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Πνεύματα λειτουργικά,

} ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΑ :

OR, A

Discourse of Angels :

THEIR

Nature and Office, or Ministry.

Wherein is shewed what excellent Creatures they are, and that they are the prime Instruments of God's Providence, and are employ'd about Kingdoms, and Churches, and single Persons, and that under *Jesus Christ*, who is the Head of *Angels* as well as Men, and by whose Procurement *Angels* are *Ministring Spirits* for sinful Men.

Also something touching

Devils and Apparitions, and Impulses.

WITH

A Practical Improvement of the Particulars handled, and of the whole Doctrine of *Angels*, especially for the promoting of an

ANGELICAL LIFE.

Here such Speculations as some would seem wise in, above what is written, are declined: And such things only are handled as the Holy Scriptures give us light in, and have been taught by Sober Divines.

L O N D O N :

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THE
P R E F A C E.

Christian Reader,

BEfore this Learned, and Useful Treatise was suffered to walk abroad, in Publick, to be viewed by All: A Copy thereof was imparted to me; which I read over, to my great Satisfaction, and Edification. I am very apprehensive, That the declaring of my Opinion of It, can weigh little, or nothing with Many: both by reason of my Obscurity, and the Inconsiderableness of my Judgment. But, probably, I shall be censured by some, as too forward, and assuming, for interestting my self, and meddling with it, seeing I can contribute nothing to the Worth, or Commendation of It. Yet I shall adventure (with Submission to those who are better qualified for this Service) to acquaint such with my present Thoughts, as by reading of it desire to promote their Spiritual Advantage: by laying before them, my Sentiments touching the Subject Matter of this Excellent Discourse: and something of the learned, judicious, and pious Authors disposing, and ordering his Meditations upon this Subject.

I. The Subject, here undertaken, to be treated upon, is, certainly, very high, and noble in its self, and exceeding useful for us, to be acquainted withal, in regard there is so much spoken of the Angels, and their Ministry in the Holy Scriptures. For that which is written therein, is written for our Learning. It is then a Matter, which deserves to be soberly enquired into. What may be the Reason, why the Scripture-Doctrine, concerning Angels, is no more attended unto? For it is, in our time, but sparingly treated upon: And not so frequently, and deeply in the thoughts of Christians, as it should be; and consequently, not improved by the Children of God to their growth in Faith, Holiness and Comfort as it might be. Let me be pardoned, if I offer my Conjecture in two Instances. (1.) The bold, curious, and confident Speculations touching the Angels, both in Elder times, and in the Days of the School-men, who intruded into things not seen, vainly pufft up by their fleshy minds. This made way for a voluntary Humility, and issued in the worshipping of Angels. And some (it is probable) that they might avoid this Rock, have thought it dangerous to be inquisitive into those things, which are taught in the Scripture of Truth concerning them.

(2.) The Irreligioussness, and Scepticism of Materialists, and Sadduces, who deny, or pretend to doubt whether there are, indeed any Immaterial Be-

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ings at all. And if there be no separate Spirits, as to their Existence; there can be nothing spoken, concerning such, that is to be regarded

The present Treatise is the more to be valued upon this very account, That it both asserts the Existence of Angels, and directs us how we are to carry our selves toward them so as to avoid Superstition, and Angel-Worship.

This may suffice touching the subject Matter treated upon in this Discourse.

2ly, I shall add a few Words touching our worthy Author's disposing and ordering his Meditations upon that sublime, and noble Subject. The Work it self doth abundantly shew him to have been a Person well stored with various useful kinds of Learning, particularly in the Hebrew and Greek Languages. Of a solid Judgment, and indefatigable diligence in searching after what was to be found in other Authors, that might contribute any Light, or Furniture to him, toward the perfecting of this Composure, so that as far as my short-sighted Intelligence will reach, I must esteem this Discourse to be the most full, clear, and elaborate of any upon this Subject, especially such as are extant in our own Language. His Style is plain, and smooth, without straining for affected Elegancies; and yet very proper, pertinent, and expressive of his own Thoughts, and apt to have an easy admission into the Understanding of others, tho' but of Ordinary Capacities. He hath digested his Matters very happily, in an apt, orderly, and easily Intelligible Method, and greatly accommodated his Reader by dividing his Book into several Chapters, and every Chapter into several Sections, so that a man need to travel but a very short Stage, before he comes to a Pause, where he may rest himself. And wheresoever he is pleased to exercise his Thoughts, he shall find something to entertain them withal that is delightful and edifying. Through that whole Book there runs a Stream of sanctified Knowledge, and serious Godliness, which may season our Hearts, as well as enrich our Understandings. How much soever he extols the Dignity of Angels, and their wonderful Properties, yet he still leaves them and their Ministration under the Sovereign Will and Command of God, and Jesus Christ, their Head; to whom they devote themselves and their Services. To conclude this Preface, I commend this Discourse to the serious Christian Reader, and him to the Grace of God.

London, Febr. 20.

1700.

Geo. Hamond.

T H E

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- P**age 3. Line 26. for *Elijah's* read *Elisha's*.
p. 4. l. 26. r. his Son.
p. 10. l. 30. for *Platonists and Demons*] r. *Platonists call them Demons*.
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A
 Discourse of Angels,
 THEIR
 Nature, Office, and Ministry.

HEB. I. XIV.

*Are they not all ministering Spirits, sent forth
 to minister for them, who shall be heirs of
 Salvation?*

C H A P. I.

*The Prologue or Introduction to the Text. How the
 Apostle proves that Christ is above Angels. §. 1. Of
 the various Acceptions of the Name (Angels) and
 of other Scripture Names and Titles of Angels.
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 Scripture Arguments, proving that there are An-
 gels, and that they are such Intellectual Spirits.*

WHEN *Moses* was keeping the Sheep of *Jethro*
 his Father-in-Law, in the Desert, near unto
 Mount *Horeb*, God being about to send him
 to deliver the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, where they
 were at that time grievously oppressed; He to prepare
 him

B

him for this Undertaking, first entertained him with a strange and wonderful Sight, *Exod. 3. 2.* A Bush all in a Flame burning, but not consumed. This *Moses* with Admiration observed, and for his fuller Satisfaction, was about to have come nearer to it, to discover (if possible) the reason why the Bush, tho' on fire, was not burnt. But no reason in Nature could be assigned, for it was indeed a Miracle. The intent of the *Prodigy* was, to represent to *Moses*, the present State of God's People, the Children of *Israel* in *Egypt*, now under grievous Servitude, and in the hands of a cruel Prince, that designed their ruine, yet marvellously preserved, as was that Bush he saw.

As it was then with the *Jewish Church*, so was it with the *Christian* in its Infancy, for about Three Hundred Years especially. It was almost continually under most bloody Persecution, and Multitudes of Christians daily slaughtered; and yet there was no Diminution, or lessening of their Number, but it became a vulgar Observation, that the Blood of the Martyrs was the Seed of the Church.

By this, as a standing Miracle, has the Truth of the Christian Religion been greatly confirmed, after the Gift of Miracles began to cease.

God's People do not alway live in such a flame of raging Persecution, but they still live in the midst of a World of Enemies, that really in their hearts do hate them, *Job. 15. 19. viz.* wicked Men and Unbelievers, and 'tis as natural (in a manner) for such Men to seek the ruine of Gods Church and People, as 'tis for the fire to burn what combustible Matter it meets with. God's People have Multitude, and Power, and Craft, and Malice against them, and yet they are preserved: But what Man living can tell how? 'Tis oftentimes to God's People themselves a wonder, how they are kept, and how delivered. They cannot see which way it comes about, and because the way of Safety and Deliverance is not seen, where new Dangers and Difficulties arise, Affiance, and Trust in God, become the more difficult.

It would be no small help to our Faith, if we could see not only that we are kept, and delivered, but which way this is brought about.

'Tis no doubt the great God of Heaven, that is the Saviour and Deliverer of his People: But by what means? We that are used to means, should more easily believe, if we could see somewhat of the Means God makes use of, and has ready in the worst of times, to save by.

Now God's Word (which is a rich Treasury and Store-house of Comfort) gives some Satisfaction hereabout, making Discovery to our Faith, of certain unseen and unobserved ways and means of Help, and Safety, which our Senses cannot bring us any Tidings of. Among these the Ministry of *Angels* (which my *Text* speaks of) is one very considerable one. These blessed Spirits, the Inhabitants of the upper Regions, does the great God imploy for his Church, and People, and they are ever at work, tho' unseen, in their Behalf. Of this 'tis my purpose to discourse, so far as I can get any light from God's Word to direct me.

These Heavenly Agents are invisible to us, and work insensibly; we cannot perceive them, or their way of working, by any of our bodily Senses, therefore are they but little counted upon: But if the Blessed God would please to open the Eye of our Faith, as he did the bodily Eyes of the Prophet *Elijah's* Servant, *2 Kings* 6. 17. we should plainly see, that when we are most forsaken, there are more for us than are against us, as the Prophet told his Servant, *ver.* 16.

Our Apostle does in this Text roundly assert this Truth: That all the Angels, those Intelligent Potent, Active, Agile Spirits, that inhabit the Emphyreal Heaven, are sent forth by God into this lower World, to minister here, for their sakes especially, that are Heirs of Salvation.

'Tis I confess by the by here, That our Apostle does propose this great Truth. His direct Scope is to set forth, and prove the transcendent Excellency and Eminency of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, his *Person* and *Office*. To prove that he is high indeed, he tells us, that he is above *An-*

A Discourse of Angels,

gels, which are the most glorious Creatures in the whole Universe. The Apostle finding no fit Comparison in all this lower World, goes to Heaven for one, and singles out the very Crop of the whole Creation, the blessed Angels: And then says, *ver. 4. that Christ was made better than the Angels, having obtained a more excellent Name than they.* That is, more Dignity and Power. And how, the next Verse satisfies us. In that, he is called the Son of God. *For unto which of the Angels said he at any time, thou art my Son? &c. ver. 5.*

Some may say, How is *Christ* on this account above the *Angels*? Are they not also called *the Sons of God* frequently? *Job* 1. 6. and 2. 1. and 38. 7. Yea, and Believers are also so called, 1 *Job*. 3. 2. *Now are we the Sons of God.* Adam also has that Stile given him, *Luke* 3. 38. How then is this an Honour peculiar to *Christ*?

I answer, Tho' *Angels* (and others too) are called the Sons of God, yet are they not said to be Sons of God, as *Christ* is said to be. *Christ* is called *Son* in an appropriate Sense: *Angels* are *Sons of God* by Creation, and so was *Adam*: But none ever was called *Son* with such a Reason annexed, *viz.* because begotten of God. *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* *Christ* is Gods Son by eternal Generation. He is of the same Essence with the Father, and therefore said to be *his only begotten Son*, *Job*. 1. 14. And as Man, *Christ* is in an appropriate Sense *Son*, and called *his first begotten*, *Heb.* 1. 6. This Dignity belongs not to any of the *Angels*: They are but Servants, *ver. 7.* and do owe Worship and Service to *Jesus Christ*, and accordingly at his Nativity, they did do him Honour, *Luke* 2. 11. & *seq.* And they ministred to him after his being tempted by *Satan*, *Matt.* 4. 11. Thus is our Saviour superiour to *Angels* in respect of his Person.

He is so also in respect of his Office. This the Apostle does also shew. Because he is set on the Throne of God, and made Sovereign Lord of all. He is made an Universal Monarch, and the *Angels* are some of his Subjects, *ver. 7. 8.* They are the chief of his Subjects, the Nobility (as we may say) or Prime Ministers of State: For they

they stand before him, as the Nobles are wont to do before the King; they sit not down on the Throne with the King, but stand before him: But *Christ* sits on the Throne, *ver. 13.* To which of the Angels saith he at any time, sit thou at my right hand? God lays so to none but to his Son.

What the Angels Place and Office is, the *Text* expresseth, *Are they not ministering Spirits, &c.*

Are they not? He does with great Emphasis, use a Form of Interrogation. 1. More vehemently to affirm the thing. 2. To note that it was a matter vulgarly known, and acknowledged, *viz.* That as there were such Creatures as Angels existing, so that they were Spirits, and that God had assigned them an Employment. This was so well known, that scarce any doubted of it, and therefore he says, Are they not? Yea, Are they not *all*? Not some of them only, but *all* were ministering Spirits.

The Papists tell us, That those only of the lowest rank do minister to Man: But the *Text* says they are all sent forth to minister, they have all an Office and Work appointed them. And 'tis for them that shall be Heirs of Salvation, that they are sent forth. For does not note the extent of their Commission, but the End or chief Design of it. The Apostle does not mean that the Angels are sent only to them, and do minister only to them: But his meaning is (as shall be further shewed hereafter) 'tis chiefly for the sake of the Heirs of Salvation that he sends them forth.

The Words need no further Explication. We have Four things in them worthy of Observation. 1. The Nature of Angels, what they are as to their Essence. They are *Spirits*. 2. Their Office, which is to minister or do Service. 3. Their Mission, they are sent forth. 4. The special End of their Mission, the good of them that shall be Heirs of Salvation, *viz.* God's Elect.

This brief Consideration of the *Text* shews the Fitness of it, to be the Basis of mine intended Discourse, concerning the *Nature* and *Office* of Angels. These are the Two Heads of the ensuing Discourse.

Under the former Head, I shall endeavour to make as Intelligible as I can, and prove what Creatures Angels are, and that there are such existing; Superadding something further about them, namely, touching their Original, their Excellency in Knowledge, Power, Agility, Holiness, their Number, their Order, their Love and Good will towards Men.

The Angelical Nature, tho' it be a Secret for the most part, and will remain so to us, till we come to Heaven; yet is it such a Secret as we may modestly inquire into, and seek to know so far as it is revealed, either in Nature, or in Scripture. And so much as is profitable for us to know of it, is revealed there.

S E C T. I.

Because the Names of things do often express somewhat of their Natures and Properties, I shall enquire into the Signification of such Names as Angels are in Scripture called by.

1. Our *English* Name *Angel*, is borrowed from the Greek. And ἄγγελος in Greek, and that which answers to it in the Hebrew מַלְאָךְ, both signifie a Messenger, any one that is sent; In this large Sense the Words are sometimes used, viz. for any Messenger that is sent in Business. See *Gen.* 32. 3. *Jacob* sent Messengers before him, *Heb.* Angels; and *James* 2. 25. *Rahab* received the Messengers, *Gr.* the Angels. And some understand that, *Acts* 12. 15. it is his Angel, to be meant, It is his Messenger, or one sent from *Peter*.

On this account the Prophets and Ministers of the Gospel, are called *Angels*, because sent of God. *Behold I send my Messenger or Angel*, saith the Lord, *Mal.* 3. 1. that is my Prophet: And such was *John the Baptist*. The Pastors of those Churches of *Asia* are called the *Angels of those Churches*, *Rev.* 2. and Chap. 3. So the *Messias Christ* himself (because sent of God into the World, to be the Author of Salvation to all that believe in him) is also called the *Angel of the Covenant*, *Mal.* 3. 1. And the *Angel of God's presence*, *Isa.* 63. 9. And when the Son of God appeared

appeared in the Old Testament, an Angel is said to appear. It was not a Created Angel, but the Son of God himself that appeared to *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 2. as appears, comparing *ver.* 13, 17. where he is called the Lord.

Thus the Word signifies one that is sent in Business; But it is very frequently used in an appropriate, and more restrained Sense, for a Created Spirit, sent of God to Men. And so 'tis the Office of Angels, rather than their Nature, that this Name doth notify.

Semper Spiritus sunt sed cum mutantur vocantur Angeli. *Isid.*

Quærit nomen hujus naturæ? Spiritus est. Quærit officium? Angelus est, *Aug.*

2. Angels are sometimes in the Old Testament called אלהים *Elohim*, one of the Names by which the Blessed God himself is sometimes notified to us. The first mention of God in Scripture is under this Name, Gen. 1. 1. *In the beginning God created, &c. Heb. Elohim created.* 'Tis a Word in Form of the Plural Number, but in that Text joined with a Verb of the Singular Number, to denote (as some think) the Trinity in Unity.

Sometimes it is Translated according to its Plural Form, God's: As in *Psal.* 97. 7. *Worship him all ye Gods.* The Apostle quoting this Text, says, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, Heb. 1. 6. Therefore by *Elohim*, or the Gods (in that *Psalms*) we are to understand Angels. And so we interpret the Word, *Psal.* 8. 5. *Thou hast made him little lower than the Angels*, in the Hebrew 'tis little lower than *Elohim*. And our Translation is justified by the Apostle, *Heb.* 2. 7. where he quotes the place, and reads, *Thou hast made him little lower than the Angels.* *Elohim* is also in several other Places translated Gods.

Now Angels are called by this Name, either to note their Strength and Might לח signifying strong and mighty: or in respect of the Interest they have in the Government of the World under God, as Magistrates that rule and govern, and are over others, are also called *Elohim*, or Gods. As in *Psal.* 82. 1. *God standeth in the congregation of the mighty: He judgeth among the Gods:* That is, the Rulers and Judges of the Earth, as what follows expounds it. *How long will you judge unjustly, ver. 2. And, I have said ye are Gods, &c. but ye shall die like men, ver. 6, 7.*

3. Ano-

3. Another Name we have, *Job* 38. 7. There they are called *Morning Stars*. *When the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy.* The latter Words are Exegetical, or Expository to the former. There were no Sons of God but Angels, before *Adam* was created, therefore Angels must be meant: And they are called *Morning Stars*. Now Stars they are called for their Lucid Nature, they are lightsome Substances, full of Knowledge. And they are Morning, or Early Stars, because in the Morning or beginning of Time, they first praised God, as in that place is shewed.

4. Angels are called שרפים *Seraphim*, but no where in Scripture, but only in *Isa.* 6. where one of them is said to fly unto the Prophet with a live Coal of Fire in his Hand, *ver.* 6. The Name comes from שרף which signifies to burn. So *Seraphims* signifies burning, or fiery ones. The Hebrew Word is Translated fiery in *Numb.* 21. 6. fiery Serpents we read: the Hebrew Word השרפים. Angels then are called *Seraphims*, from fire or burning. And the Psalmist says, that Angels are Fire, or a flame of Fire, *Psal.* 104. 4. *Who maketh his Angels Spirits, and his Ministers a flame of Fire.* Fire is of a most active Nature, and very quick and swift in Motion: And so are the Angels, as shall be shewed. *Dionysius*, and the School-men after him, say, that *Seraphim* is the Name only of some Angels, *viz.* those of the higher Orders, and that these are called *Seraphims*, because they burn with a greater ardency of Charity, than the other Angels do. But this is but a Conjecture that hath nothing to support it. There be none of the Angels but may be called *Seraphims*, and that for their fiery or active Nature, as before. Some think they have the Name *Seraphim*, from the Fire of God's

Wrath, which they are Messengers of; and so sometimes some, sometimes others are. Thus they make it a Name not of perpetual Office, but taken from the effect of some particular Mission. Angels are called *Seraphims* when sent to execute the Wrath of God on any.

Facit Spiritus Angelos suos cum læta & levia nunciant, & Ministros suos flammam ignis dum ad exercitium vindictæ mittunt, ut in *Sodoma*, &c. *Pet. Lamb.* in *Heb.*

5 Another Hebrew Name of Angels is כְּרֻבִים *Che-
rubim*, and this is oftner read in Scripture. Some derive
the Word from כּ a Note of Similitude, as much as *Sicut*,
like as; and רביא a *Chaldee* Word, that signifies a little
Boy, or Youth; because so Angels often appeared. And
in such a Form Men now a-days picture them, viz. as
winged Boys. But the Angels are called *Che-
rubims* not only
when they appeared in Humane Shape, but when in the
Form of other living Creatures: As in *Ezekiel's* Vision,
Chap. 10 15. Wherefore *Che-
rub* (say others)
signifies generally any Smilitude or Figure,
but most properly, such as is with Wings
flying. And it notes a swift flying thing.
So learned *Cameron*, God is said, *Psal. 18. 10*.
volare alis כְּרֻב i. e. *velocissimo ferri motu*. To
fly on the Wings of a Cherub, that is, on
the Wings of a swift flying thing. So Angels
are stiled *Che-
rubims*, for their Activity and Agility. *Je-
rome* thinks the Name is derived from the same that
Rabbi is, signifying a learned Teacher: And they are
called *Che-
rubim* q. *Che-
rabbim* from the abundance of their
Knowledge.

*Cherub est Nomen gene-
rate, ad omnem figuram.
Proprie tamen videtur signi-
ficare Imaginem cuiuscunq;
faciel, quæ aliis expausis tan-
quam avis volare pingitur
vel apparet. Moller. in Psal.
80. 2.*

6 Angels are called *Watchers*, *Dan. 4. 13*. *And behold
a Watcher, and an holy one came down from Heaven*, i. e. no
doubt an Angel. And *ver. 17*. *This matter is by the De-
cree of the Watchers*, i. e. Angels. The Hebrew Word sig-
nifies one that watches, or is waking, or one that waken-
eth, or stirreth up others. 'Tis rendered a Master, *Mal.
2. 12*. *The Lord shall cut off the man that doth this, the
Master and the Scholar*; In the Margin of our Bibles 'tis,
him that waketh, and him that answereth. A Master is
called צַר a Waker or Watcher, because he should be
ready and excited alway to Teach; or because he excites
his Scholars to Learn. In *Greek* they read the Word *ἄγγελος*,
ἄγγελο, from which (as *Grotius* thinks) comes *Iris*, which is
the Messenger of the Gods among the *Pa-
gans*. Angels are called *Watchers* or *Wakers*,
either in respect of their Spiritual and In-
corporeal Nature, not needing Sleep: For
Bodies only have need of Sleep; or in re-

*Angelus quia incorporeus
(sec. Eben Ezra) semper vi-
gil, & nunquam dormiens.
Æcol. in Dan.*

spect of their watchful Office ; They are alway ready to do the Will of God, *Psal.* 103. 20. They have constant and continual Care of God's People, and take all Opportunities of doing them Good. They never neglect their Charge : And therefore are called *Watchers*.

Θρόνοι, Κουρόνη
τοι, Ἄγγελι,
Εὐδαιας. Coll. 1.
16.

7. In the *New Testament* there are several other Names and Titles given Angels, which I need not insist on a particular Explication of, because they are all of them much of the same import. They are called *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers*. Names of Authority, Rule and Government. They do not prove so many distinct Degrees of Angels (as *Dionysius* the supposed Author of their Hierarchy of Angels, and the Schoolmen after him do boldly affirm) but only signifie to us, that Angels have a Power, Authority and Rule in this World, and that the Administration of it is with excellent Order, such as is observed in the Kingdoms and Governments of the Earth, where there are divers sorts of Powers, with which Officers are invested.

Quid inter se distant hæc
vocabulary, dicant qui pos-
sunt, si tamen possunt pro-
bare quod dicunt. Ego me
ista ignorare confiteor.
Aug.

What Names Heathen Writers give Angels, is not so material : Yet to note, it will help us somewhat to understand what Conceptions they had of them. *Aristotle* and the *Peripatetick* Philosophers, call them *Intelligences*, and *Abstracted*, and *Separate Forms*, to notify the Simplicity and Im-materiality of their Essence, and their great and excellent Knowledge.

Δαίμων γ. δαιμων, i. e. Sciens.

The *Platonists* and *Dæmons*, to signifie also their great Knowledge. And tho' with us now, *Dæmons* is taken in an ill sense for Devils, or wicked Spirits, yet anciently, and with them, it was used to signify good Spirits also, to whom the *Platonists* gave not only the Name, but the Honour of God, as *Laertius* affirms of *Plato*.

Οἱ αἱετι δὲ καὶ θεοὶ ἐρεθίζουσι
ἀνθρώπων καὶ δαίμονας ἐπιαι.
Laert.

The *Latines* call them *Genii a Gignendo*, because as some think, they take care about our Birth, and from our Birth are to us, *ut Genitores*, as Fathers.

Whether

Whether, besides those more common Names that are indifferently given to Angels, to denote either somewhat of their Nature, or their Office more Generally, or some Special Office they are sent about; they have also their Proper Names, by which they are distinguished one from the other, some have thought worth disputing: Yea, some have endeavoured to prove, that all the Angels have their proper Names, such as are known to God and among themselves, tho' they be unknown to us. Several Arguments from Scripture are brought to prove the Probability of this, but none of them worth considering but this one, *viz.* Some Angels are, in the Holy Scripture, called by their Proper Names, and if some have Names, why should we not believe that all have as well? There is *Gabriel* mentioned, *Dan. 8.* and in the *New Testament* also, *Luke 2.* as the Proper Name of a certain Angel. There is also *Michael* spoken of, *Dan. 10.* and also in *Jude's* Epistle, *v. 9.* These are all the Names that look like Proper Names, that we read in any of the Books of Scripture, that are *Canonical.* But in the *Apoeryphal* Books, we find more such Names. In *Tobit* there is mention of *Raphael*, and in *Esdras* of *Uriel*, and of *Jiremiel* an Arch-Angel, and also of *Sealtiel.* The *Jewish* Writers give us a great many more such Names of Angels, which they pretend to have received by Tradition, from their Fathers. Yea, and their *Cabalistical* Writers tell us, that all the Angels Names are contained in the Scriptures mysteriously: But what they write hereabout are nothing but idle Dreams of theirs.

As for those two Names which we find in Sacred Scripture, and are therefore concerned to consider them: I answer, they are Names given those Angels, not as their proper Names, but as Names that suited such Messages, as they were then sent in, and did as properly belong to other Angels, when sent in like Messages. *Gabriel* signifieth the Power or Strength of God, and the Angel is so called, when sent to declare the great Power of God. *Michael* signifieth, who is like unto God, that is, so strong as to be able to contend with him; and so the Angel is called when sent to fight for God's People, and to oppose

the *Devil* and his Angels. In like manner that Angel mentioned in *Tobit* is called *Rapbael*, because he was sent to heal, (as you read in that History) and so the Word signifies. These were not Names perpetually belonging to those Individual Angels, as their Proper Names, but Names given them as appearing in certain Ministries suiting such Names. And when any other Angels are sent about the like Services, those Names do as properly belong to them. But enough of this.

S E C T. II.

YOU have seen what is the import and reason of those several Names and Titles given to Angels, that they chiefly signify to us their Office, and Ministry, and some of them signify also some Qualifications fitting them for their Ministry. The most common Name denoting their Nature, remains to be spoken to, namely, that which we have in the Text, πνεύματα *Spirits*. This

Name best signifies what they are in their Intrinsic and Essential Constitution. And therefore we shall consider this by it self here, that we may the better know what kind of Creatures Angels are. Angels are *Spirits*, they are not Flesh and Blood as we

are, they have not any corporeal Grossness, but are pure Spiritual Natures. Both good and bad Angels are in Scripture called *Spirits*. The good Angels are so called in the *Text*, and by the Psalmist, *He made his Angels Spirits*, Psal. 104. 4. So also in many other places of Scripture. And this same Name is also given to the Apostate Angels, or Devils: They also are called *Spirits*, but usually with some addition by way of Distinction. They are called *Unclean Spirits*, *Evil Spirits*, See *Matt.* 12. 43. *Acts* 8. 7. *Acts* 19. 15, 16. *Luke* 7. 21. and other places. By nature they are *Spirits*, of the same essential Constitution the good Angels are; but by their Apostacy they became wicked and unclean, who were not so in their Creation.

Quæris nomen hujus naturæ? Spiritus est. *Aug.*

Semper spiritus sunt, sed cum mutantur vocantur Angeli. *Isid.*

There be some that will by no means admit that there are any such Creatures as Spirits, or Spiritual Natures, subsisting in the World. The *Sadduces* of old denied that there was any Angel or Spirit. And there are some now a-days, that profess themselves to be *Christians*, and yet do not believe that there are any Spirits, or Spiritual Substances; yea, stick not to say, that the Notion of a Spirit, or incorporeal Substance, doth imply a Contradiction, and that there is an utter Impossibility of any other being beside *Matter* or *Body*. But methinks, the Consequence of this Conceit should make any one that is a *Christian* tremble: For it will follow, that either there is no God; or that God is not a Spirit, when our Saviour *Christ* expressly says, that he is a Spirit, *Joh. 4. 24.*

Wherefore very Shame enforces these men to except God, and they will acknowledge him to be an incorporeal Being, and pure Spirit. But if God be so, then does not the Notion of a Spirit imply a Contradiction, but 'tis possible for such pure Spiritual Natures to be created of God, after his own Image and Likeness.

Now, whereas the Scripture doth frequently make mention of such Creatures as *Spirits*, to evade such Testimonies as are brought against them, they tell us, that by *Spirits* in Scripture, we are to understand nothing but, either certain *Qualities*, *Motions*, and *Inspirations* in men; or else certain *Divine Phantasms* or *Appearances*, created by God to serve some present occasion, which ceased to be as soon as they disappeared, this was the old *Sadduces* Opinion of Angels.

I do confess we must yield, that the Word *Spirit* is sometimes used in these Senses, in the Holy Scriptures. Because Spirits are very active natures, working, tho' powerfully, yet insensibly, therefore such Impressions, Qualities, and Affections in men, as do powerfully and secretly move them, are called *Spirits*. By the *Spirit of the Holy Gods*, *Dan. 4. 8, 9.* is meant the *Inspiration*. And when it is said of *Caleb*, that he had another *Spirit* with him, *Num. 14. 24.* the meaning is, he was a Man of a better Inclination than the rest, he was a Man of a more active Affection. So the vehement Motions of sin are called

Exod. 28. 3.
 2 Tim. 1. 7.
 Rom. 8. 15.
 Isa. 11. 2
 1 Cor. 4. 21.

called Spirit. And we read of the *Spirit of Whoredomes*, *Hos. 4. 12.* and the *Spirit of Jealousy*, *Num. 5. 14.* In many other places of Scripture, where is mention of the Spirit of Wisdom, the Spirit of Fear, the Spirit of Bondage, the Spirit of Knowledge, and of the Fear of the Lord, the Spirit of Meekness, and such like Phrases, the like Sense is to be understood; or, by a *Metonymie* of the Cause, those Motions and Impressions that are the Effects of the Spirit of God, are called the Spirit: But in these Phrases the Word Spirit is used *Figuratively*, not *Properly*.

Again, because Spirits are such pure Substances as cannot be perceived by our Senses, therefore meer Phantasms and Appearances, are sometimes called Spirits; as in our Translation of *Mar. 6. 49.* *They, i. e. the Disciples, supposed it had been a Spirit.* In the Greek 'tis a *Phantasm*. And they being under the like Apprehension another time, 'tis said, *they supposed they had seen a Spirit*, *Luke 24. 37.*

The Word Spirit then hath sometimes such a Signification as is by our *Sadduces* suggested. But this not being the Proper Signification, of the Word, but borrowed from the Activity and Insensibility of Spirits, we must not interpret other Scriptures (where it is used properly) according to this borrowed Sense.

Can we understand the Word *Spirit*, in either of the former Senses, when it's said, *Joh. 4. 24.* *God is a Spirit*, &c.? Is God only a *Quality*, or a meer *Phantasm*? Is not he a Proper Spirit, or Spiritual Substance? And when he is said to be, *The God of the Spirits of all Flesh*, *Numb. 16. 22.* and by the Apostle is called *the Father of the Spirits*, *Heb. 12.* No doubt: the Souls of men are meant, that are Proper Spirits. When *Solomon* calls the *Soul*, *Man's Spirit*, and says, that at Death it returns to God that gave it, *Eccles. 12. 7.* And when *Christ* on the Cross, is said to give up the *Ghost*, or *Spirit*, 'tis meant his *Soul*, *Joh. 19. 30.* And when *Stephen*, at his Death, prayed, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*, *Acts 7. 59.* does he not mean his *Soul*, that he believed should be presently with the Lord? The *Soul* of Man is not a *Quality*, or *Phantasm*, but a Real Substance, existing when separate from the

Body:

Body : How else could it be said to return at Death to God who gave it, and to be received by *Jesus Christ*?

A Spirit therefore in the Proper Acceptation of it, signifies a *Substantial Being*. By reason of the Imperfection of our Understandings, we are not able to form any one single adequate Conception of a Spirit, but first we conceive of it as a *Substance*, which is the *Fundamental Conception* of it, then we conceive of it as *Virtue*, or *Power*, which is its *Formal Conception*. These Two Substance and Power, are not really distinct compounding parts of a Spirit, but Two partial inadequate Conceptions, or Intelligible Parts. And if you ask, what a Spirit is? He to me gives the most intelligible Account of it, that says, it is, *Substantia Virtuosa*. A Substance, a pure Substance, that has an active Virtue or Power.

S E C T. III.

There are Three sorts of Spirits, *Intellectual*, *Sensitive*, and *Vegetative*.

Intellectual are either, that one *Uncreated* and Eternal Spirit, the Blessed God ; or such as are *Created* by him.

God is an uncreated, eternal, infinite, and transcendently pure, and simple Essence. As he is invisible, so is he unspeakable, we having no Words fit to express what he is in his Essence. When we say, he is a Substance, and he is a Spirit, these Words must be understood to signify something more excellent than they signify when applied to the most perfect created Spirits : For all created Spirits are as base, dull, unactive Matter, compared to his transcendently, pure and simple Essence.

Created Spirits are either *Angels*, or *Humane Souls*. Now these tho' they are infinitely beneath God in Purity and Simplicity, yet are they made after his Image, and 'tis by the Knowledge of these, that we come to know what he is, they being the best Glasses we have to see him in.

Athanasius says, There are Three things, that as to their Essence, are to Men ἀγνώσιμα, ἢ ἀόσιμα, unknown, and
not

not to be defined, *viz.* God, Angels, and the Souls of men. To know these immediately, and intuitively in their Essence, we are not able. And no wonder when 'tis a very imperfect Knowledge that we mortals have even of things that are corporeal. As for the Substances of things that are corporeal and sensible, they are but by accident said to be the Objects of Sense, and as stripped of their Accidents, we have no positive true Conception of them. " Who hath told us any thing (*saieth Baxter, Reasons of*
 " *the Christ. Relig.* p. 554.) of the naked Matter or Form
 " of Fire (such as the Sun and Luminaries are?) any
 " otherwise than by its Acts and Powers, or Vertues of
 " Motion, Light and Heat, as we describe the Soul of
 " Man. We know Spirits by their Acts and Operations: By these we come to know their Formal Vertues, and so their Nature, what they are, and that as clearly and certainly as we do other things.

There is in the Soul of Man a Faculty Essential to it, by which it doth perceive its self, and its own Acts. He that liveth, doth by living know, and perceive that he liveth; he that understands, doth perceive that he understands; he that willeth, perceives that he doth will; and he that thinketh, by thinking doth know and perceive that he thinketh: And a Man is as sure of this, as he is of any thing in the World. When I am thinking, I am more certain of mine own Act, *viz.* that I do think, than I am of the Truth of that which I think upon. And note, 'tis not a Man's *Flesh* or *Body* (which is but dull, heavy, unactive Matter) but some *active Nature* in him, that thinks, understands, wills, or does any work: Some active Nature within moveth the Body. This active Nature in Man is his Soul, or Spirit, and so says our Apostle, *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man which is in him,* 1 Cor. 2. 11. And *Elibu* says, *There is a Spirit in Man, and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding,* Job 32. 8. Our *Flesh* then does not know our inward Thoughts, nor is capable of receiving Understanding, but it is our Spirit that is within us; that is, our Soul.

Whatever men may dispute and argue, unless they quite put off and lay aside their Humanity, they cannot deny that they have Souls, that they understand, will, chuse, and refuse. The Soul hath an intimate Essential *Conscience*, and *Perception* of its self, and its own Acts, that it cannot lay aside. From the Acts of the Soul thus certainly known, and immediately perceived, it undeniably follows, that there is a Power by which these Acts are performed. Whatsoever thinketh, understandeth, will-eth, hath a Power so to do: For nothing doth do that which it hath not a Power to do. And from the Acts and Power supposed, it does necessarily follow that there is a Substance, or some substantial thing that hath this Power, by which the Acts are performed; for nothing cannot have any Virtue or Power.

Upon the whole, we fairly infer what the Soul is, *viz.* That it is a certain Substance, that hath a Faculty or Power for the performing of the aforementioned Acts, wherefore there is no ground for saying, that we can have no positive Notion or Perception of Spirits, or Spiritual Beings; for that Knowledge which we have of our own Souls, (if we consider it well) will appear to be as clear, and full, as the Knowledge we have of other things, that we count we know very well.

Now by this Knowledge that we have of our own Souls, we come to know other Spirits, such as Angels, of which we are discoursing, we taking them to be of much the same Nature with humane Souls.

What Variety there is of Intellectual Creatures, or Spirits, we cannot determine. Some say that (for ought we know) there is as great a Variety of Intellectual Creatures in the Invisible World, as there is of Animal in the Visible, and these several kinds of Spirits, differing in their Natural Perfections, some from others. But we read but of two sorts of created Spirits only, Angels and Humane Souls. (for the Souls of Brutes are not Intellectual) These Two Angels, and Humane Souls, differ no doubt, but how far, and in what, we cannot precisely define. Only this all agree in, Humane Souls are made to inform Bodies, but it doth not appear that

Scheitler's Definition of an Angel is, Angelus est Spiritus finitus, independens a corpore. Wierus says, Angeli sunt naturæ Intelligentes absq; corporibus. Heereboord, Angelus est Substantia incorporea, completa finita.

Angels are so. And by the Angels Independence on Bodies, some do define them, so distinguishing them from Humane Souls, which have a certain Dependence on Bodies, in that they are made to inform them, and are not fully compleat without them. Yet Soul depend not on Bodies, as to their Being and Existence, for they exist in a separate State, after Death; and then in their separate State they differ little from Angels; only then they have a Relation unto the Bodies which they have left, and unto which they shall be joined again the *Resurrection*. They still belong to them, and have a natural desire of Union with them, and so it cannot be said of them, that they are Persons, as it may be said of Angels. The Angels are all so many distinct Persons. A Person is an Individual Substance, having Understanding, and is no part of another thing. Now Humane Souls are Individual Substances, having Understanding, but yet not Persons because they are parts of Men. They were made to inform Bodies, not to subsist by themselves, without any Relation unto Bodies: Therefore they cannot be said to be Persons, as Angels may, that have no Relation to Bodies essentially belonging to them.

S E C T. IV.

BUT here it will be enquired, how it can be proved that there are such Creatures, as we suppose *Angels* to be? It is largely disputed by some, whether their Existence can be Demonstrated by Natural Reason. There are good Reasons brought from Nature, that there are such Spirits; but some think they do but prove it probable, and amount not to a Demonstration. But if there were no Natural Reason

Heereb. Melet. Phill. vol. 1. Disp. 12.

to persuade the Belief of the Being of Spirits; How came it to pass that the Heathen Philosophers, both *Aristotle* and *Plato*, and their Followers, with one Consent, assert and defend the same? Sure they thought there was reason for such a Belief, for they gave no heed to Divine Reve-

Revelation in the Scriptures. If they had any Knowledge of those Sacred Writings, they did not believe them.

But we need not dispute this. 'Tis sufficient for us, if it may be proved by the Word of God. And the Word of God doth afford us Arguments evidently proving that there are such Creatures; yea, and by what we read in those Sacred Writings, some of the Arguments from Nature are so clear'd, and strengthened, that they come not short of a Demonstration.

I shall propose a few Scripture Arguments (instead of many more that might be brought) as sufficient to satisfy such as believe the Scriptures.

1. The *Apostle* arguing in the beginning of his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, to prove the super-eminent Excellency of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, his Person and Office, does necessarily suppose that there are such Creatures as *Angels*, and that they are the most excellent of all God's Creatures, and therefore not meer *Phantasms*. Pray observe well the *Apostles* reasoning. To beget in the *Hebrews* a more awful and reverent respect unto the Gospel, of which *Jesus Christ* was the prime Minister, Chap 1. 2. He labours to convince them of the Transcendent Dignity of his Person. This he attempts by comparing him, not with *Moses*, or one of the Prophets, or any mortal Man, how excellent soever; but with the blessed *Angels*, the highest and most excellent of all Creatures. And he tells them, ver. 4. that the Lord *Jesus Christ* is better than the *Angels*, that is, far above them. This he proves by several Reasons,

(1.) Because he is the Natural Son of God, which *Angels* cannot pretend to. They are said to be the Sons of God, but not to be begotten of him. Says the *Apostle*, Unto which of the *Angels* said he at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? ver. 5.

(2.) He alledges, that God commands his *Angels* to worship *Jesus Christ*, therefore sure, he is above them. So ver. 6. When he bringeth his first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the *Angels* of God worship him.

(3.) Tho' he denies not that Angels have Power under God, yet he affirms that the Sovereign Power immediately under God, is given unto *Jesus Christ*, which is meant by sitting at God's right Hand, *ver. 12.* To which of the Angels (says the Apostle) said he at any time, sit on my right hand, &c. The Angels have no Power but under him, and are servants to him, as he argues, *ver. 7.* and in my Text, *ver. 14.*

Now does not the *Apostle* in all this Discourse manifestly trifle, if there be no such Creatures as *Angels*, really existing, or if by *Angels* nothing be meant, but *Motions* and *Impressions*, or *Phantasms*? And did not the Woman of *Tekoab* speak idly and impertinently, when she said of *David*, *My Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an Angel of God*, if there be no such eminently Intelligent Creatures as *Angels*, in Being?

Yea, further when the *Apostle*, *Heb. 2.* is discoursing of the way how *Christ* was to become the Author of Salvation to men, even by suffering of Death, *ver. 9.* And shews how it was meet and agreeable to the Scriptures, that he should be Partaker of *Flesh* (by which the Humane Nature is meant, *ver. 14.*) He says, *ver. 16.* For verily he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the seed of *Abraham*.

Ὁυ γὰρ ἀπέλαβεν, For verily, or, For no-where, that is (as some interpret) in no place of Scripture is it said, he took or should take the Nature of Angels.

He took not the Nature of Angels. The word (Nature) is not in the Original, but Ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι. He took or taketh not Angels, or taketh not hold of Angels. But our Translation giveth the Sense well enough, reading for Angels, the Nature of Angels. 'Tis said, *ver. 14.* He was partaker of our *Flesh* and *Blood*; that is, Humane Nature: Now here, because Angels have not *Flesh* and *Blood*, 'tis said, He took not Angels, meaning that in Angels, which answers to *Flesh* and *Blood* in us, even their *Spiritual Nature*; he took not that, nor is it said any where in Scripture, that he should, but 'twas promised that he should come of the Seed.

Seed of *Abraham*. Here now to make good Sense, it must of necessity be supposed, that *Angels* (tho' they have not *Flesh* and *Blood* as we have, yet) have a Nature that is capable of being assum'd, tho' the Son of God would not assume that, but the Humane Nature rather, as was meet, and that of the Seed of *Abraham* according to the Promise.

2. My next Argument is taken from what the Apostle *Jude* speaks of God's punishing the *Apostate Angels*. He is insisting on Examples of God's Judgments on Apostates, to shew the danger of Apostasy. And he does instance first in the *Israelites*, ver. 5. and then in the Angels that fell, ver. 6. telling us how they left their Habitation, and were condemned to everlasting Chains of Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day. What can be more evident than that there were such Creatures as *Angels*, Holy in their first Estate, but some of them continued not so, but fell from their first State. That they had an Habitation, and place of dwelling together, and that some of them left it, and that such as did so were condemned of God unto Chains under Darkness, to be kept to be judged with men at the last Day. How impertinently does the Apostle urge the Angels that sinned, as an Instance of God's Vengeance on Apostates, if there were not any such Creatures as Angels, capable of sinning, and of being punished, nor ever were? And how ready will men be to think *Hell* but a *Fancy*, which is said to be prepared for the Devil and his Angels, *Matt.* 25. 41. if *Devils* and *Angels* be but *Phantasms*, or *Inspirations*, and there be no such Creatures having a Real, and permanent Being and Existence? For if so, they cannot be capable of any Punishment, and for Men to be condemned to their Punishment, is to be condemned to no Punishment at all.

3. Angels have a *Vital, Active Power, Understanding* and *Will*, ascribed to them, and are said to do such actions, as cannot properly be said to be done, but by *Persons*, or *Substantial Beings*, really and actually existing. They are said to know many things, and there are some things, that they are said not to know; as for Instance

the Day of Judgment. *But of that Day and Hour* (says Christ) *knoweth no man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only*, *Matt. 24. 36.* They are said to serve God, to praise him, to worship him, to execute his Commands. They are said to speak, to ask Questions, to answer, to teach, to comfort, to come and go, to help, protect, deliver. What great and wonderful Actions are in Scripture ascribed to Angels, you will see in the following Discourse, to which I refer you. If *Angels* were not Living, Intelligent, Active Creatures, really existing, it cannot be conceived how all this could truly, and will any Propriety of Speech, be spoken of them; and in particular how it could be said of them (as in the *Text*) that they are *Ministring Spirits sent forth to minister for the Heirs of Salvation*, which the Apostle does attest as a commonly acknowledged Truth.

*Actiones sunt
Suppositorum,
as all acknow-
ledge.*

4. I thus argue, If there be a glorious and blessed Life, and State of *Angels*, to which the Life and State of the Faithful after the *Resurrection* may be fitly compared, and by which it may be represented; then are *Angels Substantial Permanent Beings*, not *Accidents* or *Phantasms*, or transient *Appearances*; But there is a glorious and blessed Life and State of *Angels*, to which the Life and State of the faithful, after the *Resurrection*, may be fitly compared, and by which it may be represented. Therefore *Angels* are *Substantial Beings*.

The *Assumption* is proved by *Christ's* own Words, who tells us that the Faithful in the *Resurrection*, shall be like unto the *Angels* of God in Heaven, *Matt. 22. 30.* In *Luke* it is said, They shall be equal to the *Angels*. The *Sadduces* were questioning with our Saviour, touching the State of Men in the *Resurrection*, particularly, whose *Wife* she should be in the *Resurrection*, who had been successively married lawfully to several Persons. *Christ* in Answer, tells them that in the *Resurrection* Men shall not live, as here they do: They shall not marry nor be given in Marriage, but be as the *Angels* are in Heaven, that is, live as they live. Does it not necessarily follow from these Words of *Christ*, that the *Angels* are living in Heaven, and that they live in a more perfect way than Men

do now; and that the Faithful shall come to live even as they do? And what? Shall the Faithful lose their Being and Subsistence? A great Change shall be in the *Resurrection*. Our Natural Bodies (the *Apostle* says) shall be raised Spiritual Bodies, but we shall have true Bodies then, only they shall be such as shall not need to be sustained (as now) with Meat, and Drink, and Sleep, nor will there be any use of Marriage and Propagation, which is for the continuing of the Kind; Because we shall be Immortal and Incorruptible: And in this respect we shall be as the *Angels*, who are in no need of those things. If *Angels* live not. If they live not a true and most perfect Life, then will Heaven prove but a Fancy, as Hell also will prove but a Fancy (as was shewed on my second Argument.) And what can be more repugnant to all Religion than such a Conceit?

5. My next Argument is this, That which is in God's Word noted as a dangerous Error, must needs be false, and the contrary to it a certain and great Truth. But to hold that there are no *Angels*, or *Spirits*, is noted in God's Word as a dangerous Error. Therefore it must needs be false, and the contrary to it, *viz.* that there are *Angels*, a great and certain Truth.

The Denial of the Existence of *Angels* is noted as the Error of the *Sadduces*, and as a very dangerous Error, overthrowing a *Fundamental* Article of Faith, *viz.* that of the *Resurrection*. See *Acts* 23. 8. For the *Sadduces* say there is no *Resurrection*, neither *Angel* nor *Spirit*. Observe here, it was the *Resurrection* that *Paul* in that Assembly declared himself for, and he did it to divide the Company, they being some *Pharisees*, some *Sadduces*. The *Pharisees* were for it (he knew) and the *Sadduces* against it. But the *Evangelist Luke*, noting the Error of the *Sadduces* in denying the *Resurrection*, does not only mention that Error, but another also, that led them into it, *viz.* That there was neither *Angel* or *Spirit*. He had no occasion to subjoin this additional Charge here, but to shew that this latter Error drew them into, and confirmed them in the former. The *Sadduces* (says he) say there is no *Resurrection*, and what led them into this Absurdity the next

Words

Words intimate, They say there is neither Angel nor Spirit. These Two Errours are twisted one in the other. The Resurrection being the Re-union of the Body and Spirit, how can they own a Resurrection that deny there is any Spirit?

And how did the *Sadduces* deny there was any *Angel*, or *Spiritu*? They could not deny the Name of *Angel* and *Spiritu*, for the Scriptures which they acknowledged the Authority of, do often mention those Names: Nor did they deny that there were Spiritual *Qualities*, *Motions*, *Impulses*, and *Inspirations* from God: Nor could they deny *Apparitions*, so often recorded in Scripture. This they could not possibly deny, believing the Scripture: But that which they denied was, that there were any *Angels* or *Spirits* that were Living, Intelligent Creatures, having a Real and Permanent Being and Existence. They thought them to be but *Divine Phantasms*, or *Appearances* and *Shews*, created of God for some Services, which ceased when the Service was over. This was their Errour. And this being noted in Scripture as a dangerous Errour, it must needs be so indeed: For the Scripture does not represent any thing as an Errour, but what really is so. And if the denying of Angels be a dangerous Errour, then the contrary is a great Truth, *viz.* That there are Angels, and Spirits, as we are proving.

6. I shall offer but one Argument more, and that shall be from such Effects as mens Senses are Witnesses of, and by which Angels or Spirits have discovered themselves to the World, time after time. Tho' Spirits are in their own Nature Invisible, yet have they often in such manner applied themselves to Men, sensibly transacting with them, and working strange things amongst them, that no Man can well doubt whether there be such Creatures existing.

