready to be offered, or to be poured forth as a libation or drink-offering; not by way of sacrifice, to make atonement for sin, either his own or others, this he knew was made by the sacrifice of Christ; but by way of martyrdom, as a victim to the cause of truth, for the sake of the gospel, and the confirmation of it: and if laying down his life would be of any service to the interest of Christ and his people, he was ready to do it with all cheerfulness and pleasure; as he elsewhere says (Philip. 2:17), yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. The latter phrase, the time of my departure is at hand; is an expression of death in a very familiar manner; a way of speaking used by our Lord, and by our apostle in another place (John 13:1; Philp. 1:23); signifying, that death is not the annihilation of men, there is

a state of existence after it; it is only a departing elsewhere: it is indeed a dissolution of the union between soul and body, an analysis, as the word in the text is, or a resolution of the body into its original principles; a departure out of one world into another; a removing, as it were, from one house to another, from an earthly house of this tabernacle, to an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; for which there is a time fixed, beyond which life cannot pass: and this the apostle, with respect to himself, knew was at hand; and which he might conclude, either from his years, or rather from the state and situation in which he was, being in bonds for the gospel, and having been brought before Nero a second time; and perhaps the sentence of death was passed upon him by that Emperor, and the dead warrant was come for his execution, or at least he soon expected it; or he might know his death was near, by an impulse upon his mind, and a particular Rev. from God; and in the cheerful view of it he expresses the words first read. In which may be observed,

I. A pleasing reflection on his past conduct, or on what through the grace of God he had been enabled to do.

First, He had fought a good fight.

Secondly, Had finished his course.

Thirdly Had kept the faith.

II. A delightful and comfortable prospect, and the firm belief he had of future happiness; which happiness is,

First, Expressed by a crown, by a crown of righteousness, by a crown laid up, and that in particular for him.

Secondly, Of which happiness he was assured, that it would be given him; and by whom, the Lord, the righteous Judge; and in what manner, by way of gift; and at what time, at that day. And, Thirdly, For the encouragement of common saints and believers in Christ to expect the same, he adds, and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing; the appearing of Christ. The apostle looked backward to what was past, and forward to what was to come.

Here is,

I. A pleasing reflection on his past conduct, or on what through the grace of God he had been enabled to perform; this he could not do before, but now he could: a minister of Christ, whilst he is fighting with enemies, running his race, and discharging his trust, cannot stop, and is not at leisure to make such a reflection, nor can he with propriety do it; but when all is over, when the battle is fought, and the victory got, when the race is ended, and he is come to the goal, is in fight of the prize, and just stretching out his hand to receive the crown; and when he has faithfully discharged his trust, and is delivering it up; then he can, and not till then, with pleasure express himself in the following manner the apostle does.

First, That he had fought a good fight; or rather, the good fight, as in 1 Timothy 6:12, or the fight, that good fight,^u for the article is doubled, which makes it the more emphatical. The present state of life is a state of warfare, in which every man is engaged: is there not a warfare to man on earth? as the words may be rendered, Job 7:1, there is; especially for a Christian man, whose warfare is as good as accomplished, as it most certainly will be; and more especially for a minister of the gospel, who is in peculiar circumstances, and is directed by peculiar means to war a good warfare, for which he has weapons peculiarly fitted and adapted: the weapons of our warfare, of us ministers, are not carnal, but mighty through God (1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Cor. 10:4), to answer particular purposes; for the demolition of Satan's kingdom, and the spread and enlargement of the kingdom of Christ: every Christian is a soldier; all the Lord's people are volunteers in Christ's service; thy people shall be willing, or volunteers, in the day of thy power, or in the day of thine army (Ps. 110:3), when that is collected together and mustered; but a minister of the gospel is particularly called to endure, and he ought to endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 2:3).

Ministers of the word are meant by the valiant men of Israel; who guard the bed of Solomon, the church, and are well accoutered for that service; having their loins girt with the girdle of truth; their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and every man his sword on his thigh (Song of Solomon 3:7, 8); the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: and being thus armed, their business is to fight the battles of the Lord; to play the men for their God, and the cities of their God; for Christ, and for his interest: and, as they have enemies in common with other Christians, and by whom they are more especially assaulted, they fight with them.