We read in the Holy Scriptures of frequent Apparitions of Angels to men. We read also of many wonderful things that have been done by them. We read of Men possessed of Evil Spirits, and that they that have been possessed have done such things, as they could never do by any Power of their own. We read also of

some

some that have had *Familiar Spirits*, and have told things that they could not possibly know, but by some Supernatural Intelligence, and have done things beyond the reach of Art, or ordinary Nature. Such as would persuade us that those Possessions (spoken of in the Gospel, were nothing else but Distraction and Madness, or some strange Diseases, are obliged to shew us how 'tis possible that Madness, or any Disease, should make Men able to do things above the Strength of any Man whatever, as 'tis evident that *Demoniack* could, *Mark* 5. 4.

That there have been *Apparitions*, *Possessions*, and strange Works done, above the Power of Man, is not only attested by the Scriptures, but found to be true by the common Experience of the World ; The like things happening in after times, in every Age, and Country. And hereof there have been so many Thousand Eye-witnesses (many of them wise and grave Persons, not likely to be imposed upon, and some, not very apt to believe such things, till convinced by such Experience of their own, as they could not withstand the Evidence of) I say there have been so many Eye-witnesses that have known and attested these things, that none can question them that are not downright Infidels as to all History, and Reports of the most credible Persons.

I shall not insist upon *Apparitions*, that have been very frequent : Nor upon the *Confederacies* of *Witches* with Evil Spirits, which not only have been freely confessed by very many of the *Witches* themselves, but have on good Reason been so firmly believed by the wiser sort of Men, that many *Laws* have been made against such impious Practices in most (if not all) of the best governed Kingdoms in the World, making the Offences *Capital*. I say I shall not insist on either of these for the present : But I would fain know what Cause can be assigned of such strange Effect, (as we are sure have been wrought) if there be no Supernatural Agents at work in the World. When the Walls of *Jericho* fell flat to the ground, at the sounding of *Rams Horns*, when Fire came down from Heaven, and suddenly consumed *Sodom* and the neighbouring Cities, when a *Serpent* spake with a Man's Voice unto *Eve*,

and when *Balam's Ass* spake so to him, when a fierce Fire was kept from hurting the Three young Men, that were cast into the Furnace, and when the hungry *Lions* were restrained from touching *Daniel*, when he was cast into the Den. A Multitude of such strange Events we have related in Scripture, and the like have happened ever and anon in the World: I shall not insist on Particular Instances, but refer you for them to such as have collected abundance of them, of unquestionable Verity, and published them to the World. When great sturdy Trees have been pluckt up by the Roots, no Man knows how, and some so twisted and shatter'd as hath amazed the Beholders. When great huge Stones and pieces of Timber, have been heav'd and hurl'd a great way in the Air, without any visible Hand: When Doors fast lockt have opened without any body near them: When ignorant Persons, never educated in any kind of Learning, have spoken readily in *Latine*, *Greek* and *Hebrew*, and of things secret, which they could not in any ordinary way, come to the Knowledge of: Such things have happened, and I would fain know how these things come to pass. There can be no sufficient Natural Cause assigned, therefore there must of necessity be some such Supernatural Agents as Angels are, acknowledged.

If any shall say, that all such strange things may be supposed to be effected by God's own Immediate Power, and so do not sufficiently prove that there are Angels.

I answer, 'Tis true God's being immediately the Cause of some of them cannot be disproved by Natural Reason, but a Christian Man or Woman, that believes the Scriptures, hath no reason to believe so, when such of those strange Effects as the Scriptures make mention of, are ordinarily ascribed to the Angels Agency, as you will see in the ensuing Discourse: But then tho' some of the stranger Events mentioned, might be ascribed to God's Immediate Hand, if the Scriptures did not report otherwise; yet there are some others of them that cannot be ascribed to God without gross Impiety: 'Tis notoriously known that there have been *Witches*, and *Demoniacks*, or *Possessed Persons*, Silly, Ignorant Persons,
never

never brought up to Learning, that yet have readily discoursed with others in divers Learned Languages (as was noted before) and have spoken touching things Secret, and unknown, even of things newly done, very many Miles off: And these men in these Discourses of theirs, often utter many Blasphemies, and Lyes. Some Cause or other there must be of such strange Discourses. These Ignorant Men themselves cannot be thought to be sufficient Causes, there being Languages spoken which they never Learned: And they cannot be referred to God as the Cause of them, because of the Lyes and Blasphemies that are supposed to be spoken, unless we will make God the Author of Sin. Therefore there must be some other *Intelligent, Active Nature* besides the Blessed God, and Mortal Men, even the *Angelical*. And it must be some *evil Angel*, or *Spirit* that speaketh in and by such Men; yea, and doth those strange Works that they profess and seem to do. And no good Christian can ever be induced to think that the Holy God should make choice of such sad Creatures as *Witches* are (the very Dregs of Mankind, very Lew'd, wicked, and malicious Persons) to be extraordinary Instruments of his Providence, to do things so much above any Art of Man, or ordinary Nature: Much less can any good Man believe, that all those Villanies and Mischiefs against Men and Beasts, that are acted by *Witches*, are all from the Holy and Good God, and wrought by him. No Man that hath any Sense of Religion can think so.

Wherefore (perhaps) others will say, that those strange and unaccountable Effects of which we are discoursing, may be ascribed to separate Souls of Men: They may be skilled in Languages they learned while in the Body, and they may have a mind to do Evil, and God may permit it. Therefore (say such) these Effects do not necessarily prove the Existence of any other Spirits but Humane Souls.

To these I answer, 1. I think there are none that deny the Existence of Angels good and bad, that hold the Existence of Humane Souls, when separate from the Body.

2. Such as believe the Scriptures know, that such Actions are ascribed there to Evil Spirits, as the hurt *Job* had done him, is ascribed to the *Devil*. And we understand by the Scripture that Good Angels are sent forth to minister for the good of Men, and that Evil Angels or Devils, go up and down seeking whom they may devour: But we read nothing of Humane Souls, that they have any Work assigned them here in this World.

3. The *Devil's* speaking in the *Serpent* to *Eve*, was before there was any *Separate Soul*; For there had not as yet happened the Death of any one Man or Woman, wherefore this could not be an Humane Soul, it must be an Evil Angel.

If this prove no more but that there are *Devils*, 'tis sufficient for my purpose; For I know none question the Existence of *Good Angels*, who acknowledge that there are *Devils*.

C H A P. II.

§. 1. *Whether Angels are wholly Incorporeal and Immaterial. And of the Opinion of the Ancients, that Angels are Corporeal.* §. 2. *Some things Corporeal, for the Purity of their Substance called Spirits, And how the Substance of Spirits is to be distinguished from the finest Bodies.* §. 3. *Three Reasons proving Angels Incorporeal.* §. 4. *What Bodies they were that Angels have appeared in.* §. 5. *Of their Opinion that hold all Intellectual Spirits are embodied. And how Spirits are capable of the Sense of Pleasure and Pain, tho' we suppose them not embodied.*

HAVING with all the Plainness I could, proposed those few Scripture Arguments, to prove the Existence of Angels, and that *Angels* are not *Accidents*, or *Phantasms*, but *Substances*, have a Real and Permanent Being. I shall proceed to inquire a little further into their Nature, whether they are wholly *Incorporeal* and *Immaterial Substances*, and whether this be included in the Notion of *Spirits*.

S E C T. I.

ABOUT this Learned Men have spoken very differently. *Suarez* tells us, that there have been many, both *Philosophers* and *Divines*, Ancient and Modern, who tho' they grant there are *Incorporeal Spirits*, and that the *Superiour Angels* are *Incorporeal*; yet think there are other *Angels* that are *Corporeal*, especially that *Devils* are so. And he says that *Cajetan* does affirm it, both

Multi ex antiquis Philosophis & moderni aliqui Philosophi & Theologi videntur hoc modo asseruisse aliquos Angelos præsertim Dæmonas esse corporeos. Quod de motoribus Cælorum affirmat. *Cajetanus* in cap. 4. *Gen* & de Dæmonibus in cap. 2. ad *Ephes.* *Suarez* met. Dilp. 35. Sect. 3.

of

of the *Angels* that are the Movers of the Heavens, and also of *Devils*, viz. that they are *Corporeal*. And supposing it possible there should be such a sort of *Angels*, they think 'tis for the Beauty of the Universe, that there should be such. *Quod*

Imò si hujusmodi varietas Intelligentiarum possibilis est, pertinebit ad decorem Universi, ut in eo sit utè q; modus & ordo Intelligentiarum.

scilicet oportet in eo esse omnes gradus rerum. Because it is meet there should be in the Universe all Degrees of things.

Others we find going further, at least seeming so to do, affirming it of *Angels* indefinitely, and *Humane Souls* also, that they are *Bodies* or *Corporeal*.

Heracitus says of the Soul, 'tis *Essentie Stellaris scintilla*. *Hipparchus* in *Pliny* says, 'tis *Cæli pars*. *Epictetus* calls the Stars, *εἰς αὐτῶν σφαιρῶν*. *Aristotle* (with the *Peripateticks*) says, *Eam quinta essentia constare, & ἀνάλογον τῷ πνεύματι ὁμοίαν ἰσχυράν* animabus inesse.

Scalliger calls it *Naturam Cælestem, alia quidem a quatuor Elementis natura præditam, sed non sine omni Materia*. So *Mr. Baxter* quotes them.

Tertullianus non ob aliud Corpus est Animam credidit, nisi quod eam incorpoream credere non potuit: Et ideo timuit ne nihil esset si Corpus non esset. Not. in *Tert.*

Not only the *Platonists*, but many of the Ancient Fathers do roundly, and without Scruple, tell us so much. *Tertullian* a Father, that writ in the beginning of the Third Century, in his Book *De Anima*, says of the Soul of Man (which is of the same Nature that an Angel is) *Nihil enim est si non Corpus, i. e.* It is nothing if it be not a Body. Nor did he think it any Contradiction for him to say also, that the Soul is a Spirit. This seems (*I confess*) a Paradox; But that Consequence in *Laertius* agrees well with it, *Ψυχὴ πνεῦμα εἶναι, δὲ καὶ σῶμα εἶναι, i. e.*

That the Soul is a Spirit, and therefore is a Body. But *Body* with *Tertullian* signified no more but *Ens*, something that hath a Being, and so he is interpreted to mean, that the Soul is a *Body* or *Corporeal*, only because he could not conceive how it could be *Incorporeal*, and be any thing at all.

This Word *Body* is sometimes used as opposed to a *Shadow*, or to a *Phantasm*, and signifies the same with *Being* or *Substance*, as in *Col. 2. 17.* and other places of Scripture. And so whatever has a *Substantial Being*, and is not a meer *Shadow* or *Phantasm*, is a *Body*. In this Sense of the Word 'tis not Heterodox to say, *Humane Souls*, and *Angels* too are *Bodies*: For they are not meer *Shadows* and *Phantasms*.

Several others of the Fathers have declared themselves to be of the Opinion that *Angels* are *Corporeal*, and have *Bodies*, and that nothing is *Incorporeal* but God only. So thought *Augustine*, that they have *Subtile Bodies*, that they are *Aerial* or *Ætherial* Creatures, having *Bodies* not *Fleshy* and *Earthly* as ours are, but such as consist mostly of those *Elements* that are more *Active* than *Passive*, as *Air* and *Fire*, and therefore not to be dissolved by *Death*. *Origen*, *Lactantius*, *Hilary*, *Basil*, and many other Fathers are produced as being of the same Opinion. Yea, we find

Aug. lib. 2. de Gen. Cap. 17. Tradit Angelos tam Bonos quam malos subtilia habere Corpora Et lib 3. cap. 10. Ostendit esse Aeræ, sed per Mortem indissolubilia, eo quod prævaleant in his Elementa magis ad agendum quam ad patiendum apta; Hoc est Aer & Ignis Sidercus. In Psal. 85. Assertit Corpora Beatorum futura post Resurrectionem, qualia sunt Corpora Angelorum. Sixt. Sen. Bibl. Sta.

it reported to be the Doctrine of the *Catholick Church*, and that by a whole Council. The *Second Council of Nice*, which hath the Name of the *Seventh General Council* (but does not deserve it) that they might defend the *Picturing* and *Worshipping* of *Angels*, approved the Opinion of *John Bishop of Thessalonia*, that was read in the Council by the *Patriarch* out of a *Book* of the *Bishops*, wherein he disputes with an *Heathen*. The *Bishop* affirms, that it is the *Judgment* of the *Catholick Church*, that *Angels* and *Archangels*, and also *humane Souls*, are not altogether without *Body*, viz. a thin either *Aerial*, or *Igneous Body*: grounding it on that of the *Psalmist*, *He made his Angels Spirits, and his Ministers a Flame of Fire*, *Psal. 104. 4.*

it reported to be

Productus & lectus est liber quidam Beatis, Joannis Episc. Thess. in quo disputat cum Gentili quodam. Sanctus dixit de Angelis & Archangelis & eorum potestatibus, quibus & nostras Animas adjungo, ipsa Catholica Ecclesia sic sentit, esse quidem intelligibiles, sed non omnino Corporis expertis (ut vos Gentiles dicitis) verum Tenui Corpore præditos, Aereo sive Igneo, ut Scriptum est Qui facit Angelos suos Spiritus, & ministros ejus Ignem urentem, &c. Hanc Sententiam dicent: Traslato Patriarcha, Sacra Synodus responder, etiam Domine. Barth. Carranz. Sum. Concil. sol. 355.

The *Council* declared its *Approbation* of, as says *Sixt. Senensie*, and *Carranza* in his *Epitome* of the *Councils*.

I do not give this so large Account, of what the *Antients* have said, touching the *Nature* of *Angels*, and *Humane Souls*, because I like their way of expressing the *Matter*, or that I think 'tis fit to say as they do, that *Angels* and *Souls* are *Corporeal*; But I would not have men uncharitably

uncharitably to censure the Opinions of others; tho' they use not such Terms as are to their liking; and fall out about Words, while there is an Agreement in Sense, which is much of the Contention that is now in the World. When Learned Men are not agreed on the meaning and Signification of such Words, and Terms, as they make use of, in their Disputations, they often fall a quarrelling one with the other very furiously, when their meaning all the while is (perhaps) the very same. Thus it happens in Mens Disputes about the Nature of *Angels*, while they agree not on the Signification of those Terms, *Body*, *Spirit*, *Corporeal*, *Incorporeal*, *Material*, *Immaterial*. zealous Oppositions arise between them, when they differ not at all in Sense. 'Tis probably thought that the Ancients before quoted, did mean by *Body* and *Corporeal* the same that others that oppose them mean by *Substance* and *Substantial*.

We are not much concerned precisely to determine what was their Sense of those Words: But if they understood them as aforesaid, they were in no Errour: But if when they say that Angels have Aery or Fiery Bodies they mean that the Substance of Angels is no more pure than the Substance of Air and Fire, then they were, I conceive, in an Errour.

S E C T. II.

Job 6. 9.

WE know that the more Subtil, Fine and Pure sort of *Bodies* are called *Spirit*. The Breath of Man is called *Spirit*, Isa. 42. 9. The Wind is called *Spirit*, Job. 3. 8. The Wind [gr. πνεύμα the Spirit] bloweth where it listeth. Those tenuious subtle Parts, that in our Bodies are the Instruments of Life and Motion, are called *Spirit*: There are *Vital* and *Animal Spirits*. And these *Corporeal Spirits* Job means, when he says, *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my Spirit*. Again, the finer Parts extracted from *Plants* and *Minerals*, the *Chymists* call *Spirits*. These are all *Corporeal*, and therefore improperly called *Spirits*. The *Substance of Proper Spirits* is much more Pure than the Substance of these,

these, yea, and than the Substance of Fire, which some think to be a middle thing between Body and Spirit : For God gives the most excellent Forms to the purest Substances.

Angels are *Proper Spirits*, or *Spiritual Natures*. And if we understand by *Body* and *Corporeal*, a compounded Elementary Body, such as may be invested with sensible *Qualities*, so as to be seen or felt, there is nothing *Corporeal* belonging to the Notion of a Spirit. And taking *Matter* and *Matterial*, for that which hath such Elementary Materiality as we have, or for a Substance, *que Potentia est Corpus*, as Mr. Baxter expresses it : Or for a certain stupid *Congeries* of *Physical Monads* (as Mr. Glanvil) then *Angels* or *Intellectual Spirits* are *Incorporeal*, and *immaterial*. The Substance of Spirits for the ineffable Purity of it, is most fitly said to be incorporeal and immaterial : Yet have Spirits Real Substance. Bodies and Spirits agree *in aliquo genere*, in some General Nature : Supposing the *Genus* to be *Substance*, then as a *Body* is *Substance*, so a *Spirit* is a *Substance* too. But how *Spiritual Substances* are differenced from *Corporeal*, is a thing very difficult to explain satisfactorily.

Several Men have gone several ways to work, to clear this Matter, namely, how the lowest kinds of *Spirits* or *Spiritual Substances*, do differ from the most Tenuous and Subtil Bodies, or *Corporeal Substances*.

1. Such as wholly insist on *Penetrability*, and *Indivisibility* as the only distinguishing Characters (some think) do neither prove nor make Intelligible, what they undertake (a) I will not presume to censure them, nor yet chuse their way of Solving the Difficulty.

(a) Utinam verò Brutissis & Seducis magis dubitandi ausam non præbeant, dum illud minime præstent quod præstandum in se recipiunt, & rem tanti ponderis post magnos conatus, ausus, & promissa, minime intelligibila aut probata relinquunt. *Baxt. Meth. Theol.* p. 142.

2. Some have thought *Sensibility* as fit a Character to distinguish things *Corporeal* from *Spirits* as any other. I shall not follow these neither, tho' I am well assured they may more easily be understood, than some others can. We all affirm that all *Spirits* are *Insensible*, that is, cannot be seen or felt, &c. The *Apostle* says so much of *Angels*, that they are *invisible*, Col. 1. 16. And why may we not

A Discourse of Angels,

venture to say, that all *Bodies* or *Corporeal* things, how thin and Subtil soever, are *Sensible*? Meaning by *Sensible* not that which we are able to perceive by our *Senses*, but [as Mr. Baxter] that which is a fit Object for *Senses*, of the same kind with ours, supposing them elevated to the greatest Perfection that they are capable of in their kind. For so (says he) *Air* and *Atomes*, being of the same kind as other Matter, may be visible to a Sight of the same kind as ours, if raised Degrees enough. We know many *Animals* can by *Sense* perceive such things as we cannot. What a perfect and easy *Sent* hath a *Dog* of his Master's Foot, or of an *Hare* gone by some time before, when no Man living can smell any thing? And we know that by the help of a *Microscope* we can plainly see such things, as for the Smallness of them, we cannot see otherwise. This proves that many things are *Sensible* (that is) are fit *Objects* of *Sense*, that notwithstanding we cannot perceive, by our imperfect *Senses*. And I know not but we may say, that the most thin and Subtil *Corporeal* Substances are the *Objects* of *Sense*, and might be perceived by *Senses* of the same kind with ours, if elevated to the highest degree of Perfection, that they are capable of in their kind.

But now *Spirits* are not so: They are not *Objects* capable of being perceived by the most perfect *Sense*, and that because of their unconceivable Purity. But (as I said) neither do I chuse this way.

3. I confess I most approve of them, and they speak most intelligibly to my *Understanding*, who say that *Spirits* are chiefly differenced from things *Corporeal* by their *Form*, though they acknowledge too, that their *Substance* which some call *Metaphysical Matter*, is also more Pure.

The Definition that Learned Mr. Baxter gives of an *Intellectual* or *Mental Spirit*, tho' some dislike, I can discern no fault in it, viz. "That 'tis a most pure *Substance*, that hath in it self an *Essential Principle of Life*, "*Intellection*, and *Volition*, or whose *Form* is a *Power*, or "*Virtue of Vital Action*, *Intellection*, and *Volition*; that "*hath a Will* to chuse, an *Understanding* to guide, and a
"*Vital*

“ *Vital Power* to put in Execution. Now it being the *Form* that doth *Specificate*, and *Denominate*, and *Difference* other things, I know not why we should not say the same here too, *viz.* That *Spirits* are distinguished from *Bodies*, or *Passive Matter*, by their *Formal Virtue*, founded in most pure Substance without any Real Composition. This may be said both of *Angels* and *Humane Souls*, in Consistency with their *Simplicity* and *Immortality*.

S E C T. III.

There is no ground for Objecting (as some perhaps may) *Angels* and *Humane Souls* are Simple Natures: But how can they be so if compounded of Substance and Virtue? If they be compounded of these, why may there not be a Dissolution? And if there may, how can they be Immortal?

I answer, 1. These Two Substance and Virtue, as hath been noted, do not make any Real Composition, but are only *Intelligible Part*, or *Inadequate Conceptions*, of one Simple Nature, and so it follows not that there may be a Dissolution: For they are not Two distinct things as *Soul* and *Body* are of Man, but signify one Simple Substance so potentiated.

“ The *Substance* or *Metaphysical Matter* of a *Spirit*, is
 “ not such a thing (says Mr. *Baxter*) as is existent with-
 “ out its *Form*: *Matter* none a Partial inadequate Con-
 “ ception of things *quoad hoc*, which have something
 “ more that is essential to them: For there is no such
 “ thing as *Matter* existing without *Form*, or *Peculiar*
 “ *Nature*.

Now if they be not Two things really distinct there is no danger of their Separation.

2. *Angels* and *Humane Souls* are not absolutely Simple and Immortal, as God is. *Scheibler*, and others that maintain the Simplicity of *Angels* and *Humane Souls*, yet grant that they are compounded *ex Genere & Differentia*; and tho' the *Divine Nature* will admit of no such Composition, yet 'tis not God's *Simplicity*, but his *Perfection* (as *Scheibler* says) that hinders it. *Spirits* are Simple

Natures, not because they are without all Composition, as God is; but because without such Composition as Bodies have. Neither are the most perfect created Spirits absolutely Immortal, *viz. ex necessitate Naturæ*, For so God only is Immortal: and therefore the Apostle says of
 1 Tim. 6. 16. God, *That he only hath Immortality*. No Creature is Immortal, so as it can by no means perish. God can destroy Angels, yea, without his Sustentation, they would instantly cease to be: For they have (as all other Creatures) a Dependent Being, and (as *Damasceus*) are Immortal, not by *Nature*, but by *Grace*. The Immortality Creatures are capable of, is not a *non posse mori*, but a *posse non mori*, supposing ordinary divine concurrence. When we say they are Immortal by Nature, we mean they have nothing in their Nature that is *sui corruptivum*, not any Principle or Seeds of Corruption within; and that there is no Creature without, that can destroy them. Thus Angels are Immortal, as are also Humane Souls. Of the Soul our Saviour *Christ* says, That no Man is able to kill it, *Mat. 10. 28*. The greatest and most powerful Men on Earth are not able, and that because it hath within it self no Principle of Corruption: And if Souls be thus Immortal, then so are Angels also; and that because they are not of an Elementary Composition, as Natural Bodies are. Thus have I shewed how *Angels* are *Simple, Incorporeal, and Immaterial* Natures.

These Reasons may suffice to evince that they are thus *Incorporeal*.

1. The notion of a Spirit does import so much, Angels are Spirits, and are usually called so; Now Spirit stands in Contradistinction from Body, and one cannot be predicated of the other: A Spirit cannot be said to be a Body, nor a Body be said to be a Proper Spirit.

2. Our Saviour *Christ* says, that a *Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones*, *Luke 24. 39*. That is, any thing of Corporeity.

3. If Angels had any thing of *Corporeity*, or *Grossness*, many of them could not occupy one and the same place, as we read Angels have done, for a whole Legion of them,

them, (and a Legion consists of above 6000 Persons) possessed the Body of one Man, Luke 8. 30.

S E C T. IV.

BUT if *Angels* be *Incorporeal* it will be objected that they cannot be capable of moving any *Body* or *Corporeal* thing. For (say some) we cannot conceive how a thing that is wholly *Incorporeal*, can apply it self to a *Body* so as to move it. A *Spirit* by reason of the Purity of its Substance so easily passes thro' all *Bodies* it applies it self to, that 'tis not conceivable how it should be able to take such hold of any *Body* as to move it.

To this I answer, Because we cannot conceive how a *Spirit* by *Contract*, can apply it self to what is *Corporeal* to move it, shall we conclude a *Spirit* is incapable of moving a *Body*? Alas! how many things are there in Nature, that we are not able to give an account of, nor know we how or which way they are so? Can we conceive how the *Fetus* is formed, and does grow in the Womb, or how any *Plant* or *Flower* does grow up out of the Earth, with such a *Shape*, *Colour*, and *Virtue* as it hath? Do we know how the *Loadstone* draws *Iron* to it? And a Thousand other things, we know they are, but cannot conceive how they should come to be so. I pray who can tell so much as how the several Parts of a solid and hard *Body* (such as *Iron* and *Steel*) do so almost invincibly stick one to the other, For my Part, I think the Power by which a *Spirit* may join it self with Matter, or a *Body*, so fast as to be able to move it, is fully as intelligible, as is the glutinous Quality by which the Parts of a solid *Body* do adhere so firmly one to another that they can hardly be severed.

But what will the Objectors say? 1. Cannot God (who is wholly *Incorporeal* and *Immaterial*) cannot he move *Bodies*, or *Corporeal* things? Yea is not he the *First Cause* of all *Motion*? How is it then so unconceivable, how a *Spirit* should move *Bodies*? They that hold there is nothing in the World beside *Matter* and *Motion*, say that God gave the first *Push* to *Matter*, and set it a moving:
And

Capere non licet quomodo quod incorporeum est, ita applicari Corpori valeat, ut illi impulsu imprimat. *Gassend.*

And how can that be, if it be true what *Gassendus* says, That that which is *Incorporeal* is not able so to apply it self to a *Body*, or *Matter*, as to give

it a Push. They will not say that God is a *Corporeal* Essence.

2. Does not the *Soul* of a Man (which also is incorporeal) move the *Body* it informs? Else of what use is it in the *Body*, if it have no Power to move and govern it? The *Soul* of Man as it is an Intellectual Spirit, having in it an Essential Principle of Life, Intellection and Volition, hath a Power to move the *Body*, if not, all *Morality* must needs fall to the ground, as Mr. *Baxter* very well notes. 'Tis true the *Soul* makes use of the *Spirits* in the *Body*, (that are *Corporeal*) in moving it. The *Spirits* in the *Body*, or the fiery *Matter* (as he says) of them, have a natural Power to move themselves, and the *Members* of the *Body*: But if there be not another Principle of Motion that guideth and ruleth Natural Motion, by a peculiar Action of its own: *viz.* If the Rational *Soul* do not govern the Actions of the *Body*, and have not a Causal Influence on them, but the *Body* is moved in its Actions, only by a natural necessitating Force, how can such Actions be said to be *Morally good* or *evil*? Yea and why is a Man blamed, and punished, rather than a *Beast*, for what he does, if that more excellent Spirit that is in Man, hath not the command of the *Body*, as to its actions, to cause or to hinder them? And to what purpose are any *Laws* of God or Men, if the *Soul*, (which only is capable of *Laws*) have no Power to govern the Actions of the *Body* conformably to them? The *Soul* then must be acknowledged able to move the *Body* it informs, or there can be no good or evil, no virtuous or vicious Action. And if the *Soul*, tho' *Incorporeal*, can move the *Body*, then may an *Angel* tho' *Incorporeal*, move things *Corporeal*. So much of that.

S E C T. V.

BUT that *Angels* have notwithstanding appeared in *Bodies*, and sensibly conversed with Men in them, is a thing so fully proved by the Experience of all times, as well as by Scripture Instances, that no Man can question the Truth of it. Now what sort of *Bodies* those are, in which they appear, and how they are united to them, no Man can certainly tell. Differing Opinions there are about this.

The most commonly received Opinion is, that the *Bodies* in which *Angels* appear are not their own proper *Bodies*, but either the *Bodies* of some Men lately deceased, or (which is more probable) either created of God, or formed out of some *Præ-existent Matter*, and assumed by them only for the present Purpose, and then laid by again.

That the *Bodies* *Angels* are said in Scripture to appear in, were real Solid *Bodies*, seems very likely, because they have sometimes been not only seen with the Bodily Eyes, but felt and handled. The *Angels* that appeared to *Abraham* and *Lot*, are said to eat and drink and mention is made of washing their Feet. And they took *Lot* and his Wife and Daughters by the Hand: therefore they had True *Bodies*. Gen. 11. 4, 8.
Gen. 19. 3, 16.

Peter Martyr is of the mind that *Evil Angels* as well as good, sometimes appear in true Solid *Bodies*: But *Dr. Willet* thinks otherwise, namely, that tho' good *Angels* appear in true *Solid Bodies*, yet *Evil Angels* do not. By disposing and gathering the Air together, they make a Representation of Colours, and Shapes of *Bodies*, and that is all. And such he thinks, was the appearance of *Samuel*. When our Saviour came towards his Disciples, walking upon the Water, 'tis said, *They supposed it had been a Spirit*, Greek. A *Phantasm*. Such a *Phantastical Body* as *Evil Spirits* use to appear with: And when they were in the like Fear another time, to satisfy them, *Christ* bids them behold his Hands and his Feet, and to handle him, telling them that a *Spirit* or *Phantasm*, Mark 6. 49.
has Luke 24. 39.

not *Flesh* and *Bones* (that is a real solid Body) as he had.

Whatever *Bodies* they were that *Angels* appeared in, according to this Supposition they belonged not to them, but they were compleat without them, and could perform their proper *Actions* without them.

Ne illi quidem [speaking of *Angels*] opus habent corpore, quod attinet ad actiones ipsorum proprias, opus autem habent ad actiones nobiscum communicandas. *Pet. Martyr in Sam.*

Angeli neq; subsistendi neq; intelligendi, neq; seipos movendi gratia, corporibus indigent. *Sixt. Sen. Bibl.*

And as for their *Ministries*, which they are to perform for us, 'tis true, they could not appear to us without

Omni actio quam extra se habent [*Angeli*] est ejusdem rationis, quia non transcendit localem motionem, quæ ab Agente incorporeo fieri potest. Quin potius de motoribus Cælorum, ex locali motu perpetuo, conatur *Aristoteles* elicere esse Incorporeos, &c.

Bodies, being in their own Nature *Invisible*, yet perform them they can, as well without *Bodies* as with them.

And therefore some think that the *Angels* assumed *Bodies* only to shew themselves to Men, that it might be more easily believed that there are such

by God as *Ministring Spirits* for the good of Men, and that we shall have *Communion* with them in the World to come: But not to render their *Ministries* more easy to them, or that they might be more capable of performing them; For, for this they have no need of *Bodies*.

Angeli non indigent corpore assumpto propter seipos, sed propter nos, ut familiariter cum hominibus conversando, demonstrent intelligibilem societatem quam homines expectant cum eis habendam in futurâ vitâ. *Aq. 12. q. 51. a. 2. ad 1m.*

If any enquire what becomes of those *Bodies* which *Angels* assume, after the Service is over, which they are sent to perform? 'Tis commonly answered, if they were the Natural *Bodies* of Men that they assumed, then they are returned, and left where they were before. If they were *Bodies* created out of nothing, they are annihilated. If they were formed out of some præ-existent Matter, then they are resolved into that out of which they were made, as soon as the Service for which they were assumed, is over.

S E C T. VI.

TH^{O'} this be the most received Opinion, yet there are Learned Men that think, that the Bodies the Angels appeared in, were their own Proper Bodies, even such Bodies as they were vitally united with; certain subtil, thin Bodies, that cannot be seen ordinarily, with our Eyes, but being to a certain Degree compress'd become Visible. Such *Bodies* (or *Vehicles*, as they call them) these Learned Men suppose all Spirits to have, tho' as to their Intrinsic and Essential Constitution, they acknowledge them to be *Incorporeal* and *Immaterial*.

I will not undertake to determine of the Truth of this *Hypothesis*, but leave it (as I find very Learned Men do) among the things we can have no Certainty of. An able Divine says, a pure Spiritual Nature some allow to no Being but God only: Because he only is Omnipresent and Immutable, he only is Incorporeal and Spiritual, all things else are clothed with Bodies.

Mr. *Baxter* gives us Reasons for, and against the Absolute Simplicity of Angels; But he leaves the Question undetermined, tho' he declares it to be his Judgment, that it is probable that the Supreme Spirits are not *Forms* either of *Bodies*, or of other Spirits: And yet these Spirits are not to be thought to exist so separate from other Creatures beneath them, as to have no Communion with them, or not to work upon them at all.

It has been noted as a thing out of Question, that *Angels* have appeared in *Bodies*; And that they have their Offices in the visible World, and do operate on Inferiour things, will abundantly appear in the ensuing Discourse: Now how this Incorporation of theirs differs from ours, and how their Operations differ from the Operations of the Humane Soul on the Body, who can clearly and distinctly understand?

That which is urged with the most Appearance of force of Reason, to prove that both *Angels*, and *Humane*

Utrum verò Angeli sint Spiritus absolute simplices an potius ex Spiritu Simpliciter & Corpore quodam purissimo Spirituali compositi, mortalibus (mihi saltem) haud certo constat. *Baxt. Meth. Theol.*

Souls, must be supposed to be vitally united to *Bodies*, is that otherwise, if they be not, we cannot conceive how they can be capable of having any *Sense* of Pleasure or Pain.

To this I answer, Tho' *Separate Spirits* cannot have just such a *Sense* and *Perception* of things, as we have by our *Corporal Senses*, yet I see no Reason to think them uncapable of all *Sense*. There is a more excellent sublime and noble kind of *Sensation* that we may attribute to *Spirits*, without any degrading of them. Shall we think that *Souls* of Men departed this *Life*, can have no such *Sense* either of Pleasure or Pain till the *Resurrection*, unless they carry *Bodies* with them? Why may we not suppose that all *Intellectual Spirits* have a Faculty and Power of *Sensation* that is essential to them, and contained in *Intellection*; yea that *Intellection* is eminently *Sensation*, (as Mr. Baxter says) to wit, a more noble kind of *Sensation*?

Are not *Humane Souls* *Conscious* to themselves of their own *Acts*? Do not we perceive we *Will* the things which we *Will*, and that we *Understand* the things we *understand*? And how is this conceived to be, but by a kind of *Spiritual Sense*? And when the *Faculties* of the *Soul* are exercised about *Objects* very suitable to its *Nature*, is it without a certain *Sense* and *Perception* of real *Delight* and *Pleasure*? The *Understanding* (says one) has naturally as strong an *Appetite* to *Truth*, as our *Stomach* hath to *Food*, and as grateful a *relish* of it, as an hungry *Man* hath of a pleasant *Morsel*. And how is this but by a kind of *Spiritual Sense*? And the *Free Acts* of the *Will*, chusing and adhering to the *Chief Good*, must needs be exceeding joyous and blisful. *Rational Love* is the *Act* of the *Will*, and what is *Love* in the prime *Act* of it, but *Complacency*? 'Tis the *Souls* being pleased with its *Object*. And can we conceive of *Pleasure* without any kind of *Sensation*? what unconceivable *Delight* and *Pleasure* is there, in *Knowing*, and *Loving* *God*, and in knowing his *Love* to us, and in the *Conscience* of our *Love* to him? Yea, and in all holy *Acts*, there is a *Gratefulness* to the *Soul*: The *Apostle* says, *This is*

our rejoicing, even the Testimony of our Consciences. And ^{2 Cor. 1. 12.} have we not here the Consent of all the Faithful, who thirst after, and earnestly pray for a more quick, and lively Sense of Divine and Spiritual things? When a Devout and Holy Soul, is in its Contemplations sequestred from all things here below, and wholly taken up with God, and things Divine, are not the thoughts it hath very joyous and delightful? Yet here the Spirit is in a manner solely exercised, at least it was when Paul in an Extacy had the Sight of Heaven, and says, whether in the Body, or out of the Body, I cannot tell, God knows. Spirits then are capable of a Sense of Pleasure, without the help of any Bodies, even in their own Proper Acts.

And so are they capable of a Sense of Pain, on the other hand, without being Incorporate. Devils and Damned Spirits having the Conscience of Sin, and Enmity against God, and the knowledge of his Wrath, and just Displeasure against them, carry an Hell alway about with them.

Dæmones
quocunq;eunt,
Gehennam
secum por-
tant. Beda.

Cannot the great God (against whom they are in a State of Rebellion) send swarms of horrid and frightful Thoughts, and dismal Expectations, continually to haunt them? When they see themselves everlastingly shut up from ever having their Will, in any of the things their minds are wholly set upon, may they not be as much aggrieved with this, as sensible Bodies are with the most exquisite Tortures? Their inveterate Malice, Hatred and Enmity against God (which carries Displeasure in the very Nature of it) must needs be very afflictive, as the Act of Love is joyous, and pleasant. Their excessive Pride must needs horribly vex them, while they are enforced to bow and yield to their mortal Enemy. So must their Fears, by which they are continually scourged: For as the *Apostle* says, *Fear has Torment in it.*

Here is Fire to burn Spirits, which they may have a Sense of, tho' not joined to Bodies. How they should suffer by *Corporeal* Fire (I confess) is more hard to conceive. But you must know, that tho' those Terms *Fire* and *Brimstone*, by which *Hell* is set forth in Scripture, be

1 Joh. 4. 18.

Jude 6

fitly used to express how exquisite and intolerable the Torments thereof are, yet some much question whether there shall be Corporeal Fire (such as ours is) burning there. Certain it is the Fire in Hell shall give no Light (for Hell is set forth by utter Darknes) and Light is as Essential a Property of Corporeal Fire, as Heat is. The great God can appoint somewhat more dreadful than Fire is, to be the Instrument of tormenting the Damned, which the Scripture may call Fire, because we know nothing more terrible than Fire.

But supposing the Fire to be Corporeal, the Schoolmen will tell us, that tho' that which is Corporeal cannot work on Spirits, and so Corporeal Fire cannot afflict the Devils, that is, cannot naturally, yet it may as a supernatural Instrument of Divine Justice. And they tell us how. The Devils can see this Fire, and know themselves to be forcibly detained in it against their Wills, so as that they can by no means get from it, nor rove any more to do mischief (which was all the ease and pleasure they had, before their dismal Confinement) This they may see; and this being so much against their Natural Liberty, and so great a debasing of them, it must needs be a Torment to them. Others say they may suffer the same kind of grief, and pain from the Fire, that the Souls of the Damned do, when united to their Bodies. But enough of this. You have what I have to say of the Nature of Angels.

Aliz verò passiones solent tribui Dæmonibus, &c. Sed qui hujusmodi passiones Dæmonibus tribuerunt, si id propriè & formaliter intellexerunt erraverunt, &c.

Si verò objectivè tantùm id intelligatur, ad illum effectum non erit necessarium Corpus, possunt enim Dæmones Intellectualiter percipere sensibiles odores, &c. & in eis Spirituum affectu complacere. *Suarez.*

C H A P. III.

§. 1. *Of the Original of Angels, That they were created by God.* §. 2. *Whether they were created before the visible World, or together with it.* §. 3. *How Devils came to be. Of the Fall of Angels and what their first Sin was.* §. 4. *Of the wonderful Knowledge of Angels.* §. 5. *That they are not Omniscient as God is. Whether they know Mens Hearts, and things to come.* §. 6. *Of their great Power.* §. 7. *That they cannot work Miracles. An Objection answer'd.* §. 8. *Of the Angels Agility, and swift moving from place to place.* §. 9. *Of their Holiness.* §. 10. *Of their Number.* §. 11. *Of their Order.* §. 12. *Of their great Love to Mankind.* §. 13. *Some Corollaries.*

HAVING in the foregoing Chapter made it as Intelligible as I can, what the Angelical Nature is; I shall in this, proceed to handle some other things touching *Angels*, the Knowledge of which will be useful as to the main Design of this Work, which is a Demonstration of the great Goodness of God to Men, in having appointed these excellent Creatures to be *Ministring Spirits* in this lower World. I shall treat, 1. Of their *Original*. 2. Of their great and wonderful *Knowledge, Power, Agility, Holiness*. 3. Of their *Number*. 4. Of their *Order*. 5. Of their *Love and Good-will* to Men, and readines to be imployed for them.

S E C T. I.

AND first of the *Original* of Angels. Little hereof is said in Scripture, only by its Light we know that they had a Beginning, and were created by God. Therefore *Aristotle* was in an Errour, who thought that the Heavens were Eternal, and by Consequence the *Intelligences*, or *Angels*, which he supposed to be the Movers of them. There is nothing Eternal but the Blessed God himself: Whatever is besides him was made by him.

The *Psalmist* says of God, *He made his Angels Spirits, and his Ministers a Flame of Fire*, Plal. 104. 4. Some think these Words do not only sufficiently prove the Creation of *Angels*, but that there were Two sorts of *Angels* created, one of an *Aerial Substance* (because 'tis said he made his *Angels Spirits* or *Winds*) and the other of an *Igneous* or *Fiery*, because 'tis added, *And his Ministers a Flame of Fire*. But such a Distinction of *Angels*, cannot be inferred from that Text, without offering Violence to it. Those Expressions denote no more but the Spiritual and Active Nature of *Angels*: But they being said to be made, their Creation is sufficiently proved there, but more clearly and fully by the Words of the *Apostle*, Coloss. 1. 16. *By him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, &c.* By things in Heaven that are invisible, we must needs understand *Angels* (for the Luminaries of Heaven the Sun, Moon, and Stars are visible) and these *Angels* he calls *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers*, to note all the Orders of them: Now these were all created by *Jesus Christ*, and for him. *Moses* in *Genes. 1.* makes no mention of their Creation, his Design being only to give an account of the Original of this visible World; But the *Apostle* speaking of the Invisible World also, shews that it had the same beginning, even from *Jesus Christ*. And in that he says, they were all created, it follows that Heaven was not replenished with *Angels* in the same way that the Earth was with Men. God did not create some *Angels*, and they
generate

generate others: Angels marry not, nor are given in Marriage: They were all of them created, nor any of them begotten, nor do any of them die, they are Immortal. Wherefore there are no more, nor no fewer of them, than there were at the first. They were all even the whole *Species* of them, God's immediate Workmanship. And they are the most perfect *Images* and *Representations* of his own Nature, coming nearest in Likeness to him of any thing he has made. Indeed there is no Creature in Heaven or Earth that is fully like God. To whom will ye liken me says God? No meer Creature is fully like God. 'Tis said of *Jesus Christ*, that he is the *Brigh:ness of his Glory*, and the *express Image of his Person*: But this cannot be said of any meer Creature. Man is said to be made after his Image, but is no where said to be his Image: Angels are also made after his Image, and more perfectly than Man is, and they come nearer to him. But now tho' they be excellent Creatures, yet they are Creatures deriving their Being from him who made all things.

Isa. 40 25.

Heb. 1. 3.

S E C T. II.

WHEN Angels were created, is one of those unrevealed Speculations, which some have presumed to go about to determine, but is to us altogether unknown, and uncertain, nor is it useful for us to know it. That Angels are, and that they are employ'd about us for our good, pertains to us to know, and God has plainly revealed this: But as for their beginning, when they were first made, we have nothing revealed of it: And little do we know of their *Laws*, and *Government*, their *Enter-courses* with God, and with one the other; and we must not intrude into things we have not seen, or can see, either in the *Glass* of the *Word*, or of *Nature*.

The most common and received Opinion is, that the Angels were Created neither before, nor after, but together with this visible World. Some say they were a part of the first Days Work, some of the second, &c. That they were not created after this visible World is evident;
For

For Angels were, and some of them were fallen, before Man fell [which was soon after he was made] for one of the fallen Angels was Mans Tempter: But whether they were not made before this Visible World, is not so clear and certain.

Some *Divines* have thought it probable that they were

Verisimile videtur Angelos tam bonos quam (jam) Apostatas, ante primum sex dierum creatos fuisse. Quamdiu autem non est hominis facere conjecturam. Baxt. Meth. Th.

Quando conditi sunt ceritò affirmare equidem non possum; quandoquidem videam *Mosebech* visibilibus duntaxat rerum creationem descripsisse. *Bucer. in Matt.*

Est duplex Sententia Theologorum. Alii ante mundum visibilem conditos existimant. In quâ sententiâ sunt omnes ferè *Græci Patres*; *Basilius* dicit, ante hunc mundum esse alium *Ordeſtor* & *aristætor*, intelligibilem & *Mose* non descriptum. In hoc autem Mundo antiquiore fuisse dicit hocce Thronos, Dominaciones & Potestates de quibus loquitur *Apostolus*, *Col. 1. 16.*

Chrysoſtomus & *Naxianzenus* sunt in eadem Sententiâ, quibus annumerare possumus ex *Latinis Hieronymum* & *Hilarium*. *Dav. in Col. Plura vide in Sixt. Sen. Bibl. S. l. 5. Annot. 5.*

Laudant Angeli Dominum, & ante ipsum Mundi initium Cherubin & Seraphin cum suavitate canoræ vocis dicebant, Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus. *Ambr.*

created some time before the first of the Six Days, it seeming to them not reasonable, that we should assign so little time as one Day, for the *Creation* and *Regiment* of all the *Angels*, the *Obedience* of the good *Angels* for *Confirmation*, and the *Fall* of the other, their Judgment, and Punishment: To assign for all this no more than one Day, when we have nothing in the Word of God to enforce us to it, seems unreasonable. Bishop *Davenant* says, that some *Divines* think that the *Angels* were created before this visible World, and that the *Greek Fathers* were generally of this Opinion, as *Basil*, *Chrysoſtom*, *Naxianzen*, with others; and some of the *Latin*, as *Hierom*, and *Hilary* also. *Joannes Cassianus* says, that in his time, it was the common Opinion of all good Christians. And for the Proof of it that *Text* in *Job* is brought, where 'tis said, the *Angels*, (called the *Morning Stars*) did shout for joy, and sing together when the foundations of the Earth were first laid, *Job 38. 4.* compared with ver. 7. And this Sense does *Ambrose* give of that Place, saying that before the very beginning of the World the

Angels did praise God, and sing *Holy, Holy, Holy*, to him.

But others think this *Text* will not sufficiently prove that the *Angels* were before this visible World was made. Because 1. The separating the Earth from the Waters (which

(which in that Text may be called the founding of the Earth) was the Third Days work, and all grant the Angels were made before that. 2. Supposing the Angels were made together with this World, and not before it, they might praise God as soon as they had a Being, and likely did, and that may be said to be when God laid the Foundation of the Earth.

And they argue against the former Opinion of the *Fathers*, that Heaven is the Habitation of the Angels, and if the Angels were some time before the Heavens, and the Earth, then so long they lived without their Habitation.

But this Argument can sway but little with such as suppose the *Empyrean Heaven* to be the Habitation of Angels, and that that was created when the Angels were, some time before the Visible Heavens, and the Earth: And so do the Assertors of that Opinion hold.

Coelum Empyreum, Angelos, & Mundum Intelligibilem huic Mundo Sensibili diu præexistisse nil vetat, imo ex *Mose* probabile est.

That which seems to lie most clear against it is, *Exod.* 20. 11. where 'tis said that in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth and all that in them is. Now if God made Heaven, and all in it within the Space of the Six Days, then he made the Angels within that time.

But neither doth this fully satisfy, because 'twill be reply'd, that *Moses* relates only the Creation of the visible Heavens and the Earth, and is to be understood of them in that place. God made the visible Heavens and all in them, that is the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, that are in the *Heavens*; but notwithstanding it may remain doubtful, whether the Seat of Angels (which is supposed to be above the Visible Heavens) were not before this, and the Angels possessing the same. *Augustine* does prefer the Opinion of those that hold the Angels were made together with the Visible World, but yet in his Book *De Civitate Dei*, allows it free for Men to think of this as they please, provided they do not make Angels Coeternal with God, but hold firm to this as an unquestionable Truth, that all things invisible as well as visible were

Illud porrò scire necesse est, omnia quæ usq; existant, exceptâ Trinitate, naturam habere corruptioni obnoxiam: Hoc autem concesso, si quis Angelorum turbas ante Cælum & Terram conditas esse dixerit, non offendet verbum pietatis. *Theod. Qu. 3. in Gen.*

made by God in time. And with him does *Theodore* well agree, who after he had discoursed much against *Basil*, concludes as *Augustine* does. Now this is certain that they were created by God, but any thing further we cannot be sure of.

S E C T. III.

BUT here a further Difficulty offers it self. We read in Scripture, not only of good Angels, but of evil Angels, or *Devils*: Now that the good Angels were created of God, is of easy Belief, but how came *Evil Angels*, or *Devils* to be? For God who is infinitely good can hardly be thought to be the Maker of Creatures so very bad.

To this I answer, The Angels out of doubt were all of them created by God, as were all things else, that have Being. God made them Angels, but he did not make them Evil Angels. He was the Author of their Being, but not of their Apostacy, and Sin. For clearing this Matter note,

1. All those Spirits which now are Devils, were once glorious Angels, and some think some of the highest Order of Angels. They had the same beginning with the now Blessed Angels, but they kept not *Τὴν ἀρχὴν*, their beginning, or first estate, *Jude 6.*

2. The Angels, tho' they were all made good, yet were they mutable: They had not in them any innate Propensity to sinning, no Lust to incline them to it; yet being made free, and having a *self Determining Power*, they might sin, and so they did, freely chusing Evil. If God had made them by Nature immutable, and impeccable, he should have made them Gods; for Immutability, and Impeccability, is an incommunicable Attribute of the Divine Nature.

Consonum magis est, supremum Angelum inter peccantes, fuisse supremum inter omnes. *Aq. 1a. q. 63. Art. 7. Concl.*

Ille qui peccavit fuit superior inter omnes. *Greg.*

I confess it hath its Difficulty in it to conceive, how sin came into the Angels first: And to be over inquisitive hereabout, becomes not sober Minds, when God hath said so little about it. There are but Three places of Scripture (as *Beza* reckons) where the Fall of Angels is mentioned, *viz.* *Joh.* 8. 44. *2 Pet.* 2. 4. and *Jude* 6. And in those places there is not much said of it, only that they sinned, and were therefore sorely punished by God. We must not affect to know more of things, than God sees good to reveal.

Quia de lapsu Angelorum breviter hic meminit *Petrus*, &c. Sobrie in hac parte Philosophari convenit. Sunt curiosi plerique homines qui nullam de his rebus Solicitudinam finem faciunt. Atqui cum Deus

parce duntaxat, & quasi obiter eas attigerit in Scripturis, hoc ipso nos admonuit, ut modicâ istâ notitiâ sumus contenti. *Calv.* in *2 Pet.*

3. Seeing we read in Scripture of *the Devil and his Angels*, and of *Beelzebub the Prince of Devils*, it seems very probable, that there was one Angel, that was the *Principal*, and *Ring-leader*, in this Revolt, and drew others after him; and so that the most of the Angels that fell had a *Tempter*, as Man had: But this is but probable not certain.

Mat. 25. 41.
& 10. 5.

4. What was the first Sin of Angels, is disputed among the Learned, but they proceed by guess and Conjecture, rather than by Substantial Proof. Most say it was *Pride*, and this may the more safely be said, 1. Because there is *Pride* in every sin. 2. Because *Pride* or *Envy* is called *Devilish*, *Jam* 3. 15. as being the prime Sin of Devils. 3. 'Tis a Sin very agreeable to the Spiritual Nature of Angels. But 4. That of the *Apostle*, *1 Tim.* 3. 6. has most force in it, where he says, *Ordain not a Novice, lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil.* That is, lest he being Proud, as the Devil was, he be condemned with him.

I think it was a compound Sin, the chief Ingredient being *Pride*. There was *Ambition* and *Envy* in it. Likely those Spirits were not contented with their Station, but affected to be higher. This may seem to be their Sin, by the first Temptation used to seduce our first Parents into the like Revolt: *Ye shall be as Gods.* That their Sin should be an attempt upon the Empire of God, and that they affected to be in his room, is not very likely:

This is not like to be their first Project. 'Tis more probable that they envied other Angels, and affected to be above them, contrary to Gods established Order; And first envying their Fellows, they next hated them, and God too, who established the Order of Heaven; and so, conspiring together, they resolved on an open Revolt, and withdrew from the rest of the Angels that consented not with them.

Jude says, they kept not their first State. They would be higher. And he says they left their Habitation; which is mentioned also as their Sin, rather than their Punishment; 'Tis spoken of as somewhat they chose, rather than as a thing inflicted on them. He says not they were turned out of their Habitation, but that they left it. Howbeit, when they voluntarily left it, God made their Sin their Punishment, and banisht them for ever from those blest Abodes they left, that they could

Duplicem defectionem ponit in his verbis *Judas*, ab Origine & a Domicilio. —Speciem esse duplicem (peccati) quod non servarunt originem suam, & quod suum domicilium imple dereliquerunt. *Jur. in Jude.*

Domicilio sede & gloria pristina sua carent, sua quidem voluntate, sed justitia Dei necessitatem importante, ut ne volentes quidem possint domicilium suum recipere. *Id. Ib.*

not return to them again, tho' they would. When this lower World was made, and Man placed in it, the *Devil* instantly comes to draw him into Confederacy with him, and his *Apostate Angels*, and ever since he hath taken up his Residence in these lower Regions, in pursuance of his Hellish Design against Heaven; For which Cause the *Devils* are called the *Power of the Air*. Thus came *Devils* into the World, and their incessant Endeavours to seduce and destroy, is one chief reason why God appoints good Angels their Ministry here.

Something I may say further of *Devils* in this Discourse, but for the present I shall dismiss them, and speak of the good Angels, and that

S E C T. IV.

NExt of their great and wonderful *Knowledge*. Angels are of great Understanding and Knowledge, so great as that the wisest Men on Earth do not come near to them in any kind of Knowledge. Wherefore 'tis an Hyperbolicall Expression, that of the Woman of *Tekoah* touching *David*, *My Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an Angel of God, to know all things that are in the Earth*. The Angels are represented as full of Eyes, before and behind, *Rev.* 4. 6. All Mysteries and Secrets have they the knowledge of that are any way reveal'd. They have a wonderful insight into *Nature*, and *natural Causes*, and are acquainted with the *occult Qualities* and *Virtues* of things. They have the knowledge of the whole visible World, and all Quarters of it, where they minister. They walk to and fro thro' the Earth, and can give an account of what is done in it, as, *Zech.* 1. 11. They have a perfect cognizance of Countries, and Kingdoms, and People; their Manners, and their most secret Projects and Counsels. They are privy to what is transacted in the closest Councils of *Princes*. An ^{2 Kin. 6. 12.} Angel could carry the *Prophet* word, what was debated and resolv'd in the *King of Syria's Bed-chamber*. The wisest and most watchful Men that are on the Earth, may sometimes be surpriz'd, over-reach'd, and outwitted by their Enemies; they cannot discover all their Motions; but Angels can, and do.

Angels have *Eagles Eyes*. In *Ezekiel's Vision* each of them had the Face of an *Eagle*, which is the most quick-sighted Creature. They say of *Eagles*, that they will soar aloft, and see Fishes swimming in the Sea. Angels can see to the bottom of things, both in *Nature* and *Policy*, and so are both great *Philosophers*, knowing the Principles, Causes, Effects, Life, and Motions of Natural things: and great *Statists* too, skillful in all the Intrigues of State, and discovering the deepest Plots and Projects of Men, tho' manag'd with never so much privacy.

They are represented not only as being full of Eyes before and behind, *Rev.* 4. 6. but as full of Eyes within too,

Mr. Greenkil
on Ezek.

ver. 8. They have much Natural Knowledg, and much by Revelation, meant (as some think) by their Eyes within: and they have much experimental Knowledg, Knowledg coming in by observation, and deep insight into things, signified by their Eyes before and behind.

S E C T. V.

BUT however, tho' Angels are very knowing, yet are they not *Omniscient*, nor know things as God does. There are some things Angels do not know.

1. They do not know the Day of Judgment, as our Saviour *Christ* tells us, *Mark 13. 32. Of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the Angels that are in Heaven.* And therefore 'tis a great Presumption for any mortal man to go about to determine (as some have done) when it will be, or when will be the end of this World.

Jer. 17. 10.
Rom. 8. 27.

2. They know not the Hearts of Men: this God challenges to himself, as his Prerogative, *I the Lord search the Heart, I try the Reins; i. e. I alone.*

Yet here Angels can go very far. Tho' they can have no immediate sight of the Thoughts, as God has, yet they can go very far in discovering what is within men, namely, their Thoughts, Affections, Desires, Purposes: They can see the inward Impressions that are on the Fancy, they can perceive the *Phantasms* that are the Object of the Mind, tho' what the Judgment of the Mind is, they cannot certainly know. They are acquainted with Mens Looks, Gestures, Motions, by which their inward Affections are often discern'd by observing Men.

A *Physician*, by the *Pulse* and *Temper*, will tell a man's Affections and Passions, as that he is in Love, or carking and caring: And a wise and observing man, that is acquainted with all one's Discourse and outward Actions, all one's Looks and Gestures, will go far in divining what is in his Mind. Now Angels know all this, and more, even the inward motion of the Blood and Spirits, and by their great Sagacity. they much better know what is the meaning of such a look, gesture, blush, or paleness, than the wisest men can: And therefore, tho' they cannot immediately

diately discern the Thoughts, they are extremely ingenious in guessing what is in Men, and are seldom mistaken of them. But otherwise they know not the Thoughts of the Heart, unless God do reveal them to them, as sometimes he does.

3. Angels do not know things to come, except in and by their Causes; they know not things to come immediately, and in themselves; for to be able to do this, is proper only to God, *who calleth those things that be not, as if they were*, as the Apostle says, *Rom. 4. 17. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, (says the Lord) that we may know that ye are Gods.* By Revelation Angels are made to know things to come, that are merely casual and contingent, but otherwise they cannot come to know them. Ira. 43 23.

And as Angels do not know all things, as God only does, so neither do they know such things as they do know, in such a perfect manner as God does. They know things in a more perfect way than men do, but not in such a way as God does.

1. They do not know the Essence of God comprehensively, and *totaliter*. God is an Infinite Object, and therefore no Creature that hath but a Finite Being can comprehend him: God is perfectly known only to himself.

2. Angels know not all things together *uno intuitu*, in one view, as God does, but one thing after another successively, and as they are present with the things. That Angels know particular things, and not only the several Species or Kinds of things, is certain, otherwise their Knowledg were more imperfect than ours. Whatever comes under the Knowledg of Men, which they can naturally know, the Angels also can know. Whatever is done, or said, or suffer'd in any part of the World, where they are present, they know; but all the things which they naturally know, are not present at once to them, nor do they alway actually consider and understand them. 'Tis God's Prerogative to have all things open and naked before him. All particular things and persons that they are concern'd with, and come under their charge, they thoroughly know, even as far as they have need to know, tho' one thing after another, not all things at once.

Neq; Verbum Dei dicit, neq; ulla ratio evincit, ea semper actu considerare, & intelligere, in ò contrarium potius evincitur.

Zanch.

They

They come to the knowledg of new things in proceſs of time, which they did not know before, and that ſometimes by *Revelation*, ſometimes by *Experience* or *Obſervation*. And that they do by Diſcourſe and Reaſoning come to know things by their Effects, I ſee no cauſe to deny: but their Diſcourſe and Reaſoning is with that quickneſs and certainty, that our greateſt Underſtanding is Darkneſs to theirs.

Interim diſcurſus hic tam eſt ſubitus, tam celer ut non percipiatur motus Intellectus Angelici ſuper Objectum. *Hueb.*

To diſpute any further of the manner of Angels knowing things, whether it be *per eſſentiam divinam*, or by their own Eſſence, or by *Concreated Species*, or by *Species receiv'd* from the Objects, or ſuch as are put into them by God, (as the School-men very laboriouſly do) is to undertake things above our Knowledg, which we muſt be content to be ignorant of, till we come to Heaven.

S E C T. VI.

AS the *Knowledg* of Angels is wonderful, ſo alſo is their *Power* and *Strength*; therefore are they ſtil'd by the Apoſtle *mighty Angels*; *When the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels*. And by the *Pſalmiſt* they are ſaid to *excel in ſtrength*; no Creatures come near them. The Lyon among the Beaſts of the Earth has the name of the ſtrongeſt; and in *Exekiel's* Viſion the Angels are repreſented to have the Face of a Lyon. The Devil is call'd the *ſtrong one*, but an Angel can bind him. One of them can do more than a whole Army of Men: What a huge Hoſt of the *Aſſyrians* did one Angel vanquiſh in one Night, deſtroying an Hundred fourſcore and five thouſand of them!

They have Power over all the Elements, and all Elementary Bodies. We read of *four Angels, that held the four Winds, that the Winds ſhould not blow on the Earth, nor on the Sea, nor on any Tree*, Rev. 7. 1. And other Angels we read of *that had power to ſhut Heaven, that it rain not, and that had power over the Waters*, Rev. 11. 6. The Devil could bring Fire from Heaven, to burn *Job's* Sheep and Servants: any good

good Angel can do as much. They can cause *Earthquakes*, and terrible *Thunderings* and *Lightnings*; as they did on *Mount Sinai*, at the giving of the Law.

They can easily and very suddenly carry any Bodies from one place to another. An Angel carried *Philip* from where he was with the *Eunuch*, unto *Azotus*. And the Devil took our Saviour *Christ* up into the holy City, and set him on the Pinnacle of the Temple. They have power on our external Senses. An Angel smote the *Sodomites* with blindness, that they could not find the Door of *Lot's House*, tho' they were just before it. And an Angel made the *Syrian Army* hear a Voice of *Chariots* and *Horses*.

Acts 6. 26 39.

Mat. 4. 5.

Gen. 19. 11.

2 Kin. 13 35

They have power also upon our *internal Senses*, whether we be sleeping or waking, and can suggest things to the Mind. *Joseph* was warn'd of an Angel in a Dream, to go into *Egypt*; and many others we read of that had things reveal'd to them by Angels. The Devil suggests Evil to Men, as he did put it into the Heart of *Judas* to betray *Christ*, and (no doubt) good Angels suggest that which is good.

Mat. 1. 26.

Joh. 13. 2.

Eph. 2. 2.

And this they do (say some) by ordering the *Phantasms* that are preserv'd in the *interiour Sense*; now, these are mov'd by the motion of the Spirits and humours of the Body, which Angels have power upon. Several Fancies Men have, according to the temperature of their Bodies: In Sickness, which alters the Body and Humours, Men have strange Fancies (we know) and fearful representations of things, and Dreams follow the temper of the Body. Now, (says *Mr. Laurence*) such Fancies as befall us as it were by chance, as in Dreams, or in Sickness, by casual, inordinate, or natural motion of the Humours, the Angels can most orderly and most efficaciously move, because they do what they do from Will and Counsel, and know exactly how the Spirits and Humours must be moved, that the *Phantasms* may be conveniently apply'd to some Conceptions or Apprehensions, most accommodate and fitted for the knowledge of what Truth they would suggest. More of this hereafter.

Mr. Laurence
of Angels.

Furthermore, Angels can stop and hinder the bent and course of particular nature. An Angel kept the Fire from burning or hurting *Daniel's* Companions, when cast into the Furnace, and the hungry Lyons from devouring or touching *Daniel*, when cast into their Den.

What is there, in a manner, but Angels cannot do, either by themselves immediately, or by means which they can quickly bring in place, and apply to the doing of the same? They can shake and break mighty Kingdoms, destroy vast Armies, make strong Walls to fall flat on the Ground, as did the Walls of *Jericho*. An Angel could open the Prison Doors to *Peter*, and make an Iron Gate to open of it self before him: What not?

S E C T. VII.

YET must it be acknowledg'd, that Angels are not *Almighty*, their Power is great, but not Infinite, as God's is.

1. There are some things which Angels cannot do: They cannot *create*, or make a thing out of nothing; they cannot turn one Substance into another, as *Christ* did Water into Wine. They cannot raise a dead man to life, tho' they can so move a dead Body, and all the Members of it, that it may seem to be alive. They cannot do any thing that is truly and properly a *Miracle*, tho' they can do things that are very wonderful, and to Men seem *Miracles*.

Obj. If Angels cannot work *Miracles*, then have they not so great Power as some Men have had; for the *Apostles* had a Power and Gift of working *Miracles*.

Answ. The *Prophets* and *Apostles* that are said to have wrought *Miracles*, were not in working such *Miracles* any *Physical Causes* of them, but only *Moral Causes*; by their Prayer, or by the strength of their Faith, they obtain'd of God to do them, they did not do them themselves. Their Words or Actions upon which the *Miracles* were wrought, were not proper Causes of the *Miracles*, but Signs only that God was with them, and would do them. God never gave any Creature a Power to effect a *Miracle* himself.

The

The Apostles Gift of Miracles was (says Mr. Perkins) the Faith of Miracles. The Faith was grounded on Revelation, and the Revelation was, that God would work such or such a Miracle, when they pray'd or impos'd Hands, or the like.

2. As there are some things which Angels cannot do, so such things as they can do, they cannot do in an Instant, as God can, tho' they can do things with unconceivable quickness; as you will see in the next Section.

3. They can do nothing at all without God; for as they are dependent in Being, so are they in Working. They must have God's Leave, and his Concourse, or they cannot act in any matter: But now for what God will have them to do, or appoints them to do, there is no work too hard for them. In *Ezekiel's* Vision they are represented as having four Hands under their Wings, noting a fitness for dispatch of all sorts of Business. They are of unconceivable Abilities.

S E C T. VIII.

AND as they are strong and mighty, so are they quick and speedy, in their Motion and Action; for which cause they are compar'd to Winds: He made his Angels *Spirits* or *Winds*, i. e. not unlike the Winds in agility and nimbleness of motion. And they are commonly represented with Wings, with many Wings, to note their extraordinary swiftness. No Arrow moves so swiftly out of a Bow, no, nor any Bullet out of a Gun, as Angels move from one place to another. How many Millions of Miles does the Sun move in one hours time? Angels can move faster than the Sun in its course. The proper Habitation and Abode of Angels is the highest Heaven, and they can move from Heaven to Earth in a very short time. The Angel *Gabriel* was sent from Heaven to *Daniel*, and he came to him: They reckon the distance no less than 160 millions of Miles, and pray note in what space of time it was he came to him. The Angels says, *Dan. 9. 23.* At the beginning of thy supplication the commandment came forth. Then when *Daniel* began his Prayer, the Angel

was sent from Heaven, and before, or as soon as he had ended his Prayer, the Angel was with *Daniel*.

The Angels move not *in instanti*, in an instant : it implies a Contradiction to say they move in an instant, but they move in an unconceivable point of time. They can move from one place to another vastly distant in the twinkling of an Eye. They have no Corporeal Gravity to slacken their motion, nor is there any thing to stop or retard their motion, and therefore they move most swiftly. They can pass thro' brazen Walls or Iron Gates, without being hindred : Wherefore they are soon present where they have any business to dispatch, let it lye where it will, they are instantly at hand for the doing of it. Never can any matter they have in charge miscarry by their coming too late.

As for the *Locality* of Angels, how they are present where they are, and how they move from one place to another, these are things so little known to us, that 'tis great presumption for any to go about to determine now. This is sufficiently clear, that they are not every where, (as God only is) and that they do move from one place to another, and are not at two far distant places at once, this is out of question. When the Angel was sent to *Daniel*, he was in *Persia*, and not with *Daniel*, but came to him when he was sent, *Dan.* 10.

S E C T. IX.

TO the foregoing Qualifications of Angels, we must add their singular *Holiness*. They are very holy Creatures, therefore stil'd the Holy Angels, *Mat.* 25. 31. Great is the Purity of their Nature, and to represent it, they usually, in their apparitions, came in a Garb signifying Purity and Innocency. At *Christ's* Sepulchre two Angels appear'd in white, and at his Ascension two Men, (that is, two Angels in the shape of Men) stood by the *Apostles* in white apparel. And the seven Angels that had the seven Plagues, came out of the Temple cloth'd in pure white Linnen. Now, we know, White is an Emblem of Purity and Innocence.

Mat. 28. 4.

Acts 1. 10.

Rev. 15. 6.

'Tis

'Tis true the Angels have sometimes appeared in other Colours to represent the Quality of such Messages, as they were then sent in. In *Zech. 1. 8.* we read of some appearing Red, and some speckled. Red, to note that they were sent to cause War, and Bloodshed, Speckled, to note they had both Judgments and Mercies to dispense: But White is the Colour they most usually appeared in, to denote their holy Nature. They are pure white, void of all Sin, and Error. When 'tis said, *God charged his Angels with folly*, *Job 4. 18.* the Mutability of their Nature in which they were created, is called Folly. 'Tis not meant that God found any Sin in them that kept their Habitation. All Creatures have this defect necessarily attending them, they are mutable. God only is by Nature immutable, Creatures are mutable, and may sin, if not preserved by Divine Grace: And this Mutability or Defectability is called Folly. If there had been any the least Sin, in the Angels, Heaven would have been no Habitation for them. Wherefore they were singularly Holy Creatures.

Their *Holiness* consists in a *Devotedness* to God, in most pure and perfect Love. And how can they chuse but most perfectly love God, who live always in the clear Vision of the Face of God? 'Tis said they alway behold the Face of God in Heaven. Such clear and full sight of God as is in Heaven, necessitates Love. Our Souls when they attain to this Vision, will be quite Metamorphiz'd and transform'd: The Apostle says, *we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* A little sight of God, darkly and as in a Glass, here in this World, makes Mortals love God unto the Death, what will it do to see him Face to Face? Now so do the Angels see God, they see him with open Face (as all the Saints also shall when they come to Heaven) This makes them cleave most closely to him, and God's Will is their Will, and what he likes, they are best pleased with. They perfectly hate all Sin, and rejoice when men are turned from it. So perfectly do they do the Will of God, that their Obedience is made a Pattern for ours, and Christ teaches us to pray, that his Will may be done in Earth, as it is done in Heaven. Mat. 6. 10.

S E C T. X.

THE next thing I am to enquire into is the *Number* of Angels. And of this all that we can say with Certainty is, that there are very great Multitudes of them. In all likelihood, as there is a World of Men, so there is a World of Spirits, and they inhabit the Regions above us. It hath pleased the great God, the Creator of the Universe, to fill all parts of this lower World, (as we see) with Inhabitants, so as there is no place but does abound with living Creatures. The Earth is inhabited by Men, and all sorts of Beasts are on it: The Air is replenished with Birds and Flies: The Sea and Waters with Fishes. Now then, how unlikely is it, that all those Regions, and vast Spaces above us, should be uninhabited, or but thinly inhabited, and empty? But we cannot be positive in this Matter. Only this we are sure of, the Prophet *Daniel* mention a very great Number of Angels. Thousand Thousands, and Ten Thousand times Ten Thousands: And these (it seems) all standing before God's Throne, and waiting on him: Such as were then actually employ'd here below, are not in this Computation. Multitudes of Hosts of Angels are still at work here in the World, and coming and going, and besides these, there are Thousand Thousands and Ten Thousand times Ten Thousands, waiting alway before God's Throne. The Apostle speaks of an innumerable Company of Angels, so we render it. In the Greek 'tis, *Myriads*, which is so many Ten Thousands. Our Translation says, an innumerable Company, not that they are simply innumerable, but so many as no Man can Number, they pass Man's reckoning, but God knows the Number of them.

The Computations that some have made, of their Number, are not only presumptuous, but ridiculous, and therefore I shall not so much as mention. Let that satisfy us which is revealed, and certain 'tis, that there are many great Armies, and hosts of them. We read of great Numbers of them, that have been sent to attend one single Man. *Jacob* when he was in his Journey from *Syria*

Dan. 7. 10.

Heb. 12. 22.

1 King. 22. 19.

Psal. 103. 21.

* 148. 2.

to his own Country, had *Two hosts* of them for his *Con-
voy*. 'Tis said he went on his way, and the Angels of Gen. 32. 1, 2.
God met him, and what Numbers there were of them
appears, for 'tis said also, when he saw them he said this
is God's Host, and called the place *Mabaraim* which sig-
nifies *Two Hosts*: Wherefore there were *Two Hosts* of
Angels that there encamped about *Jacob*.

The Prophet *Elisha* had another such Guard of Angels
attending him. When God opened the Prophets Ser- 2 King. 6. 17.
vants Eyes, he saw such multitudes of them about his
Master, as covered the Mountains.

Now if such Multitudes may be spared to attend single
Men, we may safely conclude, that the whole Number
of them is next to Infinite. This of the Number of An-
gels is not to be passed over, because it adds very much
to their Power, and Sufficiency for the charge they are
intrusted with. Weak Creatures by their Numbers may
become very mighty, and formidable. *Lice*, and *Flies*,
are but little weak things, and yet what a Plague were
they to the *Egyptians* by means of the Number of them.
Angels are mighty, and numerous too. Oh how safe are
they that the Angels have the Charge of! So much of
their *Number*.

S E C T. XI.

I Shall add somewhat of their *Order*, which makes their
Number more considerable.

Tho' we cannot give an account of the *Order*, and
Preheminence that is among the Angels, as to say parti-
cularly what it is, yet must it be acknowledged, that
some *Order* there is among them, in their ministring in
this World, and one is Superiour to another, as shall be
shewed.

But the *Presumption* of the *Schoolmen* and *Papists* may
not be passed over here, without *Censure*, who under-
take to give the World so particular account of this, as
if they had lived among them, and seen their *Manners*
and *Government*.

This they take from their counterfeit *Dionysius*, who has written very boldly many things of Angels, and their *Hierarchy*. The Author of those Writing was, no doubt, some fanciful Man, that having little to do, set himself to frame such a Doctrine of Angels, as he imagined might be true, and would take with curious Minds, and that his Writing might have the more Credit, he put it forth under the Venerable Name of *Dionysius the Areopagite*: But learned Men have observed, that the Vanity and Frothiness of his Style, is such as plainly proves he was not one trained up in the School of the Apostles, as the true *Dionysius* was.

This Author tell us, (and the Popish Schoolmen after him) that there are *Three Hierarchies* of Angels, and *Nine Orders* into which the Three Hierarchies are divided, Three Orders in each Hierarchy. In the supreme or highest Hierarchy are, *Cherubims, Seraphims, and Thrones*: in the middle are *Dominions, Principalities, and Powers*: in the lowest, *Virtues, Archangels, and Angels*.

I confess we find in the holy Scriptures, that all these Names and Titles are given to the Angels, and 'tis likely enough they may signifie some Order, and Distinction of Angels among themselves, tho' this be not certain, for they may note such Authority and Power, as they have over Men, and not over one the other: But that they do particularly define the stated Order that is among themselves, and that there are precisely so many distinct *Degrees* of them, is an idle and ungrounded Conceit. And that which they add, that they are only the Angels of the lowest Order, that are sent forth to minister in this World, 'tis directly contrary to the Scripture: For my Text says they are all ministring Spirits, and we read of a *Seraphim* one of the highest Order, sent unto the Prophet *Isaiab*.

Ma. 6. 6.

Yet that there is some distinction among the Angels, and a certain Order of Superiority and Subordination, is not improbable. God is a God of Order, and hath made all things he hath made in excellent Order. It is to be seen in all sorts of Creatures. Take what sort you will, it will be found that all of the same Nature are not alike,
and

and equal, but there be diversities of Ranks, Qualities, and Functions. When the Apostle says, *Unto which of the Angels said he at any time, &c.* He does either grant, or else for Arguments sake condescend to the Apprehension of the *Hebrews* (as Dr. Owen observes) that there is a distinction of Degrees, and Preheminence among the Angels. For he provokes them to instance in any one of the Angels (which either indeed, or in their Apprehension was promoted above others) to whom such words were spoken, as were spoken to *Christ*. Unto which of them? 'Tis not so said unto any one of the highest Order.

And some such thing appears to be among both good and bad Angels.

1. As for the evil Angels or *Devils*, it is most clear that they have a *Prince*. *Beelzebub* is called the *Prince of Devils*: And our Saviour calls the whole Company of Devils a *Kingdom*, which is a governed Body, where some are Rulers, others are Ruled. as, *Mat. 12. 25.* And the Apostle calls this *Beelzebub*, the *Prince of the Power of the Air*. And by the Power of the Air, he means the Devils, and by their Prince he means the *great Devil*, which the Evangelist calls *Beelzebub*, who was (most likely) the *Ringleader* in the first Apostacy, and kept the Supremacy ever after.

2. As for the good Angels we read of some stiled chief Princes, *Dan. 10. 13.* One of which was *Michael*. And in stiling them *chief Princes*, the Prophet (as seems) compares them not with Men, but with other Angels, among whom they were as Princes.

We do not read of any one Prince of the good Angels, as we do of the Devils. The good Angels have no *Monarch* over them, but our *Lord Jesus Christ*, who is the King of Kings, they have no one supreme among themselves. *Thrones* we read of, but not of one Throne. Princes they have, but not one Prince, save only *Jesus Christ*.

How many there are of these Princes, 'tis a great Presumption for any Man to go about to define. Yet some have undertaken it, and tell us there are *Seven* Principal

Angels, that are invested with greatest Power. This Number hath been much insisted upon by the ancient *Jews* (as learned Men have observed) and by some

Επι τα τρε μαρτυρω δειναι εν ονοματι
 πρωτογενους Αγγελου. Clem. Alex.

Tob. 12. 15. Christians too. And in the Book of *Tobit* we read of an Angel that calls himself *Raphael*, and says he is one of the Seven Holy Angels. But those Writings are not Canonical. How many Principal Angels there are, no mortal Man can tell, but that there are such, those Scriptures seem (at least) to prove that speak of *Archangels*. We read in *Jude* 9. of *Michael the Archangel*. The same that in *Dan.* 10. 13. is said to be one of the chief Princes. Some will needs have our Lord *Jesus Christ* to be meant by *Michael*, and not a created Angel: But that seems not to be so. It seems beneath the Dignity of the Son of God, before his Incarnation, to contend with the *Devil*, as *Michael* is said to do. And that Phrase (he durst not) is not applicable to *Jesus Christ*. Therefore *Michael the Archangel* is a created Angel. If not, yet that the Name *Archangel* is given to a created Angel is unquestionable, *1 Thess.* 4. 16. For there the Lord *Jesus Christ* and the *Archangel* are distinguished one from the other. The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven, &c. with the voice of the *Archangel*. Some Angels there are that are *Chiefs*, and are in some Superiority, for so *Archangel* signifies. In *Zechary* we read, how, first one Angel appeared, and then another Angel met him, and the former speaks to the other as one beneath him, giving him command. *Go, run, tell the young man, Jerusalem shall be inhabited.*

Zech. 2. 3 4.

Psal. 34. 7.

There be several *Hosts* of Angels, and these must have their *Leaders*. When it is said, *The Angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him*, it must be meant some Angel and his Company: For one Angel cannot be properly said to encamp: But as we say such a *Captain*, or *Colonel* besieged such a Town, when we mean, He with his *Souldiers*; So the Angel of the Lord is said to encamp, that is, He with his *Host*, which he has the Conduct of. Thus are there *Orders* of Angels.

But whether the Differences that are between them lie in the Qualities of their Nature, or only in the Imployment they are sent about; whether the Names by which they are distinguished import an Imparity of Natural Dignity, or only a Diversity of Offices which they exercise towards us, we cannot determine. Nor can we certainly tell (as says Bishop *Davenant*) whether the same Angels do always perform the same Offices. One Angel may be higher and greater in this or that Service, higher in Order, but yet not in Strength: For when the Apostle speaks of Angels that are greater in Power, and might, 1 Pet. 2. 11 He compares not these Angels with other Angels but with Men rather.

Hieronymus naturâ æquales facti Angelis, omnes, ministrant autem impariter. *Zanch.*

Quid inter se differant quatuor ista vocabula, &c. dicant qui possunt. si tamen possint probare quod dicunt. Ego me ista ignorare confiteor. *Aug.*

S E C T. XII.

There is one thing more I shall touch upon, before I fall on the Ministry of Angels (the thing first in my Intentions) and that is their great Love to Men, and willingness to minister, as they are appointed of God to do. This is most proper immediately to introduce what I intend touching their Ministry. These blessed Spirits, they have a very great Love to Men, and are of very benign Inclinations towards them.

The Reason of this is their great Love to God, which makes them fully pleased with whatever is the Will and Pleasure of God. And they do with a kind of Naturalness follow God in loving. Where they see God to set his Love, they cannot chuse but love too. Wherefore they have great Love to Mankind in General, but a special Love they have to the Saints, on whom God has bestowed more Love, and in whom more of God does appear. I say they have a Special Love to the Saints, yet do they love all Men, as being capable of becoming Saints. Who are God's *Elect* (before God has differenced them from others by his Grace) they cannot tell, unless by special Revelation: Therefore they bear good will to

Joh. 3. 16. all Men, and the Reason is because (as I said) they follow God in loving. And they see what Love God hath shewed to Mankind in General. *God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* They cannot chuse but love such as they see God to shew such Love to. They see what *Jesus Christ* (by the appointment of God the Father) has done for sinful Men, and what is designed for them, even to bring such of them as shall believe to Heaven, and to a never-ending Fellowship with themselves. This they see, and know, by what God has revealed of his Grace in the Church, *Ephes. 3. 10.* This is the reason of their Love to Men, and of their Alacrity in ministring.

And an Evidence and Demonstration of it is given.

1. In their rejoicing in the good of Men. 'Tis said, Luke 15. 10. *when any sinner is converted, there is joy in Heaven, in the presence of the Angels.* And if the holy Angels are glad on such occasions, how much more should we. Again the Angels are brought in joining with the faithful in praising God for his Goodness unto Men. For God's Redeeming, Sanctifying, Saving of them. And at *Christ's* coming into the World to save Sinners, they are brought in rejoicing, as *Luke 2. 13, 14.* They call it glad and joyful Tidings, *ver. 10.* All which are Demonstrations of their Love and Good-will to Men: and what one rejoices in, he must needs be willing and ready to further.

2. The Angels quick Dispatch of Business given them in charge, is a clear Proof of their Willingness. When there is an Unwillingness or Backwardness, Persons are wont to linger, and demur: But when Angels are sent of God, to do any thing for Men, they make all possible speed, they fly.

3. The Angels manner of working, is made a Pattern for us to imitate, and *Christ* teaches his Followers to pray, *that they may do Gods will on earth, as it is done in Heaven,* viz. by the holy Angels Questionless if there were any grudging, or backwardness in the least degree in the Angels Ministry, he would not have taught us so to pray.

Oh, what a Comfort should this be to God's afflicted People, in their most solitary and forsaken condition, that they have multitudes of such hearty Friends, so near to God, and unto them, as Angels are.

The afflicted Soul makes sad Complaint sometimes, "I am quite forsaken, I am left alone, I have none to take my part: No Friends left in all the World! Oh, do not say so; all the holy Angels are thy hearty Friends, and have the charge of thee, and with the greatest alacrity and cheerfulness attend that Charge. Of these there are great Hosts, numberless numbers there are of them, (as has been shew'd) and they are of wonderful Understanding and Strength, and (as shall hereafter in this Discourse be fully evinc'd) they are always at work for you.

S E C T. XIII.

Some Corollaries.

FROM all that has hitherto been said of Angels, we may infer somewhat for our Instruction touching God and Heaven, which I may not pass over here.

1. It greatly helps to set forth the Majesty and Glory of God, who is the Creator of Angels, and whose Servants they are. Oh, how much more glorious is God than this visible World, and the things that are in it, do discover him to be! The Psalmist says, *The Heavens declare the glory of God*; he means the visible Heavens: and sure these do represent God as very glorious. What a stately Fabrick is the visible Heaven above us? How adorn'd and deck'd with bright sparkling Lights? The Earth also is full of the Goodness of God, and of his Wisdom and Power. What curious workmanship is there in every Flower? But more in every living Creature. As for Man, GOD's Master-piece on Earth, *How wonderfully (says Job) is he made in the Womb?* Man's Body is a curious Piece, but his Soul is a Work of more Divine Art. These Works of God that are visible, are wonderful, and so is his Providence, in preserving, ordering, and governing of them. O how great must we acknowledg God to be, if we measure him
but

but by the things which he hath brought forth in this visible World ! But, alas ! this which we see with our Eyes is not all that God hath made : These are but the lower ranks of his Works ; there is an invisible World of Spirits which we are in a manner utter strangers to. By Faith we come to understand there is another Species of Creatures, of far greater eminency than any we see here, *viz.* Angels, most pure, holy, intelligent, potent, active, agile Creatures, as has been shew'd ; these as much excel the noblest Creatures on Earth, as Men do the vilest Worms that creep on the Ground. Our Eyes are dazled with the magnificence and splendor of the Courts of earthly *Princes*, where Dukes, and Marquesses, and Earls, and Barons surround the *King*, and do him honour : alas ! these are but poor things to the Orders of Angels, that wait on God's Throne.

And if the Angels are such glorious Creatures, how glorious is the place of their abode and settlement ? How much more richly adorn'd must we suppose the Heaven of the Blessed to be, which is their dwelling-place, than this Earth, where Men inhabit ? O let us consider, and magnifie God in these his noblest Works. God's Glory is above the Heavens : What we see is glorious, but the Glory of what is seen is nothing to the Glory of that which is unseen, but understood by Faith. Much has God done more than we know of ; but, that he has made a World of glorious Angels, we know : What else he has made, we may see hereafter, if by Grace we be made meet.

Could we better understand the Angelical Nature, Properties, and Perfections, and what the Converse and Enter-course of these Spirits is one with the other, and with God, how they love and praise him, and how he communicates himself to them, we should have more worthy and awful Thoughts of God, the Maker and Lord of them : We should have more worthy Thoughts of his Power, Wisdom and Greatness : Nor should we so easily question his Goodness, as now we do. When we hear of God's Severity declar'd against all ungodly ones, we are ready to say, Where is the Goodness of God, if he will send the greatest part of men to Hell, to be eternally tormented ?

Alas !

Alas! God has Myriads of Creatures to glorifie his Goodness on, besides those few Mortals whose dwelling is on Earth. There is a World of Angels, as well as of Men: Oh, glorifie the God of Angels, magnifie him.

2. This may serve both to *ascertain* and to *sweeten* Heaven to all the faithful Servants of God.

1. To *ascertain* it to them, namely, That there is a state of Blessedness above. When any Doubts arise in our unbelieving Hearts, whether there be any such state or no, 'tis no small help to Faith, to understand of some that are in actual possession of it. God has a Heaven of Bliss for Saints, we need not question it, Angels are already in it; *They always behold the Face of God in Heaven.* The grand encouragement the Apostle gives Believers, to assure them of their future Bliss, is, That *Christ*, their Head, is gone before, as their Harbinger or Fore-runner, *Heb. 6. 20. Whither the fore-runner is for us entred.* And says Christ, *I go to prepare a place for you.* Joh. 14. 2. This is our best Evidence, that Heaven is no Fancy; and 'tis some further help to our Faith, that 'tis the place of the Angels settlement.

2. This may serve to *sweeten* and endear Heaven to us, and make us more to desire it; because when we come to Heaven, we shall there have fellowship and acquaintance with those Hosts of blessed Angels, which now we believe on good grounds, but cannot see.

It is mention'd as a considerable part of our Happiness in Heaven, that we shall have the company of Angels there. *We are come,* says the Apostle, *to an innumerable company of Angels.* Heb. 12. 22, He mentions the company of the blessed God, of *Jesus Christ* the Redeemer, of the *Spirits of just men made perfect*, yea, of the general Assembly of them, we shall see them all together, all that ever were in the World, we shall have the company of them all: These he mentions as all concurring to the making of the Blessedness of that state compleat; and among the rest, he puts our fellowship with an innumerable company of Angels. 23.

Oh, what a blessed Day will that be, when all these shall meet together! 'tis unconceivable. *It does not appear* (says the Apostle) *what we shall be*; that is, not fully appear: Such blessed company must needs add much to the Blessedness of the State.

C H A P. IV.

§ 1. Of the Mission of Angels ; Who sends them ; From whence they are sent, and whither. § 2. Whether they had been sent to minister to Men, if Sin had not enter'd into the World. § 3. That the Lord Jesus Christ made way for, and procur'd this great Benefit for Men ; and how. § 4. That Angels are Christ's Ministers, and minister under his Conduct. § 5. That it is meet it should be so. § 6. Two Ends, especially for which God would have Angels to be under Christ ; with Uses. § 7. What God's sending Angels imports, and how God sends them.

S E C T. I.

Hitherto of the Existence of Angels, and of their Natures, Properties, and Qualities ; next of their Ministry. How they are Spirits, hath been shew'd, now must I shew how they are *Ministring Spirits*.

Here two things are to be consider'd : 1. Their *Mission*.
2. Their *Work and Employment*.

1. Their *Mission*. My Text saith, they are *sent forth*. 'Tis not express'd by whom, nor whence, nor whither : But wherever there is a sending forth, there must be some one that sends, and there must be Terms to which the Mission relates. There must be suppos'd the *Terminus à quo*, and the *Terminus ad quem* : If the Angels be sent forth, it must be from somewhere, to some otherwhere ; but of this the Answer is not difficult.

1. He that sends them is God the *Father*, and Jesus Christ the *Redeemer*, who (as I shall shew) is made the Head of Angels. God sends them forth by Jesus Christ ; none other can be suppos'd to be superiour to Angels, and to have

have Power to send them. They are God's Angels, and he gives them their Charge, *Psal* 91. 11.

2. The *Terminus à quo*, from whence he sends them, is the *Empereal Heaven*, or the Heaven of the Blessed, where is their Habitation, and where they were created, or to which they were advanc'd after the Fall of the Apostate Angels: There the Blessed Angels stand before God, and behold his Face. Heaven is their proper home, and there (no doubt) they have Work to do, but what 'tis, we Mortals little understand: only we find by many divine testimonies, that they are praising of God there. No question they have most intimate and blessed Communion with the great God; their beholding his Face, *Mat.* 18. imports no less; but fully to declare what passes between them and God above, what Addresses they make to him, and what Communications they have from him; this is above the power of any mortal man. When we come to Heaven, to be of the company of those Blessed Spirits (as all true Believers shall at last) then shall we see and understand more of it. But besides the blissful Work of Angels above, God has Work for them elsewhere to attend, to which he sends them forth.

Isa. 6. 3.
Rev. 4. 8.
Rev. 7. 11, 12.
Psal. 103. 20,
21.

3. The place to which he sends them, is this lower World, the Habitation of Men; here has God Work for them, if not so honourable as that above, yet such as they attend with great alacrity and delight. Some may think it must needs be to the Angels loss to leave Heaven, and God's Presence there, to follow Business in this lower World, and to wait upon Men; but no such matter. They count it no loss to follow their Master's Work wherever it lie: and while they are doing it, they still behold God's Face, as well as when at home in Heaven. Saints here on Earth can enjoy God in the works of their Secular Callings; as well as in the exercises of his Immediate Worship; And shall we think Angels cannot enjoy God in their Work here, as well as in that above?

You see then *who* sends Angels, and *whence*, and *whither* they are sent: 'Tis God sends them from Heaven, down into this lower World; Into a sinful and miserable World God sends them, and that for the relief, help, and conduct

duct of sinful men. Oh the boundlessness of Divine Goodness and Mercy! how worthy is it to be admir'd and ador'd by us! *What is man, (says the Psalmist) that thou art mindful of him: and the son of man, that thou visitest him?* For God to send any to look after sinful men, is much; but for him to imploy such excellent Creatures as Angels are, his prime Ministers of State, to send such forth for men, for sinful men, sure this is wonderful.

Yet God hath done not only this for men, but that which is more; he hath sent his only begotten Son into the World, to take our Nature, and to humble himself to the form of a Servant, that he might become the Author of Salvation to all that should believe in him: This is more wonderful, and let it have the chief room in our Hearts: But next to this, let God's sending of Angels be thought of with most wonder and thankfulness.

S E C T. II.

TIS a Question which (without offence) we may enquire into, so it be with Sobriety, *Whether if Sin had not enter'd into the World, but all the Angels had kept their first estate, and man continued in Innocency, the Angels would have been sent forth, as now they are, to minister in this visible World?*

Angels and Men, by the Law of their Creation, were two distinct Worlds, far distant one from the other: the proper Habitation of Angels was Heaven, and therefore they are call'd *the Angels of Heaven*: the Habitation of Men was to be here below, on this Earth. Now, had not Sin enter'd, and made such a breach as it did in God's Kingdom, both above and below, it may be thought that (for ought we certainly know) Angels might have kept Heaven, and Men this Earth, living as two distinct Kingdoms, that have no Commerce one with the other.

'Tis not good to be positive in things not clearly revealed, but this seems evident: Had not Sin enter'd into the World, there had not been all that need of Angels here that now there is, nor would they have had the work to do that now they have. Yea, supposing the Fall of some

of

Jude 6.

Mat. 24. 36.

of the Angels, and these permitted to tamper with Men, (as we know the *Devil* did with our first Parents in the state of Innocency) tho' there would have been more reason for, and need of, the Ministry of the good Angels; than otherwise, (for if God suffer'd evil Angels to oppose Man's happiness, 'twould have been most congruous to his Goodness to appoint good Angels for Man's aid, and Man would have needed it) yet Angels would not have had all that Work to do here which now they have, nor would there have been altogether so much need of them as now there is. This cannot well be denied. However, it seems also very probable at least, if not certain, that if things had continued in their primitive state, as they came out of the Creator's hands, Angels would not have liv'd utter strangers to this visible World, and have had nothing to do in it.

The whole World is made so compact and united, that no part is to be thought to be made to exist so separate from the rest, as to have no communion with the same. We see things superiour are made to operate on things inferiour; and it is probable, the more excellent any Nature is, by so much the more closely is it united to the rest, and so much the more powerfully and constantly does it operate on things beneath it. The great God himself, who is infinitely above all, yet is he in, and worketh in all things in Heaven and Earth. Therefore most likely 'tis, as God made the *Stars* (at a great distance from us) not only to be gaz'd on, but to have their *Influences* on *Plants* and *Animals*, so he made the Angels, that are higher than the Stars, for some Service in the World, to be *Instruments* of his *Providence* in it.

And certain 'tis, the Angels had knowledge of this lower World, and did contemplate the Glory of God in it, as soon as it was made, and before Man had sinn'd; for God himself says, That when the Corner-stone of it was laid, *the morning Stars sang together, and the Sons of God shouted for joy.* 'Tis generally agreed on, that by the *morning Stars*, and the *Sons of God*, are meant the holy Angels, and they prais'd God in this visible World when God made it, there-

Job 38. 6, 7.

fore they had Knowledge of it, and Love to it, and to Man, the chief of God's Creatures in it.

Aq. 1. q. 113.
a. 4. ad 2.

Wherefore it is very probable, (if no more) that had not Sin enter'd into the World, Angels would have had a Ministry here, tho' not every way the same that it is now: and Man would have had great benefit by them.

S E C T. III.

BUT tho' this be true, yet must it be acknowledg'd, that Man by his Sin forfeited his Right to this, as well as all other Privileges granted him in his Creation, so that the Angels being sent to minister to Men since the *Fall*, must be on some new account, and this is well worth our enquiring after, *viz.* by *whom*, and by *what means* this great Benefit is procur'd for Men: Of which in the ensuing Section.

Mankind being by Sin turn'd from God, and fallen under his Displeasure and Curse; and Death being made his due by a just and righteous Law, we cannot conceive how it can consist with his Wisdom and Justice (as a Ruler) to receive them into his Favour, and grant them so great a Privilege as is the Ministry of his Angels, without some reparation first made to his Honour for the Sin of Man, and without some provision for the recovery of men out of Sin, first either made or undertaken.

Nor can we imagine how the holy Angels could be willing to undertake such a Service for Men in a state of Rebellion. Angels could never be willing to befriend God's Enemies, a Reconciliation being not first made or undertaken.

The first Act of the Angels that we read of (after Man had sinn'd) was an act of Hostility. God turn'd our first Parents (when they had sinn'd) out of Paradise, and presently the *Cherubims*, or *Angels with a flaming Sword*, appear to keep them out. Man's Sin stands in the way, both of God's granting such a Commission to Angels as now they have, and of their cheerful accepting of such an Employment. Now 'tis worth enquiry how, and by whom

Gen. 3. 24.

whom way is made for the grant of this great Blessing to Mankind.

For satisfaction herein, you must know ; when there was so great a change made by the Sin of Angels, and Men, (all Mankind having fallen from God in the Sin of our first Parents, and a great part of the Angels having sinn'd before, and left their habitation) it pleas'd the All-wise and gracious God (having purpos'd the restoring of some of lost Mankind) to erect and constitute one Kingdom out of these two broken and disorder'd ones, uniting Angels and Men under one common Head and Lord of them both : In pursuance of this, it was agreed upon between the *Father* and the *Son* in the blessed *Trinity*, that the Son of God should assume the Nature of Man, and in it suffer, so making atonement for Sin. This God the Father appointed, and God the Son consented to, and *God was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself*, as the *Apostle* says, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19.

By this means Sin is taken away, the only hindrance of Good to be communicated to men. Sin made a sad and lamentable breach, both between God and men, and between men and Angels too, yea, and between men and all other Creatures. All the Creatures must needs be against man, when man came to be against God.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, was sent to make Peace, and he came in the fulness of time, and did effect it, by offering up himself a *propitiatory Sacrifice* on the Cross : *He became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* ^{2 Cor. 5. 21.} This being done, God's Justice is satisfied, and his Wrath appeas'd, yea, and at once man is reconcil'd to God, and to the holy Angels too. And this we have very plainly and fully laid down by the *Apostle*, in that noted place, the explication of which hath seem'd very difficult, for want of noting this Truth, which we have before us ; 'tis, *Col.* 1. 20. *And (having made peace thro' the blood of his Cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven.* The *Apostle* speaks here of the reconciling of men to God by the Death and Passion of *Jesus Christ*, but this is not all that is in the *Text*.

Here

Here is mention (if you weigh it) of reconciling men to the Angels too; for as by *things in Earth* we are to understand men, so, by *things in Heaven*, we are to understand Angels. Now, the Apostle cannot mean, that *Christ* suffer'd to reconcile Angels to God, for there had never been any variance between God and them, they had never been out one with the other: But as there was by Sin variance between God and men, so was there also between Angels and them, and *Christ* made up all Differences, taking away Sin the cause of them. Not that *Christ* came to make satisfaction to Angels, but let man be once reconcil'd to God, Angels presently fall in with him. So he is said

Factum est beneficio Redemptoris ut reconciliatis Electis cum Deo, amicitia quoque inter Angelos & homines renovata est. *Aug.* And again, Quomodo pacificantur cœlestia nisi in nobis, id est concordando nobiscum. Calvin explaining the Text, mentions the Opinion of Augustin and Bucer to our purpose, and not only approves it, but illustrates it by a Similitude in Ephes. 1. Per Christum amicitia inter homines & Angelos renovata est. *Zanch.*

to reconcile things in Earth, and things in Heaven. And this I take to be the proper scope and meaning of the Text; and so many *Divines* of good note expound it. Nor does it oppose this Exposition, that tis said, *God reconciled to himself*: for [to himself] notes not the term of the Reconciliation, but the end of it. And the meaning is, for himself, that is, his own Glory, God did, by *Christ*, make all Friends. Hereupon *Christ* having made Peace, there remains nothing either to hinder God's granting Sinners such a Favour as is the

guardianship of Angels, or to hinder Angels from the willing and cheerful accepting of such a Charge. God is resolv'd to bestow nothing on Sinners, but in and thro' his Son *Jesus Christ*, and upon his account; and so this grand privilege it is a part of his acquisition and purchase.