1. With the corruptions of their own hearts, those fleshly lusts which war against the soul; striving against sin (Heb. 12:4), or acting the part of an antagonist with it, even indwelling sin: and the great apostle Paul, though so holy a man, was not exempt from this combat. He found a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind (Rom. 7:23): he found himself under a necessity of keeping under his body, the body of sin, and not to make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it; but to keep a strict eye and hand over it, and to use a kind of severe discipline with it, lest whilst he preached to others, he himself should be a cast-away (1 Cor. 9:27): but now the conflict was over; and he, being on the shores of eternity, saw those spiritual enemies, the Egyptians who had distressed him, all slain and dead, and found himself a triumphant conqueror over them.

2. With Satan, and his principalities and powers. None of the saints in this life are free from Satan's temptations; nay, generally speaking, the most eminent, fruitful, and useful of them, are most furiously assaulted by him. Joseph was a fruitful bough by a well; and the archers shot at him, and sorely grieved him, though his bow abode in strength (Gen. 49:22-24). At those who are the most eminent for grace and usefulness, he lets fly his fiery darts thick and fast: the apostle Paul did not escape his buffetings; a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him (2 Cor. 12:7); he had many combats with him: we wrestle, I and other ministers, as well as the rest of saints, against principalities, against powers (Eph. 6:12), even the powers of darkness, Satan and his angels; and minister shave their peculiar temptations, with which they are assaulted by him; many are the difficulties, obstructions and impediments, he throws in their way; our apostle was not clear of them: we would have come to you, says he, writing to the Thessalonians (even I Paul) once and again, but Satan hindered us (1 Thess. 2:18); but now the battle with him was over, and Satan was bruised under his feet.

3. With the world, the reproaches and persecutions of it, and a great fight of afflictions in it: and particularly ministers have to do with false teachers in it, who resist the truth, as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses. Some think such as these were the beasts at Ephesus the apostle fought with; men, comparable to beasts, wolves in sheep's clothing, which entered the flock, and did damage to it by their pernicious doctrines; with whom the apostle had disputes in the school of Tyrannus, whilst he resided in those parts; though I see no reason to depart from the literal sense of the words: yet however it is certain, the apostle met with such men of corrupt minds, more or less, wherever he came; to whom he gave place, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with the churches; but now his contests and sharp disputes with them were at an end. This fight is called a good fight, and elsewhere the good fight of faith: the fight of faith, because faith, as a doctrine, is what is fought for; the Philippians are exhorted by the apostle to stand fast in one spirit, striving together, with him and with one another, for the faith of the gospel (Philp. 1:27); and, as Jude's phrase is, contend earnestly, even to an agony, for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3); and faith, as a grace, is the weapon saints fight with, especially with Satan, whom resist, stedfast in the faith (1 Pet. 5:9): and it is called a good fight, because it is in a good cause, the cause of God and truth; fought under a good captain, Christ, the captain of our salvation; under the banner of him, the Lord of hosts; and with good weapons the whole armor of God, armor of proof, than which none is better, and which always issues well, it ends in victory. It is said of Camillus, that he fought many and good fights;¹²¹ that is, many famous battles; but none so famous as this, fought by our apostle and others; in which the Christian combatants are always conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Christ, who has loved them.

Secondly, The apostle with pleasure observes, that he finished his course; which is what he had wished for, and cared not what he met with, so that he could but finish it with joy (Acts 20:24); and now it was done: by which may be meant, either the course of his life, of his days; the time of his departure was near; he was just going the way of all the earth, as Joshua expresses it; his age was departed, as Hezekiah says; his days were extinct, and the grave was ready for him, as Job thought was his case; his last sands were now dropping: or else his Christian race, called a course, in allusion to the Grecian games, in which men ran races, and to which the apostle frequently alludes, particularly in 1 Corinthians 9:24, etc. and in Philippians 3:13, 14, know ye not that they which run in a race, run all — so run, that ye may obtain: the stadium, or race-plot, which reaches from the place of starting to the goal, in which the Christian racer runs, is this world; what answers to the white line between the two terms, within which the racers were to run, and according to which they steered their course, that they might not go in and out, but move straight forward, is Christ; and who is the mark that is always to be kept in sight; and the prize run for, is the high calling of God in Christ, or the heavenly glory: or rather, by his course may be meant the course of his ministry; thus John's ministry is called his course, which he fulfilled; and so the apostle calls his, that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus (Acts 13:25; 20:24), and now it was just finishing; he was come to the end of his line, to Rome, where he was to bear his last testimony for Christ (Acts 23:11): all these three may be taken into the sense of the passage, the course of his life, his Christian race, and the course of his ministry; for they were all finished together.

Thirdly, The apostle observes, with like pleasure, that he had kept the faith: meaning, not the grace of faith; for though that is an abiding grace, and cannot be lost; is much more precious than gold, because that may perish, but this cannot; yet it is not in any man's own keeping; it is preserved and

supported by Christ, through his powerful mediation and intercession; who, as he prayed for Peter, so he prays for all his ministers, and all his saints, that their faith fail not; he is the author, and he is the finisher of it (Luke 22:32; Heb. 12:2): nor is a profession of faith meant; for though believers ought, and they are encouraged to hold fast the profession of their faith, from the priesthood of Christ, and the promises of God; yet this is what formal professors may do, and the foolish virgins did; they took their lamps of profession, and trimmed them too, so that they looked bright and splendid as to outward show; and they held and kept them likewise until the coming of the bridegroom: rather the doctrine of faith is intended, the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to the trust of the apostle; a sacred depositum lodged in his hands, which he was careful to keep, and had kept; what he exhorted Titus and Timothy to do, he had done himself, namely, to hold fast the faithful word; to hold fast the form of sound words, and keep the good thing committed to them (Titus 1:9: 2 Tim. 1:13, 14); this he had done, and had not suffered the gospel to be wrenched out of his hands, neither through the force of furious persecutors, nor through the art and sophistry of false teachers: unless it can be thought his fidelity is meant; God, when he put him into the ministry, counted him faithful, having made him so; and through the grace of God, he maintained his integrity, kept his fidelity; which appeared in declaring the whole counsel of God, and in keeping back nothing that was profitable to the saints; and he continued faithful unto death; and now, henceforth *λοιπον*, it remained, and nothing else remained for him to do, but to receive the crown of life and righteousness. Which brings me to consider,

II. The delightful and comfortable prospect, and firm belief the apostle had of his future happiness; which,

First, Is described by a crown, by a crown of righteousness, by a crown laid up, and that for him in particular. It is described by a crown; either,

(1) In allusion to royal crowns, such as are wore by kings and princes; and that partly for the glory of it, nothing being more glorious, more grand, and more august than a crown: and this is called a crown of glory, or a glorious crown; and indeed it excels all others in glory: crowns of gold are weighty things, but do not endure always; but the heavenly happiness is an eternal weight of glory (2 Cor. 4:17): this will consist of a glory put upon the saints; upon their bodies, which, though sown in dishonor, will be raised in glory, and fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; and upon their souls, which will be possessed of perfect knowledge, purity and holiness: and of a glory that will be revealed in them, and that will be revealed to them, and beheld by them, even the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ; with whom they will appear in glory, and be forever with him to behold his glory. And partly the heavenly happiness may be described by such a crown as suitable to the character of saints, who are made kings, as well as priests unto God by Christ; and who shall reign as such on earth, and that for the space of a thousand years, and then reign with him forever in heaven (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; 22:5). Nor are they mere titular kings; they have not only the title of kings, but they have a kingdom, a kingdom of grace now, which cannot be moved, and which lies in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost: and they are heirs of another kingdom; the kingdom of glory, prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and though they were in their nature-state beggars upon the dunghill, they are raised from thence to inherit the throne of glory; and thrones will be placed for them to fit upon; yea, every overcomer will sit down with Christ on his throne: and so likewise crowns are prepared for them; thus the four and twenty elders, the representatives

of gospel-churches, and the members of them, are said to have on their heads crowns of gold (Rev. 4:4). Or rather,