This great Truth of Angels ministring to men in and thro' *Christ*, was first represented to the Patriarch *Jacob* in a Vision, as he was going to *Padan-Aram*, Gen. 28. 12. *Jacob dreamed, and behold a Ladder set upon the Earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven, and behold the Angels of God ascending and descending on it.* The Lord *Jesus Christ* is this Ladder, and by him is made the Angels way from Heaven to Earth. *Christ* is the way in which they go and come to Sinners. And our *Saviour's* Speech to *Nathanael* hath (no doubt) respect to this Vision of *Jacob*, when he says, *Here-*
after

after ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending on the son of man, Joh. i. 51. Ascending and descending on him, how so? Some would refer this unto such Apparitions as were of Angels ministering to *Christ* at his *Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension*. But with what propriety of Speech can the Angels (in those instances) be said to ascend and descend upon him? 'Tis true, they may be said to have descended upon him, but how to ascend and descend upon him? We cannot fairly explain this, but by referring it to *Jacob's* Vision; as there the Angels were seen to ascend and descend on a Ladder that reach'd from Heaven to Earth; so in the Gospel shall it be discover'd, that the Son of Man is this Ladder, and that it is on him that the Angels ascend and descend, to minister to men. This is the wonderful thing that our Saviour tells *Nathanael* they should hereafter see. [*Jacob* had it represented in a Vision, that the Angels ascended and descended as on a Ladder; that they were appointed of God to be ministering Spirits, for the good of his People: But that which they should come to see further by the Gospel, was, that the Son of Man is the Ladder on which they ascend and descend:] namely, that all the good that comes to men is only by *Jesus Christ*, and that Angels, that are the Instruments and Servants of God's Providence, do go and come by him.

Alludit indubiè ad illam *Jacobi* Scalam, Gen. 28. Verè in *Christo* præstatur quod ibi obumbratum est. Cælorum januam per *Christum* patefactam creditibus quibus Angeli ordinantur custodes, &c. *Calv.*

Oh, how doth this exalt and magnifie the Grace of God that is by *Jesus Christ*! 'Tis great pity such a Truth as this should lie in obscurity, that so much conduceth to the setting forth of *Christ*, and what he has done for us. We shall never fully understand what we have by him, till we come to Heaven; much will lie hid from us here after our most diligent enquiries; *Eye hath not seen, &c.* But let us get to see as much as we can: What we have no distinct knowledg of, we cannot duly praise him for.

Now pray note, among the many great Benefits that we have by *Christ*, and do magnifie him for, how rarely do we hear any thing of this rich and glorious Atchievement

ment of his, our Peace and Friendship, with those numerous Hosts of blessed Spirits above? I confess, 'tis enough to ravish our Hearts to hear, that *God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself*: No Enemy can hurt us when God is our Friend; but, you know, the Apostle commends Peace with men, as a thing worthy to be pursued; *Follow peace with all men.* Now, if Peace and Friendship with men be such a desirable Blessing, what is Friendship with the holy Angels of God, who are so excellent in nature, so many in number, so great in power? To be brought into friendship and fellowship with these, to have their Company, Love and Care, undoubtedly (next to fellowship with God, and Christ, and the Spirit) there is nothing in the whole World we have reason so much to value, nothing wherein we have reason to place so much comfort and confidence as this.

Now this is one of the Benefits we have by *Christ*. 'Twas he that turned the Hearts of those blessed and beneficent Spirits towards us. When Man had sinned the *Angels* were presently in arms against him: But no sooner was the great Mystery of *Christ* discovered to them, but all hostile Dispositions were laid aside. The Apostle says of *Christ*, *God manifested in the flesh*, that he was seen of *Angels*, no doubt he was seen of them in that first Promise of him, *Gen. 3. 15.* if not before, and this made them hearty Friends, and willing to be for us, under *Christ*, their Head, and ours. Oh let not *Christ* lose the Honour of this great Achievement of his. 'Tis he has procured the *Angels* for us. He is the Ladder *Jacob* saw. God open the Eyes of our Faith to see the *Angels* ascending and descending upon him. *Angels* come down to us, by the same way that we (if faithful) shall go up to them. Magnify the Grace of *Jesus Christ*.

S E C T. IV.

AND as it is by *Jesus Christ* that the Angels Ministry is procured for us, so it is under his Conduct that they go forth to minister. He is made Lord of Angels and they are his Agents. And because this contains singular Encouragement in it, I shall here entertain you a while with an Explication and Vindication of Christ's Power and Authority over Angels.

When the Son of God undertook the Redemption and Reconciliation of Sinners, God the Father was resolved to put all into his hands, and to make him Lord over all; not only over Men for whom he undertook to suffer, but over Angels too. He purposed to gather both Elect Angels, and Men into one Kingdom, which were originally two distinct Kingdoms, He purposed to unite the Elect of both, to make one Kingdom and Family, as the Apostle tells us, *Ephes. 1. 10. That he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.* God would unite Angels and Men in *Christ*, making them one Family; therefore are they called *the whole family in Heaven and Earth.* Col. 3. 15 They are to constitute one Kingdom, or Family, and the Lord *Jesus Christ*, is to be over them and govern them as his Subjects. Yea and all things and Persons, are to be subject to him. This we have from *Christ* himself, *Matt. 28. 18. All power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth.* All Power, and all Power in Heaven and Earth, that is, over Angels as well as Men, all are made his Subjects, of Right, tho' all do not consent to his Rule, as the Elect do, and are therefore peculiarly called his Kingdom. And this Power is said to be given him, as 'tis also said by the Apostle, *Phil. 2. 9.* to note, that he speaks not of the Power that he has as God, for that he has by Nature, but this he has by Gift. He speaks therefore of a Power bestowed on him as Mediator. And that this extends to Angels as well as Men, the Apostle *Peter* does more expressly tell us, who, speaking of *Christ*, says, *He is gone into Heaven and is on the right hand of God, An-*
M gels

gels and Authorities and Powers being made subject to him, that is, all Orders and Ranks of Angels whatsoever. So also, *Phil. 2. 9, 10.* Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given 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. He, that is, God the Father, hath given, 'Tis of the Power he hath by Gift he speaks. Him that is the Man Christ Jesus. A Name that is Power and Authority, and Eminency. That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, that is, that unto him, thus advanced, of God, every Creature should be subject. Whether things in Heaven, that is, the holy Angels, or things in Earth, that is, Men and all other Creatures on Earth; or things under the earth, that is Devils. So that by this Text it appears that not only the good Angels but the evil Angels, or Devils also are subjected to him. And so are wicked men also, but they are Rebel-Subjects, and Christ shall reign till he hath brought all these his enemies under his feet. Devils and wicked Men are *de jure* Christ's Subjects. And over the Devils Christ exercised a Power when he was here on Earth, commanding them to come out of the possessed, and they were at his beck: And in the end of the World he shall adjudge both them, and all wicked men, unto everlasting Torments.

1 Cor. 15. 25.

One Text more I shall alledge, in which you may further observe, that the Authority that is given unto Christ over Angels, is for the sake of the Church, and has a special respect unto the Salvation of men. 'Tis *Ephes. 1. 21, 22.* And hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be Head over all things to the Church. His Headship over Angels and all things else, is in order to his gathering, preserving and glorifying of his Church.

By these Scriptures it appears that God the Father hath granted unto Jesus Christ a Sovereignty over Angels.

S E C T. V.

NOW as for the Congruity and Equity of the grant this Power, know, that it is founded immediately in *Christ's* undertaking, and interposing to recover what was lost by Sin; and in his being obedient unto Death, in order thereunto. This is given by the Apostle as the reason why God advanced him, *Phil.* 2. 9. with 6, 7, 8. *Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, ver. 9. Why? Because He being in the form of God, &c. he made himself of no reputation, and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, therefore God highly exalted him.* This is the Reason that in this, and other Places, is given why God conferred this Power upon *Christ*. But besides, 'tis not to be doubted, but there was some special advantage that was to accrue to the Angels by *Jesus Christ*. Somewhat over and above what they had by Creation, they were to have by *Jesus Christ*, upon the account of which it became more meet that he should be their Lord.

What Benefits the Angels have by *Christ*, we cannot fully and certainly determine. It is commonly said by Divines, and not improbably.

1. That they had their Confirmation by *Jesus Christ*. They were in their Creation tho' holy, yet mutable Creatures, as appears by those that fell: And those that stood might have fallen, as the others did, till such time as they were confirm'd by Divine Grace. Now this Grace was by *Jesus Christ*, as the Apostle seems to intimate, *Col.* 1. 17. where he says of *Christ*, *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* That is, all elect Men and Angels consist, or stand firm, by him.

Qui erexit
homoem lap-
sum, dedit
stanti Angelo
ne laberetur,
&c. Solvens
illum & ser-
vans istum.
Bern.

2. It seems no less clear, that the Angels were not only settled by *Jesus Christ* in what they had by Creation, but had by him some superadded Benefits granted them. That they had some further knowledg of God by *Jesus Christ*, may be infer'd from *Ephes.* 3. 10. where the manifold Wisdom of God is said to be made manifest to them by the Church. And in *1 Pet.* 1. 12. 'tis said, *Which things the Angels desire to look into.*

That they had not the Beatifical Vision (which now they have) originally, and by Creation, is thought to be sufficiently prov'd from *Job. 1. 18.* *No man [i. e. no one, be it Man or Angel] hath seen God at any time, the only begotten son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* If the Angels had seen him originally, they might have declared him, but none could do this but *Jesus*

Pleniorum Dei cognitionem, simul ac cumulativa gaudia per Christum accipiunt (Angeli) *Bucer.*

Christ. And indeed had all the Angels had, by Creation, the Blessed Vision of God, they could not any of them have fallen, for where this Vision is,

the mind must needs be so taken up, that it cannot entertain so much as a thought of any better, or other good. On these accounts there is a Meekness that the *Lord Jesus Christ* should be the *Head and Lord* of Angels.

The Dominion and Rule that he hath over Devils, he obtains by conquest. So *Col. 2. 15.* *Having spoiled Principalities and Powers, that is, Devils, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it, i. e. in his Cross.* He vanquish'd them by Dying. And they are subjected to him both as to their present actings, being able to do nothing without his Permission, and as to their future State and Condition, which shall be according to his final Judgment unavoidably.

S E C T. VI.

FOR Two ends especially would God have the holy Angels to be under Christ as a part of his Kingdom.

1. For the greater *Glory* of his Kingdom to which this must needs be no small accession, that such excellent Creatures as Angels are Members of it; of which more by and by.

2. For the *Help and Succour* of it, while militant here on Earth. For in its militant State it has great need of the aid and help of Angels, and therefore 'tis fit that they should be at the command of Christ, whose Office 'tis to bring the Faithful safe to Heaven. For this purpose it was God invest'd Christ with such Sovereign Power,
that

that he might use it this way. So says the Apostle, *He gave him to be Head over all things to the Church*, that is, for their Sakes, that he might be the better furnished to conduct them safe to Heaven, having all at his beck.

Thus you see how, and on what account the Lord Jesus Christ is the Angels *Sovereign Lord*, and *Master*. And 'tis under his Conduct that they are ministering Spirits. He sends them forth, God by him. They receive their Orders immediately from Jesus Christ, and are employed by him in all their Negotiations in the World.

Therefore in *Ezekiel's* Vision, *Chap. 1.* We read that the *living Creatures* (by which Angels are meant) *did stand, and move with their faces stretched upwards*, that is, they looked up to him that sate on the Throne, and he that sate on the Throne was Jesus Christ: See *Ezek. 1. 11.* *Thus were their faces and their wings stretched upwards*, so we should read the Word. The Angels keep looking to Christ, to receive Instructions from him, being purposed to do nothing without him.

Now if it be as hath been shewed, how full and plain is here a Demonstration of both the Glory and Strength of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, unto which all true Believers do belong.

The faithful Servants of God, and Followers of Jesus Christ here on Earth, are all Christ's visible Kingdom, and these, considered by themselves, are such a feeble and contemptible Company, that God calls them *worm Jacob*. *Fear not thou worm Jacob*. What is more weak and contemptible than a Worm? And such may the Kingdom and Church of Christ on Earth be said to be, in all times and ages of it, consider it by it self. Yet is the Church compared to *an Army with Banners*, and this Can. 6. 4. must be for its Beauty and Strength. And wherein does this Beauty and Strength lie? No doubt chiefly in its Head the Lord Jesus Christ. He is glorious and mighty who is their Sovereign Prince and Ruler. But tho' the Churches Glory and Strength lies chiefly in this, yet is this some Proof thereof, that the blessed Angels of Heaven belong to it, and are a part of Christs Kingdom, they

they are fellow Subjects with the despised Servants of Christ on Earth. So said the Angel to *John*, *I am thy fellow Servant, and of thy Brethren that have the testimony of Jesus*. Now

1. This proves the *Glory* and *Beauty* of Christ's Kingdom. On how is the Kingdom of Christ, yea and Christ himself slighted by the Generality of men? Christ is called by the Psalmist *the King of Glory*, yet when he came in the Flesh, he was little esteemed of. The Prophet *Isaiah* prophetically set it forth. *He is despised and rejected of men. We hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised and we esteemed him not*. The People lookt upon him but as the *Carpenters Son*. Thus was it while he was on Earth. And now he is in Heaven how little do men really regard him, or his Laws? Yea, they reproach and persecute him in his Members. But when such Wretches as now do so, shall see him come in State, magnificently attended with numerous Hosts of Angels, what thoughts will they have of him then? They will then have other thoughts of Christ than now they have, and of his Followers too, that now they scorn and abuse, when they shall see them associated with Angels, who were before their Guardians and Keepers. The blessed Angels in Heaven, and good Men on Earth, they are all of one Family, of one Company, Fellow-subjects. Oh what an Honour must it be to be a Christian! He that is so indeed, is a Fellow-Citizen with Angels, of that Kingdom whereof they are a part. Grace makes a Man so. When you come to be true Believers, you come to Fellowship with Angels. So says the Apostle, *We are come to the general Assembly of the first-born, and to an innumerable company of Angels*. He is speaking of what they come to immediately on believing. Then begins God's Peoples Communion with Angels, tho' in an insensible way; but hereafter their Communion with them shall be full, and clear. Oh what a Dignity is this!

2. This proves the *Power* and *Strength* of Christ's Kingdom, as well as the *Glory* and *Beauty* of it. Christ's Kingdom is strong, not only in the strong God that heads it, but in respect of those Hosts of Angels that be-
long

long to it, and do minister in it. Christ's Kingdom on Earth is a little Flock of Sheep, *Fear not a little Flock.* Luke 12. 32. They have little visible Strength for them, but much against them, so that 'tis a wonder how they are preserved. But Christ that heads them, is Head of Angels too. These mighty Spirits are at his command, and belong to this Kingdom, and have a Charge of it.

Let none be afraid to join themselves to the despicable Company that are Followers of Jesus Christ here, They are not alone, The Blessed Angels, that are Christ's Servants too, will not suffer them to sink. Here is God's Peoples Strength and Safety, let us take hold of it for our Encouragement.

Again, if Angels be under Christ the Redeemer, if he have the Command and Conduct of them, then to be sure they pursue the same design that Christ came into the World about, and is still carrying on. If they be his Servants, they are for his Work. Now what is Christ's Work, that he came about, that he laboured in, while he was on Earth, and that he principally minds, now he is in Heaven? Why, 'tis the Eternal Salvation of mens Souls. This is Christ's great Work. *I am come that ye might have life,* says Christ. About this God the Father Joh. 10. 10. sent him, as the Apostle testifies. *God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning every one of you from his iniquities.* Acts 3. 26. Now if this be Christ's Work, then 'tis that which the Angels chiefly aim at, and are most busy about. They do many a kindness for Men, in refreshing, defending, delivering and prospering the outward Man (as shall hereafter be made appear) but 'tis the Salvation of their Souls that they are most careful about, and therefore when suffering may farther our Salvation, no wonder if we meet with it, tho' we have such mighty Champions on our side. Oh let us chiefly mind that for our selves, and ours, that Christ and Angels mind. Let us *first seek the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness.* Let us take a Pattern from Angels, who do take theirs from Christ. What Angels do to further the Salvation of Men, shall in its proper Place be shewed, But let us see that we make that our chief Business, which is Christ's, and Angels under him.

Again :

Again, if Angels be Christ's Ministers, and do serve him as their Master, then the more we honour Christ, and the better Testimony we give of our being Saints, and true to his Interest, the more sure we may be of the Holy Angels, that they will be for us, and do us all the good they can. The Angels are glad to see men come in to Christ, and to cleave to him. *There is joy in Heaven among the Angels, when a sinner converteth.* Christ is their Master, as well as ours, and they love their Master, and they love them that are faithful to him. But when we play the Cowards, or the Wantons, and have his Service, or are unfaithful in it, this is a grief and offence to those blessed Spirits, and if any thing can make them cease to be friendly to us, this will.

S E C T. VII.

§. 7.

BUT to go on with the Mission of Angels: having shewed by whose Procurement, and under whose Conduct they are sent forth, with some other circumstances, I shall briefly exp'a'in what this sending does import, and how God does send Angels.

Now God's sending must be by some signifying to them, that it is his Pleasure that they should go. This signifying or notifying his Will and Pleasure, both gives them Authority, and brings them under an Obligation, to the work they are sent about.

How God does signify his Will to Angels is inexplicable. The Language of Spirits is to Mortals, a thing unknown. Some boldly discourse of it, I shall not follow their Presumption, but confess my nescience.

However it is certain, Angels have some way to discover their minds one to another, and some way there is in which God speaks to Angels, and makes them understand what his Will and Pleasure is. When God sends Angels he gives them some notice that it is his mind they should go, and this is a Law to them, and brings them under an Obligation, and investeth them Power, as before. And there needs no more. There can be no higher Authority than the Divine Will: When

when this is notified, they become oblig'd in Duty, and this lower World, into which they are sent, becomes their Charge.

Ministers of the Gospel, that are God's visible Angels on Earth, when they have a Call from God to preach, this both gives them authority to do it, they may preach who-ever forbid; and it brings them under an obligation to do it; *A necessity is laid upon me (says Paul) and woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.* When Paul had his Commission, he was both authoriz'd and oblig'd to his Work, and so are Angels to theirs. God having signified, that it is his will that they should go forth and minister in this World, for the good of his Elect, we may call this their general Mis-sion. 1 Cor. 9. 16.

But now, as the Apostles, besides their *General Commission*, had oftentimes *particular Instructions* given them, for some special Services; as when they were going to *Bithynia* (in pursuance of their *general Mission*) they were by a *special Commission* directed to go to *Macedonia*; so the Angels have new *particular Instructions* given them for some special Ser-vices; and when God communicates to them any such Advices, this may be said to be a *special Mission*, superadded to their *general Mission*, and determining how it is to be executed and pursued, in certain particular instances. Acts 16. 7. 9. Thus God is said frequently to send Angels, *viz.* by a spe-cial Mission, and they wait on him to receive his Com-mands; and without such particular Instructions, they could not know how (in all particulars) to fulfil God's Will according to their general Commission.

Their general Commission in the Text, you see, is to go forth and to minister, for the good of such as are Heirs of Salvation, even God's Elect. But who are God's Elect the Angels cannot certainly tell, (until they be by Grace actually distinguish'd from others) unless God do reveal the same to them. Wherefore God does by special Mis-sion direct them to such as he has special favour for, to in-struct, comfort, preserve, and deliver them; and by this ('tis like) they come to understand who they are God has special favour for. So he sent an Angel with *Abraham's*

Servant, when he went about a Match for *Isaac*, to make his Journey prosperous. And he sent an Host to attend *Jacob* in his return from *Syria*, and to preserve him from the Fury of his Brother *Esau*. And many such-like Instances we read of in Scripture, and shall meet with in the following Discourse of the Ministry of Angels, by which God may give them to understand who are his chosen ones, and to how they may rightly pursue their General Commission, which is, to be *Guardians* and *Keepers* of the Heirs of Salvation. They are also sent by special Mission to others, that are not elect persons, as will appear in the following Discourse; and they seldom do any extraordinary matter for or against any, but they have special Instructions given them for it.

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

- § 1. Of the Work and Employment of Angels; That some ascribe too much to them, some too little.
- § 2. A more general Consideration of it. § 3. That they are employ'd in all parts of the World.
- § 4. And in all sorts of Actions whose natural Causes are hidden. § 5. And in such as are ordinary, whose immediate Causes are apparent.
- § 6. That it does not derogate from the Honour of God, or his Providence to ascribe such Agency to Angels. § 7. Several Arguments, proving, that God does ordinarily make use of Angels, as the Instruments of his Providence.

S E C T. I.

Hitherto of the *Mission of Angels*, they are sent forth for Service: We are next to enquire, what the Service is about which they are sent forth. Here I shall strictly confine my self to the holy Scriptures, ascribing nothing to them but what I find the Scriptures do ascribe to them. Some ascribe too much to Angels, some too little; God's Word will shew us the mean or middle between these two Extreams.

They attribute too much to them that allow them any absolute and independent power: They can do nothing but in subordination and subserviency to the great God, who is their Maker, and by power deriv'd from them to him. 'Tis in him that all things live, and move, and have their being.

When God promis'd *Moses*, that his Angel should go before the Children of *Israel*, but in the mean time told him, that they should not have his presence, how was *Moses* troubled? He look'd on the People (tho' under the con-

duct of an Angel) as left destitute, if God were not with them : for, alas, what can Angels do without their Maker? They are but Instruments in his Hand, to execute his Pleasure, and can do nothing without him. To give absolute and independent Power to Angels, is to make them *Deities*; as shall be more fully shew'd hereafter: This is too much.

But there are others that (I suppose) I may safely say they attribute too little to them; and they are such as do in a manner confine the Angels to the Heavens, acknowledging no ordinary Work or Employment that they have in this lower World. They will acknowledg, that God does sometimes make use of them, *viz.* in some extraordinary and prodigious occurrences; but this is but very rarely, now and then, as they conceive.

I am fully satisfied, Angels are more concern'd in the affairs of this World than so: And tho' their Agency and Operation be secret and insensible, yet have we no reason to question the truth of it, or to think they do no more than we see them do, as long as the Word does assert their more ordinary ministring.

S E C T. II.

I Shall first discourse more *generally* of the extent of their Ministry, and enquire what God's Word says thereabout, for we must take all our measures thence.

That all things in the World, both great and small, are order'd and govern'd by the Providence of God, no good Christian will deny; many of the ancient *Philosophers* have acknowledg'd it.

Plotinus libros aliquos de Providentiâ scrip-

fit, quibus in maximis & minimis Providentiam demonstrat. *Seneca* etiam unum librum de Providentiâ scripsit, *Ph. Morn.*

Non enim dirigit Deus tantum omnia, quoque tempore, ad plenam & absolutam universi harmoniam, verum etiam singularum curator, conservator, medicus est. *Porphy.* in *Morn.*

Now the Providence of God is either *immediate*, or *mediate*. God's *immediate Providence* is when he does, by himself, without the ministry of any Creature, preserve and govern things. His *mediate Providence* is, when he governs

governs Creatures by Creatures, the inferiour by superiour, as by means and instruments. The first and universal Causes of things, God does preserve and govern *immediately* by himself, not making use of any Creatures, as means and instruments: and some things that are above Nature and proper Miracles, God himself works extraordinarily, and no Creature can be so much as a proper Instrument therein: But ordinarily God worketh all things by certain means and instruments which he has prepar'd and appointed.

These Means or Second Causes are in a manner infinite, and there is an Order of them, one is above another, and all of them subordinate to himself. To which purpose is that *Hos. 2. 21, 22. I will bear the Heavens, and they shall bear the Earth, and the Earth shall bear the Corn, and the Wine, and the Oyl, and they shall bear Jezreel.*

The Order of Second Causes appointed by himself God usually observes, and keeps to; not that he has any need of Means or Instruments to work by, but because it best pleases him to glorifie his Wisdom and Goodness in this way of working.

The Blessed Angels are God's *immediate Subordinates*, they are nearest to him in Nature and Power, being much superiour to all other Creatures. Now these God does, by his immediate Providence, uphold and govern; and what use he does make of them as Instruments of his Providence about inferiour things, to execute his Decrees here in this World, is that which we are soberly to enquire after. Some use God makes of them, none deny that acknowledg there are any such Creatures: But we shall enquire, 1. What is the extent of their Employment or Ministry, and then, 2. Whether it be ordinary, or only now and then, as some do suppose.

1. As for the *extent* of the Angels Employment, there are some Scriptures that seem sufficiently to prove, that God makes use of them in all Quarters of the Earth, from one end of it to the other, and they have an hand in all sorts of matters that pertain to the good of Mankind, but especially to the present Benefit and eternal Salvation of God's Elect.

S E C T. III.

THAT they are concern'd in all parts of the World, seems sufficiently prov'd in the first Chapter of *Zechary*. The Prophet in a Vision saw a man riding on a red horse, and behind him there were red horses speckled and white, Ver. 8. All agree, that by the Man riding on the red Horse, is meant the Son of God; and that by the red, and speckled, and white Horses behind him, are meant an Host of Angels attending on him. Now, when the Prophet made enquiry, what these red, speckled, and white Horses or Horsemen were, the man that was among the Myrtle Trees (*i. e.* the Son of God) answer'd him, ver. 10. *These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the Earth.* Note, They are sent into all the Earth to traverse it, to go up and down in it: And that they did so, the next Verse shews, and they were able to give an account of all Nations and Kingdoms; for they answer'd, and said, *We have walked to and fro, through the Earth, and behold, all the Earth sitteth still, and is at rest,* Ver. 11. They were then as *Superintendents*, and *Overseers* of the whole Earth, and all parts of it, and God sent them forth to be so, and (no doubt) not to be idle Spectators, but to be Servants of his Providence. And this is meant (as was noted before) of the holy Angels.

The same thing is very notably represented to us in another Vision, which the Prophet *Ezekiel* had, *Chap. 1.* He saw (among other things) *four living Creatures, having the likeness of a man,* Ver. 5. and they had *the hands of a man under their wings,* Ver. 8. By these living Creatures he saw *four Wheels, and these Wheels moved only when the living Creatures moved,* Ver. 19.

Now who are meant by these *living Creatures*, the Prophet himself doth explain to us, *chap. 10. 20.* where we understand he had the like Vision another time. He says, *And I knew that they were the Cherubims, i. e. the Angels.*

Now

Now, as these moved, the Wheels moved. By the *Wheels* are meant *inferiour Causes*, whose motions were guided by the *living Creatures* or *Angels*.

The number *Four* (in all likelihood) notes the *Four Quarters* of the *World*.

The *Affairs* of this *World*, in all parts of it, are ever *rouling* and *turning* like a *Wheel*, and all the *Revolutions* and *Changes*, all the great *Actions* that are in it, are *order'd* and *govern'd* by those *living Creatures*, which are the *Cherubims*, or *Angels*. By these *invisible Agents* of his, does *God* *order* all, as the *Servants* of his *Providence*. To represent this, seems to be the *principal Scope* of both those *Visions* which this *Prophet* had.

Great *Actions* were about this time on the *wheel*, some things were *past*, some things were yet to *come*, and that especially on the *Jewish Church* and *Nation*. The *Babylonians* had carried some *captive*, and they were about to *come* and *burn* the *City* and *Temple*, and to put an end to the *Kingdom* and *Government* of the *Jews*. The *People* took little notice of *God's Hand* in *past* and *present Occurrences*; wherefore to shew how all these and such-like things are brought about, namely, not by *chance*, nor merely by the *force* of *Natural Causes*, but by a *superiour Power*, the matter is represented to the *Prophet* in these *Visions* of the *Wheels*, and the *Cherubims* by the *Wheels*, reaching us, that *God* by *Angels* governs and guides all *Inferiour Causes*, and their motions, so as that in all the *wheelings* and *turnings* that are in the *World*, even in all the *four Quarters* of it, the *Angels* have an *hand*, as *Instruments* of *Divine Providence*.

The *Jews* confin'd both *God* and *Angels* to their own *Country*, being generally of the opinion, that neither *God* nor *Angels* did ever appear, save in *Judea*; but this fond *Conceit* of theirs, as 'tis confuted by the *Experience* of all *Times*, so more especially by this *Vision* which the *Prophet Ezekiel* had; for this was not in *Judea*, but by
the

Apparuit Rota.] Inferiores
Causæ quibus utitur Deus descri-
buntur. Jun.

Quatuor Animalia] i. e. San-
ctos Angelos, ut patet ex cap.
10, 20. ubi animalia ista dicun-
tur esse Cherubim. Calv. Qua-
tuor dicuntur esse, ut ostenderetur
Angelos in omnibus quatuor
mundi partibus, hoc est in uni-
verso orbe terrarum, jussa Dei
executi. Polan. In terrâ] Quo
significatum fuit, omnes mundi
partes esse expositas Angelorum
administrationi tanquam ad pe-
des ipsorum. Ib.

the River *Cbebar*, in the Land of the *Cbaldeans*, *Ezek. 1. 3.* Tho' God had special regard for the *Jewish* People, especially while they kept in his Statutes, yet was he not their Governor only, looking after none but them; *His Eyes run to and fro throughout the whole Earth*, and he has a care of all the Kingdoms and People of it.

Who knows not that *St. John's Revelations* are a Prophetical History of things to come to pass in most Countries in the World, and in several Ages preceding the end of the World? *John* speaks of good things to be done for the Church, and of dreadful Judgments to be executed on the Enemies of it, and all these great things are spoken of as things to be effected by Angels. The Angels are to sound the Trumpets one after another, and they are to pour out the Vials, whereupon follow all those great tremendous effects, in all quarters of the World.

S E C T. IV.

A Angels therefore are at work in all the World; and, that they are made use of in all sorts of actions, is no less clear, and shall be further evinc'd by Scripture Instances. I say, in all sorts of actions, both such as are *ordinary*, and such as are *extraordinary*, that is, seem so to us, because we see not how, or by what means, they are wrought.

There are some Events that are very wonderful and strange to us, we knowing nothing of the Causes of them, or means by which they are brought about, and these we are wont to ascribe to the immediate Hand of God; nor are we out of the way in so doing, because the Scripture does speak of such things as Effects of his powerful Agency, in a peculiar manner. When *David* had the choice of several Punishments offer'd him, he chose to suffer by *Pestilence*, rather than by the Sword of an Enemy; and gives this reason, because he had *rather fall into the hands of God than of men*, *2 Sam. 24. 14.* Why is it not God that destroys by the Sword, as well as by *Pestilence*? No doubt it is, Man can do nothing without him, and they are Instruments in his Hand; for which cause the *Assyrian* is call'd

call'd *the Rod of his Anger*; God smote the *Jews* by the *Assyrian*. How then are men said to fall into God's Hand when smitten by the Pestilence, rather than when destroy'd by the Sword? Why thus; In sudden and raging Pestilence no natural cause appears, as there does in the destruction that is by the Sword; therefore God himself is said to destroy by the Pestilence: For tho' there be natural causes of Pestilence, yet why it rages so grievously as sometimes it does, and that at this time rather than at another, and in this place rather than in another, of this no natural Cause can be assign'd, therefore God himself is said to destroy by it: But now, tho' in such-like wonderful Effects, of which no natural Causes can be assign'd, there may be said to be a Special Hand of God, yet the Word of God makes it evident, that the Angels have their Agency in them, and tho' God works them, yet it is by Angels. When *David* had chosen (as before) to fall into the hands of God, and God sent a Pestilence that suddenly swept away Thousands of the *Israelites*, an Angel is said to destroy by that Pestilence. God did it, but it was by an Angel: See, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15. with 16. In *ver.* 15. 'tis said, *The Lord sent a Pestilence upon Israel*; and *ver.* 16. 'tis said, *The Angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it.*

When *Sennacherib's Army*, that lay in Siege against *Jerusalem*, were so many Thousands of them cut off in one Night, none knew how, the *Jews* might well say, this was the Hand of God upon them: What natural cause could there be of so great and sudden Destruction? But tho' God did this, it was by an Angel that he did it, 2 *Kings* 19 35.

That the *Syrians* should hear such a noise of *Chariots* and *Horsemen* in the Night, as should make them all run away, was a special hand of God; but this, no doubt, was effected the same way that the Destruction of the *Assyrians* was.

When *Herod* suddenly fell down dead, and was eaten out with Lice, this, we may say, was the immediate hand of God upon him; but yet the Text says, it was *an Angel of God that smote him.* Acts 12. 23.

- Dan. 3. 27. When particular Nature is hinder'd, so as is above the power of any natural Agent; as, when the Fire was kept from burning or hurting the three young Men that were cast into it; and when the hungry Lyons were restrain'd from devouring or harming Daniel, when cast into their
- Dan. 6. 27. Den; this is to be ascrib'd to the great Power of God: yet it must be confess'd, that God did both these Wonders by the ministry of his Angels. Daniel says plainly, *My God hath sent his Angel, and hath shut the Lyons mouths*, Dan. 6. 22. And Nebuchadnezzar says of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that were cast into the fiery Furnace, *Blessed be God, who hath sent his Angel, and delivered his Servants that trusted in him.*
- Dan. 3. 28.

Thus God's strange and wonderful Works of Providence are perform'd by Angels; nor see I any reason to believe that God does ordinarily do any thing himself *immediately*, (understanding by *immediately*, without any *Second Cause*) which he hath made some Creature able and fit to do, but he works ordinarily by such means and instruments as he has fitted for his Work.

S E C T. V.

AND where there are *Natural Causes* of things known to us, yet are not those things effected merely by the force of those *Natural Causes*, but there is the efficiency of Angels frequently to be acknowledg'd. As Angels do order and govern *Natural Causes*, so do they sometimes (for the fuller demonstration of God's Power and Justice) put somewhat into the Effects that doth speak some higher efficiency, *viz.* that there is somewhat more in them than the force of the *Natural Cause*. As in great *Thunders* and *Lightnings*, in *Storms*, and *Tempests*, and vehement gusts of *Wind*. There are *Natural Causes* of *Thunder*, and *Light-*

Dicendum,

Terræ motum, procellam, Tonitru, Fulmina, quæ facta esse narrantur quum Lex in monte Sinâ data est, orta & excitata esse Angelorum operâ, qui possunt statum Elementorum & regionis Elementaris facillè immutare. *Can. Myroth.*

ning, and *Tempests*, and *Earthquakes*, but these come sometimes with such terribleness as is unusual; as at the giving of the Law on Mount *Sinai*; and then God works by An-

gels in them. *Moses*, in relating that business, makes no mention of Angels, but the Apostle *Paul* does, saying, that *The Law was ordain'd by Angels*; that is, the Angels were employ'd in managing those terrible formalities with which the Law was given, *Gal. 3. 19.*

There is an History of a certain *Philosopher* that, travelling with a Countryman in a terrible Thunder, the Countryman being in great fear, the *Philosopher* slighted the matter, and began to discourse of the Natural Causes of Thunder; but while he was thus discoursing, he was suddenly struck dead with the Thunder he made so light of. He should have known, that in such things there is oftentimes more than the force of Natural Causes; and God made him feel it, for an example to others, that they may learn to fear the God of Nature.

Frogs are very ordinarily generated of Slime and Putrefaction, by the warmth of the Sun; yet those Frogs that God plagu'd the *Egyptians* with were caused by the operation of Angels, as was also the Hail, and all the other Plagues; as appears in *Psal. 78. 49.*

The Winds also have their Natural Causes, yet that violent gust of Wind that blew down the House on *Job's* Children, was caus'd by evil Spirits, (as you know) God gave the Devil leave, and he caus'd it by some peculiar Operation of his own.

Job 1.

And have we not read and heard of Storms, and Tempests, and Thunders, in our own times, that have been so terrible, and accompanied with such prodigious effects, as are plain characters of some supernatural efficiency, so as that all conclude (not without good ground) that they are caus'd by the operation of Spirits or Angels.

Yea, I shall further add, when there are no such strange and unusual appearances of any supernatural Agency, no Characters of it imprinted on the Effects, but the Natural Causes, Means, and Instruments, by which the things are effected, are clearly known and seen, and nothing but Nature is observ'd; yet God's Word will assure us, that even in such things Angels have a great hand, and do work insensibly, where nothing but Nature doth appear to vulgar notice. As for instance; A skilful Physician looks after a

sick Person, and the sick Person recovers by following the Physician's Prescriptions: A Tradesman is diligent in his Business, and he thrives and grows rich: Here, in all this, there's nothing strange; however, as we must confess such Events are govern'd and order'd by God's Providence, so is it evident, that Angels are employ'd in such matters, as Instruments of his Providence. Does not *Solomon* tell us, that 'tis the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich? 'Tis true, he says, *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*; but he says also, *The blessing of the Lord maketh rich*; and this special Blessing of God prospering a man's diligence, is dispens'd by the ministry of Angels. For proof note, When *Abraham* sent his Servant unto his Kindred, to get a Wife for his Son *Isaac*, the Servant was a wise and faithful Servant, and, no doubt, did his best in that affair, and had very good success; he saw nothing of any Angels agency, he met with none but Men like himself: And yet we know *Abraham* had told him, that *God would send his Angel before him*; and the Servant believ'd this, and that God by an Angel had made his way so prosperous; so he does confess in his Speech to *Laban* and *Rebekah*: But what the Angel did was invisibly.

Gen. 24. 7.

V. 40.

Exod. 23. 23.

In most of the Battels that were fought by the *Israelites* in the conquest of *Canaan*, there was nothing visible but their own Arms; but God had told them that he would, and accordingly he did, send his Angel before them to expel those Heathen Nations, that were the then possessors. And why should we question God's doing the like nowadays, giving Victory by the aids and conduct of those unseen Champions?

In great Plagues, that sweep away Thousands, common Eyes see nothing but Nature; but Religion teaches men to look further, to the God of Nature, and to acknowledge that the Plague is a Judgment of God upon men; and the Scripture does moreover assure us, that God employs Angels in executing of this Judgment, for it was an Angel that smote the *Israelites* with the Pestilence, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15, 16.

Thus it appears that God employs the Angels in all parts of the World, and about all sorts of works, ordinary and extraordinary.

S E C T. VI.

SOME perhaps may incline to think, that to ascribe so much to Angels, is to derogate from God, even from the Honour and Glory of his Providence : But if it had been any diminution of God's Honour to work by means, or to reveal and communicate himself by any thing out of himself, he would not have made the World, the Heavens, and the Earth, which are to declare his Glory ; He would not have made the Sun, to enlighten and quicken this lower World, and the Creatures in it, he could have enlighten'd and enliven'd us without a Sun.

The Power and Providence of God is no less glorious in preparing and ordering means to effect things, than in causing the things without any means. If God be glorious in being able to stop the mouths of Lions, and to keep the fierce Flames from burning, is he not more glorious in making a Creature that can do such wonders ? If there be not more of his Power shew'd in this way of working by means, sure there is more of his Goodness display'd in communicating such Power to the Creatures he makes use of.

Whatever we say God does by Angels, or by any other Creature, we do not deny that he does the same himself, and that immediately : For as to God's proximity and nearness to Objects and Effects, we acknowledg he does all his Works immediately, both *immediatione virtutis, & suppositi*, as the School's speak. He is nearer to us than we are to our selves : No Creature interposes between his Essence and us, so as to cause or prove any distance (as Mr. Baxter says well). Tho' he makes use of millions of Instruments and Means, he is yet nevertheless the only *prime Cause*, and doth as much to the Effect as if he used no Instruments at all. There is no more of God in an Effect produc'd without Means, (as Mr. Baxter goes on) than in the Effect produc'd by Means ; nor is there less of God, because he makes use of Instruments.

Instruments bring nothing to the Work that God has any need of, for they have nothing but what they have
from

from and by him. The Angels that we suppose to be the Instruments of God's Providence, have their Being and Powers from God, and he sustains their Being and Power: for it is true of all Creatures whatsoever, that in him they live, and move, and have their Being.

'Tis God that appoints Angels their Ministry, and what they do is but an executing and fulfilling of his Will and Pleasure; and he makes use of them, not out of any need he has of them, but only because this way of working best pleases him: So that the whole glory of every Work belongs to him.

S E C T. VII.

BUT supposing that the Angels are employ'd in all Quarters of the Earth, and that about all sorts of Actions, we are further to enquire, Whether they are ordinarily so employ'd, as the Instruments of God's Providence? for this some doubt of. They grant, that the Scripture-instances alledg'd do prove, that Angels are sometimes made use of in dispensing of Judgments and Mercies, but they count this is not God's ordinary way of working. What things the Scripture says were done by Angels, we ought to believe they were done by them, because the Scripture does say so; but those Instances (say they) are rare and extraordinary, and prove not that God does usually work by them now.

Unaquæq; res
visibilis habet
Angelicam po-
testatem sibi
præpositam.
Aug.

Gentes sub
ditione Ange-
lorum ordina-
tæ sunt. Epiph.

To this I answer: It is the Opinion of many *Fathers* and great *Divines*, both ancient and modern, that God does make use of Angels in governing and ordering of this World, and the affairs of it, not only now and then extraordinarily, but in his ordinary way of working; and the following Arguments (I suppose) will appear sufficient to prove it probable, at least, if not certain, that it is so.

Καὶ ὅ κινέμενοι ἐν Ἄγγελοι κινεῖται τὰ ἔθνη. Sunt enim Angeli Ministri Dei in omnibus ipsius judiciis patefaciendis, & executioni mandatis, quamvis illi à nobis non videantur, sed tantummodo homines quorum operâ illi utuntur. Zanch.

God's Works in the World are usually by Instruments, and not immediate; and as good Angels are his Instruments, in conveying his Mercies both to Soul and Body, Churches and States, so evil Angels are the Instruments of inflicting his Judgments both corporal and spiritual. Hence Paul's Phrase of delivering to Satan. Baxter. Ideo enim à Deo creata est Angelorum constitutio, ut quæ ab illo disposita & ordinata sunt, curarent: ita duntaxat ut universam & communem rerum omnium Deum ipse, singularem verò in Universitatis partibus, ab ipso ordinati Angeli, providentiam & curam gererent. Athenag.

Arg. 1. The Ministry of Angels is represented to us in Scripture as a stated Office, which they are appointed to attend. So much the words of my Text import, *Are they not ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister?* Πνεύματα λειτουργούντα. The Greek Adjective signifies such as are for the discharging of some publick Office, as Magistrates are in the State, and Ministers in the Church. Magistrates and Ministers are God's visible Officers and Agents, which he employs in matters, administering things by them in a visible way. Now, besides these, God has his invisible Agents, that are no less concern'd in the government of this World, and they are his holy Angels. These by Office are his Ministers, and must be suppos'd to have ordinary work to do in the World. So the Psalmist, *He made his Angels spirits, and his Ministers a flame of fire.* Daniel calls them *Watchers*, and speaks of the Decree of the Watchers, that is, the Divine Decree which they were to execute. It seems very clear, that they are in office to superintend, and take care of certain affairs committed to them, and which they are to manage. And the Psalmist says expressly, that God giveth them a charge of his People, *He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.* They have a special charge of all God's People. Now these are in all parts of the World, and are much concern'd in the Nations and Kingdoms of the Earth; so that, if the Angels have the charge of them, to preserve and keep them in all their ways, they must needs have constantly much to do. The Concerns of God's People are many and great, and they lie in remote and distant places, wherefore there will be need of their frequent going to and fro in the Earth, as 'tis said the Angels do, *Zech. 1. 10.* And so are they represented in *Ezekiel's Vision*, as being constantly in action. 'Tis said, *The living Creatures*, that is the Angels, *ran, and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.* As soon as one Work was done, they presently undertook another, they were never idle.

Dan. 4. 17.

Psal. 91. 11.

Ezek. 1. 10.

God's People have a special Propriety in them, and they are call'd their Angels, as Magistrates of Countries or Cities, and Ministers or Pastors of Churches, are call'd their Magistrates, and their Ministers, over whom they have a charge. Now supposing the Angels to have such an office and charge, their ordinary Employment hereabout cannot well be question'd.

Arg. 2. It is in a manner universally acknowledg'd, that malignant Spirits or Devils do very ordinarily intermeddle in the Affairs of this World, and cause Confusions, and Tumults, and Wars; and there is scarce any Wickedness committed, but they have some hand in it: They exercise a certain Lordship and Rule in the World, and are therefore call'd *The Rulers of the darkness of this World*, Ephes. 6. 12. The word which we translate *Rulers*, signifies *Rulers of the World*, and so the Devils are, but 'tis of the dark part of it that they are Rulers, even over such as live in the darkness of Sin and Unbelief. The great Devil is call'd *the Prince of the power of the Air*, and *the God of this World*. The Devils then exercise a certain Power and Rule in this World, but 'tis not by *Right*, but by *Divine Permission* only; and seeing God suffers Devils to exercise such Power here, we have little reason to question God's giving a like power for Good, unto the good Angels. Moreover, we know the good Angels are call'd *Thrones*, and *Dominions*, and *Principalities*, and *Powers*, all which words note a ruling Power which they have; on which account they are also call'd *Gods*, a Title given to Magistrates; *I have said ye are Gods*. This Title is given to Angels, *Psal. 97. 7. Worship him all ye Gods*; which the Apostle reads, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, Heb. 1. 6. So that Angels are Gods, and God ruleth by them; and if so, we cannot but conclude they are much concern'd in the affairs of Men; surely no less concern'd than God permits the Devils to be.

Arg. 3. What we suppose concerning the ordinary mixturing of Angels, accords very well with all God's working in the World (so far as we can see them) which

are

not *μωονες* *ἄγγελοι*

Eph. 2. 2.

2 Cor. 4. 4.

Col. 1. 16.

are by means ordinarily. God's way of working (as we may observe) is not immediately by himself, but by means, and second Causes, and there is an Order of Causes, as we see, one above another, and by Superiour things God usually works on things inferiour, and the more excellent Natures govern those that are less pure and perfect. Groffer and thicker Bodies are managed by more fine and subtil, as the Bodies of Beasts by a Spirit of Life in them. Rational Spirits which are far more pure and perfect than irrational which are in Brutes, are over them, as Men they govern Beasts. Why so, Angels, that are pure Spirits, are over men, that are partly Spirit and partly Body. The Angels are the highest and purest of all God's Creatures, and come next to him in Nature and Power, now seeing it pleases God to work (as we see he does) ordinarily by means, and instruments, taking his Creatures into the work and honour of doing good in Subordination to himself, it is most congruous to God's way of working, which we see in the World, to suppose that he uses the Angels as the chief Instruments of his Providence.

Arg. 4. God has made nothing in all the World in vain, or to be idle; but every part is made to minister to the good of the whole, according to such Powers and Virtues as are communicated to it. Angels are a part of the Universe, and if we consider how richly accomplished Creatures they are, how great their Strength is, how almost infinite their Number, I say if we consider this, we cannot in reason think that such innumerable Hosts of excellent Spirits, so intelligent, and active Natures, should be in this World, and make no use of their Wisdom and Power, except very rarely in some extraordinary things that happen in the World. Their great Abilities, and the wonderful activity of their Nature, proves that they certainly are for much action; and being more excellent than any other Creatures in the whole World, they are of more use than any other whatsoever.

This may suffice for a more *General* Consideration of the Ministry of Angels, and to shew that God does ordinarily

dinarily make use of them, and that in all the World, in governing and ordering of the affairs of it.

Oh let the Blessed God have the Glory of all his wonderful Works!

The God of Heaven (says Bishop *Hall*) loses much Glory by our Ignorance, while we conceive too narrowly of his Works. We must not measure them by our Senses, our Faith must help us to glorify him, in such as are invisible, which are the most excellent. Oh how little do we know of the Negotiations, Policies, and Actions of the Inhabitants of the invisible World? They far excel those rare Contrivances, heroick and noble Exploits which we extol and admire, in the greatest Wits, and mightiest Personages of this World. The Devils are said to have their *methodias* Methods and Devices, so have the good Angels too. How busy are they in undermining and defeating the Projects of malignant Spirits, and in framing and preparing Mercies for God's People! What the great and gracious God hath revealed hereof should be inquired into, and the more we discover of it, the better furnished shall we be for the glorifying of him.

C H A P. VI.

§. 1. A more Particular Consideration of the Employment of Angels. That they have the charge of Kingdoms and Churches, &c. §. 2. What things they do in and about these, with some Improvement of this. §. 3. Their Ministry about particular Persons. Whether it extends to all Persons, or be limited to the Elect only. §. 4. Several Reasons proving that Angels look after and care for other besides God's Elect. §. 5. Some uses this is to be applied to. §. 6. Whether every Person hath his proper Angel assigned him? §. 7. Of the first Period of time in which Angels Minister to Persons, viz. Infancy. §. 8. How they do care for Children.

S E C T. I.

I Shall now proceed to a more Particular Consideration of the Angels Employment. And I shall endeavour to shew, that they have a Charge. 1. Of Kingdoms and Churches, or stated Societies, and great Bodies of men, and are employ'd about them. 2. Of Particular Persons whom they attend as Guides and Guardians.