(2) The future happiness is described by a crown, in allusion to crowns given to conquerors in the Grecian exercises; one of which was running of races, as well as fighting, wrestling, etc. to which the apostle manifestly alludes in 1 Corinthians 9:24, 25. Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize: so run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. The apostle justly observes, that in those races men strove for mastery; and indeed for that only, for victory; merely for the honor and glory of being conquerors: as for the crowns that were given them, they were nothing worth, being only garlands made of the branches or leaves of laurel, or of olive, or of pines, and sometimes of parsley-leaves, things of no intrinsic value; nor was it for the sake of those they ran, but for the honor annexed to them, of being crowned with them. But the crown which the Christian racer, being a conqueror, obtains, is of real worth and value; sometimes expressed by the true riches, real and substantial; by an house, not made with hands; by an inheritance of the saints in light; by a city which has foundations; and by a kingdom and glory. The crown run for in the Grecian games was a corruptible one: the Corinthians knew full well what the apostle meant by a corruptible crown; for the Isthmian races were ran in their neighborhood, and the presidents and judges^[3] were of their city; and they must be sensible of the propriety of this epithet corruptible, since the crowns given to the conquerors in those races, were made of nothing but parsley;^[4] some say, dried: hence we read of persons being ornamented and honored with Corinthian parsley,^[5] or parsley-crowns; whereas the heavenly happiness is an incorruptible crown: so when it is spoken of as an inheritance, it is said to be an incorruptible one (1 Pet. 1:4); it cannot be corrupted itself; it lies where moth and rust corrupt not: nor can it be enjoyed by corrupt persons; corruption cannot inherit incorruption; in order to enjoy it, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and this corruptible must put on incorruption (1 Cor. 15:50, 52, 53), and be clear of every corruption, natural and sinful. Again, the crown the racers in the above exercises ran for, was a withering and fading one, as even those made of green and living parsley used in the Nemean exercises were;^[6] but the crown of eternal glory and happiness, is a crown of glory that fadeth not away; an amaranthine crown, as the word is,^[7] alluding to such crowns as were made of the herb amaranthus, which is immarcessible, and never fades, as its name imports;^[8] and of which crowns were made in the winter-season: so when this happiness is signified by an inheritance, it is called an inheritance that fadeth not away; it is durable and lasting, yea, everlasting; and therefore expressed by everlasting habitations; by an house eternal; by an eternal inheritance; and by the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ: and for the same reason it is sometimes called the crown of life (Jam. 1:12; Rev. 2:10), because it is a crown for life, as all crowns are not, even for an eternal life; yea, is eternal life itself, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

2. The happiness the apostle had a view of, and faith in, is further described as a crown of righteousness; still alluding to the crowns given to conquerors in the Grecian exercises, such as were obtained in a lawful manner, and legally adjudged to them; for, as the apostle says elsewhere, alluding to the same custom, if a man strive for masteries, who shall have the honor of being declared the conqueror, yet is he not crowned, except he drive lawfully (2 Tim. 2:5); if he used any illicit methods to obtain the prize, when detected, even after the prize was declared for him, he was disgraced, and the true and right conqueror, even though he might be dead, had the crown adjudged

to him,¹⁹¹ such strict justice was observed in those exercises; hence the crowns thus distributed were called θεμιπλεκτοι,¹¹⁰¹ "crowns wreathed or platted by justice:" in allusion to which, the apostle calls the heavenly happiness a crown of righteousness; it is what the saint comes at in a legal manner, what he has a just right unto; it is a kingdom his heavenly Father has bequeathed unto him; it is an inheritance he is born heir apparent to, and for which he has a meetness through the grace of God; and his title to it lies in the righteousness of Christ: no unrighteous man can inherit this crown and kingdom; and he must have a better righteousness than his own, or he will never be put into the possession of it; wherefore our apostle desired to be found in Christ, not having on his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ (Philp. 3:9); by which being justified, such become heirs of eternal life, are entitled to it, and shall most surely possess it. Moreover, though this crown is not given for the fidelity and integrity of those that fight and run, and keep the faith; yet it is the consequence thereof, and follows thereon, according to the divine promise, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life (Rev. 2:10).

Besides, this epithet of righteousness, may express the state and condition of the happy crowned ones; that it is a state of purity, holiness and righteousness; a state in which none but righteousness dwells, or righteous persons, who are made righteousness itself in the Lord; and so is called the crown of righteousness, just as it is the hope of righteousness (Gal. 5:5); that is, a state of righteousness which is hoped and waited for.

3. This happiness is further described as laid up; laid up in the covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things, and sure; where all grace and all spiritual blessings are secured for the saints, and their glory also; it cannot be said how great that goodness is, which is there laid up for them: this crown is also laid up in the hands of Christ the mediator; in whose hands the saints themselves are, and are safe; and where all fullness of grace is treasured up for them, and their life of glory is hid and preserved: it is also laid up in heaven, and is the same with the hope laid up in heaven (Col. 1:5), that is, the heavenly glory hoped for; and the inheritance reserved in heaven (1 Pet. 1:4): things that are laid up, are hid and out of sight; the glories of another world are invisible; they are things that are not seen and hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? (2 Cor. 4:18; Rom. 8:24, 25), and they are also safe. Crowns are generally laid up in places of great strength and safety; the crown of England is secured in the tower of London; though as strong a place, and as well guarded as that is, the crown was near being stolen and carried off in the last age: but the crown of life and glory is laid up where thieves do not break through, nor steal (Matthew 6:20), and this crown is laid up for particular persons; for me; and me, and me; for all the vessels of mercy before prepared for glory; for all chosen in Christ to holiness and happiness, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus; for all that love him, and love his appearing.

Secondly, The assurance the apostle had of his enjoying this happiness thus described; from whom he expected it would be bestowed upon him; in what way and manner, and at what time.

1. The person who, he was well assured, would give it to him, is Christ, who is described by the Lord, the righteous Judge; he is Lord of all, Lord of lords, and King of kings; who sets them up, and puts them down at his pleasure: and he who has the disposal of kingdoms, crowns and scepters, the apostle believed would give to him a crown of life and immortality: he who upon his ascension was made or declared Lord and Christ, and constituted head over all things to the church, and fills all in all; fills all the members of it with gifts and grace, and crowns them with loving-kindness and

tender mercies; he had in his hands a crown of glory to bestow on him: he whom David could call my Lord, and Thomas, my Lord and my God, the apostle knew he had an interest in as such: and therefore counted all things but loss, says he, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord (Philp. 3:8): and from this his interest in him, no doubt he concluded he should receive the crown from him; whom he also considered, for his further encouragement to believe it, as a righteous Judge: this character best agrees with Christ; for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son (John 5:22); he has appointed him to be Judge of quick and dead (Acts 10:42); which office he will execute at his appearing, when the crown will be given, verse 1, and for which office he is abundantly qualified, being God omniscient and omnipotent: he is omniscient; he knows all persons and things; he is the living Word, before whom all things are naked and open, with whom we have to do, or to whom we must give an account; he has no need that any man should testify of men to him, for he knows what is in men; and therefore can bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, and judge the secrets of all men: and he is the Almighty, the Lord God omnipotent that reigns, and so is able by his power to raise the dead at his coming; to summon all nations before him; to separate one sort of men from another; to pass the decisive sentence on them, and execute it: and he is a righteous Judge; Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 1:1), the Judge of the whole earth, who will do right; who will judge the world in righteousness, and the people with equity: as in the execution of all his offices, so in this, righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins (Isa. 11:5).

Now from the purity, justice and integrity of Christ as a Judge, the apostle had no doubt of the crown of righteousness being given him by him; and here also the apostle alludes to the Grecian exercises, in which crowns were given to the conquerors in strict justice:^[11] at first they had only one judge of them, afterwards the number was increased; but always care was taken that men of strict justice and uprightness were chosen into that office, who would pass a righteous sentence, and give the crown to whom it of right belonged; and if any were found tardy in this matter, and gave it wrong, by an appeal to an higher court of judicature, if found guilty, they were severely mulcted;^[12] it was always from the judges^[13] the conqueror received the crown.

2. The manner in which the apostle expected to have the crown; by way of gift; which the righteous Judge shall give me: not by way of merit; he knew his best works were not meritorious of eternal life; that what he did was not in his own strength, but by the grace of God; that there is no proportion between works of righteousness done by the best of men, and the crown of life; that the purest services of the saints, which are their sufferings for Christ, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in them; he knew that though he fought and ran, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy (Rom. 9:16): the crown of life is promised as a gift, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life (Rev. 2:10); the heavenly kingdom is what it is the Father's good pleasure to give; and eternal life is the free gift of God through Christ; Christ gives grace, and he gives glory; he has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him; and he does give it to all his sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him. Some translate the words of our text, which the righteous judge shall render unto me;^[14] and so they may be translated without any contradiction to the crown being a free gift; for that will be rendered, not as the reward of men's works, or according to their deserts, but as the fruit of Christ's righteousness, satisfaction, and atonement; so our salvation, and all the parts of it, are both in a way of grace, and in a way of justice: God is a just God, and a Savior; just, and yet the

justifier of him that believes in Jesus; and just and faithful to forgive sin, and cleanse from all unrighteousness; justification, though by the free grace of God, yet being through the righteousness of Christ, is according to the strict justice of God; and pardon of sin, though according to the riches of grace, is an act of justice; mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, meet together in the salvation of sinners, in their grace and in their glory: with respect to them, it is of grace; with respect to Christ, and to his satisfaction and righteousness, it is of justice; and so it is given and rendered according to both.