First, as for *Kingdoms* and *Churches*, or stated Societies of Men, God has appointed and does appoint Angels over them, as well as over Particular Persons. They are *Presidents* and *Guardians* of Kingdoms, and Dispensers both of Mercies and Judgments, in them, and Supreme Moderators of the affairs of them, under *Jesus Christ*. This very considerable *Divines* hold as unquestionable,

Ex Angelis quosdam Gentibus quasi præfides præesse, quibusdam singulorum hominum creditam esse curam ne eis incommodent & nocent pestiferi Dæmones. *Aug.*

Hinc (viz. Dan. 10.) Hieronymus & alii omnes collegerunt singulis Provinciis certum aliquem præfectum esse Angelum. *Zanch.*

Clemens Alexandrinus affirmat per singulas Gentes, Civitatēq; distributas esse Angelorum Præfecturas.

and count sufficiently proved out of the 10th Chapter of *Daniel*, where is mention of the *Prince of the Kingdom of Persia*, ver. 13. and the *Prince of Græcia*, ver. 20. and the *Prince of the Jews*, ver. 21. And by those *Princes*, all Interpreters in a manner, understand the Angels that were set over these Kingdoms. As for the *Prince of the Kingdom of Persia*, ver. 13. it cannot be meant of the King of *Persia*, for the

Prince of the Kingdom of Persia, is (in that Text) distinguished from the Kings of *Persia*. 'Tis said, *the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me* (or rather stood before me) *and then I remained there with the Kings of Persia.*

This Angel that spake to *Daniel*, and the Angel that was over *Persia* were together for a certain time, they did not oppose one another, (as our Translation seems to say) We may by no means allow that there is any Strife and Contention between good Angels. Their Ministry is always concordant, and uniform, they never take contrary ways, *Their Wings are joined one to another, as they move*, Ezek. 1. 9. By which is represented the Unity, and Agreement in their motion. Wherefore instead of (withstood me One and Twenty days) we should read (stood before me) They were both of them with the King of *Persia* for a while, and that to excite, encourage, and strengthen him to promote the Liberty of the *Jews*. For so this Angel says he was with *Darius*, Dan. 11. 1. *In the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood to confirm and strengthen him.*

The *Prince of the Kingdom of Persia* was the Angel that was over *Persia*, But the *Prince of Persia*, with whom the Angel is said to fight, ver. 20. was the King of *Persia*. And the ruine of that Kingdom by the *Græcians*, is there revealed to *Daniel*, which should be when the Angels should leave that Country. *When I am gone forth, Lo, the Prince of Græcia shall come.* Whether by the *Prince of Græcia* be meant *Alexander*, or the Angel of that Country conducting

conducting and bringing in *Alexander's Army*, upon the *Persians*, is not so certain; but this way the *Persians* should be broken, as the Angels shews *Daniel*. And very clear 'tis from the whole, that Angels are employ'd in preserv- ing and in ruining *Empires*.

And as it is with *Empires* and *Kingdoms*, so is it with *Churches*. The inner part of the *Tabernacle* and *Temple*, was by God's appointment, to be adorned with *Cberubims*, as we read, *Exod. 25. 16. &c. 1 King. 6. 23.* which was to note the constant attendance of Angels in the *Churches* of God. And the Apostle *Paul* charges *Women* to be modestly attired in their *Church-Assemblies*, because of the *Angels*, *1 Cor. 11. 10.* which supposes that the Angels are ordinarily present there. A little before the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*, there was heard a Voice, (as is credibly reported) saying, *μεταβαίνουσιν ἐν- τεῦθεν*, Let us go hence: And what was this but the Voice of their *Guardian Angels*? *Origen* and others, think those words of the Prophet, *Jer. 51. 9.* were spoken by the *Presidential Angels*. *We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed, forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country.* Whether we are to understand the words so, or no, sure they look very well like the Voice that was heard before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, which was of the Angels.

S E C T. II.

IT will here be enquired, what things Angels do, in and about *Kingdoms*, and *Churches*, that they have the charge of?

To which I answer: The Scriptures insist not much on any particular account hereof, yet the Particulars following are very certain.

1. They do *Counsel* and *Encourage Princes* to great Enterprizes, and that for the *Churches* good. The Angel that appeared to *Daniel* went to *Darius* (as was noted before) and did stay with him to confirm, and strengthen him, to promote the building of the *Temple*, and the *Jews* Liberty. Angels are (tho' unseen) in the Councils of

Dan. 11. 1.

of earthly Princes, and carry things there as pleases the Great and Holy God, that employs them.

2. *They conduct and make prosperous their Armies*; as an Angel did the Army of the Grecians under Alexander, Dan. 10.

3. *They advance and enlarge the Power and Greatness of Empires.* If Devils can, and do raise States and Kingdoms, good Angels no doubt can do the like. Now it is said that *the Dragon*, that is, the Devil, gave his Seat, and Power, and great Authority, to the Beast, this is, to the Pope. The Devil wrought to the raising of him to his Greatness. And the Devil rules, and acts that State, the State of the Papacy, to this day. See 2 *Theff.* 2. 9, 10.

Rev. 13. 2.

4. *They break the force and strength of enemies*, as an Angel did the Army of the Assyrians, so raising the Siege of Jerusalem, and restoring Liberty and Peace, to Judea.

2 King. 19. 35.

5. *They sometimes cause a revolting of the people from their Rulers*, as they did the Revolt of the Sheckemites from Abimelech, Judg. 9. 23.

6. *They bring down and debase the mighty ones of the Earth, that exalt themselves against God and his Church*; as they did Nebuchadnezzar. He (we know) was put from his Kingdom, and turn'd a grazing among the Beasts of the Field, for seven years together, and this is said to be *The Decree of the Watchers*, that is, it was the Decree of God which the Watchers, or Angels had in charge, to put in Execution. 'Tis said, *This matter is by the Decree of the Watchers.* And a Watcher, or an Holy one, said, *Hew down the Tree.*

Dan. 4. 13.
14, 17.

Angels are God's Agents in pulling down, and setting up, in moulding, and forming Kingdoms, and States, and Churches, and in ordering and effecting the great changes that are in them.

What support and comfort may this yield the true Church and People of God, against the growing Power and Greatness of *Anti-Christ*, and such Kingdoms as are in League with *Anti-Christ*, and against the Strength and Rage of the *Nimrods* of the Earth, wicked and cruel Tyrants? God's Church and People are a little weak Company, and have no visible force or strength, able to cope with

with such swelling Greatness as is against them. Such is now the Power of *France*, carrying all before it. But let it be so; the holy Angels preside in all the Kingdoms of this World, and are ready to execute the Decrees of Heaven. Be it the loftiest *Cedar* in the whole Earth, if the *Watchers*, the Holy ones, say, *Hew it down*, it shall be instantly done. There are Myriads and great Hosts of these invisible Agents, one of which is able to master the proudest Tyrant on Earth. They can *overturn, over-* Ezek. 21. 27.
turn, overturn.

Let Angels once begin to fight against a Kingdom, as the Angel did against *Persia*, Dan. 10. it will soon be weakened, and broken, as that Kingdom was. God can quickly bring down the Pride of Men, and he has Instruments at hand to effect his pleasure.

'Tis no small Succour to Faith in bad times, to see means in being, and always at hand to help; and this we may see by Faith. We may see Hosts of Angels standing always ready to execute the Commands of Heaven.

God will preserve his Church, and establish it, He Isaiah 2. 2.
will shake the Nations in pieces that do oppose the weal ver. 19.
of it. He has given his mighty Angels a special charge of his Church and People, for their defence, and they are in all the Assemblies of his People (as was noted before) looking after their charge. Oh what bold wretches are they, that presume to offer Violence to those Assemblies, where Angels are Guardians! Signal Judgments have soon overtaken some such: And tho' Angels may suffer such mens Presumption to go unpunished a while, yet wo be unto them if they repent not. So much of the Employment of Angels about Kingdoms and Churches.

S E C T. III.

THAT which comes next to be handled, is their Ministry about *Particular Persons*. And here the first Question to be examined shall be, *Who they be about whom the Angels are employed?* To whom their Ministry does extend? Whether unto all, or only unto some?

Psal. 34. 7.

The Reason why this Inquiry is necessary, is because the Text seems to limit the Ministry of Angels to *the Heirs of Salvation*, or elect Persons. And such as treat of the Ministry of Angels, do seem to limit it to God's Elect. Tho' they must grant that Angels do some good Offices for others besides God's Elect (the Scripture affording several Instances thereof) yet they seem to be of the mind that God appoints them over none, and gives them a charge of none, but God's Elect, and such as are truly gracious Persons; according to that of the Psalmist, *The Angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him.* These words seem to make a narrower Inclosure of this Benefit, than my Text does: For there are many Elect Persons that for the present are void of the Fear of God, namely, while they are in an unconverted Condition. And if the intent of the Psalmist be to define the extent of the Angels charge, then all the Elect do not come within it, at least, not till they be converted. But if the matter be well considered, it will appear that 'tis neither the Psalmist's Intention, nor our Apostles in the Text, to determine of the extent of the Angels Charge and Ministry: When the Apostle says, *they are ministering Spirits sent forth to minister for them that are Heirs of Salvation*, his meaning is to shew, not how far their Ministry does extend, but what is the Principal End of it. 'Tis for the Heirs of Salvation, that is, for their sakes chiefly that they are sent forth to minister. I say, 'tis for their sakes, that is, had it not been for them, had not God had a People that he purposed by *Jesus Christ* to bring to Heaven, he would never have sent forth those blessed Spirits to minister in the World. This is most certain, as 'tis also certain, that he would not have sent his Son *Jesus Christ* into the World, had it not been for them; nor would he have sent the *Gospel*, nor his *Apostles* and *Ministers* to preach it; nay (I may say) he would not have suffered the sinful World of Men to have continued thus long; The Elect are as it were the Pillars and Foundations of this World, bearing all up: For (says the Apostle) *All things are for your sakes*, 2 Cor. 4. 15. 'Tis for the Elects sake that this World is continued, and one

Generation succeeds another, namely, because in all Generations God has some Elect ones that he means to gather to himself; This is most true, yet no man will say, That *Christ* was sent, and the Gospel and Ministers are sent unto none but the Elect. If *Christ* were not sent to others besides the *Elect*, why are they blamed for refusing him? And why does *Christ* complain, *Ye will not come to me that ye may have life? Christ* says to the *Reprobate Pharisees*, and others, *I am come that ye might have life.* They did not all receive *Christ* that he was sent to. 'Tis said, *He came to his own, and his own received him not:* Therefore all that he was sent to and came to, were not elect Persons. Again, if the Gospel were sent to none but the Elect, how are some condemned for rejecting it? None of God's Elect do finally reject the Gospel. *Christ's* Ministers are sent forth into all the World to labour with all sorts of men. 'Tis true, 'tis chiefly for the Elects sake that they are sent forth, but 'tis not only to them, and none else. *Paul* preach'd the Gospel to all in those Cities and Countries, where he came, He laboured with all sorts of Persons, and expos'd himself to great Sufferings in order to their Salvation; yet, considering that this would become effectual only to the Elect, he says, *I endure all things for the Elects sake, that is, chiefly for their sakes, in whom his Ministry would take effect, tho' he laboured no less painfully with others also. The same may be said of the Angels. For the clearing of this matter, take these Propositions following.*

1. *The Angels Ministry as to the principal end of it, takes effect only in God's Elect:* The Salvation of men is the principal thing design'd in the Mission of Angels, and this none attain unto but the Elect. 'Tis this also that is the chief thing intended in sending Apostles, and other Ministers, as is shewed in *Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13.* *He gave some Apostles, some Propbets, &c. for the perfecting of the Saints for the edifying of the Body of Christ. Till we all come in 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 fullness of Christ.* The bringing of all the Elect into one com-

Q

pleat

Joh. 5. 40.

Joh. 10. 10.

Joh. 1.

2 Tim. 2. 10.

Aq. 1a. q. 113.
a 4. ad 3um.

Eph. 2. 21.

pleat Body, the building of them up an holy Temple to the Lord, this is the design of the Ministry : But now, in pursuance of this end, God sends his Ministers into all the World, to labour with all sorts of men, to fit them for this building : Some will not frame to it, but are obstinate, other (*viz.* such as are Elect) are wrought upon and prevailed with. Here the Gospel takes effect only in the Elect as to the principal end designed. And so does the Angels Ministry too which has the same end ; none but God's Elect do attain the principal Benefit intended by it.

2. *The Blessed Angels that are such pure and holy Spirits, cannot have such kindness for wicked men, as they have for those that are godly.* The wicked ways of men as they do grieve God's Spirit, and the Spirits of good men, so they are offensive and distastful (no doubt) to the holy Angels too, who are Observers of them. Wherefore, tho' they will not refuse to befriend and help wicked men, according to their general charge or any particular Instructions they have from God concerning them ; yet must they needs have more regard for men, when by Conversion and Sanctification they are separated from the World that lieth in Wickedness. 'Tis said, *that there is joy in Heaven among the Angels, when a Sinner is converted.* From thenceforth the Angels look on Persons as more their own, because the Lords ; greater Friendship is contracted, Angels love more to be with them and befriend them, and so (no doubt) do more for them than for others.

3. *Angels in their Ministering, do alway wait on God's commands, and follow such instructions as they have from him.* 'Tis said of the *Living Creatures* (i. e. the Angels) *They went whither the Spirit led them.* That is whithersoever the *Divine Spirit* directed them, they still went. Now God bearing special Good-will to his Elect, he gives his Angels a special charge of them, and sends them often times (by a special Mission) to them, which may be a Notification to the Angels, that these are the Persons he intends special Favour for. For, that Angels do (by Revelation) know who the Elect are, from the first hour

of their Conception, is more than can be proved, or we have sufficient reason to believe: But God's sending them to such by Special Mission, may be a Notification of their Election. And I question not but Angels are sent to God's Elect, so as they use not to be sent to others.

4. *Such as do truly fear God, and they only, have a promise of the guardianship of Angels, belonging to them.* Such only have an actual Interest in the Promises, and therefore are called *the Heirs of the Promises*. No wicked man can lay claim to them, tho' God may bestow upon them some of those good things that are promised: The Benefits they partake of, they have by *common Providence*, and not by *promise*. And so they have many great Benefits by the Ministry of Angels, but 'tis not by Promise, but by common Providence: Whereas such as are godly, and do truly fear the Lord, they may lay claim to those Benefits, and plead the Promises, and hope for, and expect the Performance of them, to themselves, they being the Persons that are described in those Promises. See, *Psal. 34. 7. Psal. 91. 11, 12.*

5. If it be true, what some affirm, that particular Persons have each one his *Tutelar Angel* assigned him of God, to attend him from the Womb to the Grave: If this (I say) be a Truth (of which we shall enquire anon) I should think, that *this is the Priviledge of God's Elect only*: For we have nothing in the Scriptures (that I know of) to induce us to believe that wicked Men, and Reprobates have any such Assignments.

6. *God's faithful Servants, and Elect ones are always under the Tuition, and Care of Angels.* The Angels do never totally abandon and forsake them: But others that have had great Benefit by Angels, may sin away this Priviledge and be deserted of them. As we read the Angel left *Per-* *Dan. 10. 20.*
sia, whereupon that Country was over-run, and vanquished by the *Grecians*.

7. *Whatever God orders Angels to do for other persons, is both some respect near or remote unto the good of God's Elect people.* As what the Angel did with the King of *Persia*, *Dan. 11. 1.*
was in reference to the *Jewish People*. For which cause

'tis said in my Text that they are sent forth to minister for them that shall be Heirs of Salvation. 'Tis some way or other for them, all that they do in the World.

In all these respects the Ministry of Angels may be truly said to be limited and restrained unto the *Elect*, and faithful Servants of God.

But however, it cannot be denied but Angels have the charge of others also, who are not Heirs of Salvation; and are appointed of God ordinarily to look after them, and provide for them. This the following *Propositions* will clear.

1. Angels have the Oversight of the *Kingdoms* of this World, as well as of *Churches* (as hath been shewed) even of *Heathen Kingdoms*, but these are none of God's chosen People.

2. Angels have the charge of *whole Churches* (as has also been shewed) but in these there are many that are not *Elect* Persons. Many *Hypocrites* and *Reprobates* are within the Pale of the Visible Church: There were many such in the *Jewish Church*, which God notwithstanding owned, for their sakes who were upright; and the Angels had the Charge and Conduct of the whole Body of them, and did minister many things to them indifferently. The *Manna* that they were fed with in the Wilderness was provided for them by the Ministry of *Angels* (and therefore called *Angels Food*) but both good and bad did indifferently partake of that Benefit. And when the Angel stirr'd the Waters, *Job. 5. 4*. Whoever stept in first, were he good or bad, he was healed.

3. As God has not limited Mercy in general to his chosen People, but dispenses many Blessings to others; so neither has he confined the Privilege of Angelical Ministration to them. God's Goodness spreads it self over all his Works, *He causes his Sun to shine not only on the just, but also on the unjust, Mat. 5. 45*. Wicked men have many great Preservations and Deliverances vouchsafed them, and great Blessings bestow'd upon them, and in conveying of these

these to them, God makes use of Angels as Instruments of his Providence, as well as in conveying of the like Blessings to his own People.

4. *Balaam* was a wicked man, and yet an Angel was employ'd to keep him back from sinning, even from going to curse the *Israelites*; and (as one well says) had wicked men their Eyes open'd, as *Balaam* had, they would (at every turn) see an Angel stand in their way ready to resist what they go about, as he did: For this is one of the noble Employments of those glorious Spirits, to give a strong tho' invisible opposition to lewd Enterprizes. Many a treacherous act have they hinder'd without the knowledg of the Traytor.

Mr. Young.

It does not appear that *Ishmael* was an elect Person, for whom an Angel wonderfully provided in his extrem necessity.

5. Some men that are not elected unto Eternal Life, yet are ordain'd of God to do great Service to the Church and People of God: So was *Cyrus*, and was preserv'd unto the time appointed for the return of the *Jews* out of Captivity, which he was to be the means of. When God has a special Work for any to do, he appoints his Angels to be their Keepers, unto the time of effecting it, and to direct, encourage, and prosper them in it. So an Angel encourag'd *Darius*, as has been noted: And very likely there was the hand of an Angel in what hapned to *Saul*, when he was to be chosen King of *Israel*, 1 *Sam.* 10.

S E C T. V.

THUS Angels do minister to all, good and bad, tho' not to all indifferently, and in the same manner and degree. Well then,

1. If the blessed and holy Angels be ordinarily employ'd about mortal Men here on Earth, it follows, that they are present with them, they know and see them, and what they do. They are Companions and Observers of Men: for where Angels are at work, there they must be suppos'd to be present. How Angels are in this and that place, and how they move from one place to another, is much disputed.

ted by the *Schoolmen*; but we must be better acquainted with the Angelical Nature, before we can determine such Questions (as has been noted before.) But this is out of question, that they are present there, where they are employ'd: And so they having the charge of us, and being employ'd about us, they are conversant with us, in our company and presence, seeing us, and hearing us. Oh, how careful should we be of our Carriage at all times, that no undecent thing be acted by us, when such holy Creatures as the Angels are ever observing us. Most men that are much addicted to Lewdness, are notwithstanding restrained by the presence and company of Persons reverenc'd for Holiness; Very wicked men, in the presence of such, will not speak or do as they will in other company, or when they are by themselves; they will not swear, and curse, and rant, as they are wont to do; the presence of holy men is some restraint on the worst men ordinarily. Why now, know it for a certainty, when no mortal man sees, God sees, yea, and there be multitudes of holy Angels that do ordinarily look on. Tremble all ye prophane Wretches; these blessed Spirits hear your Oaths, and Curfes, and Blasphemies, they see all your Lewdness and Vanity, they are Witnesses of your Fraud, and Intemperance, and Uncleanness. God, who will be your Judge, sees you; and Angels also, who will serve to be Witnesses against you, take cognizance of you. What awfulness would this beget in Men if it were throughly believ'd? How would Men be asham'd and afraid to be wicked, if this were well consider'd? *Seneca* counsels his Friend *Lucilius* to set some grave and good man always before him, and never to do what he would not do under such a one's Eye, *Imagine*, says he, &c. 'Tis good Advice; but we need not go to imagining, for most certain it is, God and his holy Angels stand by us, and look on, whatever we are a doing; God make us duly sensible of it.

The Spirit of God presses this Argument, therefore may I insist the more upon it. *I charge thee* (says the Apostle) **1 Tim. 5. 21.** *before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that thou observe these things.* And the same Apostle presses Women to be decently attir'd, and veil'd in their Assemblies,

blies, because of the Angels, that is, because they are present. Oh Friends, the Angels are very holy Creatures, and your irregular and undecent Carriage is (no doubt) an offence to them, more than it can be to the holiest man on Earth. If they joy in the Conversion of a Sinner, (as 'tis said they do) sure they are troubled (as blessed Angels are capable of being troubled) at whatever Miscarriages they observe: And what sad Reports, think you, must Angels carry to Heaven concerning you, if you walk disorderly in their presence? They come and go, from and to Heaven frequently, and give an account of what passes here, as *Zech. 1. 11.* and they must make true Reports of you. The Devil is call'd *the Accuser of the Brethren*, he is a false Accuser, he charges the Saints unjustly and untruly: You know what he said of *Job*, Chap. 1. 10, 11. The good Angels will not falsely accuse any, and so neither will they by any means make a Lye to excuse any; they must report the very Truth, and the whole Truth, when call'd to make report of any Person: Such a time, and such a time, did he drink Healths, and swear and curse; and at such a time did he defile himself with Women; and at such a time defraud and oppress his Neighbour, &c. If God did not himself see and know your Actions, (as indeed he does) there are Messengers enough to carry him notice of them: Angels report mens Actions to God, and also what they have done to hinder their sinning, but they would notwithstanding on in it. The God of Heaven set this home on every one's Heart.

2. If the holy Angels do minister in this World for the good and benefit of all sorts of men good and bad, but with some difference (as hath been shew'd). If they have Kindness for all, but more for some than for others, why then let us take a Pattern from them, and imitate their Love and Beneficence, as to the distributing and right placing of it.

Ever since Sin first enter'd into the World, there have been two sorts of Men living together in it, some good, some bad, some godly, some ungodly. In this great Field there grow *Tares* as well as *Wheat*, and 'tis the Will of the great Housholder, that they should be permitted to grow so-

V. 49.

gether till the Harvest: Then at the end of the World he will take care to have good and bad men sever'd one from the other, but not till then: But tho' he will have them live together here, yet does he make a difference between these, and Angels do make a difference, and so should we. There are none so bad, but God has some Love for them, as they are his Creatures: He loves them, and-so do Angels too; but both God and Angels have most love for such as are holy, pious, willing, and obedient. The holy Angels are in a peculiar manner the Guardians and Keepers of such, and most beneficent to them. Oh, let us be followers of Angels in this, *Let us do good to all, but especially to them that are of the household of Faith.*

Gal. 5. 10.

1. *Let us do good unto all:* Let our Charity be like unto the Sun, that shines upon all, both the just and unjust. Our Saviour *Christ* teaches us to love our very Enemies..

But you'l say, Wicked men are God's Enemies as well as ours, and how can we love them? I answer, There are none so bad, but they have some good in them, and as Rational Creatures, they are in a capacity of becoming better. Angels minister to some, not because they are good, but that they may be so: an *Angel* went to *Balaam* to keep him from sinning, tho' he were a Sorcerer. We should not easily think any so bad, that we should not have any thing to do with them to make them better; a serious word seasonably spoken may be a means of reclaiming a very wicked Person; and an act of *Benevolence* and *Kindness* may strangely operate on one we think past our cure. The *Apostle* says, *If thine Enemy hunger, feed him:* and then adds, *Overcome evil with good;* which implies there is some probability of Victory this way: But whatever the Success be, thy well-aim'd Charity and Benevolence is most Christian, and shall not go unrewarded. Do good to all, but,

Rom. 12, 20,
21.

2. *More especially to them that are of the Household of Faith;* Reserve a special Kindness for good men; they should have more of Heart and Hand than others have: In your acts of Charity such are ever to be prefer'd, *ceteris paribus*, supposing an equality in other respects, and with such should you have most free and inward Conversation.

Selo-

Solomon says, *He that walketh with the wise shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*

Prov. 13 26

The Church, in its Administrations, and in dispensing its Rights and Privileges, is directed to put a difference. The ancient *Christian Church* had an Officer in every Convention or Religious meeting, to cry with a loud Voice, *Sanctis Sanctis*, Holy things are for holy men: Their Administrations were not wont to be promiscuous in the purest times of Christianity; but alas, we have some among us that are perfect *Levellers* in Religion, and would lay all in common, perswading us to believe all are to be reputed good Christians that pretend to that holy Name: Whenas the Apostle says to the *Philippians*, *Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, they are enemies to the Cross of Christ.* And again, *We command you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw your selves from every Brother that walketh disorderly.* And again, *If any one obey not our word, &c. note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.* And our Saviour *Christ* says, *Cast not your Pearls before Swine.* We should be ready to extend Love and Respect in a meet and fitting way to all, yet sacred things must not be polluted with unwashen Hands; and as to special love, as to intimacy and religious conversation, all must not be alike to us, but we should give good men the preheminance: Angels minister to all, but not to all alike.

Phil. 3 18.

2 Thef. 3 6

V. 14.

S E C T. VI.

THAT which I shall in the next place consider and examine, is, *Whether every Man and Woman (at least every elect person) have some one particular Angel specially assign'd him of God to be alway his Guardian, even from the Womb to the Grave?* The Schoolmen generally hold the Affirmative, and some Protestant Divines incline the same way. Zanchy does defend it as his Opinion; and 'tis certain the Opinion is very ancient: The Doctrine of *Plato* asserts it, and more, *viz.* That every one has not only a

*ἄγγελος ἀσκή-
σαν ἀνδρεί*

συμπαιταίαι εὐθὺς γενόμενα μυστηρίου τῆ βία ἀγῶνης. Men. in Clem. Alex. 5. Strom.

good Demon or Angel, but also an evil one. And this *Heathenish* Conceit of a *bonus* and *malus Genius* has made the Opinion in question less liked by some, namely, for its looking so well like that of a *bonus* and *malus Genius*.

The *Christian* Writers, both ancient and modern; that are of the mind, that every one hath his proper Angel, do ground their Opinion on some few places of Scripture that seem (at least) to countenance it, but (as other *Divines* think) do not sufficiently prove it. *First*, *Mat.* 18. 10. where our Saviour *Christ* says of little Children, that *their Angels behold the face of his Father*. He does not say *the* Angels, but *their* Angels; which seems to import, that they had their *proper* Angels, and call'd *theirs*, because alway attending them.

The other place is *Acts* 12. 15. where we read, that when *Peter* came and knock'd at the Door, and the Maid that went forth, hearing *Peter's* Voice, return'd and said it was *Peter*; the Company within knowing *Peter* to be in Prison, said, *it was his Angel*: therefore (it seems that in their Opinion at least) *Peter* had some *particular* Angel that was his *proper* Angel. These Texts (I confess) seem to favour the Opinion in question, but they do not prove it certainly true, for,

First, Whereas 'tis said *Mat.* 18. 10. *Their* Angels, we cannot hence infer with certainty, that those little ones *Christ* speaks of, had each of them his proper Angel; all that can be prov'd thence is, that they had an Interest in the Angels in common, and so God's People have. My Text says, *They are sent forth to minister for the Heirs of Salvation*; the Heirs of Salvation then have an interest in the Angels, and the Angels may be said to be their Angels: all the Angels are theirs, they being alway attended by the Angels, tho' not alway by the self-same Angels, but one while by some, and other while by others. We may say (says *Dr. Manton*) these *Prisoners* have *their* Keepers, these *Souldiers* have *their* Captains, these *Scholars* have *their* Masters, but it doth not follow, that every one of them therefore hath a *particular* Keeper, Captain, Master proper to himself. The Saints and Servants of God have not one Angel only

only each of them, but oftentimes many *Angels* attending on them, and sometimes one *Angel* takes the care of several Persons. One *Angel* was sent to deliver several of the Apostles out of Prison, *Act. 5. 18, 19.* not as many *Angels* as Persons, but one *Angel* only : and several *Angels*, even an Host of them, attended on *Jacob* as his Guard, *Gen. 32. 1, 2.* So there did on the Prophet *Elisha* ; 'tis said, *He prayed, and the Lord opened the Eyes of the young man his servant, and he saw, and behold the Mountain was full of Horses and Chariots of fire round about Elisha ;* that is, *Angels* appearing in that form : here were many employ'd about one single Person. So when *Lazarus* died, his Soul was conducted to Heaven by many *Angels*. 2 Kin. 6. 17.

As for the other place, *Act. 12. 15.* where 'tis said of *Peter*, *It is his Angel*, several Answers are given to it.

1. Some think 'tis to be understood *appellatively*, and should be render'd, It is his *Messenger* ; so the word *Angel* signifies, as has been noted : according to this interpretation they thought it was some *Messenger* sent by *Peter*, from the Prison ; but this cannot be the meaning. The Maid had said, she heard *Peter's* Voice, hereupon the Company conclude it is his *Angel* ; but that reason could not move them to think it was a *Messenger* sent from him.

2. Others answer, The Company spake *ex communi conceptione*, according to a common Opinion that was received among them ; such an Opinion, that every one has his proper *Angel*, might be very generally believ'd, and yet it might not be true. The Scripture doth not approve every Saying that it doth relate.

3. The Company conclude it was his *Angel*, because the Maid had said, she heard *Peter's* Voice. If they meant, that it was his proper *Angel-guardian*, their Opinion must be, not only that every one hath his proper *Angel*, but that such *Angels* use to speak still with the same Tone or Voice that the Persons do which they do attend ; But who will undertake to justify such a Conceit ? It is more likely they meant only that it was his *Angel*, that is, an *Angel* assuming *Peter's* shape.

4. Supposing their meaning to be, It is his *Angel-guardian*, that is, the Angel that was employ'd to keep him, it will not follow that he had alway one and the same Angel for his Keeper: This might be the Angel that now was employ'd for *Peter*, but at another time he might have another. When we say, It is the King's Physician, or it is the King's Servant, this does not necessarily denote any one certain Person, because the King hath many Physicians and many Servants; and so have the faithful Servants of God many Angels looking after them. 'Tis said, *Psal. 91. 11. He shall give (not his Angel, but) his Angels charge over thee.* When a Sinner repenteth and turneth to God, 'tis said indefinitely, *the Angels rejoyce*; 'tis not said, that his Guardian-Angel rejoyceth. Great multitudes of evil Spirits have gone into one man, and possess'd him, and why not many good Angels be about one man? You had some Instances hereof but now. I grant, one Angel is a sufficient guard for one man, yea, for many men: but God will shew his abundant Kindness to his People by employing many for single Persons. And to me it seems more probable, that God's People have sometimes more Angels, sometimes fewer; and when but one, sometimes this, sometimes another, to take care of them, than that they are each of them committed to the care and conduct of their proper Angels. Yet if any will needs hold, that usually 'tis the same Angel that attends a man from first to last, I shall not contend: We cannot certainly tell how the Divine Will ordereth this, nor is it very material.

S E C T. VII.

HAVING (I hope) sufficiently cleared these *preparatory Questions*, I shall proceed to shew how the Angels are employ'd about particular Persons, and that from first to last. And here I shall take notice of several distinct *Periods* of time in which they diversly minister to Persons. As 1. In the beginning of their time, or *Infancy*. 2. When they are grown up during their *life* time. 3. At their *Death*. And 4. *After Death*.

As for the first *Period* of time, it will be inquired, when it doth begin? And what *Employment* Angels have about Persons in their *Infancy*, and *Morning* of their time?

Divines speak differently about the time when Angels first take charge of Persons, and begin to look after them.

First, Some say, that 'tis not till mens *Conversion*, that the Angels are concerned with them: For till then (say they) Elect Persons are not differenced from others, nor are they (till then) actually made Members of *Christ's* Body, nor brought in under his special Care, who is Lord of Angels, and under whose Conduct Angels do minister.

Before their *Conversion* all men are under the Power of *Satan*, who is called *The God of this World*, and *effectually* worketh in the Children of disobedience, *Ephes. 1. 2.* In coming in unto *Christ* they are delivered from *Satan's* Rule, and Power, and come under *Christ's* special teaching and conduct, and then begins Angels *Ministration* about them, as these men think.

But I am not so well satisfied with this Opinion, as to acquiesce in it, because I conceive it is grounded on a Mistake. These men suppose that the Angels are sent to minister only to God's Elect, which I have shewed is a Mistake: For tho' they are sent forth chiefly for their Sakes, and do minister in a peculiar manner unto them, yet are they sent to others also, and are Benefactors to them, and Keepers of them, even as our *Lord Jesus Christ* is said to be the *Saviour of all men, but especially of them that do believe*; So are Angels the Guardians of all, but especially of the Saints.

And as for Elect Persons, it is not to be thought that Angels have no charge of them until they be actually converted: Doubtless God carefully keeps such as are chosen Vessels, not only after *Conversion*, but unto it, even unto the time when he purposes to manifest his Grace to them.

'Tis true, the Angels are said to have Joy among them, when any do convert and turn to God, and therefore 'tis very likely, that upon the *Conversion* of Men, the
Angels

Angels become more propense to Acts of Love and Beneficence to them than before, but they do not then first begin to minister to them. Angels follow such Instructions as they have from God, in the Execution of their Office, and God does signify to them that it is his mind they should take the charge of such Persons, even in their Infancy, and before they are grown up to a Capacity of actual repenting, and believing: For little Children have their Angels, as well as adult Persons, as is evident, *Mat. 18. 10.*

2. Others are of the mind that the Angels Ministry does extend to *Infants*, and that it begins at their *Baptism*. And for this reason, because then they are first joined to *Christ*, and made Members of his mystical Body. And I grant so they are *Sacramentally*; But Infants if they be rightfully baptized, were by Covenant in *Christ* before their *Baptism*, and that gives them right to their *Baptism*. Wherefore I like not this Opinion neither. And it seems altogether improbable to me, that the Angels should wait the Parents leisure for the taking of their charge, as they must if it be limited to the time of *Baptism*: For that depends on the Will and Pleasure of the Parents. Wherefore

3. Others say, Angels take the Care and Charge of Persons, even from the Womb, as soon as they are born, then they begin to look after them.

^c ἄγγελοι δαίμων ἀνδρῶν οὐρανῶν ἐκείνων, &c. *Men. in Clem. Alex. 5. Strom. Vld. Ag. 1^a. q. 113.*
 a. 5. c. 4. ad 3^m.

This (I make no question) is true, I mean, that they do begin so soon, and that is as soon as they come to have a distinct Being by themselves; for be-

fore, while they are in the Womb, they are a part of the Mother.

4. However, I shall add with others, Angels first take the Charge of Infants while they are in the Womb, and that from the time of their first quickening there: For then may they be said to have a distinct Being, and [in a sort] to be distinct Persons, having both Soul and Body, and if they die in the Womb, they shall rise again as well as those that live to be born.

Some go yet further, (and I cannot gainsay them) and say, That as soon as a Child is conceived in the Womb, Angels have the Charge of him. So says Bishop Hall, speaking of Angels, " They have ever graciously attended me without Intermiſſion, from the first Hour of my Conception, to this present moment.

S E C T. VIII.

GOD's Providence is exerciſed about Children in the Womb, and that before quickning as well as after, and Angels are the Servants and Instruments of God's Providence. But that Angels do miniſter to Babes while in the Womb, and at their Birth, and afterward while they are young and tender, we want not Scripture Testimony to prove.

1. While they are in the *Womb*. Then and there they are expoſed to many dangers, thro' their Mothers negligence, thro' their Intemperance, and by ſeveral other accidents. Divers ways may they receive much hurt even in the Womb, and this God prevents often by the Agency of Angels. We read how an Angel was ſent to *Manoah*, to direct what courſe the Mother ſhould take while ſhe went with Child with *Sampſon*, Judg. 13. 13, 14. I grant, Angels are not wont now to appear viſibly to give Direction to Women with Child, as they did there to *Manoah*, and his Wife; yet I doubt not but they are Instruments of God's Providence very ordinarily, in keeping Mothers from things hurtful to the Babes they go with, tho' this be not obſerved. And *David* ſets a ſpecial Remark on ſuch a Providence of God, *Pſal. 71. 6.* by which he was covered in his mothers womb, that is, was graciously kept from what might annoy him while he lay there.

2. At the *Birth* of Children. How wonderfully are they kept in their coming into the World? *David* glorifies God on this Behalf, acknowledging that it was God that took him out of the Womb. *Thou art he that took me out of the Womb, Pſal. 22. 9. Thou art he that took me out of my Mothers bowels, my praiſe ſhall be continually of thee,*

thee, Psal. 71. 6. God did it, 'twas not the *Midwife* alone that did it, there was somewhat that God did in it, and that was by the hands of his invisible Agents: The skillfullest and most careful *Midwives* would often fail, if God ordered not Angels to attend at the Birth of

Genii dicuntur a gignendo quod ut quidam alunt, agunt & currant ut gignantur. Zanch.

And because they take care of Children when born ut Genitores.

Infants. And from the care that Angels have of Children at their Birth, they are by the *Latines* called *Genii*, and we read in them of them of a good and evil *Genius*. 'Tis by Angels help that Children are brought safe into the

World, and as *David* praised God for this, so should all Mothers remember to do it too.

3. After Children are born, while they are young and tender, great is the Angels Care of them. Our Saviour *Christ* speaks of *Little ones that have their Angels beholding the face of his Father*. And he is to be understood of *Little ones in age and growth*, as well as adult Persons resembling *Little ones in some Virtues*: For 'twas a Child in age that he took and set in the midst of his Disciples, when he spake these words, *One of these Little ones*.

Mat. 18. 10.
Ver. 2.
Mat. 2. 13.
V. 19, 20.
Gen. 21. 16.

What Care had an Angel of our Saviour *Christ*, when he was a *Babe* in the *Cradle*? When *Herod* sought the Life of this Blessed Babe, an Angel warned his Parents to fly with him into *Egypt*; and when the danger was over an Angel gives them notice to return again. When *Hagar* had exposed her poor Child in the *Wilderness*, to die of *Thirst*, having no *Water* left to keep him alive, an Angel comes and bring her to a *Spring of Water*, so preserving the Childs Life. A like Instance there was in the late *Rebellion in Ireland*. The Wife of a Minister called *Mr. Teate*, being flying for her Life, with a young Child at her Breasts, her *Milk* failing, and the Babe ready to perish for want of *Suck*, when she was about to leave him to die by himself, and stooped down to lay the Babe on the ground, she found a *Bottle full of Milk*, by which she preserved the Childs Life. No doubt this *Bottle* was laid there by some *Supernatural Hand*, for the *Bottle* lay upon the *Snow* that fell there but a little before, and it was remote from

from any Houfe. And in the time of the late *Civil Wars* here in *England*, at the taking of *Bolton*, there was a Woman lying among the Slain with her Daughter (but Eleven Weeks old) crying at the Breasts of her dead Mother, and an Old Woman passing by, and pitying the Babe, took it up, and to still it held it to her Breast, which the Babe sucking, Milk came, and the Old Woman nursed it, though she had not given such for above Twenty Years before.

Such Instances are (I confess) somewhat rare and extraordinary, but it pleases God that we should have some such, that we may more easily believe the ordinary Ministrations of Angels, though it be secret and insensible.

How often are little Children in danger of Suffocation by their Nurses side, and of falling into the Fire, and into the Water, or from high Places to which they get, being venturous, and given to climbing, but that they are preserved by such invisible Means? Ah let us look back on former Passages of our Lives, and bless God. When we were little Children, God did many things for us, which we were not then capable of observing, but 'tis our duty afterward, in our riper Years to reflect on them, and praise God, as *David* did. *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my Trust from my Youth: By thee have I been holden up from the womb, thou art he that took me out of my Mothers bowels. My praise shall be continually of thee. Thou art he that took me out of the womb, thou didst make me hope when I was upon my Mothers breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb. Thou art my God from my Mothers belly,* *Psal. 71. 5, 6.* *Psal. 22. 9, 10.* It does mightily enhance the value of Divine Goodness, that it begins so early with us, and assigns us Nurses and Guardians when we are so young and tender: Yea, and Physicians too (for such Angels also are) when then best Artists are at a loss not knowing what to do for poor sick Babes, Angels are their best Physicians,

to whom (some think) 'twere better leave them when sick, than to be tampering so much with such tender things, as some are.

So much of the *First Period* of time, when Angels first begin to take the charge of Persons. From this time of our Infancy, until the Resurrection of our Bodies, and our Infallment in full and perfect Glory, the Angels Ministry shall continue, and there it ceases, and we shall keep an uninterrupted Sabbath, or Rest together with them, in the blissful Presence of God to all Eternity.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

- §. 1. *The Second Period of the Angels Ministry.*
 1. *For the Soul promoting the Knowledge of God in Persons grown up.* §. 2. *What Angels do mediately by others.* §. 3. *What they do immediately by themselves: Applying themselves to Mens Imaginations, they represent things so intelligibly as if they spake.* §. 4. *This inward way of teaching is in Subserviency to the Spirit.* §. 5. *An Answer to what some object against this.* §. 6. *How Angels are employ'd as Monitors. Instance.* §. 7. *What heed is to be given to such Motions and Impressions as we meet with.* §. 8. *How Angels are employ'd as Comforters.* §. 9. *Angels are in several respects better Comforters than any men on Earth.* §. 10. *How employ'd in keeping evil from mens Souls.*

S E C T. I.

THE *Second Period* wherein Angels continue their Ministry, is when men are *grown up*, for all their Life time. And in this Period of time that which Angels do for men is either for their *Souls*, or for their *Bodies*. Now

First, In reference to mens *Souls*, the Welfare and Salvation of them, tho' the Scriptures do not so frequently mention Ministrations of Angels immediately respecting these, as they do those respecting the Body, and outward Man; yet 'tis Mens *Souls* Angels have the chief Care of, and they do more towards the Safety and Sal-

vation of mens Souls than we are aware of; yea, and they are more pleased when mens Souls do well, than when they prosper in the outward Man, what way soever. 'Tis said of Conversion, which is the Souls recovery out of the Death of Sin, *That there is joy in Heaven among the Angels, when one sinner repenteth*: 'Tis not said so of any good that does accrue to the outward Man, that there is Joy thereupon among the Angels, and yet no doubt they are pleased with that too, but not so much.

The Work of mens Salvation is called *the pleasure of the Lord*, Isa. 53. 10. because that is a Work God is most pleased with. And as it is the Pleasure of the Lord, so is it of Angels too, they have greatest content in it, and therefore will do their best to promote it.

That which Angels do for mens Souls is, either *conveying good to them, or keeping evil from them*.

The good which Angels are means of conveying to mens Souls is manifold.

That which I shall *first* and most largely insist upon, is *Instruction* in the Knowledge of God, Angels do much towards the promoting of the *Knowledge of God* in men. 'Tis ordinarily in a way not observed, their working is insensibly, yet very great helpers are they. The Devils are great hinderers of holy Knowledge, they blind mens Eyes all they can, and labour to hide the Gospel from them, they lead men into error, and perhaps, they are therefore called *the Rulers of the Darknes of this World*.

Ephes. 6. 12.

Jude 6.

They are in *Chains of Darknes* themselves, and labour to keep men in *Darknes* too. On the contrary the Holy Angels are called *Angels of Light*, and do their part to bring men *into the Light of the Knowledge of the glory of God*.

That God has made use of Angels to acquaint men with the Knowledge of himself and his holy Will, is so evident, that no one that has read the Bible can deny it.

There be few (I think) but will acknowledge that that audible Voice by which God spake to our *first Parents*, was formed by the Ministry of Angels; for God's usual way of working is by Means, and he does not things *immediately* by himself, when there are Creatures made

made able to do them. And if God then spake by Angels, they were the *first Preachers of Faith and Repentance* Gen. 3. 15. to Men, and the first Publishers of the *Promise of Christ*.

The Law that was given on Mount Sinai to Moses, and by him to the People of Israel, was spoken by Angels, Heb. 2. 2. *It was ordain'd by Angels*, Gal. 3. 19. *It was received by the disposition of Angels*, as the expression is, Acts 7. 53. The meaning is, God made use of Angels in that revelation of his Mind and Will to the *Israelites*, in which are contain'd the Laws by which they were to be governed.

An Angel of the Lord spake to the Prophet *Elijah*, 2 *Kin.* 1. 3, 15. an Angel was sent to *Daniel*, to make him to understand the Vision, *Chap.* 8. 16. an Angel was sent to the Prophet *Zechary* also, to instruct him, *Chap.* 1. 9. & 2. 4. And so, no doubt, were there Angels sent to the other Prophets of the Lord, tho' no express mention be made thereof: What was reveal'd unto them in Dreams and Visions, was by the Ministry of Angels; most of their Revelations they had this way.

I know it will be objected, That all these Instances are *extraordinary*, and no such things may be expected now.

To which I answer. I grant such sensible Communion with Angels is extraordinary, and unusual now. For God to communicate his Mind to men by Apparitions of Angels, by audible Voices, by Dreams and Visions, as in the foregoing Instances, is not usual now, these things are extraordinary. But there is a Ministry of Angels (in a more insensible way) that is ordinary, as hath been prov'd, and whereabout this is conversant, the Instances I have alledg'd do (in part) satisfy us, and that is all I produce them for, namely, to shew that Angels are made use of to propagate the knowledg of God. This appears to be one part of their Business with Men, by the foregoing Instances.

S E C T. II.

BUT you will ask me, *What that is which Angels do towards the promoting of the Knowledge of God?*

I answer: What they do is either *mediately* by others, or *immediately* by themselves.

1. Much of what they do is *mediately* by others, even by men who are call'd to preach the Word of God, or have ability to instruct others. As God has commanded all Christian People to edifie one another, according to the Gift of Knowledge which they have receiv'd; so hath he appointed a standing Ministry in the Church, who are in an open way to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom. Angels preach not the Gospel thus themselves, but it is a part of their care that Men be taught, and well taught, by such as are thereunto call'd and fitted. Now God imployes Angels, 1. In providing good Teachers for Men. 2. In protecting and defending them. 3. In assisting and helping them. 4. In detecting Seducers.

First, He imployes Angels in *providing good Teachers* for Men, in *directing* the Teachers to them, or *directing* them to the Teachers: Of this we have many Instances.

An Angel directed *Philip* to take his Journey toward the South, that he might meet with the *Eunuch*, to instruct him in the knowledge of Christ, *Acts* 8. 26, 27. An Angel mov'd *Cornelius* to send for *Peter*, to teach him the same precious Knowledge, *Acts* 10. And *Paul* was by an Angel directed to go to *Macedonia*, to preach the Gospel there, *Acts* 16. 9.

There was somewhat extraordinary in these Instances, but when it does so frequently happen that Persons strangely meet with Ministers and Means by which they are converted, when no such thing was intended or thought of; (as *Onesimus*, when he ran from his Master *Philemon*, and was wandring, chanc'd to come where *Paul* was preaching, and was converted by him) when (I say) this so frequently happens, every good man will acknowledg herein a special Providence of God: And how can we reasonably question the agency of Angels herein, when they are
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the ordinary Instruments of his Providence, and we read they have been so often employ'd extraordinarily in such Errands, and when we are withal well assur'd, that Devils are active to hinder Ministers from going where they may do good? as is clear in *Paul*, who says, He often would have come to the *Thessalonians*, but *Satan* hindred him. This was no visible Opposition made by the Devil, *Paul* would not have been hinder'd by a *Diabolical Apparition* forbidding him, but have gone so much the sooner; there was no such thing in it, but the Devil was secretly and underhand a means of laying some business or other in his way, that did hinder him, as now also it happens that men are hinder'd: and if Devils do hinder Ministers insensibly, Angels do further them. Thus they promote holy Knowledge by bringing Men to the means, and by bringing the means to them.

1 Theſ. 2. 18.

2. God does by Angels preserve and keep *good Ministers* out of the hands of *Persecutors*, that seek to suppress them. Good and faithful Ministers have more Enemies than others have, and are more sought after in bad times, and they are the prime Instruments of advancing and propagating of the knowledge of God: There is no knowing and believing without hearing, and no hearing without a Preacher, as the Apostle reasons; let Preachers be taken off, and Knowledge must needs decay. Wherefore, while Angels encamp in a special manner about such, and keep them, (as indeed they do) they this way may be laid to be promoters of holy Knowledge, and contribute to the propagating of it. Now many Instances may be produc'd of good Ministers strangely preserv'd, and that by the agency of these Heavenly Keepers; I shall relate only one History, which is indeed wonderful, and is reported by many great Divines and others of unquestionable credit: 'Tis of one *Grynæus*, a *German Divine*, a learned and holy man; He coming from *Heidelberg* to *Spire*, and going to hear a certain Preacher in that City, that did then let fall some erroneous Propositions of Popish Doctrine, was thereat greatly offended, and presently went to the Preacher, exhorting him to abandon his Error: The Preacher seem'd to take it well, and pretended to be desirous of
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some further Discourse with him, and so they parted. *Grynaeus* goes to his Lodging, and reports the Passages of the late Conference to those that sat at the Table with him, amongst whom *Melancthon* being one, he was call'd out of the Room to speak with a Stranger newly come into the House; and going forth, he finds a grave old man, of a goodly Countenance, seemly and richly attir'd, who in a friendly and grave manner tells him, That within one hour there would come to their Inn certain Officers to apprehend *Grynaeus*, and to carry him to Prison; willing him to charge *Grynaeus* with all possible speed to fly, and requiring *Melancthon* to see that this Advantage were not neglected; which said, the old man vanish'd out of his sight. Instantly *Melancthon* return'd to his Company, related the words of this strange Monitor, and hasten'd *Grynaeus* away, who had no sooner taken Boat, but he was eagerly sought for at his said Lodging. No doubt this was an Angel, which God sent to deliver this godly Minister from his Persecutors. And after this manner, by the ministrations of Angels, have many good Ministers been preserv'd, to do the Church more service, in promoting the sound knowledg of God.