3. The time when the apostle expected the crown, at that day; a phrase used by him in other places in this epistle, as in chap. 1:12, 18, that famous day, that well-known day, looked for by all the saints; even the day of Christ's appearing to take his kingdom, and to judge the dead; which is the day of his second coming, as is clear from ver. 1. then he, in his whole person, soul and body, he believed, should enjoy the everlasting happiness, signified by the crown of righteousness.

Thirdly, The apostle adds, by way of encouragement to all believers in Christ, and lovers of him in common, that this crown was laid up for, and would be given to, not him only, and such as he, eminent for gifts and usefulness, but all them also who love his appearing: the appearing of Christ. In this there is a difference between the crown given to the runner in the Grecian races, the apostle has a respect unto; that crown was given to one only, this to many; of which the apostle thus speaks, Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize? (1 Cor. 9:24), but they which run in the Christian race, every runner therein, everyone that is tried and endures temptation, everyone that is faithful unto death, everyone that endures to the end, every persevering saint, every overcomer, receives the crown of life; everyone that loves the appearing of Christ, be their gifts, their grace, their usefulness, what they may. It will be proper to inquire,

1st, What is meant by the appearing of Christ; his second appearance is intended: he appeared once in the end of the world; in the end of the Jewish world, their state, civil and ecclesiastic, when he became incarnate, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; which having done, he is gone to heaven again; where he indeed appears in the presence of God for his people, as their advocate and intercessor; but to them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:24, 26, 28): and this is the appearing which is here meant, when he will come to judge the quick and dead; which will be at his appearing and his kingdom, as says the apostle in ver. 1, of this chapter; then the dead in Christ will arise, and their bodies be united to their souls, Christ will bring with him: and the living saints will be changed; and both will be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and this will be a virtual judgment of them, and a declaring them to be the happy persons to whom the crown belongs: as there will be also a judging of the wicked then found alive, who will perish in the general conflagration, when the earth, and all therein, shall be burnt up; and when Christ will enter upon his personal reign and kingdom, which will continue a thousand years; at the close of which all the wicked will be raised, and stand, small and great, before the judgment-seat, and will be adjudged to the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

This appearance of Christ will be a glorious one; his first appearance was mean; he had no form nor comeliness desirable by men; he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in the form of a servant: but his second appearance will be without sin, and any sinless infirmities; it will be a glorious one: he will come in his own glory; in the glory of his divine nature, the perfections of

which will be gloriously displayed; and in the glory of his human nature, being in it crowned with glory and honor; and in the glory of his office, as mediator: and in his Father's glory; the same with his own, as a divine person, as the only begotten of the Father; and clothed as a Judge, with authority and power by him, to judge the quick and dead; and in the glory of his holy angels (Luke 9:26), as attendants on him, and ready to obey his commands: this appearance of Christ will be personal; he himself in person shall descend from heaven; not by another, by a deputy, or by the effusion of the Spirit, but he himself in person; in like manner as he went up to heaven at his ascension, will he come down from thence at his second coming: and this appearance will be visible; he will be seen in the air by all the risen and living saints; and he will be seen in the clouds of heaven; every eye shall see him (Rev. 1:7), even all the kindreds of the earth.

2dly, This appearance of Christ is to be loved, and is loved by some: to some indeed it will be the great and dreadful day of the Lord; which will burn like an oven, and consume the wicked root and branch; on sight of him, and even of the sign of the Son of man in heaven, all the tribes of the earth will mourn; and persons of the highest rank and class will flee to rocks and mountains, to hide them from his face, the great day of his wrath being come, and at which also the devils will tremble; but he shall appear to the joy of saints, when others will be ashamed and confounded.

Now such may be said to love his appearing, who pray for his appearing and kingdom, or that his kingdom may come, and he appear in his glory; who took earnestly and wistly for the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who long for it, and hasten in their affections, desires, and petitions for it; and say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly;" as it shows love to a man and his presence, when one most pressingly desires it, and most earnestly and ardently wishes and longs for it: and there are many reasons to be given, why the appearance of Christ should be loved by his saints.

1. Because then they shall see the person whom they love, in all his beauty, glory and excellencies; now whom having not seen, they love (1 Pet. 1:8); they have not seen him with their bodily eyes, and yet having heard and known much of him, their affections are towards him; but then they shall see him in the flesh, and with their eyes behold him, and not another: now sometimes they lose sight of him in a spiritual sense; he withdraws himself from them, and they know not where he is, and they go in quest of him, saying to one and another, saw ye him whom my soul loveth? (Song of Solomon 3:1), but now he will be always in view, and they will see him, of whom they have often said, whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee! (Ps. 73:25).

2. Because they will then see him who has so loved them; so loved them, as to become incarnate for them; so loved them, as to lay down his life for them; so loved them, as to wash them from their sins in his blood; so loved them, as to bear their sins, and all the punishment due unto them, to suffer, the just for the unjust; so loved them, as to be delivered into the hands of justice and death for their offenses, and to rise again for their justification; the appearance and sight of such a person, must needs be loved by those to whom he has shown so much love.

3. Because his appearance will be a glorious one, as before observed, and therefore to be looked for gladly, to be loved and longed for; looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

4. Because when Christ shall appear, his saints shall appear with him; their souls will be brought along with him, and their bodies will be raised, and both reunited, and they all appear in glory (Col. 3:4) with him, with a glory both on their souls and bodies: when he shall appear, they shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2); see him in his glory, and be conformed unto him, and changed into the same image and likeness, so far as they are capable of; and then shall they be completely satisfied, and not before; as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness (Ps. 17:15); and it is not to be wondered at, that such persons should love the appearing of Christ.

5. Because the saints at Christ's appearing shall not only see him, and be like him, but they shall receive much from him; much grace they have received from him now, but they will then receive it in its full perfection; wherefore they are exhorted to gird up the loins of their mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto them at the Rev. of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:13): and when also they shall receive from him the crown of life and righteousness; for when the chief shepherd shall appear, not only the under-shepherds that are faithful, but even all the sheep themselves, that hear the voice of Christ, and follow him, shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (1 Pet. 5:4).

6. Because then the saints will be put into the possession of their complete salvation; for to them that look for him, will Christ appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28): when he came the first time, salvation was wrought out by him for them, he became the author of it; and it is brought home to them by the Spirit of God at conversion, and applied unto them, and they are shown their interest in it; but as yet are not in the full enjoyment of it; though now is their salvation nearer than when they first believed, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time (Rom. 13:11; 1 Pet. 1:5); that is, when Christ shall appear, and reveal it to them, and put them in the full possession of it.

7. The appearing of Christ is to be loved by the saints, because they shall be with him, and be forever with him, and never part more: here they have a visit from Christ now and then, and this but short; he is like a wayfaring man that tarries for a night; but when he shall come again from heaven, with all the saints, the dead raised, and the living changed, they shall be caught up to meet him, and so shall they be ever with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:17, 18); with which words they may comfort one another now, whilst they are looking and longing for the appearing of Christ.

Thus have I considered this passage of scripture, as briefly as I well could, at the request of the surviving relative of the deceased; of whom it may be expected I should give some account: his person, doctrine, and manner of life, were known to many, if not most of you; some things I may be able to say, not known by you, or but by a few.

The Reverend Mr. William Anderson was called by the grace of God under my ministry, between forty and fifty years ago; for I find on search, that he was baptized by me on a profession of his faith, Jan. 1, 1723-4, near forty-four years ago; and soon after was received into fellowship with this church, with which he walked very honorably and comfortably as a private member for several years: and in process of time, it being perceived and thought by some that he had a gift for public usefulness, he was called by the church to the exercise of it; and after sufficient trial, he was regularly sent forth to preach the gospel, where God in his providence might call him; and for some