3. What *Help* and *Assistance* Ministers have from Angels in the performance of the Duties of their Function, we cannot certainly tell: But this we know, and 'tis worthy to be consider'd, that Ministers find themselves in much better frame for their Work at one time than at another, and their ministring both in Prayer and Preaching is not always according to their Preparations beforehand; they have present assistances in their Work, and why may not Angels be suppos'd to be us'd of God to give those assistances to them, and to put more spirit, warmth, and promptness into them, when we read, that an Angel strengthen'd *Darius*, and when Angels have such power (as 'tis confess'd they have) on the Humours of the Body and the Spirits, upon the advantagious motion of which such performances very much depend?

DAE. II. 1.

4. Angels are often employ'd in detecting of *Seducers*, and sometimes cutting them off, at least defeating them, as the *Egyptian Sorcerers* were by what *Moses* did. Seducers

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are great hinderers of sound Knowledge, and they have many Arts to bring their Persons and their Doctrines into repute, even as the *Egyptian Sorcerers* us'd their Tricks upon *Pharaoh*, to harden him; but *Moses* was assisted by some Exod. 7. supernatural power to detect their Fraud, and wholly to overthrow their Design.

Thus Angels work *mediately* by others, to the furtherance of the Knowledge of God.

S E C T. III.

SEcondly, They do much *immediately* by themselves in promoting of holy Knowledge: They do not only excite, and encourage, and assist others to teach and instruct, but they have a way of ministring *Instruction* themselves. They can come to us, and speak to us, *suo modo*, in their manner, when there is no Apparition or audible Voice. Angels have often instructed men in a sensible way, both by an audible Voice (as appears in some Instances before produc'd) and by Writing also; as *Belshazzar* was warn'd by a Hand appearing and writing on the Wall, *MENE MENE TEKEL UPHRASIN*. But this is not usual or ordinary now: They do more ordinarily instruct men, not by the outward Senses, the Eye or Ear, but by the *inward Sense* or *Phantasie* working thereupon, and upon the Images of things there receiv'd and kept. Thus they reveal things to Men in *Dreams*: *Joseph* was inform'd in a Dream of the lawfulness and fitness of his taking home of *Mary* his espous'd Wife to him. Now in Sleep, you know, all the outward Senses are bound up, nothing can be then receiv'd by them, but yet many things may (even then) be represented to the Mind, and Angels can represent things to the Mind, and speak to Persons as intelligibly as by an audible Voice, by working on the Internal Sense, stirring up and moving the Phantasms or Images of things there kept.

Dan. 5.

When we are waking, and do see and hear things, there are certain Images of those things receiv'd, and preserv'd and kept in the Internal Sense or Phantasie: Now Angels can apply themselves to the Phantasies or Imaginations of

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men, and make what use they please of such Images as they find there, and by that means have the advantage of representing to the Mind whatever they list in a manner.

Neque verò necesse est ut putemus inmitti à Diabolo aut ab Angelo formas recentes & novas; illi enim utuntur præsentibus.

Non possunt ullâ vi efficere ut cæcus natus aliquid somniat de coloribus: aut Surdus de Sonis. *Per. Mart. in Sam. p. 166. a.*

And this they can do whether Men be sleeping or waking; what Images they find in the Internal Sense, they can move at pleasure; They cannot put new things into it, such things as were never there before: They cannot make a man, born blind, to dream or to conceive of Colours, and of their differences; but they can make rare compositions and deductions of the Images that they find there, for the offering of what they please to the Mind: Even as a *Printer* (says one) sets his Letters together in Words and Sentences, to represent what he would have to be read.

That Angels can and do both these ways speak unto men, cannot be denied, when malignant Spirits or Devils ('tis clear) do so. They have sometimes visibly and extraordinarily appear'd to deceive men, and to hinder holy Knowledge; and they do more ordinarily, in a secret and insensible way, work to keep men from the knowledg of the Truth: For this we have plain testimony of Scripture, *2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.* *If our Gospel be hid (says the Apostle) it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this World hath blinded the Eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them. He blinds mens Eyes: He put it into the Heart of Judas to betray his Master; and he put it into the Heart of Ananias and Sapphira to lye unto the Holy Ghost: He is that Enemy that sow'd Tares in the Field, while men slept, that is secretly insilling erroneous and corrupt Principles into the Minds of Men.*

Now, if the Devil can, and does do this, no doubt the holy Angels can do as much to promote holy Knowledge as Devils can to hinder it; they have as much power to enlighten Men, as Devils have to blind them. Angels have like access to the Minds of men renew'd by the Grace of God, as Devils have to the Minds of unconverted Persons, and

and have no less power to help, than the other have to hurt; and as their Power is no less, so neither is their Will; they have as great a mind to promote Knowledge, as Devils have to oppose it; the Angel-Love is no less perfect than is the Devils Malice: And how unreasonable is it, to question God's making use of them, when they are so able and willing, and when 'tis granted he permits Devils to oppose.

S E C T. IV.

SOME perhaps will say, God has reserv'd the honour of this Work of *inward secret Teaching* to his *Holy Spirit*, which he has promis'd to them that do believe.

To this I answer; 1. God's Promise of the Spirit does not suppose his laying aside all means, to work immediately by it: He appoints the agency of means notwithstanding, in subserviency to his Spirit. Tho' God gives his Spirit, yet he makes use of a written Word, and of a preaching Ministry; and why not as well of invisible Teachers?

2. Our asserting of the Operation and Agency of *Angels* in and about the teaching and instructing of Men, can nothing derogate from the Honour of the Spirit, because *Angels* work only in *subordination* to the Spirit, and in another way, much inferiour to the way of the Spirit. We must (I grant) be very careful we do not ascribe any of the proper Work of the Spirit unto Angels, I should be loth to be guilty of so doing.

The Spirits working in teaching Men, is in another, higher, and much more inward way: Angels can but present things to the Mind, and so teach but as one man teaches another; they have a nearer way of access to mens Spirits than one man hath to the Spirit of another, yet they cannot operate immediately on the Mind, nor can they heal the debility and indisposition of it, as the Spirit does.

Concedi etiam potest quòd licèt Dei peculiare sit, lumen fidei, & ignem charitatis infundere mentibus humanis: tamen ut utitur externo ministerio hominum, ad mentes Electorum illuminandas, & ad pietatem excitandam in Voluntatibus illorum, sic etiam utitur invisibili & interno ministerio Angelorum. Concedunt Scholastici id fieri 3. Per remotionem impedimentorum, per excitationem & ordinationem Phantasmatum, per commotionem Passionum debitarum, &c. *Davenant.*

All the difference that is between the Angels speaking to Men, and Mens speaking to one another, is, Men have somewhat a further way about, they can apply themselves but to the *External Senses*, to the Eye, and to the Ear, and by these affect the Inward Sense, from which the Understanding takes things: but Angels can immediately apply themselves to the *Inward Sense*. *Note*, The way of the Understanding's receiving things is (as they say) by turning to the *Phantasms* or *Images* of things in the Phantasie: When the Images there are form'd and set in order, the Understanding easily takes off what is represented to it: Now the Angels can set these Phantasms in order, but not immediately work on the Understanding.

In the aforesaid manner both good and bad Angels speak to us, insensibly suggesting many things to our Minds, and therefore we have reason to be very careful what Impressions we receive by our Eyes and Ears; for if they be evil, they give the Devil great advantage; but if they be good, the holy Angels will have the greater advantage to converse with us, and to suggest good things to us: Of which more hereafter.

Now all that the Angels do in teaching, being but to represent and offer things to the Mind, they are but *Instruments* of God's Spirit, and not by themselves sufficient *Causes* of *Inward Illumination*. There is more necessary to the illumination of the Mind than the bare proposing of things to it. There is by the Fall a weakness and indisposition come upon the Minds of Men, disabling them to discern and perceive the things of the Spirit, when sufficiently propos'd *ex parte Objecti*, this must be heal'd and remov'd: And 'tis this *David* prays for, *Psal. 119. 27. Make me to understand the way of thy precepts.* This God's Spirit only can do, Angels cannot hide the blindness of the Mind; nor can they make men to understand: What they propose to the *Understanding* is not always receiv'd by

it : When the evil Spirit said, that he would be a *lying Spirit* in the Mouth of *Ahab's* Prophets, God says, *Thou shalt prevail*; that is, (says *Camero*) *Phantasma quod obijcies movebit*, The Phantasm which thou shalt set before him shall move: Now it shall; but here is suppos'd that it does not always so : But the Spirit of God does ever effectually move the Mind to receive what is propos'd, when comes to enlighten Men. Wherefore God's Spirit is the prime Efficient, Angels but Subordinate Instruments of Divine Knowledg.

S E C T. V.

THERE are some which we must also labour to satisfy here, that seem to be of the mind, that whatsoever use God did make of Angels, as Teachers under the Law before the coming of *Christ*, yet now under the *Gospel* this is no part of their Office, God having promis'd his People now a better Teacher, even his own Spirit, which also is promis'd as a peculiar Blessing of these times; as may be seen in several places of Scripture. And the *enlightning* and *teaching* of the *Saints* under the *Gospel* is ever attributed to the Spirit of God, and no where unto the Angels. Yea, tho' the blinding, and deluding, and tempting Men to Evil, be in Scripture often ascrib'd to malignant Spirits or Devils, yet whenever the *enlightning*, and *teaching*, and *moving* of Men to good is spoken of there is never any mention made of Angels, but this is ever ascrib'd to the operation of the Spirit: See the following Texts, *1 Job. 2. 27* *1 Cor. 12. 8, 9* *Rom. 8. 13.* *1 Cor. 2. 10, 11.* And the Apostle seems plainly to assign this as a main difference between the *Law* and the *Gospel*, That *the Law was received by the disposition of Angels, and spoken by them*; but that *the Gospel was spoken by Jesus Christ himself*, and was *the ministraton of the Spirit in an eminent manner*, and becaute it belongs to the Spirit to teach the knowledg of it. Wherefore after the *Ascension* of *Christ*, before the Apostles were to go forth to settle the *Evangelical Churches*, they had the Holy Ghost poured out upon them,

Jer. 32. 15. Joel 2. 28, 29.
Zech. 12. 1. Joh. 7. 39. 2 Cor.
3. 8. 1sa. 54. 13. Joh. 6. 45.

Acts 7. 13.
Heb. 2. 2.
2 Cor. 3. 8.

them, to fit them for it. Moreover, the Apostle comparing the *Law* and *Gospel*, does prefer the *Gospel* for this reason, *viz. because it was spoken by Christ himself, and by his Apostles, who were fill'd with the Holy Ghost, whereas the Law was spoken by Angels,* Heb. 2. 2, 3. adding, v. 5. *That unto the Angels he hath not put in subjection the World to come, i. e. the Gospel state, as oppos'd to the Jewish state under the Law.* So that it seems that the Church now is not under the Ministry and Discipline of Angels, as the Jewish Church is suppos'd to have been.

To this we may add, Some Scriptures seem to speak of the Mystery of the Gospel, as a Mystery that the Angels were ignorant of, until it was reveal'd by God first unto the Church. The Apostle Peter says, *Which things the Angels desire to look into,* as not being fully acquainted with them. And Paul says, *That unto principalities and powers in Heavenly places, i. e. the Angels, was made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.* So that, it seems, Angels are *Learners*, rather than *Teachers*, of this Knowledge.

I confess, these Reasonings did a while make this matter seem somewhat difficult to me; but when I consider'd it further, I judg'd it sufficiently clear'd in the following Answer.

I. The Spirit of God was given unto Men under the Law, as well as under the Gospel, tho' not in such plentiful manner. That which is promis'd is a greater measure of it under the Gospel; but under the Law no man could come to the saving knowledg of God, without the help of his Spirit: so that God's Spirit did then also work in the Elect: Now the more plentiful giving of the Spirit under the Gospel is no necessary superseding of the ministry of such subordinate means as the Spirit uses to work by; wherefore if the Spirit did work by the ministry of Angels under the Law, (as is acknowledg'd) I see no reason why we should deny that he doth so under the Gospel also. If the more plentiful measure of the Spirit under the Gospel, exclude the ministry of Angels, why should it not as well exclude the ministry of Men, and external means? But we find that, notwithstanding the plentiful effusion of
the

the Spirit, God makes use of external means still, as of a preaching Ministry and Ordinances, and why not as well of Angels?

2. My Text speaks of *Gospel times*, and says, that even then they are ministring Spirits, sent forth for the Heirs of Salvation; and there are not a few Instances of their ministring in *Gospel times*. It was after the pouring out of the Spirit at the day of *Pentecost*, that the Angel spake to *Cornelius*, *Act. 10. 3.* And another Angel directed *Paul*, *Act. 16. 9.* And *John* had all his Revelations by the ministry of an Angel, *Rev. 1. 1.* Wherefore it is certain that Angels do minister to the Faithful under the Gospel.

3. Is it likely that the Angels, that are said to be sent forth to minister for the Heirs of Salvation, should have nothing to do about their Souls, when the Salvation of their Souls seems to be made the end of their Mission? If it be for the Heirs of Salvation, as such, that they are sent forth, then 'tis to promote their Salvation. And Angels are able to communicate themselves to the Spirits of men, (as hath been shew'd) and if so, they have not this Power in vain. If they be able secretly to teach and instruct men, either they do so, or they do not serve God with all their might, which is Angels Duty as well as mens: They cannot justifie their Love to God, if they serve him not with all their strength, nor shew their Love to men, unless they do for them what good they are able.

4. 'Tis acknowledg'd that malignant Spirits or Devils are permitted to blind, delude, and pervert men. The Scripture attributes this Power to them; and it appears that this Power of theirs is exercis'd not only on wicked men, as *Ephes. 2. 2.* *2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.* but also on God's Elect and Sanctified ones; and therefore the Apostle ^{2 Cor. 11. 3.} wishes the *Corinthians* to take heed they be not beguil'd by *Satan*, and tells the *Ephesians*, that they were to *wrestle with the Rulers of the darkness of this World*. Now, that God should permit Devils to go on with their Work, and forbid good Angels to exercise their Power and Skill, is not to be imagin'd. ^{Eph. 6. 12.}

5. The *working on the Mind*, which, according to our *Hypothesis*, is ascrib'd to Angels, being in *subordination* to the Spi-

Spirit, and in another and lower way of efficiency, it can be no derogating from the honour of the Spirit, to say, God uses their ministry, any more than to say He uses the ministry of men, whom *Paul* calls *co-workers with God*, without any injury to his Honour.

2 Cor. 6. 1.

6. The Apostle's meaning *Heb. 2.* is no more but to shew the preheminance of the Gospel above the Law, on this account; that whereas the highest and most noble Instruments that were employ'd in giving the Law, and forming the Jewish Church, were Angels, the Son of God himself, who is above Angels, was employ'd in bringing the Gospel to Men, and in first founding the Gospel, or Christian state.

The Author both of the Law and Gospel, was the Son of God: He spake to *Moses* in Mount *Sinai*, tho' Angels were employ'd in forming the sound of Words, and therefore were the Ministers of it; but the Son of God was manifested in our Fleish, and became himself the prime Minister of the Gospel, and the first founder of the Gospel-state, but he was not so of the Law and Jewish Church-state: and on this account the Gospel state is said not to be subjected to Angels, that is, it was not first founded by them, but by the man *Christ Jesus*, who is above Angels. The first publication of the Gospel was committed to him,

and his Apostles that he employ'd therein were immediately inspir'd by the Holy Ghost, and assisted to confirm their Doctrine by Miracles wrought by the immediate help of the same Spirit, in which respect it may be said to be the Ministry of the Spirit, and not the Ministry of Angels. To which I may add, that the Mystery of the Gospel, which was brought to men by *Christ* himself, and by his Spirit in the Apostles, is such a Mystery as cannot be savingly understood by any, nor can any come up to such an height of Heavenly living as is suitable to it, walking worthy of *Christ*, without that presence and assistance of the

Collatio instituitur non in eo qui locutus est, qui in V. & N. foedere idem est, Deus sc. ejus verbum utrumque est, sed in eo per quem locutus est; quod in V. T. locutus est per Angelos, hic autem per Filium. *Law. in Pol. Syn.*

Seculum V. T. Angelis quodammodo subjectum erat, quia foedus legale ab eis promulgatum, ac subinde renovatum, ampliatum, sancitum erat. At seculum N. T. non Angelis, &c. *v. Poli Syn.*

the Spirit, which is promis'd, as the peculiar Privilege of Gospel times.

But all this nothing hinders, but that Angels may still be made use of in promoting the knowledge of the Gospel, when as Instruments much inferiour to Angels, *viz.* ordinary Preachers, are (as all know) made use of.

7. Whereas it is urged from *1 Pet. 1. 12.* and *Ephes. 3. 10.* that the Gospel is a Mystery the Angels seems rather to be *Learners* than *Teachers* of, *I Answer,* They may be *Learners* and yet *Teachers* too. They may be *Learners* of that Mystery which from the beginning of the World was hid in God, but yet *Teachers* of much precious Knowledge that fits and qualifies for the Knowledge of that Mystery. They may know much of the Mystery of Christ and be *Teachers* of it, and yet be learning more of that profound Knowledge. They might learn from Christ and his inspired Apostles, at the first Revelation of the Gospel, and yet be helpers of others in the attaining the Knowledge of it since.

Which things (says the Apostle, *1 Pet. 1. 12.*) *the Angels desire to look into.* The Greek Word signifies a reaching to see a thing in part (at least) concealed from the sight, as appears, comparing other Texts where the Word is used. The Angels did not know those things so well, but they did desire to know them better. So *Grotius.*

They were not ignorant (says *Eftius*) of those Mysteries, having revealed much of them to the Prophets, but they desired to know them more fully and perfectly.

Indeed the Prophets which spake of these Mysteries, did not fully understand, but did study and search after the meaning of their own Prophecies, as the Apostle says, *ver. 11.* and what they spake was more for the after times of the Gospel, than for themselves, as he says,

Παρευόμην. See *Luk. 24. 12. Joh. 20. 5.* Designat penitentem rei contemplationem. *Beza.*

Sensus est, Quæ Angeli ipsi antea non percognita, cum summo gaudio nunc aspiciunt. Angelos proferre per homines verus est Hebræorum Sententia apud R. *Israhel.* de anima. cap. 1. *Grot.*

Quamvis non ignorant Angeli hæc mysteria, ut quæ per ipsos Prophetis revelata fuerint, illa tamen plenius & perfectius noscere cupiunt. *Eftius.*

Hoc maximum Evangelii erco-mium est, quod thesaurum sapientia continet, Angelis adhuc clausum & occultum. *Caly.*

Quantus honos hominum quod hæc arcana consilia per ipsos, maxime Apostolos, Deus in nosteretere Angelis voluit. *Grotius.*

ver. 12. Not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister these things. They themselves understood little comparatively of them. And these things (says he) the Angels desire to look into; So that neither the Prophets nor the Angels neither, did fully understand those things, till the Gospel came to be preached, tho' they had some Knowledge of them. *The manifold wisdom of God,*

Eph. 3. 10. Sensus, q. d. ut pateat etiam maximis Angelorum ordinibus, id quod antè & ipsi & Propheta ignorarunt, Deo illud consilium apud se retinente. *Grot.* Per Ecclesiam docentem id est per Apostolos, qui hoc pacto non tantum hominum sed etiam Angelorum doctores ac magistri fuerunt. Q. in *Eslio.*

Hinc colligunt interesse concionibus Angelos, ut communitur nobiscum proficiant, Speculatio est parum firma. *Calv.*

Eph. 3. 10. was never known to the Prophets (says *Grotius*) nor to the Angels of the highest order, not to Principalities and Powers, till the Gospel came to be preached. And he says, that the Apostles were Teachers not only of men, but of Angels too. However *Calvin* likes not their Speculation, who say, That Angels frequent the Church Assemblies to hear Sermons there, that they may profit by them as we do. No doubt Angels know how

much more than the ablest ordinary Minister ever did, and so can be helpers to the most knowing Persons. And so much of the first good that Angels are Instruments of conveying to the Souls of men.

S E C T. VI.

2ly, **A**S Angels are employ'd as Teachers, so also as *Motors*: They work not only on the Understanding, but on the Will and Affections also. On the Will (I say) but yet not so as to necessitate it, but only incline it, as shall be shewed. They do not only shew to men what is good, but advise and move them to it. They often instill good motions into men.

Ephes. 2. 2. We know malignant Spirits or Devils, are busied in tempting Men to sin, they are alway working this way in the Children of Disobedience. They are acknowledged to have an hand in most of the wickednesses that are wrought in the World. 'Twas the Devil that moved *Eve* to take of the forbidden fruit, and that put it into the heart of *Judas* to betray his Master. 'Twas he made

Ananias

Ananias to come with a Lye in his mouth to the Apostle. Acts 5. 3.
 Now as Devils incline and tempt unto Sin, so Angels excite and quicken, and incline to that which is good.

All good men look upon themselves as obliged to do what they can this way. They are commanded to watch over one another, to provoke one another to Love and good works: And such as are faithful will do so. Now if good men will encourage and promote Holiness what they can, surely good Angels will do so too.

These invisible Agents are (no doubt) in their way, more busy and active than the best men are in theirs, as their Love and Zeal is more ardent than theirs.

We read how Angels have been often sent by God in monitory Messages, to encourage and excite to worthy and gracious Actions. An Angel was sent to admonish and move *Hagar* to return and be reconciled to her Mistress, when in a pet and discontent she had left the house. An Angel stirred up the *Israelites* to Repentance, and made them weep abundantly. Some think it was some Prophet that preached Repentance to them, But the Text says it was an Angel. An Angel was sent to *Darius the Mede* to promote that noble Work he had before him, the *Jews* Liberty, and the building of the Temple. The Angel says, also I, in the first year of *Darius the Mede*, even I stood to confirm and to strengthen him. He did secretly excite him, and contributed to the steadiness and firmness of his Resolution. An Angel encouraged *Gideon* to undertake the saving of *Israel* out of the hands of the *Midianites*, a noble but hazardous Attempt. When *Joseph* was about to put away *Mary*, he was admonished of an Angel to take her home to him.

Thus does God ordinarily employ Angels, though not in such a sensible way, as in some of these Instances he did.

The Devils tempt men to evil *mediately*, by laying tempting Objects in their way, and by offering occasions and opportunities of sinning, as they did lay the *Wedge of Gold*, and the *Babylonish* Garment in *Achan's* way, and exposed *Bathsheba* naked to *David's* view, and procured *Judas* a Proffer of Money to betray *Christ*. In like man-

ner the Angels move men to good actions, by fitting them with fair opportunities, and inviting advantages. But this is not all. They work also more *immediately*: And as Devils have access to mens Souls, and do inwardly move and incline them to evil (as was noted before concerning *Judas*, and others) so likewise have Angels access to mens Souls: Angels can work on the *humours* of the Body, and the *Spirits*, in and by which the several *Passions* do act and stir and so can stir up and heighten the Affections, Love, Joy, Fear, Desire, &c. and these Affections or Passions do very much incline and sway the Will. Good Angels (says Mr. Baxter) can much help the Will, but to predetermine it by any necessitating motion, they cannot. Devils cannot enforce any one to sin, they can but entice and allure: So neither can Angels efficaciously move or turn the Will to good, but they can instil good Motions and suggest good Thoughts, and press them with such earnestness and frequency, that the Will is often prevailed with.

Boni Angeli
voluntatem
juvare mal-
tum possunt,
predeterminare
autem
motione ne-
cessitante (in
fallor) non
possunt. *Meth.*
Theol.

Motions come sometimes with that Strength that they are as a Voice to men. The things seem to be spoken to them. Go pray to God. Go visit such a sick Person. This is the way, walk in it. Sudden strong Impressions men sometimes have, not knowing whence they come, and they are often caused by these invisible Agents. What heed is to be given to such *Impressions*, shall be shewed in the next *Section*.

But this must carefully be noted (which has been before hinted) tho' Angels be very helpful to men, in furthering the Knowledge of God, and holy practice; yet, as they cannot immediately affect the Understanding, so as to make it to receive, and assent to a Truth, so neither can they move the Will so as to determine it to this or that thing. The Will has a Power under God to *determine* it self, but no Power *without it* (but the Power of God) can determine it, or move it by a necessitating Motion. In *Conversion* it is God that does graciously enlighten, and effectually incline the Will to that which is good. So that (observe) over and above all that is done by the Ministry either of men or Angels, this Divine supernatural Operation is absolutely necessary unto *Renovation*,

vation, and the Glory and Honour thereof belongs to God, and must ever be given to him alone.

And this which hath been said, may serve to convince those (that their Plea is not good) who would fain excuse themselves from blame, when they do wickedly, by casting all the fault on the Devil that tempts them to it. The Devil was busy with me, or I would not have done it. What a sorry Plea is this? The Devils soliciting (one would think) should make thee the more to abhor the Motion. But there are Two Reasons proving that thou art inexcusable, tho' thou be tempted. 1. Because (as was noted before) Devils cannot *force* any to sin, they can but persuade and allure. 2. Good Angels are as active to keep men from Sin, as the Devils are to draw into it. God has not left thee to the Power of malignant Spirits, without any guard. God never leaves any so, till by their Willfulness they provoke him to it, and then he does judicially give men up to *Satan*, and to his Delusions, as *Rom* 1. 21, 24, 26. and *2 Thess.* 2. 10, 11, 12. But ordinarily 'tis otherwise. Therefore your Sin must lie at your own door. You are more complying with Hells Agents, than with God's, and that is the reason you do amiss.

S E C T. VII.

Supposing such an Operation of Angels on the minds and hearts of men, as is suggested in the Two preceding *Sections*, it will (in the next place) be inquired, *what heed is to be given to such impressions and motions, as men do at any time meet with?* It must be confessed, that it frequently happens, that men have very strong and unaccountable Impressions on their Spirits, which they cannot easily resist; the Question is, what regard is to be had of them, and whether a Man may certainly know whether they be from the Holy Angels or no?

To this I answer, 1. No doubt the Prophets and Holy Men of God, that had of old *Revelations* from God, by Angels, had certain Knowledge that they were the Holy Angels of God that inwardly spake to them, and moved them:

them: But what were the *σημεία*, the Signs and Tokens by which they knew the Language of Angels from De-lusions, I think no Mortal Man now can tell. This we may be assured of, we have a most infallible Rule of Faith and Life, which is delivered unto us in the Holy Scrip-tures, which being now perfected, is sufficient for our direction in trying of Spirits. To the Scriptures, and to the Analogy of Faith, we are sent, for answering of doubts, and trying of Spirits, as to a most compleat and infallible Judge. *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.* There needs no Supplement any other way. Search the Scriptures, (says Christ) they testify of me. For so doing the Bereans were commended. *We have a more sure word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed. Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they be of God. To the Law, and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Let us prophecy according to the Analogy, or Proportion of Faith.* In the Scriptures we have full Direction, and to this only are we to give heed, as unto an adequate Rule of our Faith and Practice. We must not entertain, or listen to any Suggestions or Motions which are not consonant with this Rule. For (says the Apostle) *tho' we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*

2 Tim. 3. 16,
17.
Joh. 5. 39.
Acts 17. 11.
2 Pet. 1. 19.
1 Joh. 4. 1.
Isa. 8. 20.
Rom. 12. 6.
Gal. 1. 8.

2. The Ministrations of Angels now, tho' it be sure, yet it is ordinarily insensible, and so little is distinctly known of the manner of their applying themselves to us, that we cannot ordinarily know when 'tis an Angel that speaks to us: Nor is it so much our concern to enquire after that, as after what it is that is suggested. We may have strong Impressions on our minds, and be uncertain whence they come, whether they are the effects of *Phan-tasy*, or *Melancholy*, or be caused by some supernatural Agents; and if by their suddenness, strangeness, or strength, they seem to be caused by some Spirit, yet whether it be a good or an evil Spirit, that we have no way

to know but by the matter or tendency of the Impressions themselves.

3. Seeing Angels are made use of to suggest things to the mind, and to move and incline to good, when we have hints and Intimations of things deeply imprinted on our Spirits, and Impulses and Motions, these are not to be wholly neglected and slighted, tho' we cannot certainly tell whence they come; but we ought to have due regard unto them, that is, so far (at least) as to consider and examine them. We owe so much regard to what is offered to us by men that are perfect strangers to us, especially when 'tis offer'd to us with seriousness and earnestness. And the Apostle says, *Try all things, hold fast that which is good.* 1 Theff. 5. 21. If we should do so by what men offer to us, sure, if Angels communicate any thing to us, we ought much rather to ponder, and muse, and cast in our mind what manner of Communication it is. We should try the work that is on our Imaginations, whether it be agreeable to the Word of God, or no, and accordingly entertain or reject the same.

4. Let Impressions, Impulses, or Motions come upon us with never so much Strength and Importunity, we must not therefore yield to them, without having tried them, and found them consonant with God's Word: For malignant Spirits do as vehemently urge their Delusions and Temptations, as the good Angels do their Motions.

5. No Angels of God comes with any Message but such as supposes the *Sufficiency* of the *Laws* of *Christ*, and the *Sufficiency* of the *Rule of Faith* which he hath given: And therefore if any new Doctrine be presented to us, that is no where revealed in the Word of God, this is not from an Angel of God, but some Spirit of Delusion. For the *Canon* or *Rule* of *Scripture* is now perfected, and *John* says, *I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the Prophecy of this Book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book.* Rev. 22. 18. Angels are never sent now to propose new Articles of Faith, or to give new Laws to men, but only to promote the Knowledge of, and Obedience to what is already delivered by *Jesus Christ*.

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6. In case it be an Interpretation of some Text of Scripture that is suggested (which some have had presented to them in a Dream, some when waking have had it suddenly cast in) before we fully credit it, it must be examined whether it agree with the Text and Context, and with the Analogy of Faith; for otherwise it may not be received: For we know the Devil does sometimes wrest the Scriptures, and suggest a false Sense of them, as he did to our Saviour *Christ* in tempting of him, *Mat.* 4. 6, 7.

7. When the matter of the Suggestion or Motions is pious and good, yet is it not alway from a good Angel; *2 Cor. 11. 14.* for the *Devil* sometimes transforms himself into an Angel of *Light*. Tho' the thing be for matter good, if there be an evil Intention or Design, or it be irregular as to Circumstances, it is from the Devil. That evil Spirit that was in the Damsel, *Act. 16.* spake well in the Praise of *Paul*, and his Companions, *These men are the Servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of Salvation.* The like Testimony the Devils gave of *Christ*, but he rebuked them. The Devils intent likely was not to beget Belief in the People of what they said, but rather to affright the People from *Christ*. With such like evil purposes the Devil may move men to Religious Duties, as unto Prayer when it is altogether unseasonable. When a Man has a sudden Impulse to go instantly to Prayer, when he is in some work that is of Concernment, and requires present dispatch; this being an irregular and unseasonable Motion, is a Temptation. *Solomon* says, *Every thing is beautiful in its season.* By such Motions the Devil does miserably entangle and trouble many melancholy People. Angels motions are always regular, and in convenient Season.

8. As for such Actions as have in them no Consideration of good or evil, but may be done, or not done without any danger of sinning; if a man be strongly moved either one way or the other, it is not good to slight or resist such motions; For they may be hints from Angels, in order to the Preservation of our selves or others. History affords us some Instances hereof. A certain Man
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being at his home, and his Daughter coming to visit him, she was very earnest to go to Bed more early than ordinary, and her Importunity prevailing, they commended themselves to God for his Custody, and all the Family went up the Stairs to their several Lodgings; and no sooner were they fallen asleep, but part of the House fell down, which would have slain them all if they had staid up. Another, a *Minister*, was no sooner gone with his Family out of his House, but his House fell right down in the place. Many imminent Dangers, which mens best Care could not otherwise have provided against, have been prevented by certain unaccountable intimations which they have had. So much in Answer to this Question.

S E C T. VIII.

3. **A** Nother Employment Angels have assign'd them of God, is, to be *Comforters*. "Next to my God, and my Saviour, (says the learned and devout Bishop *Hall*) I shall ever place my greatest Comfort and Confidence in the Angels of God. Neither hath Heaven or Earth any Creature-comforters like unto these; there are none like them, or to be compar'd with them. All the faithful Servants of God do owe this Duty one to another, to encourage, hearten, and comfort one another. *Comfort* I Thes. 4. 18. *one another* (says the Apostle) *with these words*. Ordinary Christians are bound to it by the common Law of Charity, Ministers are oblig'd to it by their Office. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,* (saith your God) *speak ye comfortably to* Ier. 40. 1, 2. *Jerusalem*. But this is not only the Work of men, but of Angels too. *Daniel* had an Angel sent to comfort him, when he was under some discouragement; *There came and touched me* (says *Daniel*) *one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, O man, greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong.* Dan. 10. 13, *And when he had spoken to me, I was strengthen'd, and said, Let my Lord speak, for thou hast strengthened me.* 19.

When there were a company of Souldiers sent by the King to apprehend the Prophet *Elijab*, he had an Angel sent to encourage and comfort him: *And the Angel of the*

Lord said unto Elijah, Go down, be not afraid, 2 Kin. 1. 15.

When our Saviour Christ was in his sharpest Conflict, and put hard to it, so as that he did sweat drops of blood, then appeared an Angel unto him, and strengthened him. It may seem somewhat strange, that he, who is God as well as man, should have need of the help of Angels. But in this Agony of his there was a suspension of the help of the Divine Nature, by a special dispensation, and he was left to his Humane Nature, being in this respect *βεβρων*, for a little while lower than the Angels, Heb. 2. 9. and so had need of the Comfort of Angels; as a very learned man says. An Angel brought him an Answer from his Father to the Prayer he made, and did bring to his mind the Glory promis'd him, and the Salvation of Men, which was to be the fruit of his Passion.

When Paul was in danger of Shipwrack in his Voyage to Rome, an Angel of the Lord appeared from Heaven, and stood by him, and said, Fear not Paul.

Besides these Scripture-Instances, after-times afford us not a few, as may be seen in Church History. The Instance of *Theodorus* is very notable: He, after he had been examin'd with most exquisite Torments, being ask'd how he could endure such extream Torture, said, That at first he felt some Pain, but afterward there stood by him a young man, who, as he was sweating with the Pain, did wipe away his Sweat, and oftentimes refresh'd him with cold Water, wherewith he was so delighted, that when he was let down from the Engine, it griev'd him more than before. Tho' Angels do seldom now appear in bodily shapes, as in those times, yet the like Offices are perform'd by them, in such spiritual and insensible ways as now they work.

Clark.

They do comfort God's People in their bodily and spiritual Distresses too: They often cast in some suitable Word or Promise, that does revive them; and this comes into the Mind (sometimes) with such power, as if they heard it spoken to them by an audible Voice. 'Tis true, the Holy Ghost is in Scripture call'd the Comforter, as being 'specially design'd for the Office of Comforting, but this hinders not but Angels may be made use of in ministering Comfort to the Soul. Angels cannot comfort as

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the Holy Ghost does, they do but offer Comfort, they cannot effectually cause it, as the Holy Ghost does: Yet are Angels far better Comforters than any men are, and that in the following respects.

S E C T. IX.

1. **T**hey better know the Cases of such as they are to comfort than any Man can, and so can minister most suitable Comfort: Many poor Souls, their Troubles are conceal'd, none know how 'tis with them, they are loth to make any acquainted with their Cases, and so can have none to administer suitable Comfort: Men cannot rightly apply themselves to the ministring of Comfort, if unacquainted with the Cases of such as need it; they may by chance drop a seasonable word, that may revive a drooping Soul, when they little think of it: But now Angels know God's Peoples Troubles, when they tell no man of them; they hear their secret Complaints they make to God in their Prayers, and have other ways they come to understand how 'tis with them, and so can speak home to their Cases.

2. Angels are never out of the way, some or other of them, and so can take the fittest times for administering of Comfort; all Persons are more capable of Comfort at one time than at another. When *Moses* came to the *Israelites* after their burthens were increas'd, 'tis said, *They barked* Exod. 6. 9. *not unto him, for anguish of spirit.* They were at that time in such an ill humour, that they could not receive the Comfort he brought them, at another time they might much better: Angels know the fittest times and seasons.

3. Sometimes Persons are so shut up, that none can come near them to comfort them. They may be shut up close Prisoners, and forbid the company and converse of their Friends, but Angels cannot be kept off; they can enter thro' the strongest Gates and Walls, and get into the darkest Dungeons, to visit the afflicted and disconsolate: There is no shutting them out; wherever persons are cast the Angels can come at them.

4. Angels always come with the purest and most divine Comforts. As Angels Food is the best Food, so are Angels Comforts the best Comforts.

5. They have nearer access to the minds of Men, and so can present things closer and nearer to them. Men can speak but to the outward Sense, to the bodily Ear, but Angels (as hath been shew'd) can speak to the inward Sense, and what is so spoken, the Mind does more easily and quickly take.

In all these respects they are the best Comforters, and God's People are oftner beholden to them in their solitarness than they are aware of; for 'tis one of their prime Offices, to strengthen the weak Hands and Hearts of such: which should much encourage us against the fear of Prisons, and Banishment, and withdrawing of Friends and Acquaintance from us; for if no others can come to us, and be with us, Angels can and will.

S E C T. X.

THUS are Angels employ'd about Mens Souls, in conveying Good to them; that which remains is, to shew how they are at work to keep Evil from Mens Souls, I mean the Evil of Sin, which doth both defile and wound the Soul.

The Devil's Work is, to tempt Men to Sin, and he is always busie at it, *He goes about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour.* He mov'd Eve to taste the forbidden Fruit, David to number the People, Judas to betray Christ, Ananias and Sapphira to lye to the Holy Ghost. For this cause he is call'd the *Tempter*, even because 'tis his ordinary work to tempt men to sin. Now, if Angels be not employ'd to prevent and hinder Sin, to repel Temptations, and to counterwork the Devils, our Protection would not be equal to our Danger. That Angels do much this way, is sufficiently clear in the Scripture, and so much has been already said relating hereto, that much need not in this place be added. They often do secretly pull us back, put Stops and Letts in our way, and prevent occasions of Sin, when we little think of it. An Angel (as has

1 Pet. 5. 8.

2 Cor. 11. 3.

1 Chron. 21. 1

Acts 5.

Mat. 4. 3.

1 Thef. 3. 5.

has been noted) stood in *Balaam's* way, to keep him from going to curse *Israel*. And when the Devil would have discover'd *Moses's* Burial place, that it might be an occasion of the Peoples *Idolatri*, an *Archangel* withstood him, *Jude* 9. It is generally agreed on, that the Devil's design was, to have the place of *Moses's* Burial known, that the *Israelites* (a People very prone to *Idolatri*) might be tempted to worship his *Body* after he was dead; and God therefore took care it should be buried where no one knew: and this was perform'd by an *Angel*, for no man was acquainted with it. Now the Devil strove to hinder such a secret disposal of his *Body*, but the *Archangel* prevail'd, and so prevented this occasion of the Peoples Sin. And how often may we observe, how when men are making haste to sin, God in his Providence (and *Angels* are the ordinary Instruments of his Providence, as hath been shew'd) sets something or other in the way to hinder it?

Num. 22. 22.

Deut. 34. 6.

David was posting to destroy *Nabal* and all his Family, *I Sam.* 25. 32. but *Abigail* happily met him, and prevented his Sin; and *David* blesses God for sending *Abigail* to prevent him. Oh, it would much afflict our Hearts, if we did see all that God does by his *Angels* to keep us from sinning, sometimes blocking up our way, and making it difficult, and sometimes suggesting and casting in such Thoughts as do make us forbear: But enough of this.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

§ 1. How Angels are employ'd for Men in reference to the Body. § 2. How in making them prosperous in their Business. § 3. How in preserving them, and delivering them. § 4. The great Objection answer'd. § 5. What ways Angels use to defend Men, as by giving notice of danger. § 6. By discovering and restraining Enemies. § 7. How they can discover secret dangers. § 8. Whether good Angels are employ'd in afflicting Men. § 9. Whether Angels do pray for the Church. § 10. How they are Defenders of the Names of God's People.

S E C T. I.

Hitherto I have been shewing how Angels are employ'd about mens Souls, these they chiefly look after, and are most careful for, the Salvation of them being the chief end of their Ministry; yet are they concern'd for the Body or *Outward Man* also; and how, I shall briefly shew in this Chapter.

What Angels do for men, in reference to their *Bodies*, is either in *purveying* for them, in *prospering* their affairs, and in *guarding* and *defending* them: And how they are in these three ways employ'd for them, I shall particularly shew.

1. Angels are employ'd in *purveying* and *providing* things necessary for them. God uses them as *Stewards* and *Caterers*, to see that nothing be wanting that is fitting for them. When *Hagar* with *Ismael* her Son were ready to perish in the Wilderness, for want of Water, an Angel takes care for their supply, *Gen. 21. 17, 19.* When the *Israelites* were journeying in the Wilderness, Angels provided Food for them there: 'Tis said, *Man did eat Angels food,*

food, he sent them meat to the full. 'Tis call'd *Angels Food*, Pfal. 78. 25. not because it was such Food as Angels feed upon, (they need no relief for bodily Food, as we do) but Angels Food, because provided and brought to them by Angels.

When the Prophet *Elijah* was fain to fly for his Life from Queen *Jezabel*, who sought to kill him, and was in distress in the Wilderness, an Angel brought him Meat. 1 Kin. 19. 5, 6, 7. We must acknowledg there was something extraordinary in these Instances, but who can reasonably question Angels ordinary ministring for the supply of the Wants of God's People, when Angels encamping about God's People, is given as a Reason why such shall not want any thing? So *Psal. 34. 7.* compar'd with *ver. 9.* 'Tis said, *ver. 7. The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.* Well, and what then? See *ver. 9. O fear the Lord, ye his Saints, for there is no want to them that fear him.* No want shall be to them, because Angels attend upon them; therefore Angels provide for them.

And whosoever observes how strangely some men have been provided for in their straits, must needs acknowledg there is something more than Humane in it. *Mr. White*, in his *Power of Godliness*, relates two or three very notable Histories to this purpose: A *Doctor of Divinity*, of singular Learning and Piety, when all his Money was spent, and his Wife fell a weeping, seeing little likelihood of being able longer to subsist, he wish'd her to send her Servant to Market, and rely on Providence: She accordingly sent her Maid, and so it hapned, that a *Nobleman* that knew the Doctor well, seeing the Maid (an ancient Servant) as he look'd out at the Window, he call'd her up, and ask'd her how her Master did, and when she told what straits her Master was in, he gave the Maid Ten Pounds, and the other Gentlemen that were in company made it up Fifteen Pounds, which she carried home. Again, another poor Family being in great want, having little or nothing for the Children to eat, being at last not able to quiet them any longer without some Food, that very night the Lord *Falkland* waking before midnight, could not sleep, and it came into his mind that this Family was in great want; whereupon he call'd up some of

his Servants, and sent them with a great Loaf and a Cheefe to the House, where they found the Children crying for Bread, and the Parents weeping by them. Were not Angels at work here think you? that this Lord should at that very time be waked out of his Sleep, and call that poor Family to mind; that he should call up his Servants at that time of Night, and send them with Relief then, when any one would judge it was very unseasonable. For my part, I make no question, the Angels (tho' unseen) were then appointed of God to be Purveyors for this distressed Family, and they caus'd this Lord's Sleep to depart from him, and brought this poor Family to his Mind.

I might fill several Pages with like Instances, if need were; I gave you two notable ones before, in shewing the Angels Care of Children; And out of doubt, God's Peoples Necessities would be better supplied than sometimes they are; and such Providences as those before reported would be more usual, if men could trust God more. "For my part, (says Mr. *Ambrose*) if, together with the Word, my own Experience may be any encouragement, I do verily think, that rather than thou shouldst dye for Thirst [who art a godly Man or Woman] an Angel will open thine Eyes to see a Fountain, out of which thou maist fill thy Bottle with Water, and take and drink.

However, I will not venture to say positively, that there never was any faithful Servant of God reduc'd to extream Want; yea, and that did die for lack of Food. Angels are but Servants of Divine Providence, and if God should in his infinite Wisdom see it meet, for secret Reasons, to order it so to happen in some particular case, this would not weaken the Truth in hand, *viz.* That God imployes his Angels *ordinarily* to provide things necessary for his People.

Lazarus was a Beggar, and yet went to Heaven; and questionless it went very hard with him many a time. If there were none poor, there would be no room for the exercise of the Charity of such as have abundance. But yet for good men to be reduc'd to Beggary, was so rare a thing in *David's* time, that he says, *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his*

seed begging bread. He does not say, that there had never been in all his time a godly man enforc'd to beg, but that he had never observ'd any such thing. It very rarely happens, yet some may be driven to it; yea, I see no sufficient reason to deny, that a prevailing Famine may carry away some good men among the rest. For Reasons best known to himself, God may order his Angels to forbear ministring Relief to the Body in some particular cases, and yet it may be very ordinary for Angels to make provision for mens Bodies in their need.

S E C T. II.

2ly, **A**ngels are employ'd in prospering mens affairs, and making them to succeed well in their hands. Every man, while he is here in this World, has several Busineses to look after and manage, several Works to do, wherein it behoves him to use his greatest diligence and best skill, according to Solomon's Counsel, *Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*, that is, with all the strength and skill thou hast: But when a man does so, he is notwithstanding uncertain what the success and issue of his labour will be. The issues and events of things are in the hands of God, and dispos'd by his Providence, even as pleases him; we cannot be certain how things will speed, and whether our labour will be prosperous, and how far. *In the morning (says the wise man) sow thy seed, and in the evening with-hold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.* Now here the Angels, that are the Instruments of God's Providence, have a very great hand, and very ordinarily do more in prospering Busineses, than the most diligent and prudent men can do.

Eccles. 9. 10.

Eccles. 11. 6.

For proof of this, we have a famous and pregnant Instance; 'tis *Abraham's* Servant, that he sent into *Syria*, to get a Wife for his Son *Isaac*; that business had not a little difficulty and hazard in it, yet the Servant dispatch'd it very happily and speedily. And by what means was it? No doubt this Servant was a faithful, prudent, diligent Servant, for *Abraham* had committed all that he had to him,

Gen. 24. 7,
10. 40.

therefore he did do his best ; but notwithstanding that, his Undertaking might have prov'd a work of longer time, and greater difficulty, and not have issued so well neither. How did he speed so well, and make so quick dispatch ? Why God promis'd to send his Angel with him, to prosper him in his way, and, no question, did so. The Servant, when he saw how well he sped, owns God's Goodness in sending an Angel with him. But what did the Angel do ? There's no express mention of any thing the Angel did in his business; but yet, no doubt, the Angel, according to God's Promise, did prosper him. And how ? Why there is one thing noted in the History that did much expedite his business: It did happily fall out that, as soon as he came near the City he was sent to, that very *Damsel* that was to be a *Wife* for *Isaac* came forth to the Well where he rested himself, and by her civility to him, encourag'd him to enquire who she was, and he found her to be the Person he was to seek out : Now this God did by the Angel order so to happen. It was a meer Accident and Casualty in respect of the Servant, he could not by any forecast of his have order'd it so to fall out, but by this means his business was in a manner half ended.

The Success of things does very ordinarily depend upon such Accidents, which are altogether out of our power, and are dispos'd by the ministry of Angels. And sometimes when we do little in matters our selves, by the concurring of several little things order'd by the agency of Angels, great things are brought about for us: as in *Mordecai's* advancement, there were several little things that concurring were the means of it: The *King* could not sleep ; he calls for the Book of the *Records* of the *Chronicles*; the place that he lighted on to be read before him was, where *Mordecai's* good Service was recorded ; and when the King makes enquiry, whether *Mordecai* was ever rewarded for this, there was one at hand to tell the *King*, (while he was in so good a mind) that *Mordecai* was at the Gate. All these things so happily concurring, *Mordecai* came to be advanc'd to great Honour. There was (no doubt) the hand of an Angel of God in disposing these

these casual circumstances, and so is there in some mens wonderful thriving and prospering in the World.

'Tis very worthy Consideration what *Solomon* says, *Eccles. 9. 11. The race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all.* That is, 'tis not mens Strength, nor their Care, or Wit, on which the success of their Affairs depends, but the happy concurrence of advantageous circumstances, and some future contingencies which God disposes by the ministry of his Angels, and no man living can have in his power: On these the success of things mostly depends. A man may take more pain and care than another does, and yet speed worse, when he chances not to take so good a time, or some other things do not so well suit and favour his Undertaking.

What a great difference is it to a *Merchant*, when he has laid out a great Sum of Money in a Commodity, if there be a sudden great Rise or Fall of the price of it? Yet this is a Casualty that sometimes cannot possibly be foreseen by the most considering person.

For the Souldier in the Host of *Midian* to dream such a Dream as he did, and report it to his Fellows, at another time would have been of little concernment, but it happening to be just before *Gideon* gave them battel, that Accident put Courage into *Gideon*, and so discourag'd the *Midianites*, that that huge Army was totally defeated by an handful of Men. Judg. 7. 13, 14, 15.

Where would *Israel* have had a Champion to encounter with *Goliab*, if *David* had not by accident come into the Army at the very time? But his seasonable coming was not only the death of *Goliab*, but the overthrow of the *Philistines* Host.

Was it not a meer Accident, that *Philip* should take his Journey the same way which the *Eunuch* came, and at the very same time, by which it came to pass that they so happily met? But this was all an Angel's doing; *The Angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go to wards the South, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza.* 'Twas by meer chance that the *Eunuch* Acts 8. 26.

met him, but yet such as (you see) was directed by an Angel; and so are many others in Mens Commerce, Labours, Travels, and Negotiations, by which means many are very prosperous, and flourish in the World, and do grow rich, grow great, and grow famous beyond expectation.

S E C T. III.