time he preached occasionally among the churches, with good liking and approbation; and in a course of time, I am not able to say exactly how long, he was invited by a small destitute people in Westminster, to preach unto them; which he accordingly did, to their great satisfaction; and after some time they chose him to be their pastor, and gave him a call to take upon him that office, which he accepted of; and was ordained, May 12, 1743, upwards of twenty-four years ago. This charge he undertook, not with any sinister and worldly views, the people being few, and for the most part poor, and were far from being capable of providing a proper maintenance for him; and certain it is, he left a very lucrative employment to serve them, and the interest of Christ among them, on which his heart was set; and it pleased God to bless his labors, both for edification and conversion, so that there was an increase both of audience and members; and he laid himself out indefatigably to serve them, both as to their temporals and spirituals: by his means, and through his interest, a commodious house for worship was built, which they greatly wanted; and he also brought them to be one of the churches in the fund, for the assistance of poor ministers and churches in the country; in short, he was the instrument of raising them from a low and mean condition, to a greater degree of credit and reputation among the churches than they ever had before: and thus they went on comfortably and harmoniously for many years; but of late a sad retaliation has been made him for all his work and labor of love! the walls of that house, built by him, through his interest, and the pulpit in it, out of which he was kept, will be standing witnesses against the people that meet in the one, and the man that fills the other, for their unparalleled ingratitude to him; I say, unparalleled, for I am persuaded, that neither the memory of any man living, nor perhaps the history of any age, can furnish an instance similar to this case; that a worthy minister of the gospel should be divested of his office, and turned out of his place, when no charge, neither of immorality nor of false doctrine, was laid against him. Such hard usage did this faithful minister of Christ meet with! these were the wounds he received in the house of those he once thought his friends; the pain of which went to his heart, and the anguish thereof drank up his spirits. Nevertheless he ceased not from his Master's work; and which he performed with more vigor, comfort and cheerfulness, than could have been expected, among those few that cleaved unto him, and abode with him; and so he continued till his last illness seized him, which it seems was in this pulpit a few weeks ago. This affliction he bore with great patience; though his bodily pains were sometimes so great, as caused him to cry out in the extremity of them, and to pray and desire his friends to pray for him, that the God of patience would give him more: not a murmuring word against the hand of the Lord was heard from him throughout the whole; nor did any worldly concerns, or any others, distress his mind; nor was the enemy of souls suffered to buffet him, which he thought a great mercy. He expressed the inward joy and comfort he felt, to various persons at different times: to one, that the doctrines he had preached to others, he now found to be the comfort of his soul: — to another, that he saw Christ to be his foundation, and doubted not of his interest in him; and in the presence of several declared, that Christ was the only bottom he had to rest on; and that he was precious to him, had been, and would be so: — to another, that the indissoluble union between Christ and his people, was his great support; but wanted to find himself in a more waiting posture: — to another, who said to him, Sir, you have almost finished your course; he answered, Yes; but I know, said he, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which he spoke with an emphasis: — to another, What, my dear child, my joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord! this he spoke with an ecstasy of joy: — to another, that saw his lips move, and asked him what he said, his answer was, though I am so unworthy in myself, yet I am complete in him; meaning in Christ: — at another time he was heard to say, "Is Ephraim a dear son? is he a pleasant child? "can it be that he is a pleasant child? he answered, yes, he is;" and with an appropriation to himself. — A few hours

before his death, he thus expressed himself, in the words of the church, in the hearing of many friends, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine; I say, is better than wine: a ministering brother coming into the room, and to his bedside at the same time, he said to him, "I am going home;" to which the brother replied, I perceive you are, and going apace; are you comfortable? he said, "I am; "God is with me, and will be with me." — About an hour before he died, he uttered these words, "my God, my God, "my God in Christ!" Then, Sir, said a stander by, you have enough; he replied, "I have." Thus died this worthy servant of Christ, who is now entered into the joy of his Lord, and into his rest; and you, his mournful widow, may dry up your tears, and rather rejoice that he is gone: where he is free from all trouble and distress; where there is no more pain, no more sorrow and crying, no more death; where he is delivered from, and is out of the reach of every open enemy, and every faithless friend; and where he enjoys uninterrupted communion with God, Father, Son; and Spirit, and with angels and glorified saints. And as for you, his little flock who cleaved unto him, and followed him in his adversity, as I understand you design to keep together to see what the Lord will do with you, be encouraged so to do; for though you may be saying, By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small; the God of Jacob can raise you up; and multiply you, that ye be not few; and glorify you, that ye be not small; sometimes from small beginnings great things arise: if God should send you a pastor, to feed you with knowledge and understanding, which I perceive you have some hope of; if God should bless his labors, the place of your tent may be enlarged, and the curtains of your habitations may be stretched forth, and God may increase you with men as a flock; frequently meet together, pray earnestly and constantly, who knows but God may have a blessing in store for you? To conclude; since we have all in one shape or another a warfare to war, a race to run, and a trust to discharge; let us manfully fight till the warfare is accomplished; and run, with patience and diligence, the remainder of the race set before us; and faithfully perform the trust reposed in us; that when all is done and over, we may enjoy the crown of righteousness, which is in common provided for all that love the appearing of Christ.