3ly, **A**ngels are employ'd as *Guardians*, in *defending* and *keeping* Men from such Evils as might any way annoy them, and in delivering them out of such Evils as light on them. Malignant Spirits, or Devils, are for hurting, killing, and destroying. The Psalmist says, *The wicked plotteth against the just, and wicked men, they are of their Father the Devil, they do as he does, and he setteth them on; they are for bringing mischievous Devices to pass; they are for Prisons, Exiles, Fire and Faggot, any thing that destroys: This is the Devil's Work, He goes about seeking whom he may devour, and that as to the Body and Outward Man, as well as the Soul.* On the contrary the Holy Angels are for preserving, for saving and keeping harmless, and are very busie this way. When the King of Syria sent an Army to take the Prophet *Elisha*, and they beleaguer'd the City in which he was, the Prophet's Servant was quite dismay'd, and cried out, *Alas* 2 Kin. 6. 15. *Master, what shall we do?* But they had there a strong guard of Angels about them, which the Servant could not see. *Fear not* (says *Elisha*) *there are more with us than are against us: and he prayed God, and his Servant's eyes were opened, and he saw, and was satisfied.* The Angels were about them before, tho' the Servant saw it not till then. God does not let us see our Heavenly Keepers, but they are about us still.

V. 16.

They keep us from *Contagious Diseases*, and other Sicknesses and bodily Harms. Peruse the Promise, *There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling; For he shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways, they shall bear up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone,* Pf. 91. 10, 11, 12.

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When any *Pestilential Diseases* rage, how fearful are men? When the *Plague*, or but the *Small Pox*, or a dangerous *Fever* is abroad in the Town, men are afraid to walk the Streets, or come near the House where any are sick: But there would be less fear, if men were sensible of the Angels Care, and that 'tis employed this way, in keeping off Sicknesses, yea and in curing of them too, as indeed it is.

Devils have a hand in bringing Diseases on men, as is evident in *Job's Case*, and Angels are at work to keep them off, and remove them. 'Twas an Angel stirred the Waters of *Bethesda*, and made them healing. There be (says a Learned man) many Waters and other things that have an healing Virtue in them, which is not wondered at, when common, but all pious men acknowledge, that 'tis the gift of a good God, and the motion of the holy Angels, as well as in that Pool of *Bethesda*. *Quicquid uspiam salutare est opus Angelorum.*

Bucer speaking of the Waters of Bethesda says, Miram pleraq, aquar & res alie ad sanandum corpora virtutem habent, sed dum perpetua illis ea virtus adest, &c. desit esse admirationi: Sed pii huiusmodi omnia dona agnoscunt optimi Patris, motusq; esse sanctorum Angelorum, non minus quàm huius Laci commotio.

Many other Evils besides Sicknesses men are obnoxious to, Wounds, Bruises, broken Bones, and a thousand distempers by wild Beasts, Fire, Storms and Tempests, Thunders and Lightning, and Preservations and Deliverances from these are the effects of the Angels Care. *There shall no evil befall thee*, so runs the Promise. The Angels have Power over the Elements, and all corporeal things both animate and inanimate, Storms and Tempests and Fire make great destruction sometimes, and there are dreadful effects of Thunder and Lightning; Angels can cause these, and can keep men from being hurt by them. They kept the Fire from touching *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, and the Lions from hurting *Daniel*, And we read of *four Angels standing on the four corners of the Earth*, that had power to hold the four Winds of the Earth, that they should not blow on the Earth or on the Sea, nor on any tree, nor hurt the Earth.

Dan. 3. ch 6
Rev. 7. 1, 2, 3

Moreover much there is that men suffer one from another, and more that they would suffer if it were not prevented

vented by these beneficent Spirits. Angels do much in preserving men from, and in delivering out of the hands of Oppressors, and Destroyers, but more especially in hiding the faithful Servants of God, when they are hunted after by Persecutors, and in delivering them out of their hands.

Acts 5. 19. An Angel of the Lord opened the Prison doors and brought forth the Apostle that had been shut up there.

Acts 12. 6, 7, 10. Peter was a second time in Prison, and in Fetters too, and an Angel came, and set him free. *His fetters fell off, and when he came to the Iron gate of the City it opened to him.*

The History of *Grinæus* (related before) is very wonderful, and we have another as much to our present purpose, of a good man, who when he was sought after by his Persecutors, crept into a dark hole in the House to hide himself, and as soon as he was got in, a *Spider* drew a *Web* over the mouth of the hole: When the Searchers came, one of them would have look'd in there for the man, where indeed he was, but the other observing that there was a *Spider's Web* over the hole, concluded he could not be there, and therefore they ceased their Search. What an Artifice of the good Man's Angel-guardian was this to preserve him? Tho' Persecutors are crafty as well as cruel, yet our keepers are more cunning than they, and can out-wit them.

S E C T. IV.

BUT here it will be objected. Whatever you say Experience assures us, that many disasters do befall God's own People, yea as many befall them as other men: There seems to be no difference, or if any, the best men are wont to be the greatest Sufferers: And they suffer sometimes when they are in such ways as the Promise is they shall be kept in, by the Angels.

To this I answer, 1. It ought not to seem strange to any, that Disasters do befall good men as often as others, and that they are as great or greater Sufferers, notwithstanding the Care that Angels have of them, according
to

to our Supposition: For there are good reasons hereof.

1. Good men have more enemies in the World than others have, and such as are more full of Rage and Fury, being set on by the Devil, who also hateth them more than he does others. 2. God chuses out them some to be as his Champions, and calleth them forth into the Field to encounter with the Rage and Fury of the World, that he may be glorified by their Faith, and Patience, and Constancy in suffering: So that such Sufferings of theirs are not to be estimated any part of their Infelicity, but their Glory and their Crown. *Rejoice* (says the Apostle *Peter*) *in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy: If ye be reproached for the name of Christ happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you.* 1 Pet. 4. 13, 14.

2. God promises Protection from bodily Sufferings alway with Reservation of Liberty to himself, when 'tis for his own Glory, and his Peoples good, to permit them to be afflicted. Now there are times when 'tis most for God's Glory that his People should suffer, and then his Angels have Instructions to give way to it. When our Saviours time for suffering was come, he says he could have prayed to his Father, and he would have given him Legions of Angels, to keep him out of his enemies hands, but then he would not because his time was come to glorify God by suffering. The Angels ministred to him at other times, as a Guard, but now he would not have them so to do.

3. Tho' some Disasters befall good men, and they suffer many things by the hands of their Persecutors, yet they may be preserved by the Angels care, from many others that they are obnoxious to. No man can think how many unseen dangers we walk thro' every day, and because we see not our dangers, we observe not our Preservations and Deliverances.

4. When Angels do not keep off Evils, they may much mitigate them, and support under them, and so they do. Their business is not only to keep God's People from trouble, but in it. And God promises the one as well

as the other. See *Isa. 43. 2. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee, and thro' the rivers they shall not overflow thee, when thou walkest thro' the Fire thou shalt not be burnt, &c.* By Water and Fire, he means all kind of troubles, and he keeps the faithful man from being swallowed up of them. *I will correct thee in measure* (says the Lord) *and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.* Angels keep us up in Affliction, as well as from it.

Jer. 30. 11.

5. God's People do not alway keep in their way, and when they are out of their way, evil may befall them, they have not a Promise of the same Protection. You know the Promise is limited. *He shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways.* When thou art in the way of thy general Calling, and of thy particular Calling, thou art in *thy ways*; But when thou art taking any irregular Course, this Promise belongs not to thee. The Devil left out this Clause when he tempted *Christ*, to throw himself down from the Pinnacle of the Temple, But *Christ* easily discovered the Fraud, and Answers, *It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* *Christ* knew that wilfully to expose himself to hurt, would have been a tempting of God, and no Promise of Angels Protection is made to such as take such an irregular Course.

If it do happen (as sometimes it may) that a faithful Servant of God, does suffer while he is in his way, and so in the Angels hands, it is that he may be tried, exercised, and made better thereby. He shall certainly be a real gainer by it. The Nurse let the Child fall a little sometimes to make it more wary. Wherefore we might ease our selves of our Cares, and Fears, if we were well provided with Answers to Mr. *Dod's* two Questions (as one says) *Who am I? What do I?* If thou canst well answer these Two Questions, thou art safe. Am I a Child of God? And am I in my way? If so, thou hast Potent Watchful Keepers alway about thee.

S E C T. V.

BUT here you will ask me, *What is that which Angels are wont to do, in order to the preservation and deliverance of God's People? How do they work, in what way, and by what means?*

I answer, Several ways Angels have to preserve and to deliver them from evil intended against them. Sometimes by giving them secret notice before hand, sometimes by making their enemies forbear Prosecution of them.

1. They sometimes gives secret notice to God's People of what evil is intended against them, by which means they can the better provide for their own Safety. *Præmonitus præmunitus.* One that is forewarn'd is fore-armed. Many mischiefs might easily be prevented, if we could but foresee them. If a Man knew when his House would be broken up, he could easily get him a Guard, that should master the Thieves. Now Angels often give God's people notice before-hand of their danger, and this they do either immediately by themselves, or mediately by some men or other, that are privy to it.

They give notice and warning *immediately* by themselves, as an Angel did to *Joseph*, acquainting him with *Herod's* Intention to kill the Blessed Babe *Jesus*, and advising him to fly with the Child into *Egypt*. 'Tis very rarely that Angels do now give warning so, in Dreams, or Apparitions, yet sometimes they do. An Angel appeared to *Melancthon*, and gave notice that the Soldiers were coming to search for *Grynæus*, and wish'd him presently to be gone, as was noted before. And when they do not appear, yet they do sufficiently disclose mischievous Designs, or imminent Dangers, and that by inward Suggestions and Impressions of Fear. Sometimes Persons have thoughts come into their minds, and Fears and Jealousies arise in them they know not how, nor why perhaps. They can see no ground for them, and yet they cannot be satisfied, to stay (suppose) in such a place, to go such a Journey, or the like. These are often secret hints, and whispers of Angels, in order to the avoiding

Mat. 2. 13.

some imminent danger that men are in. As when that Man's Daughter was so earnest for going to Bed sooner than ordinary, and when all were gone to their Chambers that part of the House where they were before, fell down, and would have slain them all, if they had staid longer there, as I related before: This was a warning from an Angel. Thus do Angels more immediately give notice of dangers. Sometimes they do it by some Person or other, that is either concerned in, or at *least* privy to what mischief is intended. In the discovery of the late horrid *Popish Plot*, there were some (you know) concerned in it, that were so troubled in mind, that they could not be quiet till they had made it known. God grant the discovery of it may be duly improved, and we not become a Prey to the bloody *Papists* notwithstanding. And in the discovery of the *Powder-Plot*, there was one writ a Letter to his Friend, to prevent his danger (not intending to disclose the Treason) and by occasion of that Letter, search being made, the Devilish Project was found out, and prevented. *Paul* was preserved by his Kinsmans coming by accident, to know the design the *Jews* had to take away his Life.

Acts 23. 16.

By such means and ways as these great dangers, otherwise unavoidable, have been discovered and so prevented, and not without the Care and Agency of Gods holy Angels, who are appointed to be Guardians of his People.

2ly, Sometimes Angels preserve God's People from suffering, and deliver them out of it, by checking, restraining and disabling their Persecutors. This the Angels do sometimes by diverting them, as they did *Saul*, when he was pursuing *David*: They stirred up the *Philistines* to invade the Land, and so *Saul* could follow *David* no longer, he had other Fish to fry. When the men of *Sodom* came to *Lot's* house to abuse him and the Strangers he had entertain'd; an Angel struck them with Blindness, that they could not find the Door. Here such a check was given the men, that they were discouraged from proceeding any further in their brutish Rage.

Gen. 19. 10,
11.

When the *Syrians* besieged *Samaria*, they were made to hear such a noise of Chariots and Horses in the Night, as ^{2 Kings 6. 6.} made them all run away, and the City was deliver'd. Angels (as has been shewed) have Power on mens outward Senses, yea and upon the Imagination also, so as they can infatuate and delude men, and so they often do the Churches enemies. Sometimes they execute the Judgments of God on Persecutors, and cut off such as are most hot, and fierce. *Herod* was a most cruel Persecutor, and stretched out his hand to vex the Church: He had put *James* to death, and imprisoned *Peter*, with an intent to deal in like manner with him also: and God knows what havock he would have made if he had been let alone: But God would not suffer him any longer, and it is said, *an Angel of the Lord smote him*, Acts 12. 23.

When *Sennacherib* lay Siege against *Jerusalem*, an Angel ^{2 Kings 19. 35.} of the Lord defeated his Army, and in one Night slew of his men one hundred fourscore and five Thousand. Thus do the Angels preserve God's People from, and deliver them out of trouble.

S E C T. VI.

BUT there is somewhat that is to be objected against both those ways of Angels preserving and delivering God's People.

Against the former which is supposed to be by discovering their danger to them beforehand; This may seem to be more than Angels can do. Do Angels know things that are to come, so as to be able to give notice of them before-hand? Does not God challenge this Power as his own peculiar? *Isa. 41. 23. Shew the things to come, that we may know that ye are Gods.* None but God (it seems) can tell what is to come hereafter.

To this I answer, None but God can tell all things that are to come, but there are some things to come that men of a very ordinary reach can foretell. Every one can foretell that to Morrow the Sun will rise at such an Hour, and in such a part of the Heaven. An *Astronomer* by his greater Knowledge, can tell the very Day and

Hour when there will be an *Eclipse* of the Sun, or Moon. The necessary Causes of these are in being, and known, and therefore they may be foretold.

Such as are privy to a secret Plot or Design, and are acquainted with all Transactions about it, can tell before-hand when 'twill be set on foot. Men of great insight into Nature, and the Affairs of the World, can foresee, and foretell many things that are perfect Secrets to others.

Now the Blessed Angels having a most perfect Knowledge of Nature, and of all that is done in this visible World, they can foretell more things than the wisest and most knowing Men can.

Somewhat has been discoursed before of the Angels Knowledge. They cannot certainly tell what is in the Heart of a Man, or what he intends, if he have by no Action, Word, or Sign, disclosed it, And so they cannot foretell things that are merely contingent, and depending on the Free-will of Man, or Pleasure of God. But

1. Whatever things have necessary Causes in being, the Angels, by their natural Sagacity, can foresee, and so foretell.

2. Whatever Designs are on foot, and Men do discourse about them, and make Preparations for the perfecting of them, (tho' they manage this with all possible Privacy) the Angels know all this, and can tell what men are about to do before-hand. Angels are in secret *Cabals*, and *Councils*, and know what is agitated there, and can give Intelligence thereof. The King of *Syria* complain'd of his *Courtiers*, and thought that some of them had betrayed his Counsels to the King of *Israel*; But there was no need of that, the Angels that knew all the Resolves of his Council, could acquaint the Prophet with them, and he the King of *Israel*. And so it was, as one of the King of *Syria's* Servants truly informs him. *Elisha the Prophet*

2 King. 6. 12. *that is in Israel, telleth the King of Israel the words that thou speakest in the Bed Chamber.*

3. Whatever Angels have Instructions from God to effect, that they can foretell. The Devil could tell *Saul*, that

that he and his Sons should be slain the next day in Battel, and that his Army should be defeated, 1 Sam. 28. 19. 'Tis very like the Devil had leave of God to be an Instrument in effecting this, and so he could give notice of it beforehand: why so can good Angels give notice of any such things as they are appointed to effect.

The Woman that had a Spirit of *Divination*, brought in her Masters much Gain by foretelling things, Acts 16. 16. Angels Knowledge is, no doubt, as great as the Devils.

This in answer to what may be objected against the first way of *Angels* preserving God's People.

S E C T. VII.

Against the latter, which is by cutting off their Enemies, it may be objected, That it seems not to be the proper Work of good Angels to destroy and cut off Men. Some chuse to say, That Angels are sent to be Instruments of Good to Men, but the Instruments by which Evils are inflicted, are the Devils. And they think this prov'd Luke 10. 19. where Serpents and Scorpions, and whatever else is noxious and hurtful to Man, is call'd, *The Power of the Enemy, i. e. the Devil*; *I give you power to tread on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the power of the Enemy*: Therefore such hurtful things properly belong to the Enemy, the Devil, as God's Executioner, that with them he may afflict men: And he is said to have the power of Death, Heb. 2. 14. that is, as being the Executioner of it, wherefore the Hebrews call the Devil *Samael*, and the Angel of Death.

Angelos bonos Deus mittit ad salutem, malos ad exitium.
Pet. Mart.

Existimo quicquid menti aut corpori accidit adversi, id esse immisionem per Angelos malos: quicquid usquam salutare est opus Angelorum. *Bucer.*

To this I answer, It is evident in the Word of God, that God executes his Judgments on men both by good and evil Angels, and not by evil Angels only. *David* praying against the Enemies of the Church, says, *Let them be as Chaff before the Wind, and let the Angel of the Lord scatter them. Let their way be dark and slippery, and let the Angel of the Lord persecute them.* This form of expression seems to import, that God's blessed Angels are ordinary
In-

Psal. 35. 5, 6.

Instruments in punishing the Churches Enemies. 'Tis true, the Psalmist speaking of the Plagues that were brought on the *Egyptians*, says, *God cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, &c. by sending evil Angels among them.* So we read the Text; but learned *Camero* thinks it should not be read, *evil Angels*, but *the evil of Angels*. רציוֹם, *i. e.* Evil is not an Adjective, but a Substantive, for מלכּוֹ is in *Regimine*, and therefore should be render'd *the Evil of Angels*; that is, such Evil as Angels were employ'd in afflicting. It cannot well be denied, but that the first-born of the *Egyptians* were slain by a good Angel, for 'tis said, He *Exod. 12. 23.* spar'd the *Israelites*, and pass'd over their Houses. And

Nec verò tantum per Angelos malos tanquam carnifices suos (quod quidam existimant) exequitur pœnis scelerum humanorum, sed etiam per bonos nunquam exercet judicia sua.

Mollerus:

were they not good Angels that brought *Lot* out of *Sodom*, and then destroy'd it? And the Plagues that are to come upon *Antichrist*, are they not spoken of as effects of the Viois which the Angels are to pour out? Therefore it is not unusual for God to employ good Angels in executing of his Judgments; nor is there any thing in their Nature or Office that should hinder this: For tho' they are ('tis acknowledg'd) Ministers of Good, so this is for Good (*viz.*) for the Church, (for whose sakes especially Angels are sent forth) that the Enemies thereof should be check'd, and, when they prove implacable, be cut off. Such as have the care of Families or Kingdoms, it belongs to them not only to cherish, protect, and make much of such as do well, but to restrain, chastise, and punish such as are disorderly.

S E C T. VIII.

AND now, while we are upon the Angels being employ'd as Executioners of God's Judgments on men, it will not be amiss yet further to enquire, *Whether they are made use of in afflicting God's own People. as well as in punishing the wicked.* It seems not well consisting with the love Angels bear to good men, and their Office, which is to be Ministers of Good to such, for them to be employ'd in causing

causing their Sorrow and Grief. Punishing of good men seems a Work fitter for Devils than for good Angels.

To this I answer, Angels are sometimes employ'd in afflicting and punishing God's own faithful Servants. It was an Angel of the Lord that met *Moses* in the Inn, and would have slain him, for neglecting to circumcise his Child. Exod. 4. 34. It was an Angel that punish'd *David's* Sin, in num- 2 Sam. 24. bring the People, and that brought that Pestilence that destroy'd such multitudes. It was an holy Angel of God that smote *Zechary*, *John the Baptist's* Father, with Dumbness for his Unbelief. Luke 1.

Several Instances of good men chastiz'd by Angels *Ecclesiastical History* affords us, there is no need to produce them.

'Tis true, they are not alway employ'd: Devils sometimes afflict God's People, and they have a great mind to be on such Work. Satan ask'd leave of God to afflict *Job*, and he had liberty to do it: And Christ tells his Apostles, *Satan had desired to winnow them, to sift them as Wheat*, Luke 22. 31. *Paul had a messenger of Satan to buffet him.* 2 Cor. 12. 7. And the Church of *Smyrna* is told, *That the Devil should cast some of them into Prison.* Rev. 2. 10. The meaning is not, that he should do it immediately, but by Persecutors that he should set on, and therefore he is said to do it: And sometimes he does afflict them more immediately; he did *Job* both ways. This cannot be denied, yet Devils have not that power over good men, that they have over others. We 1 Cor. 5. 5. read of certain contumacious and obstinate Sinners, that 1 Tim. 1. 20. were to be deliver'd unto Satan; some think that such as were then deliver'd to Satan were ordinarily vex'd by him with grievous Pains and Diseases, and that the power of delivering men thus to *Satan* was an extraordinary Power which the Church then had and exercis'd on such as were excommunicated, and was for the restraint of contumacious Persons, while there were no Christian Magistrates to restrain and punish them. But if nothing be meant by delivering to *Satan*, but Excommunication it self (as others think) yet the Phrase must needs import thus much, *viz.* That Persons cast out of the Church, or meriting it, are more under the power of *Satan* than such as continue in
its

its fellowship, and walk orderly in it. Wherefore, tho' good men may by the operation of the Devil be afflicted, yet they are not so much under his power as some others are, they are not deliver'd to him. This by the by. But to return ; Tho' Devils have often an hand in afflicting God's People, yet it is true also, that Angels are very ordinarily employ'd in chastening of them.

For any one to go about to determine when, and what Afflictions come by Devils, what by Angels, would be a very great Presumption : Only this is certain, God makes use of both, in punishing both good and bad men.

2. It is no way inconsistent with that tender Love that Angels bear to good men, for them to chastise them sometimes. Parents dearly love their Children, and yet will foundly whip them when there is cause. And the Apostle says, *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* God loves his Children better than Angels do, and if afflicting consists with God's Love, it does with Angels Love too.

3. That Angels are employ'd in chastening, is, I count, matter of singular comfort and encouragement ; for if a man must suffer, he would rather chuse to suffer by the hands of a friendly and good person, than by the hands of a cruel Enemy. You know how *David* resolves the case : Let me fall into the hand of the Lord, (for his Mercies are great) and let me not fall into the hand of men. Why ? Men have their Passions, that are apt to transport them into unmeet Severity, and make them to become cruel, instead of being just ; but God, when he punishes his People, it is *in measure*, and for their good and profit, that they may be partakers of his holiness. *Had he smitten him* (says the Prophet) *as he smote those that smote him, &c ?* God handles his People more gently than he handles others : *In measure when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it. He stayeth the rough wind in the day of the East wind : By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.* Thus God handles his People, and that because he is very gracious. Now the Angels are best like him of any of his Creatures, and they have the same Design as He has, and the same Care to

temper the Saints Sufferings; they will not put one grain of bitterness into them more than needs.

Wherefore (I say) 'tis matter of singular comfort that God uses Angels in our Chastisements; they smite us who are sent of God to keep and cherish us. We may say as *David* does of the Reproofs of Good Men, *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oyl, which shall not break my head.* Lord, let the Blessed Angels be my Chasteners, put thy Rod into their hands: So have we reason to pray, and that we may not be in the hands of any of Satan's Messengers. Angels will use the Rod so, as that tho' we have *Pain*, yet we shall have *Profit*, and we shall feel no more than they will help us to bear; when they strike with one hand, they will support with the other.

And thus have I shew'd, as fully as I can, how Angels are employ'd both for *Soul* and *Body*.

S E C T. X.

I Desire to take all my Measures from the Word of God, and not to be wise above what is written; yet shall I take liberty to note, that it is here further added by some, that tho' there be (questionless) *but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*, and he alone does obtain good things for us, and maketh us accepted with God; yet may it without offence be said, 1. That Angels do pray for God's Church and People: 2. That they are employ'd in the Patronage and Defence of the Names of his People, against the false accusations of the Devil and his Instruments. And how far this may be allow'd, I shall briefly enquire in this Section.

1. Angels (some say) do pray for the Church and People of God, and they conceive it to be sufficiently prov'd *Zech. 1. 12.* where it is written, *And the Angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy upon Jerusalem, and on the Cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? I know some are of the opinion, that this was not a created Angel, but the Angel of the Covenant, the Son of God*

himself, *who ever lives to make intercession*: But others think (not improbably) that it was a created Angel, because 'tis said in the next Verse, *The Lord answered the Angel with good and comfortable words.*

In eo nihil
erit incommo-
di si dicamus,
quemlibet ex

Calvin does not dislike this Opinion; for Angels have the charge of the Faithful, and there is no danger in saying they do make Prayers for them.

Angelis præcatum fuisse pro Ecclesiâ, &c. Angelis commissa est cura fidelium, & vigilant semper pro toto corpore & singulis membris. Ergo non mirum si etiam preces concipiant pro fidelibus. *Calv.*

But whereas the *Papists* do hence take occasion to argue, Angels pray for men, therefore much more do the deceased Saints do so: They are foolish and vain in their reasoning; for it belongs to the Angels Office to take care of the safety of men, but we read not that Saints deceased have any such Office assign'd them. Whatever Work or Service any Man is devoted to, and does busie himself in, he is desirous it should prosper in his hands; now the Angels work being to promote the Safety and Happiness of the Church and People of God, they must needs be desirous that this should succeed well, and why should we think they do not sometimes present those Desires to God, which is properly to pray?

But let this be granted, yet will it not hence follow, that we may pray to Angels. The Scripture no where countenances any such practice, (as shall hereafter be fully evinc'd.) The Scriptures testify of the Angels love to us, and care of us; not that we should go to them for help, but that we may be more fully perswaded of God's love to us, and go to him with the more confidence, seeing he hath appointed such Aids and Helps for us.

I purpose not to insist any further on this; but sure, if this be so, it should be no small strengthening to our Confidence in difficult and dangerous times, *viz.* to know that there are the Prayers not only of good men, but of good Angels too, that do sollicit for the Churches Safety.

S E C T. XI.

2. **T**HE other Ministry which is ascrib'd to Angels is, as *Patrons and Defenders of the Names of God's People*, against the false Accusations of the Devil and his Instruments: They (say some) carry a good report of them to Heaven, and do vindicate their Innocency upon all occasions.

You know the Devil is call'd *The Accuser of the Brethren*. Rev. 12. 10.

He perfectly hates the Saints of God, and will speak no good of them, but most enviously and maliciously represents them both to God and to men; first of all to God, making the worst of every thing, to provoke God against them. You read how he represented *Job*, as if he had been a meer mercenary person, when God had given a very honourable Character of him: *There is none like unto him in the earth, (says God) a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil.* Now observe what the Devil answers, most enviously reflecting on this good man:

Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, &c? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land: but put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Job 1. 8. with 10, 11.

And a second time, when God commended *Job* for his Constancy, *Still he holdeth fast his Integrity, (says God) altho' thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause.* Tho' *Job* had given such proof of his Sincerity, in keeping close to God, when he had taken all from him, yet the Devil basely reproaches him before God still, and says, *Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life: But put forth thy hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.*

Job 2. 3. with 4, 5.

Thus uses the Devil to misrepresent men to God; and some think that he is call'd *the Accuser of the Brethren* in that place in the *Revelations*, with respect unto this History of *Job*.

Secondly, the Devil ill represents God's People unto men too; 'tis his design to make them as odious as he can in the Eye of the World; he stirs wicked men up to re-

proach and disgrace them, and to lay things to their charge which they really abhor, to nick-name them, and give odious Characters of them; he incenses and stirs up Princes and inferiour Magistrates against them, without cause, and procures Laws to be made on purpose that good Men may be found breakers of the Laws, as you know was done in *Daniel's* case: a Law was made purposely to ensnare *Daniel*, and to provoke the King against him, as a contemner of his Authority. The Devil is in all such practices. Now this being the Work of Devils, to reproach and disgrace God's People, and to misrepresent them, it may (I think) without danger be acknowledg'd to be a part of Angels Work to report well of them, and that they do so both to God and men.

First to God. 'Tis true, God has no need to be told what men are, or what they do, He sees all things perfectly himself, without any Informer: Angels carry tidings to him, not for need, but for state and honour; as Kings have all things manag'd by Ministers. God knows all things, but he will have Angels to be Witnesses, and to give their Testimony concerning his People, and so they do. The Angels in the Prophet *Zeebary's* Vision report the state of things in those parts of the World where they were sent; *We have walked* (say they) *to and fro through the earth, and behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.* Other Nations and Kingdoms were in a quiet and peaceable state, only *Jerusalem* and *Judab* were in trouble and affliction, as they go on to report.

Zech. I. II.

In *Jacob's* Vision he saw the Angels going up and down the *Ladder* that reach'd from Heaven to Earth. They come down to attend their Charge here, and they go up to make report of it. God is not untold how 'tis with his People here, their Sufferings are reported, and so is their Zeal, their Purity, their Patience; 'tis all represented to him by these Heavenly Messengers: How should this comfort faithful men against Satan's Accusations, and the unjust Censures of the World?

I willingly grant, a Christian Man's chief support should be, that the Lord *Jesus Christ* is our *Advocate* with the Father, and when *Satan* accuses and stirs up God against us,
Christ

Christ takes up the matter, and not only reports our Cause truly, but enters a *Plea* for us, and obtains the pardon of such Sins as Satan may truly charge us with. Angels cannot do this, they meddle not with this Work, this is Christ's proper Work, and they will not presume to take it out of his hand. Let *Papists* look to it, whether they do not ascribe Christ's proper Work to Saints and Angels; we only yield, that Angels are true *Intelligencers*, and do testify for the Saints, which should be a great Comfort to them.

And then, as Angels truly report their matters to God, so (no doubt) they do much towards the vindication of them before Men. They detect the fallhood of the Reproaches of malicious Men, and make manifest the Innocency of good Men. The Angels were not idle in the case of the *Jews*, when *Haman* design'd to defame them, and more especially *Mordecai*, that stood most in his way. Several circumstances in that History were, no doubt, order'd by the ministry of Angels, tho' no express mention be made of their Agency.

Angels are *Keepers* of the *Names* of God's People, as well as of their *Souls* and *Bodies*, or else the Reproaches of malicious men would stick a great deal more than they do.

The Angels are *Keepers* of their Temporal Estates; they were such an *Hedg* about *Job's* Estate, that the Devil could not touch it, till God remov'd them from it: *Hast thou not made an hedg about him, (says Satan) and about his house, and about all that he bath?* Job 1. 10. This *Hedg* is taken to be a Guard of Angels: and if they be to guard God's Peoples Estates, then much more their Names, which are of greater value, according to *Solomon*, *Prov. 22. 1. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.*

Fear not the Calumnies and Reproaches of wicked men. The Devil hath never been able yet to root out of the Hearts of Men some reverend Esteem of pious Men. There is a beauty and majesty in the face of true Holiness, that commands Respect from very Enemies. King *Herod*, tho' a very wicked wretch, yet bare a reverend respect to *John the Baptist*; his Conscience told him *John* was a good

good man, and therefore he reverenc'd him. And there will be such, in the worst times, as will bear testimony to the Innocency and Worth of eminently holy Persons; and if they have none on Earth to vindicate them, the Angels of Heaven will take their part, and effectually, tho' invisibly, support their Credit.

Let this suffice touching what Angels do for men in their *life-time*, I mean, till such time as they come to die, which is the *second Period* of their Ministrations.

C H A P. IX.

- § 1. *What Angels do for Men at Death.* § 2. *They mitigate the Pains of Death, and make it more easy.*
 § 3. *They are Messengers of Comfort to dying persons.* § 4. *What Angels do immediately upon separation of Soul and Body.* § 5. *What they do at the Resurrection.* § 6. *The Belief of this Doctrine of the Ministry of Angels is urg'd.* § 7. *Of one great hindrance of the belief of it, viz. that there are seldom any Apparitions of Angels now, remov'd.*
 § 8. *The Reason and Ends of Apparitions when they were frequent, and that 'tis not so necessary nor so safe for us, that they should be now so frequent.*
 § 9. *Another Objection from the great sufferings of God's People, answer'd.* § 10. *Another Objection answer'd: And, that the Ministry of Angels places them not in any kind of inferiority to Men, is shew'd.*

S E C T. I.

THAT which remains is, to shew what Angels do for men *at Death*, and *after Death*, which is the *third* and *last Period* of their Ministrations. The Angels Ministry -

stry is not to cease until all the Heirs of Salvation are brought safe to Heaven, and settled there, and the rest deliver'd up to eternal Punishment ; when this is done, their Work of ministering is at an end ; in the mean while God makes use of them.

As for wicked Men, who have persever'd in their Wickedness to the last, stubbornly refusing from time to time the help and conduct of those Heavenly Agents, they have by their wilfulness and impenitency so distast'd them, that in this last Period we may look upon them (the most of them at least) as wholly in a manner deserted and forsaken : But as for faithful Christians, that for the main have been tractable and obedient, Angels (no doubt) shew them most Love at last.

And first, *at Death* ; when Death is near approaching, when they are entering on their last Conflicts with that *King of Fears*, this is a time in which men have more than ordinary need of Angels aid and succour. Now Angels having attended God's People all their life long, 'tis absurd to think they should have them now in their greatest need, when they are just taking their leave of all things here, never to see them more, when they are parting with dearest Friends and Acquaintance, and when they are destitute of all sensible Delight, can neither hear, nor see, nor taste, nor feel any thing that is pleasant ; when they are under divers sharp pains, and continual faintings, the natural Spirits being almost quite spent ; and when by this means the Mind also is much disabled, and unfitted for wonted Contemplations and Devotions ; yea, and evil Spirits are attending with a desire to dismay and confound them, and to shake their Faith, which is all they have to support them : at such a time as this the blessed Angels will not, doubtless, leave God's People ; no, they have there a special Part to act with them, and for them, when they are so hard beset.

Our Saviour *Christ's* Agony in the Garden, was just before his Death, and a Prologue to it, and then we read, *an Angel came unto him, and strengthened him*, Luke 22. 43. And many of God's faithful Servants, when they have been near their Death, have openly testified their Experience

rience of such wonderful and supernatural Communications, as we cannot attribute unto any other Instruments than the blessed Angels then attending them.

I shall note three ways that Angels do *in* and just *before* Death minister to the People of God.

First, They keep off, and restrain evil Spirits, and hinder their Hellish Attempts. The Devils have never more mind to be tampering with men, than when they are on their sick Beds, and a dying. As for wicked Men, their business with them is, to keep them from Repentance. The sense of Pain, and fear of Death, have often much awaken'd Mens Consciences, and true Repentance hath sometime follow'd upon such awakenings; wherefore the Devil's design on such as are un sanctified, is to keep them as quiet as he can, and to make them to presume and hope all is well, and God suffers him ordinarily to prevail: But as for true Christians, the Devils go another way to work with them; they commonly tempt them to despair, setting their Sins before them, and raising doubts, and fears, and horrors in them; they will be casting in ill Thoughts of God, and represent him to them as an Enemy. This will the Devils do to the best Men, when they come to die, if they be not hinder'd; and on a sick Bed, and when languishing under some mortal Disease, God's People are badly able to grapple with such potent Adversaries (should they be let loose) without some extraordinary assistance. Now God will not fail his People in their extremity, nor will he suffer the Devils to do, at such a time, all that they have a power to do, but will chain them up and restrain them; and the Instruments he makes use of for this, are his holy Angels, who do wage continual War with the Devils, and oppose their hellish Designs. We read, *Rev.* 12. 7. how *Michael and his Angels fought against the Dragon and his Angels*. I grant this is to be understood of a War and Contest that was to be manag'd by wicked Men, against the Christian Church; but be it so, yet there is a real foundation of that Allusion, and it supposes that good Angels do oppose the designs of Devils, waging a kind of War with them in the behalf of those which they have a charge

charge of: and did they not encamp about the Faithful, for their aid on their Death-beds, when natural Strength fails, it would go hard with them.

S E C T. II.

Secondly, **A**ngels at Death do help God's People, by mitigating the Pains of it many times, and making it more easy to them. Some *Martyrs* that have been put to very cruel Deaths, have testified to this.

Mr. *Hawks* being to be burnt to Death, was desired by his Friends to give them (if he could) some Sign, by lifting up his hand, if he found his Pains such as were tolerable, and might be born with Patience, and he did so: When his Speech was gone, his Body burning, and he thought to be dead he lift up his hands over his head, all on fire, and clapt them thrice together, which caused a great Shout among his Friends.

Mr. *James Bainham*, when the Flames had half consumed him, cried out in the Fire: *O ye Papists! ye look for Miracles, here now ye may see a Miracle, for in this fire I feel no more pain than if I were on a Bed of Down, yea it is to me as a Bed of Roses.* If Angels could keep *Sbadrach, Meshach, and Abednego* in the fiery Furnace, without any hurt, why might they not keep this holy *Martyr* in the Flames without Pain, tho' he died in them? He is a very uncharitable Wretch that will not believe he found as he spake. 'Tis I confess a wonderful Instance, but 'tis usual for God to indulge his *Martyrs* more than ordinary Supports in fiery Trials.

Nor is it the Privilege of *Martyrs* only, I doubt not but many of those that die in their Bed, do meet with such Refreshments, as make their Pains much more easy to them, than we can well imagine. *David* says of the merciful Man, *The Lord will strengtben him upon the Bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his Bed in his Sicknes,* P^{sa}. 41. 3. God will make his Sick Bed easy. And as 'tis by Angels he keeps his from Sicknes, P^{sa}. 91. 10, 11. So 'tis by them that he keeps and comforts them in Sicknes.

Oh let no good Man's heart fail him to think of Death, when he hath such to attend him as can make the most painful Death easy.

S E C T. III.

Thirdly, **A**ngels are often Messengers of most ravishing Joys, and Comforts, to dying Saints. Such things have some good men had revealed to them on their Death-beds, as have strangely transported them, to the wonder of all that have been about them. "The Soul (says one)

Diodorus notes it as the Opinion of *Pythagoras* that 'tis the privilege of Souls near their Departure to pronounce truly touching things so come. Περὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων τὰς ψυχὰς τὰ μύσθητα καὶ ἂν καλεῖται ἐν τῇ τελευτῇ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος ἁρμονικῶν ποιῶνται. *Diod. Sic. lib. 18.*

"as it is drawing into a separate Condition, and sequestred from earthly things, is more apt to enjoy the Benefit of internal Light, and better fitted for Spiritual Commerce with God himself, or with his An-

gels. And before its departure it doth sometimes, by Heavenly Inspiration, penetrate the very Secrets of Heaven it self.

Some Examples we have of Persons that have had on their Death-Beds, such foretastes of the Joys of the other World, as we would think Man should not be capable of, while in the Body.

Mr. *Holland* the Day before his Death, on a sudden, while one was reading, said, "O stay your reading! What Brightness is this I see? It is my Saviours Shine. Now farewell World, welcome Heaven. The Day-Star from on high hath visited my heart. And then turning to the *Minister* who preached his *Funeral Sermon*, he said,—"I desire you would preach my *Funeral Sermon*, for this Night I die; and speak this for me, that God deals familiarly with man: I feel his Mercy, I see his Majesty, whether in the Body or out of the Body, I cannot tell, God he knoweth; But I see things that are unutterable.

Many have told the very Day and Hour of their departure. And (says *Bishop Hall*) these Revelations and Extasies of Joy, whence are they? If a Man without all

Observation

Observation of *Physical Criticism*, shall receive, and give Intelligence many days before, what day and hour shall be his last, what cause can we attribute this to but our attending Angels?

And when Joy rises not to such an overflowing height, yet does it frequently begin an Heaven upon Earth, and the Fears of Death are fully vanquished, that the good Man can see it, and feel it coming without any regret.

Angels are with the Saints in the very minute of dying, taking away the Terribleness of it. There is an Averfation in Nature to Death: But (says Mr. *Ambrose*) the Bodies passage thro' the Grave, tho' it be dark and dismal, yet is it safe and secure. The Grave is but a sleeping-place (*They shall rest in their Beds*) and their Souls Angels guard safe to Heaven presently, as is next to be shewed. But thus Angels minister to the Saints in *Death*.

S E C T. IV.

ImmEDIATELY after the Separation of the Soul from the Body, the Angels receive it, and carry it to Heaven. They are a *Convoy* for the departing Souls of the godly, to bring them to their Felicity, tho' how they do it we cannot understand, as says Mr. *Baxter*. They keep them company at least, and they are a guard to them as they pass through the *Devils Territories*, as say some. For the Devil is called *the Prince of the Power of the Air*, because there is his Territory: He with all his Hellish Crew are the Inhabitants of that Region, and Souls in their Journey to Heaven must pass thro' the Air, and the Angels wait on them as a Convoy. This is noted in Scripture concerning *Lazarus*. *And it came to pass that the Beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abrahams bosom*, Luke 16. 22. The Devils drag the Souls of wicked men to Hell, when they die; and Angels conduct the Souls of good men to Heaven: Such Honour have all the Saints. The poorest and meanest of them shall be thus Royally attended. *Lazarus* was a Beggar, and yet went in this State to Heaven. No wonder Ba-

Animas eorum qui in domino moriuntur in Cœlum subvehunt, aut potius dum subvehuntur comitantur. *Cam.*

A Discourse of Angels,

laam was so desirous to die the Death of the Righteous. *Let me saye be die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his*, Numb. 23. 10. *שׁוּפֵן נַפְשִׁי* *Let my Soul die*. He hath not respect to the kind of Death, but the State of the Soul after Death. He had some Knowledge of the Blessed and Glorious State the righteous Man's Soul should be in. The righteous man's Soul (whether he die a natural or a sudden and violent Death) shall go off honourably attended to a place of Bliss; and this he wishes for. Oh that men were as willing to live as righteous men live, as they are desirous to die as they die. But if men will not live like them, they can by no means die like them. It may fare much alike with their Bodies, but their Souls will have a much different Treatment.

“ Oh would God ye saw what I see (said Mrs. *Stubs* on her Death-bed) Behold I see infinite Millions of Angels stand about me, with fiery Chariots to defend me, these are appointed of God to carry my Soul into the Kingdom of Heaven.

As Angels thus conduct the Souls of good men to Heaven, so we may conceive they will most joyfully welcome them into Heaven. The Holy City (by which Heaven is meant, *Rev.* 21. 12.) has Twelve Gates, and at the Gates Twelve Angels. These receive the Saints in, and if there be Joy in Heaven among the Angels when a Sinner converteth, what Joy think you is there where he comes to settle with them.

Twelve Angels as Porters to receive men into Heaven.
Eng. Annot.

S E C T. V.

THUS are the Angels imployed about the Souls of the faithful as soon as they leave the Body, conducting them to Heaven, and welcoming them into it: But their work does not end here, somewhat there is also at the Resurrection that they have to do, which is briefly this.

They shall call the Saints forth out of their Graves.

Mat. 24. 31. *Christ shall send his Angels with a great sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds.*

1 Thess. 4. 16. *For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God,*
and

and the dead in Christ shall rise first. To raise a Man up from Death to Life is a Work of Omnipotency. Angels cannot do this, yet somewhat there is in order to it, which they can do, and God will make use of them therein, viz. To gather the scattered dust of the Saints together, and to prepare the same, for the repairing and forming of the Body: But God himself who is the Creator of the Soul, will unite it again to the Body.

In resurrectione est aliquid ad transmutationem corporum pertinens, sc. collectio cinerum, & eorum præparatio ad reparationem humani corporis: Unde quantum ad hoc in resurrectione utitur Deus ministerio Angelorum: sed anima immediate à Deo corpori unietur. *Aq. sup. q. 76. a 3.*

When the dead are thus raised, the Angels shall separate the Good from the Bad. *The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire, Matt. 13. 41, 42* For the reapers of God's Harvest at the end of the World shall be the Angels, as *v. 39.* 'Tis said, *Matt. 25. 32.* that Christ himself shall separate the good from the bad, but he will do it by his Angels, as the former Text shews.

Ungodly men here scorn, and hate the Company of God's People; but then they would fain have it, but shall not be suffer'd. No, the Angels will drive them away, till the Devils do seize them, and hurry them to Hell. Wicked men are now for being by themselves, and having their Fellowships in Sin, then they shall be set by themselves, yea the Angels shall bind them together in bundles, as Sheaves at Harvest, and they shall be cast into Hell-fire. *As therefore the Tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the World.* But the faithful, the holy Angels shall gather into their own Company, and they shall have endless blessed Fellowship together in the blissful Presence of God. And here ends the Ministry of Angels. Mat. 13. 40.

S E C T. VI.

THIS *Doctrine* of Angels may to some seem to be but a nice *Speculation*, but as we have been considering of it, it is a part of our *Theology*, and capable of very holy Improvement. *Theology* is not a *Speculative*, but a *Practical Doctrine*. All Truths pertaining to it are *Practical* in respect of their end, tho' many of them be *Speculative* as to their Matter. They all aim at an holy and heavenly Life, and are excellently adapted and accommodated thereto. When *Paul* in his Epistles discourses of God's Eternal Love and Free Grace, of Election, and Adoption, and Justification, of the Person, and Offices of Christ, of the Joys of Heaven; these are all *Speculative Points*, but the end of them is holy Practice; and therefore he ever reasons from them to move to Holy Living. Whatever the *Doctrine* is, this is still the use he makes of it, yea and he expressly tells us, *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World, &c.* This is the design and meaning of all Evangelical Speculations touching the Free Grace of God in Christ, and no Gospel Truth is well understood, till this right use of it is learned. Faith is an active Grace, *It worketh* (the Apostle saith) *by Love*. This *Doctrine* of Angels has the same end and aim that others have. But now seeing no Truth can be useful and profitable unto holy Practice, any further than it is believed, and heeded, there is need that the believing and heeding of this great Truth, should be first urged, and the Impediments thereof removed out of the way, before we come to shew the Uses of it. 'Tis great pity so rich a Privilege and Blessing, as is that we have by those Celestial Agents, should lie so much in the dark, and unobserved, as hitherto it hath: For tho' many great Divines have asserted it on Scripture Grounds, yet it hath been so rarely and sparingly spoken of, that few men take any considerable notice of it, or count much upon it. The Agency of Angels is a thing that lies re-

mote

Tit. 2. 11, 12.

mote from our Senses, we can see it with our bodily Eyes, but it being (as has been evinced) revealed in the Word of God, *Faith*, which is *the evidence of things not seen*, should make it real and certain to us. And 'tis our Sin and Shame, that it is no more observed, thought on, and believed, than it is. Let us bewail and repent of our Ignorance, Heedlessness, and Unbelief as to this Matter. The Devout and Learned Bishop *Hall* thus begins his Discourse of Angels. "The good God forgive me, for
" that (among other Offences) I have suffered my self
" so much to forget (as his Divine Presence so) the Pre-
" sence of his holy Angels. It is, I confess, my great
" Sin, that I have filled my Eyes with other Objects, and
" have been slack in returning Praises to my God, for
" the continual Assistance of those blessed and beneficent
" Spirits, &c. And again,

" I am ashamed that in this piece of *Theology* I should
" be out-bid by the very *Turks*, who shut up their De-
" votions, with the mention of the Angels Presence, as
" if they were the upshot of all Blessings.

" O ye blessed Spirits (says the same Author) ye are
" ever by me, ever with me, ever about me. I do
" as good as see you, for I know you to be here, &c.

'Tis a foul Shame that those excellent Spirits should take notice of us (as they do) and we take no notice of them : that we should be so continually beholding to them, and yet not acknowledge them.

Let us reject with due abhorrence, the *Atheistical* conceit of those that deny the Existence of Spirits, and will not believe, because they cannot see their Operation. As there is great benefit by their Ministry it self, so is there also much besides by the firm Belief of it. The Apostle tells us of some to whom the Word of God came, that it profited them not, because it was not mixed with Faith. This great Truth that we have been handling will influence our Comfort, our Courage, our Love, and Thankfulness to God, and Care of our ways, no further than 'tis believed, and heeded by us. If it be a Truth, 'tis a weighty Truth, and worthy to be much considered. Oh! take it up in your thoughts, view it again and
again :

again: Let it be but once thoroughly digested, and it will be of singular use to you in your way.

I know there be some that do believe the Existence of Angels, and that God in some great Emergencies of Providence hath made use of them, who yet doubt whether God does ordinarily use them in the Government of this Visible World, as Instruments of dispensing his Favours to men, according to our Supposition.

Notwithstanding what hath been alledged from Scripture, to prove the Ministry of Angels, it remains hard for them to believe, that Angels are so much concern'd with men, and employ'd about them, as is supposed in the foregoing Discourse. Some Objections have been already answered, what other grounds there may be of their hesitating in this Matter, we shall here briefly examine.

S E C T. VII.

AND one thing that makes some men doubt is, that in Scripture times, when Angels are said to do so many great things they did appear in visible Shapes, and did work in a sensible way commonly, so that none could question their Agency then, but now there are no such *Apparitions*, or sensible Operations of Angels, or if there be any, they are very rare: And therefore such Instances as the Scripture affords us are not sufficient to prove Angels ordinary ministring now. Again, Malignant Spirits or Devils appear often, but Angels very rarely, and therefore we have not the same reason to believe that Angels are so frequently employ'd about us; as Devils perhaps may be.

To this I have several things to give in Answer.

I. We do not build our Supposition of the ordinary Ministry of Angels upon those Scripture Instances of it, where there were *Apparitions*: I say we do not build it only, or chiefly thereupon, but on such Scriptures as do plainly assert it, and give us assurance of it. My *Text* says expressly of all the Angels, *that they are ministring Spirits*.

Spirits, sent forth to minister. And the Psalmist saith, *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, Plal. 34. 7.* And 'tis promised, *Psal. 91. 11. He shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways.* On these and such like Scriptures we ground our Supposition. Now this being acknowledged to be unquestionably true, we may make use of such Scripture Instances as have something extraordinary in them (so I grant an Apparition is) to shew unto what sorts of things their Ministry does extend, and to this purpose do we chiefly urge them.

2. It is not true what is suggested, that Angels did always appear when they wrought any great Works. 'Tis true, frequently they did appear, but not always, no, nor can it be proved that they did ordinarily when they were employed. There was no Apparition of Angels (that we read of) at the giving of the *Law*, on Mount *Sinai*, and yet the Apostle tells us, that they were employ'd in that Business. Nor do we read of any Apparition when the Ten Plagues were brought on the *Egyptians*, and yet Angels were at work in them, as the Psalmist assures us. *Moses* and *Aaron* only appeared, the Angels wrought invisibly. When *Abraham* assured his Servant that God Gen. 24. 7. would send his Angel with him, he meant not that an Angel should go with him in a visible Shape, nor did he out of doubt. When the *Syrians* were struck with blindness, we do not read any Angel appeared to do that thing, nor do I think there did: Nor when so many Thousands of *Sennacherib's* Army were by an Angel destroyed in one Night. When *Joseph* was warned of an Angel to go with the Babe *Jesus* into *Egypt*, he saw no Shape, for it was in a Dream that he was warned. Yea, and when an Angel stirred the Waters of the Pool of *Bethesda*, we have no sufficient ground to think the Angel did every time appear. The moving of the Waters was visible, but we cannot say the Angel was seen. The like may be said in several other cases.

3. Such Helps and Succours as we have from Angels now, tho' they be communicated to us insensibly, yet 'tis frequently in such a way as by the effect we may plainly

enough perceive there is the hand of some Supernatural Agent in it. Bishop Hall giving some Instances, says, 'twere easy to fill Volumes with Particulars of this kind.

4. 'Tis not certain that all those *Apparitions*, that are commonly taken to be *Apparitions* of *evil Spirits*, are in truth so. They may be many of them *Apparitions* of *good Angels* for ought we know, when the Message is good, and no evil Tendency of it discernible. " The extraordinary Detection of Murders, latent Treasures, falsified and unfulfilled bequests, which are made by Apparitions, may be (says Mr. Glanvil) the Courteous Discoveries of the better and benign *Genii*. But if evil Spirits do more often appear than the good, 'tis no wonder: For they have designs to gain such for their Vassals, as they can gain (as that same Author observes) whereas good Angels have no such end to prosecute. They are Ministering Spirits for our good, and are no self-designers for a proud and insolent Dominion. They seek to gain men to God, and not to themselves; and to make them his Servants and not their own.

But whether the Apparitions that are, be of good or evil Spirits, they prove that such invisible Agents are at work, with men. Let them be mostly evil Spirits that do use to appear, this proves that such are permitted of God very ordinarily to intermeddle in the Affairs of men, and to be doing with them, and no doubt for some hurt, such is their Malignity and inveterate Malice. Now it is no way probable that God should permit Devils to work against men, and not appoint Angels to do any thing for them, as has been before noted. The Devils are enemies that men are no match for, men are very unfit and unable to grapple with them, they know not how to prepare for, or manage an Encounter with them. Now God would never expose men to such enemies, not ordaining and providing any sufficient Guard, and Succour for them.

S E C T. VIII.

5. **I**F we examine and weigh what was the reason and end of Apparitions in those times when Angels did more frequently appear in bodily Shapes, we shall find no cause at all to doubt of Angels ministering now; because they do not now appear so in assumed Bodies as they did then.

The *Heathens* ('tis true) ascribe the Rarity of Apparitions to the Sins of men, and count the reason is that God is displeas'd, and therefore denies men the benefit of those ministering Spirits: As if there could be no benefit by Angels, unless they did minister in such a visible way. But the reason why the Angels assumed Bodies sometimes, and ministred to men in a visible way, was not that they had any need of those Bodies, to help them to perform the Services they were sent about, or could not as easily communicate themselves to men, without such Bodies, as with them: These assumed Bodies were no help to them at all to facilitate their work, for we find in the Scripture, that Angels were frequently employ'd in very great Works about men, when yet they appeared not in Bodies visibly, as was but now proved. There was reason for Apparitions, peculiarly respecting those times, in which they were in use. And, except that reason that peculiarly respects those times, there can be no better reason given than this, *viz.* God would have Angels appear at work sometimes, to make the World acquainted with what they are ordinarily employ'd about, tho' unse'en. We should not have known there are such *Spiritual Powers* at work about us, if they had not sometimes appeared in their Work.

I conceive the prime and most proper reason of *Apparitions* doth peculiarly respect those times in which they were. And they were in use for the same reason that *Miracles* were then also in use. 'Tis with Apparitions of Angels as with *Miracles*, they were for Signs only for a certain time, and both of them Apparitions and *Miracles* took their leave of the Church together, when they be-

came less needful, they being both extraordinary: For (I confess) Apparitions of Angels, and sensible entercourse with them are things extraordinary, and not at all times so needful, nor so meet, and convenient for us, tho' that Spiritual and insensible Communion with Angels which we assert, is ordinary, and very needful in all times.

In the first times, when we read there were frequent Apparitions of Angels, the Church was in its Infancy, and the Scripture (the standing Rule of Faith) was not written, but God did, by the mouths of such men as he made choice of, deliver his mind to others: Now it was needful that those holy Men and Prophets, that God made use of, to deliver his mind to others, should have some visible testimonies of his presence with them, and his sending of them, that they might be the more heeded, and credited by the People. Therefore had they such sensible entercourse with Angels. In the Old Testament (says one) they were Children, and stood in need of the Apparitions of Angels. And in like manner in the Gospel times while the Christian Church was in its Birth, and forming, there was need of the like; and God did afford the same. *Mary, Zachariab, the Shepherds, Mary Magdalene, the Disciples on the Mount of Olives, Peter, Philip, Cornelius, Paul, John,* and others had the sight of Holy Angels. Yea, and in after times, before the Christian Faith had a full Settlement in the World, and while the Church was under bloody Persecution, it pleased God to send his Angels in a visible way to comfort and establish his People, as *Ecclesiastical History* informs us: But as the Church grew up, and the Faith had a more ample Confirmation, such sensible entercourses with Angels grew more rare, being not so needful. But tho' such extraordinary Testimonies of the Divine Presence thenceforth became less necessary, yet the Helps and Succours Angels afford men, as Instruments of God's Providence, are still as needful as ever. And therefore, tho' Apparitions cease, the reason of them ceasing, yet have we no cause to doubt of the continuing of their Ministry, in as sure, tho' not in as sensible a way. We lose nothing by losing Apparitions, but we should be at a sad loss, if we should be deprived

In Veteri
Testamento
pueri erant,
ideo externis
Apparitioni-
bus Angelo-
rum egebant.

deprived of their Ministration; as will yet more fully appear in what shall be added in this Tract.

I say we lose nothing by being without Apparitions, for, that such visible Communion with Angels should be ordinary, as it is less needful now, so is it at no times so safe, and convenient for us, as such an invisible Communion as we suppose; and that for the *Three Reasons* following,

1. Tho' Apparitions (as says Mr. *Glanvil*) would be some Gratifications of the Animal Life, yet would they render our Faith less noble, and less generous, if it were frequently assisted by them, as was the Faith of those in more ancient times. You know (says he) what our Saviour says to *Thomas*, *Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed, Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.* Joh. 20. 29. The more of Sight there is, the less is the Glory of Faith.

2. Visible Apparitions are frightful, and apt to terrify and confound us: And they leave us doubtful and uncertain whether they be of good Angels or no: But this spiritual and invisible Ministration of Angels which according to our Supposition God vouchsafeth us, is without any such Impressions of Fear, or so much Danger of Deceit.

3. Should Angels ordinarily appear to us in such visible Shapes, as they have been wont in ancient times frequently to appear to men, it would endanger our being drawn to gross and carnal Apprehensions of them, yea, and be a Temptation unto an inordinate Adhesion to, and honouring of them, and neglect of God. We see how lamentably the *Papists* run into Superstition in worshipping of Angels, and their feigned Stories of *Apparitions* of Angels, are used to confirm the People in this *Superstition*

'Tis more safe for us that Angels should minister as now they do. And indeed that is ever best for us which God appoints. And 'tis dangerous for any, so much as to desire to have God to go out of that way which he hath stated, or to think another way better.

Thus

Thus much in Answer to the Objection from the Rareness and Unusualness of the Apparitions of Angels, which may raise some doubt of their ordinary ministring.

S E C T. IX.

ANother thing that makes it difficult to some to believe that Angels have so much Employment about men, and such a Charge of the Godly, as is supposed, is, that men meet with so many disasters here, and good men are so often cruelly dealt with by their Enemies. Angels want not Power to keep God's People out of the hands of their Enemies, and if they had such a Charge of them as has been suggested, surely wicked men would not be suffered to handle them so as sometimes they do.

I have already said enough in Answer to this Objection, and therefore shall briefly Answer here.

First, This Objection lies as much against God's Providence over his People in General, as against this Particular way of his keeping them by Angels. None but very Atheists will deny Divine Providence. He cannot believe the Bible, that questions God's special Care of his own People. 'Tis said, that *he keepeth them as the apple of his Eye.* And that *in all their afflictions he is afflicted:* And yet for all this, such as God is so tender of do endure great hardships. If this shakes not the Doctrine of Providence, why should it make the Ministry of Angels doubtful? But

Zech. 2. 8.
Isa. 63. 9.

Secondly, Tho' Angels do not keep off all evils from God's People, yet (as has been noted) they do keep off very many. God's People's present State in this World requires that they should be sometimes exercised with affliction. *If need be* (says the Apostle) *ye are in heaviness for a season.* There is need in order to the furtherance of their Eternal Salvation, which the Angels Ministry doth chiefly and ultimately respect. *We are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the World;* And that *we may be partakers of his holiness.* Wherefore Angels will not keep good men from all that is afflictive,

1 Pet. 1. 6.

1 Cor. 11. 32.

Heb. 12.

ative, yea so far are they from doing so, that sometimes they are the Instruments God employs to afflict and chastise them, as has been before evinced. However, 'tis also certain, God makes use of them in keeping them from many Evils, which otherwise by the Malice of Men and Devils would come upon them.

Thirdly, If God's People should never meet with any afflictive and grievous things, the Protection they have from Angels might be lookt upon as more questionable than now 'tis. Their Sufferings discover what danger they live in, and how many cruel and malicious enemies they have. We should not think there were such Cruelty and Rage in men against God's People, if they were not permitted to shew it now and then. Wherefore God suffers it, that it may be known that his People live here in the World as Sheep among Wolves. And being so, 'tis not strange that they suffer sometimes, but rather that they have at any time any Peace. And indeed they would have very little, were it not for their invisible Keepers.

Fourthly, God's own People do sometimes go out of their way, and the Promise they have is only that *they shall be kept in all their ways*. Angels leave a People sometimes when they grow dissolute. They were heard to cry (a little before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*) *Migremus hinc*. Angels never totally desert any faithful Servants of God, for they do never totally forsake him: Yet may they in part, and for a time; and when they do so such good men may more grievously suffer from their enemies. So much for that Objection.

S E C T. X.

THERE be some that think it not compatible and consistent with the Dignity of Angels, to be concern'd (as this Doctrine supposes them to be) with sinful Mortals here in this World, to be as *Purveyors* and *Guardians*, and to be employed in such mean Work. It seems to them to be too great a degrading of Angels, to be in such an Office of serving sorry men, it seems to be a placing them

them in some kind of inferiority to men, when questionless Angels are the noblest of all God's Creatures. This hinders some mens believing what hath been held forth in the preceding Discourse.

To this I *Answer*. It must be acknowledged that Angels in respect of the Excellency and Perfection of their Nature, are much superior to men: They are as much above Men in Dignity, as the Heavens (Angels Habitation) are above the Earth (Man's Dwelling) Alas! Man in his best and primitive State, is but a poor sorry Creature compared with Angels, but Sin has made him more contemptible. By Sin he is become vile, a very Dunghil that is to be abhorred. The Apostle calls our Bodies *vile Bodies*, *Phil. 3. 21*. And therefore the Angels Offices about our Bodies, and things pertaining to them, may seem to be such mean and low Offices, as are beneath the Dignity of Angels, such as they might innocently have disdain'd to undertake. But however, let things be well consider'd, and it will appear 'tis no Disparagement to Angels, nor any way unbecoming them, to take up that Office and Employment about men, which we have shewed is assigned them, and to attend it as they do. For

1. Man tho' a very mean Creature compared with Angels, yet compared with other Creatures, he is the noblest and most excellent of all that God made. He was made after the *Image* of God himself, and tho' he have lost his chief Glory, yet he is capable of recovering it again: Wherefore if Angels, that are a part of the Universe have any Work and Service in it, for the Benefit and Beauty of it, (as we must suppose they have, unless we will make them a useless part of it) I say, if they have any Work and Service to do, there is not any nobler Creature than Man is, about which they can employ themselves. Him God has made Lord of this lower World, and set him over all the Works of his hands, *but a little lower than the Angels themselves, crowning him with Glory and Honour*, as the Psalmist says.

Psal. 8. 5, 6.

2. Whatever the present State of Man is, by means of Sin, the Blessed God designs the restoring him, not only to his primitive

primitive Glory and Honour, but to a greater eminency of it by *Jesus Christ*. We are not to consider Man here as he now is, but as God intends to make him, and that is like, yea, equal to Angels, *ἰσάγγελοι*; for so, our Saviour Luke 20. 36. *Christ* says, *in the Resurrection the Saints shall be*. You know a great number of the Angels which God created fell from their first estate, and it pleas'd God to leave them in that dark and dismal state into which they fell: but as for fallen Mankind, he appointed them a Redeemer, and from all Eternity did chuse some out from among them whom by his Grace he would fit for the company and fellowship of Angels, with them to fill up the rooms of *Apostate Angels*. Of this the Apostle speaks excellently well, *Ephes. 1. 3, 4, 5, 10. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, &c. That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth.* Had not God such a design as this, Angels would never have been sent forth to minister to sinful men, as now they are, as was shew'd *Chap. 4. Sect. 2, 3.* Now the promoting of this design is the prime end of the Ministry of Angels: let this be well consider'd, and the Work and Office of Angels will appear to be most honourable and worthy of them; for whatever seemingly inferiour Works they are sometimes imploy'd in, all have reference to the Glory of God in the Salvation of his Elect, than which nothing can be more honourable and worthy of the noblest Creatures.

Nor doth our Supposition place Angels in any inferiority to Men, as is objected: for tho' their Office be a Ministry or Service, yet, you must know, 'tis unto *Christ* they minister, not unto men, tho' it be for men. They are *Christ's* Servants, they are not mens Servants. A man may serve where notwithstanding he is a superiour. It may be ones Office to look after, to care for, to help, relieve, and perform many Services for another, who yet is his Inferiour. 'Tis the Office or Duty of *Parents* to do so for their *Children*, and yet *Parents* are their *Superiours*; yea,

Mat. 20. 28.
Phil. 2. 7.

Pfal. 97. 7, 10
Heb. 1. 6.
Pfal. 82. 6.

'tis the Office and Duty of a King to take care of his Subjects, and to protect them, yet is he their Sovereign Lord. Yea, our Lord *Jesus Christ* says, *that he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, or serve.* And the Apostle says, *He took upon him the form of a servant.* He went up and down the World doing good, healing Diseases, preaching, and working Miracles, and all for the Elects sake, yet is he *Lord of all.* He is God the Father's *Servant*, but our *Sovereign.* Even so are Angels *Christ's Servants*, and under him, but they are over us. The Angel that had the oversight and care of *Persia*, is call'd *The Prince of the Kingdom of Persia*, Dan. 10. And Angels are called *Gods*, even as Magistrates also are, for the Power they are invested with. In Kingdoms there are great Officers that are call'd *Ministers of State*, that are *ministri cum imperio*, and so are Angels. To God, and to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, they are *Servants*, waiting on his Commands, but to men they are *Presidents*, set over them with Power and Authority. Angels acknowledg themselves to be *Christ's Servants*, and our Fellow servants, *Rev. 6. 19.* for they are subject to *Christ*, as we are, yet have they a Presidency over us, under *Christ*: Wherefore to assign unto Angels such an Office and Ministry, as is suppos'd in the foregoing Discourse, is not to place them in any inferiority to men. I confess, God's appointing them such an Office, is a great dignifying and honouring of Human Nature: The Son of God's assuming our Nature into personal Union, is the most wonderful dignifying of it; but, next to that, is his sending of Angels to be ministring Spirits for us. Oh, let us admire God's Goodness, and imitate the Angels Humility, who, notwithstanding they are so much superiour to us, disdain not to undertake such a Service for us.

Oh, how proudly and haughtily do some men carry it in the World! How does one man exalt himself against another, if (perhaps) Riches, or Birth, or Breeding hath made a little difference? How common is it for the wealthier sort to slight their poor Brethren, tho' (perhaps) equal in Grace and Gifts? They will scarce vouchsafe to own them, or look upon them, and accompany with them. Oh that vile Flesh should thus swell and exalt it self!

Seest

Seest thou a poor Saint, and turnest from him? Know, the Angels disdain not to keep him company, and attend him: Oh, be ashamed of thy Pride, thou sinful Worm. All the Men on Earth are of one mould and make; that which makes the difference that is, is something that is without us, and is accidental to us; or if it be somewhat within, yet is the difference but gradual, all the Men on Earth are one *Species*: but Angels are another and higher *Species* of Creatures: the lowest and meanest Angel is as far above the mightiest and most accomplish'd man on Earth, as he is above the vilest Worm that crawls on the Ground. Yet see how Angels officiously attend the poorest Saints on Earth; tho' they be Beggars, and in Rags, they look after them, and take care for them. Let us be con- Rom. 12. 16.
 descending, and serve one the other in Love. Our Sa- Gal. 5. 13.
 viour *Christ* wash'd his *Disciples* Feet, convers'd familiarly with a poor *Samaritan* Woman, chose *Fishermen* for his Intimates: here is an higher Example of condescending. Let us be ashamed of our Pride, but never account it any shame to be friendly Companions of the poorest Saints, and to stoop to the meanest Offices for to do others good, for this is the glory and delight of Angels.

Having remov'd these Impediments of believing the great Truth in hand, and it standing firm and unshaken, notwithstanding what is commonly objected against it, let us receive it, take it up, and view it throughly, and so address our selves unto such a Practical Improvement of it, as it is capable of: in which that which follows will direct.

C H A P. X.

§ 1. *This Doctrine of the Ministry of Angels should excite us to Thankfulness to God, and glorifying of him.* § 2. *To further this, the greatness of the Mercy is shew'd, by representing our danger in respect of Devils: And (1.) their multitude.* § 3. *Their nearness to us.* § 4. *Their inveterate Malice.* § 5. *Their great Power: How (notwithstanding the great Power of Devils) good Angels can controul and hinder them.* § 6, 7. *Their Knowledg and Cunning.* § 8. *The Interest Devils have in wicked Men.* § 9. *'Tis not an imaginary, but a real, danger we are in from Devils.*

S E C T. I.

WHoever well understands, firmly believes, and duly considers this Doctrine of Angels, especially of their Ministry, may easily discover several Obligations and Motives to, and Directions about, many great Duties of his Christian Profession offering themselves to him. I shall thus rank them:

- I. Such as immediately respect *God*, whose Servants Angels are.
- II. Such as respect the *Persons for whom* especially Angels are sent to minister.
- III. Such as relate to the *Angels themselves* that do minister.

And, *First*, for what immediately respects *God*, and *Jesus Christ the Redeemer*, this loudly calls us to glorifie him, and to be thankful.

'Tis to God in Christ that all the glory of this doth belong, and there is a special Glory to be given to him on this account; and that because,

1. *God is the Creator of Angels.* The excellent Being they have, their wonderful Knowledge and Power, they have it from God; He made them whatever they are.

2. *He upholds them in their Being, and in all their Virtues and Powers.* 'Tis true of Angels, as well as of our selves and all other Creatures, what the Apostle says, *In him we live, and move, and have our being.*

Tho' Angels are excellent Creatures, yet are they Creatures, and so not independent: they all need Divine Sustentation, depending on God, both *quoad esse & operari*, as to being and operation; they can neither subsist, nor do any thing without him.

3. *He appoints them their Work.* As he made them Spirits, so he made them ministring Spirits, and they do no more than he puts them upon: so that all the Preservations, Deliverances, Helps and Assistances that we have by them, are from God, and to be ascrib'd to him, as if they were wrought immediately by him, without them.

4. *'Tis by Jesus Christ, and under him, that they do minister.* He obtain'd this great Benefit for poor sinful Mortals: 'tis a part of his glorious Atchievement, as our Mediator; as has been shew'd, *Chap. 4. Sect. 3, 4.* What more evident then, than that there lies a strong Obligation on us to magnifie and exalt God in Christ upon this account? Oh, let not our good God lose any of his Glory! God, who is the inexhaustible Fountain of all Good, has many Channels and Conduit-pipes, by which he conveys himself to us; these we should acquaint our selves with as fully as we can, that he may be glorified in all, and we duly thankful. He must be prais'd and magnified in all his Works, both of Creation and Providence, and they are all worthy to be distinctly consider'd.

How particularly does the Psalmist insist upon several of them, *Psal. 136. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.* The visible Heavens, and the Earth, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, &c. all which are his Ordinances for our good. And in *Psal. 8. 7, 8.* All Sheep and Oxen, yea, and the Beasts of the Field, the

Fowl

Fowl of the Air, and the Fish of the Sea, and whatsoever passeth thro' the paths of the Seas. These are all made for Man's Service : The Beasts and Plants of the Earth, and Fishes of the Sea, do cloath and feed him ; the Sun, Moon and Stars are not only Lights for him, but by their Influences they contribute to the sustentation of his being, and to the production and ripening of the Fruits which he gathers and feeds upon : They make Day and Night, they operate on the Humours of his Body, and several other ways are contributors to his good, as God does order. Now, if it be so available to the moving of us to a due praising of God, to take so particular notice of these Instruments of his Goodness, it will be a greater advantage to acquaint our selves with those ministering Spirits which God sends forth and makes use of for our good : Their Nature is more excellent, and the benefit we receive by them greater by far, therefore must they not be past over without special notice and observation. As the Sun and Moon, so (in a more eminent way) those beneficent Spirits are God's Ordinances, and he must be glorified in them.

The *Sadduces* of our times, that deny both the Existence and Ministry of Spirits, are very great Enemies to the Glory of God; these, like *Thomas*, will believe no more than they can see : Are not such in a fair way to downright Atheism? The Apostle says of God, *No man hath seen him, or can see him* : Will they not therefore believe that there is a God? Take heed, have no fellowship with such Men in their Delusions. *John* says, *No man hath seen God at any time*; but adds, *The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*. 'Tis true, we cannot see Angels, but God's Word declares that there are such, and that they are at work. Tho' we have not Apparitions of Angels, yet have we a Revelation of them, and of their Ministry, and that should suffice us.

And when we think and speak of God's glorious Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness, pass not over this demonstration of it which you have in Angels, for there is none extant like it, except Jesus Christ, who is the *brightness of his Glory*, and the *express image of his Person*.

Well,

Well, let us bless and praise God in his holy Angels, the lively Images of his Perfections: and let us bless God for Angels, even for the great benefit we receive by them.

We bless God for *Magistrates* in the *State*, and for *Ministers* in the *Church*, and worthily, considering the great good of Government; so good is it, that all are ready to acknowledg, it is better to have a bad Government than none at all. But now we have other *Governours* and *Rulers* besides *Princes* and *Parliaments*, and subordinate *Magistrates*. We have others to fight for us besides *Swordmen*. God's holy Angels are *Rulers*, and *Leaders*, and *Keepers*, and *Watchers*; they superintend and care for *Kingdoms*, and *Churches*, and *Cities*, and *Families*, and *Persons*, and that more faithfully and effectually, more wisely and powerfully, than any men do or can: These are over all that rule, and keep them that keep us, having a chief hand in all the affairs of Men; let us bless God for them. We have (believe it) much more benefit by God's governing in an invisible way by Angels, than by his governing in a visible way by men, tho' much by both. Let us bless and praise God for Angels, as the greatest Instruments of our Good under *Christ*, who is their Lord and ours.

S E C T. II.

THAT we may have a due resentment of this great mercy of God to men, I shall take the liberty of a short Digression, that we may have the fuller prospect of the dismal and forlorn estate we must be suppos'd to be in, in this World, in case we be left expos'd to the Evils of it, without any such Guard as Angels are.

That this may be made appear, I shall not so much insist on the casual Disasters we are obnoxious to, that our greatest wisdom and foresight cannot provide against, nor the violences that wicked and cruel men are Authors of. Experience shews us what sad things often happen to most considering and wary men, and what work some very bad men make in the World, and would if there were no other Restraints upon them than what we see. If there were no invisible Hands restraining brutish Men, and guiding and

go-

governing Contingencies and Casualties, who could judge himself safe for one Day of his Life? This I shall not stand upon, but having been discoursing of our *unseen Helpers* and *Keepers*, I shall take liberty to add somewhat here of our *unseen Enemies*, *malignant Spirits* or *Devils*, whose business 'tis to do us all the mischief they can, both as to *Soul* and *Body*.

That there are such, is no less evident than that there are good Angels; their Apparitions are more frequent, and so their *being* and *working* more unquestionable.

Now let us consider the *multitude* of these wicked Spirits, their *nearness* to us, their *Malice*, their *Power*, their *Cunning*, with the great *Interest* they have in wicked men, 'twill appear what a Mercy 'tis, that God hath sent forth his Angels to be ministring Spirits for us; for the Considerations before mention'd, are enough to fill us with the greatest horrour, supposing we were left without any Guard against these Enemies, and none can be imagin'd but the Guard of Angels.

First then for their *multitude*. To go about to determine precisely what is their number, would be a very vain and foolish Presumption; but that the number of them is very great, is questionless true. It hath been very anciently held by some, that every Man and Woman hath both a good and an evil Angel attending them; and if this Opinion be true, 'twill follow that there are at least so many evil Spirits or Devils as there ever have been at any time Men upon the Earth: But I think that opinion to be an idle and ungrounded heathenish Figment. We read of many *Devils* that have had their habitation in one single Person; there were *seven* that possess'd *Mary Magdalen*, and were cast out of her, *Mark* 16.9. Yea, in one man, we read, there were no less than a whole Legion, which is reckon'd 6000. *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils would never have employ'd so many of his Infernal Crew about one Person, if there had not been an innumerable company of them, sufficient to do his work with other Men.

Some think the Devils are more in number than the good Angels, as amongst Men in this World there are more bad than good: *Aquinas* concludes the contrary, but the

the Scripture he brings for it is impertinent to his purpose, 'tis 2 *Kim.* 6. 16. *They are more that be with us, than they that are with them.* 'Tis true, the Prophet speaks of the holy Angels that encamp'd about him, but compares their numbers with the Host of the *Syrians* that came against him, not with the number of evil Angels. Yet most likely it is true what he says, that the good Angels are more in number than the evil, tho' that Scripture doth not prove it. We cannot tell how many there are, but the Scripture assures us, (says *Zanchy*) that there is almost an infinite number of them. So much of their number.

Hoc novimus & S. Scripturis infantiam prope esse Diabolorum turbam. *Zanch.*

S E C T. III.

2. **A**S for their *Nearness* to us, the next thing to be consider'd. You must know, that tho' the *bottomless Pit*, or *Hell*, be the proper place of Devils, that is the place to which they are condemn'd, and in which they shall be shut up for ever under unconceivable Torments; yet are they not as yet confin'd to that place. We must not think they are all shut up close Prisoners in certain *Dungeons* of Darknes far distant from us; no, but are permitted an Habitation and Residence very near us, even in the *lower Region* of the *Air*, and so are up and down amongst men; yea, sometimes enter into men, and possess them.

Beelzebub the chief of Devils is call'd, *The Prince of the power of the air*, *Eph.* 2. 2. By the *power of the air* we are to understand that Host of malignant Spirits whereof *Beelzebub* is the Head or Prince; these are *Beelzebub's Power*, which he commands and employs in his Hellish Work: and they are call'd *the Power of the Air*, because there is their residence, even in the greatest nearness to Men, so that they can observe and invade us with ease.

I confess the Apostle *Peter* saith, that the Angels, when they sinned, were *cast down to Hell, and deliver'd into chains of darknes*; which seems to oppose their being Inhabitants of the *Air*: But the meaning seems to be, they were condemn'd and adjudg'd to that state of Torment, not that they were instantly all shut up in *Hell* for ever: Their actual total confinement to that place of misery shall not

be till the day of general Judgment: Therefore it is added in that place, *They are reserved unto judgment, viz. unto publick and final Judgment, whereupon they shall for ever be close shut up in Hell.* By the Law of Heaven they were instantly condemn'd to it, but Sentence shall not pass upon them, nor be fully executed, till the last day. Therefore also *Jude* says, *ver. 6. They are reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day:* They are said to be *under darkness*, because that out of Heaven and the Presence of God, who is Light; and *in chains*, because powerfully kept in that state, and much restrain'd by the Power and Providence of God: But they are not all shut up in their Hell, nor shall be till the Day of Judgment, but shall have the liberty of this lower World, as a large Prison, and are therefore call'd *the Power of the Air*, as before.

'Tis not improbable that some of the Devils may, at times, be confin'd to Hell, and shut up under Torment there, before the Day of Judgment, tho' not all of them: So say some good Divines. And it seems those that had leave of Christ to enter into the Herd of Swine, were afraid that our Saviour would have sent them then to Hell; for they say unto him, *Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* So *Mat. 8, 29.* the other *Evangelist*, instead of torment-

Quot a Ci visum est, ante judicium ultimum, permittit eis (Dæmonibus) inde (ex inferno) emere in Terram, & in Aërem; non omnes, sed tantum aliquos, quot se quos vult. *Luce. in 2 Pet.*

Multi ergo Dæmones in hoc Aëre versantur, multi quoque detraherentur claustris inferni. *Ephos.*

Luke 2. 31. ing them, speaks of sending them into the *Abyss* or Deep, by which *Hell* is signified, *Rom. 10. 7.* They acknowledg they must be at last shut up there in Torment, but plead that the time was not yet come: And true, the time for the shutting them all up there for ever was not come, yet were they afraid (as to themselves) lest *Christ* would presently send them thither: And their expressing such a Fear makes it probable that some, before this time, had been so serv'd, why else should they fear such a thing? Some Devils therefore are confin'd to Hell, at times, when God pleases; but ordinarily the most of them are permitted to inhabit the Air, hovering in it, and coursing to and fro in the Earth, till the Day of Judgment, and so are very near

A Discourse of Angels,

so, and because he doth nothing else but Evil, and that maliciously, and of set purpose. He perfectly hates God, and all that is good, and is an implacable Enemy to men that have his Image. 'Tis thought by some his Fall was through Malice to Men, tho' Pride was mingled (as says Dr. *Lightsfoot*): In this Malice he is immovable, and 'tis Malice to all extremity; there are no bounds of it: he sticks not to hurt himself to mischief Men. He knows his own Condemnation shall be the greater for it, and yet will be labouring to bring Men to Hell. What I say of the Devil, is true of all his Angels; their Malice, and Rage, and Cruelty is not to be express'd; 'tis always very great, but (it seems) that in the latter times of the Gospel it shall be much intended and heighten'd; and the Reason is given in *Rev. 12. 12.* *The Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, (i. e. greater than ordinary) because he knoweth he hath but a short time.* We are in those latter times of the World, when these malignant Spirits shall be so far from abating their Fury, that they shall rather advance in it. Oh, what a case were we in, if we were left unguarded? But this is not all.

S E C T. V.

4. **T**hey have *Power* with their *Malice*, great *Power*. Some Men are of very malicious and mischievous Dispositions, but they are of little strength and ability, they would hurt, but cannot: But the Devils are mighty Spirits, and therefore called *Principalities*, and *Powers*; and the chief of them the *Prince of Darkness*, and the *Prince of the Power of the Air*. The Devil is a mighty Prince, and (as earthly Monarchs have) he hath a *Power*, or *Force* under him, many Men and Devils at his beck. Ye, and all those evil Spirits which he hath under him are called, *The Rulers of the Darknes of this World*. They have great command, and great strength.

They

They can, when permitted, hurry the *Bodies* of Men ^{Mat. 4. 5.} up and down in the Air. They can raise Storms, and overturn Houses with them, as in *Job's* Case: No bodily ^{Job 1. 19.} strength can withstand them. They have *Power* upon Mens *Senses* both external, and internal, they can operate (tho' not immediately) on Mens Minds and Wills to move them. You have heard before what the Blessed Angels can do, now the Devils were once Holy Angels, and what Power and Strength was given them in their Creation, and was natural to them, they keep still: Those that fell lost their Holiness, but they lost not their Strength.

S E C T. VI.

Obj. **B**UT if it be so, how can the good Angels (you'll say) be a sufficient defence against them, and hinder their mischievous Enterprizes? If Devils have the Strength of Angels still, why should they not be an equal Match for the good Angels!

Answ. Why, you know the Apostle *Jude* says, that they are fetter'd, and in Chains, and so shall remain till the Day of Judgment. They cannot do what they will, but are under Restraints, as is evident in *Job's* Case, and several other Cases noted in Scripture. One that is in Fetters you know, is easily vanquished, he cannot make the resistance that otherwise he might. How Devils are Fetter'd by God, we need not curiously inquire. Some think they have more *gross Vehicles*, but it is not certain that Spirits have any such *Vehicles*, properly belonging to them. No doubt tho' Devils have not lost that Knowledge and Power, which was natural to them, yet they may be much wounded and weakned in both, as indeed they are by the just Judgment of God. They are wounded in their Understanding, so as tho' they still know what things they knew naturally before their Fall, yet they know them not so clearly,

Accessit illis propter peccatum aliquid tenebrarum. *Aug. de Civit. Dei.*

Nec mihi dubium est quin Angeli boni perfectius naturali suo lumine cognoscunt, quæ cognoscunt, quam Angeli mali. *Zanch.*

Certum est enim in genere hæc etiam in parte (*speaking of their Power*) illos punitos esse: ut non possint quicquid poterant cum boni esse. *Id.*

Mark 16. 17.

Acts 16. 18.

some Darknefs is come upon them: Even so, they are wounded and maimed somewhat in their active Power too, so as that they cannot do altogether as they could while they were good Angels. And they are most deservedly made subject to the holy Angels, and utterly unable to withstand them. We read how our Saviour Christ gave his Apostles, and others that believed, *Power over the Devils, and they could command them*: Paul said to the Spirit that possessed the Damsel, *I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her, and he came out the same hour*. The Devil could not withstand his Word. And if men may (by special Gift) have such a Power over the Devils, we may easily believe that the holy Angels can more ordinarily over rule and counter-work them, tho' their Power be acknowledged to be wonderfully great, when not hindred.

S E C T. VII.

5. **T**HE Knowledge and Cunning of Devils is no less than their Power, which makes them yet more formidable. Some Men would do a Mischief but have not the Wit to contrive it: Devils have great Skill and Cunning. Their Natural Knowledge of things is very great, and their long experience has much improved it. So many Thousand Years as they have been at work in the World must needs make them wonderfully expert, and skillful. On this account the Devil is called the *Old Serpent*, Rev. 12. 9. He is now above 5600 Years old, and has all this while been exercised in his Hellish Practices, of deceiving and destroying Men.

Now laying all these things together, must not the Case of poor sinful Mortals be acknowledged to be most dangerous and dismal, provided they had no defence and guard, against these terrible frightful enemies of theirs? But

S E C T. VIII.

6. IT does moreover add not a little to the Dolefulness of the Case, to consider what *Interest* the Devils have in *wicked men*, that this World is full of. Wicked Men are bad enough of themselves, they are full of Envy, Malice, and Cruelty: Notwithstanding the restraints that are upon them, what sad *Tragedies* do they act? What havock do they sometimes make? These wicked Men are by far the greater number, at all times, and we may say, in all places almost. Now all wicked and ungodly Men are under the Power of these malignant Spirits, and are ruled, and led by them as they list. The Apostle says of such Men, that they steer their Course according to the Prince of the power of the Air, the Spirit that *worketh in the Children of Disobedience*. He does *effectually*, i. e. *effectually* work in them, as the Greek Word signifies. He can bring them to what he will in a manner; they are prepared for the promoting of his cursed Designs. They will trouble, imprison, yea murder good Men, when set on by the Devil if not restrained.

Eph. 2. 21

All these things considered, our case here in this World (supposing we are without any other guard than what we see) appears to be plainly such as is the case of a Company of naked unarmed Men in an howling Wilderness, where are a Multitude of wild Beasts, Lions, Bears, Tygers, Wolves and Serpents every where besetting them: They are not one minute safe, 'tis a Miracle if they be not all destroyed. And so is it that all men are not, especially good men, being surrounded with such kind of enemies. Oh how wonderful is the Goodness and Mercy of God, in appointing his mighty Angels to incamp about us.

Should those miserable men (before spoken of) supposed to be naked and defenceless in a Desert, among wild Beasts, have succour sent them, able to keep those hurtful Creatures from them, and confine them to their Dens and Holes, would not this be resented as a very signal Blessing? Would not such Persons stand bound to him

him that sent this Relief, ever to love and praise him ? Now thus has the great God done for us in sending forth his Angels for our Relief and Succour, while we are here in the howling Wilderness of this World, where infinite numbers of Devils are ever roving. Let us exalt and praise his Name.

S E C T. IX.

IT may be some may think this is but a *Fiction* formed to fright men, and the danger I am shewing but *imaginary*, because not discoverable by our bodily Eyes. But tho' we cannot see it, we have reason to believe it real. Hear what the Apostle says, *We wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, and Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, against Spiritual Wickednesses* (or *wicked Spirits*, as 'tis in the Margin.) See we have really to do with them, we must wrestle with them, because they wrestle with us. The Devil useth both *Policy* and *Power*, both *Fraud* and *Force*, against us. *We are not ignorant of his Devices*, says the Apostle. There are τὰ ἑδν τῆ Σατανᾶ, i. e. *profound and deep policies* of Satan. And μεθοδεῖαι τῆς πλάνης, *Methods and Arts of deceiving*. And we read of *fiery Darts*: that he throws at men, that is, *Darts* dipt in fiery burning Poyson. They are dreadfully armed against us.

Obj. You'll say, all this is to be understood of their tempting men to sin.

Ans. But suppose they did us no other hurt, is not this enough, when 'tis certain Sin brings on Misery unavoidably, where it doth prevail? This is the ordinary *Work* and *Ministry* of Devils, to tempt, and induce men to Sin. Therefore is the Devil called ὁ πειρῶν, *the Tempter*. Other Names (says one) declare his *Nature*, *Power*, *Malice*: But this most properly his *Ministry*, or *Work*. *The great Dragon* (says *John*) *was cast out, that old Serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole World, and his Angels were cast out with him*. See his *Work*, 'tis to deceive all the World. And what greater *Mischief* can he do more than to deceive them into Sin, unto their *Eternal Perdition*? Men would sin (but likely

Eph. 6. 12.

2 Cor. 2. 11.

Rev. 2. 24.

Eph. 4. 14.

Eph. 6. 16.

Mat. 4. 3.

1 Theff. 3. 5.

Rev. 12. 9.

likely not so much) if there were no such Tempter, their innate Corruption would lead them to it, but the Devil promotes it. He tempted *Eve* to eat the forbidden Fruit, Mat. 15. 19. moved *David* to number the People, put it into the Heart of *Judas* to betray Christ, and into the Hearts of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* to lye unto the Holy Ghost. He set on the *Jews* to oppose the Truth of *Christ*. He dictated to *Peter* that carnal Counsel which he gave our Saviour; for which Cause *Christ* calls *Peter Satan*, *Get thee behind me Satan*. He winnoweth the Saints, *Satan* (says *Christ*) *hath desired to winnow you*. He tempteth to Incontinency and Uncleanness, 1 Cor. 7. 5. Hinders holy Knowledge, 2 Cor. 4. 3. It was a messenger of *Satan* that buffeted *Paul*. He was a lying Spirit in the mouths of all *Abab's* Prophets, to counsel him to his ruine. He is that enemy that soweth *Tares* in the Field, while men sleep, Mat. 13. 25. *i. e.* That fills mens Heads with Errours, and Delusions, to their Eternal Perdition.

Thus is the Devil and his Angels employed to destroy Souls, and tho' this be bad enough, yet 'tis not all the Mischief they are Workers of. They are for Destruction, Temporal here, as well as Eternal hereafter. They are for vexing, tormenting, killing. When King *Saul* was forsaken of God, he was lamentably troubled, and in a Frenzy, and it was an evil Spirit that vexed him. 1 Sam. 16. 15. It was the Devil that spoil'd *Job* of his Estate, smote him in his Body with grievous Sores, and botches, and slew all his Children. How pitifully were those poor Creatures used that were possessed by evil Spirits. See *Matt. 17. 15.* *He is Lunatick, and sore vexed. For oftentimes he falleth into the Fire, and oft into the water. And the Spirit cried, and rent him, and he was as one dead,* Mark 9. 26.

This is the Work of these malignant Spirits, and they would quickly make this World a very Hell for Wickedness, yea and a Slaughter-house too, filling all with Blood, and Horrour, if they were not restrain'd, and powerfully opposed. And what Creatures can encounter these, but God's holy Angels, appointed to be our Guardians against all that may harm us.

Ad tutelam nostram constituit exercitus Angelorum, ut eorum presentia Daemonum constringatur audacia. *Chryf. Hom. de Ascens. Dem.*

No Tongue can utter or Mind fully conceive how great Mercy to men the Ministry of Angels is. Let our good and gracious God have the Honour of it.

C H A P. XI.

- §. 1. *The Honour God puts on his People assigning Angels to take charge of them.* §. 2. *They should value themselves accordingly, and how, both their Souls and Bodies.* §. 3. *On the same account ought others to value them.* §. 4. *And not to Persecute them. How great a Madness 'tis do so.* §. 5. *What a compleat defence Angels are, being every where and alway with God's People.* §. 6. *That therefore they should be fearless, and how.* §. 7. *God's Peoples enemies can have no Hope to prevail against them.*

S E C T. I.

THE next Duties that I shall insist on are some that have a peculiar respect unto the Persons for whom the Ministry of Angels is specially appointed, considered as such. These (our Apostle says) are the *Heirs of Salvation*, all the faithful Servants of *Jesus Christ*, all that belong to him, the Angels are specially appointed for them. Now if we consider the State and Circumstances that these come to be in, by virtue of this their Privilege, we shall plainly discover an Obligation to several Duties, resulting out of the same. We shall consider the great Honour God puts upon such, and the compleat defence God hath made for them, and what Duty results out of this.

I. What Honour God confers on such as he has given his Angels a charge of. Where God confers Honour there
there

there is Respect due answerable to the Honour he confers. The more God honours Persons, the more they are to be honoured, and valued. Now it will be worth our while to consider how much God honours all his Saints, the Heirs of Salvation, in appointing his Holy Angels over them. It shews that God makes great account of them, and more account of them than of others. 'Tis true, all men on Earth have some benefit by Angels, they are employed for good and bad, as was shewed *Chap. 6. §. 4.* Whereupon it follows that God hath dignified humane Nature in general, by the *Mission of Angels*, as he hath (more eminently) by the *Incarnation of Christ*: But as the Honour that is from Christ's Incarnation specially belongs to the Saints for whom especially he took Man's Nature, and who are made one with him *mystically*; So the Honour that comes from the Ministration of Angels does in a peculiar manner belong to them, because they have a peculiar Interest in, communion with, and benefit by, the Angels, as was proved, *Chap. 6. §. 3.* They are the honourable and worthy Person, that God honours. Now what greater Honour can be put upon Men, than for God to send such excellent Creatures as Angels are, to be their Companions and Guardians?

What excellent Creatures Angels are, has been in part shewed in the foregoing Discourse of their Nature, and Properties. But alas all that we can speak, or write of them must needs come very short of them: They deserve other, and higher *Elogies*; than can be expected from mortal men. To set them forth is work for the Tongue or Pen of an *Archangel*. All that I shall say is, they are the most excellent Creatures God ever made: and 'tis the peculiar Praise our *Lord Jesus Christ*, that he is *above Angels*: He only is so, that is God, as well as Man. There are no mere Creatures that come so near to God himself in Nature, and Perfection, as the Angels do. They are the most Images or Representations of him that the whole Creation doth afford.

Now, that such Creatures as these are should be sent by God to men, to associate and converse with them, to instruct, admonish, defend, and keep them, to shew Love

and Kindness to them, what an Honour is this to be put on mortal men, sinful men? Yet no less than this Dignity are sinful Mortals advanc'd to, in *Jesus Christ*; when they are brought to believe, *they come* (as the Apostle says) *to an innumerable company of Angels*. Observe how he expresses himself, *Heb. 12. 22. But ye are come unto Mount Zion, 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 first-born, &c.* He sets forth the greatness of the Happiness of those that are true Believers, and speaks not of what they shall come to, but of what they do come to as soon as they believe; *But ye are come*, And to what were they come? Why not unto Fellowship with holy Men only, becoming related to the whole Assembly of the first-born, as Members of the same Body of Saints, but unto Communion of Holy Angels too, so as that from their first being Christians they have fellowship with Angels, and great Benefit by them. 'Tis true, they have not here in this Life, such a visible, such a sensible and full Communion with Angels as they shall have hereafter (as neither have they with the whole Body of Saints, and *Jesus the Mediator*) But they have a real Communion with Angels here, (as they have with *Christ*.) The Angels are with them, and constantly at work for them, by God's special appointment.

When *David* considered the visible Heavens and the Earth, that they were subjected to Man's Service, with the Creatures on it, that God had put all things under his Feet, all Sheep and Oxen, yea and the Beasts of the Field, the Fowl of the Air, and the Fish of the Sea, it made him cry out, *What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man, that thou visitest him?* *Psal. 8. 3. &c.* This is indeed very much, but that God should appoint the Blessed Angels of Heaven to be ministering Spirits for men, is much more wonderful. Among the several Marks of Honour which King *Abasuerus* ordered *Mordecai* to be graced with, this was the chief, that one of the King's most Noble Princes should array him, and wait on him, thro' the Streets of the City, *Esth. 6. 9.* The Angels are the most Noble Princes of the King of Heaven,

now,

now not one, but all of them are appointed of God, to do men this honour : Sure God makes great account of men. And so do the holy Angels too, who are willing and ready to embrace friendship with them, and to undertake a care for them. So far are the Angels from disdain'g society with men, that they are much pleas'd with it, and rejoyce when any are converted and brought into fellowship with themselves. Christ says, *There is joy in Heaven among the holy Angels* : If it be joy to them, then do they make great account of their company.

Well, seeing (as has been shew'd) God and Angels make such account of men renew'd by his Grace, and made Heirs of Salvation, it must be acknowledg'd that there is (for certain) some real Worth in them, they are an excellent People, how much soever scorn'd and despis'd by the World. *David* calls them *the excellent ones*, *Psal. 16. 3. the Saints that are in the earth, the excellent in whom is all my delight.* The Saints on Earth were the excellent ones, in whom he was most delighted : Tho' they be poor, afflicted and oppressed, yet are they an excellent People ; and they are so, not only in respect of some relative Preheminencies and Privileges that they are invest'd with, but in respect of a certain real Excellency put into them : They have the Privilege of *Adoption*, are made the Sons of God ; they have the Grace of *Justification*, what *Christ* hath done and suffer'd is accepted for them, and they are fully pardon'd and restor'd to God's Favour ; they are espous'd to *Christ*, and he is their Husband ; He is the Head, and they the Members of his Body, they are his Friends, his Brethren : All these are relative Benefits which they are invest'd with, in respect of which they have the preheminance of others : But this is not all, they have real Excellency put into them ; for God uses not to bestow *relative Privileges* on any but such as he does *especially qualify* for them ; He changes the Nature when he changes the Relation : They have therefore some singular worth in them, they have a more excellent *Spirit* than others have. 'Tis given as a reason why *Caleb* behav'd himself better than the other Spies, that he had another Spirit, *Num. 14. 24.* This the World cannot see, and therefore do not duly value

lue them: They have a Divine Spirit in them. *We have receiv'd* (says the Apostle) *not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God,* 1 Cor. 2. 12. A more excellent than is in the men of this World; upon which account it is that *Solomon* says, *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour,* Prov. 12. 26. The Apostle sticks not to say, *That they are partakers of a divine nature,* 2 Pet. 1. 4. understand certain *Divine Qualities* that make them like unto God: For certain, Holiness, by which God's People are differenc'd from others, hath somewhat more in it than the World seeth. Such as are sanctified are said to have *Christ formed in them, to be born of God, to be made after the Image of God that created them.* Such expressions must needs denote some singular Excellency that is put into them: It follows therefore that there is some peculiar Respect that is due unto all such, and in particular.

S E C T. II.

1. **T**HAT such as are real Saints, and Heirs of Salvation, have reason to value themselves. 2. That others have reason to value them accordingly.

1. Such have reason to *value* themselves, and shew such *magnanimity* and *greatness* of Mind, as is becoming Persons so qualified and dignified as they are. I would not be thought to cherish *Pride* and *Vain glory* in any: None see more to make them, and keep them humble, than the Saints do, who have receiv'd the Spirit to convince them of Sin, *Job.* 16. 8. This makes them abhor themselves, and to fall down and lie in Tears at the Feet of their *Redeemer*; but as they are renew'd in *Christ*, and have fellowship with God and Angels, it is much otherwise with them. 'Tis no *Pride* to value one's self on this account; yea, a man cannot duly value the Grace and Goodness of his God and Redeemer, unless he do value himself, and take an holy state upon him; I mean, be of an Holy and Heavenly Conversation and Carriage in the World. Oh, how do some debase themselves by sordid Actions that they stoop to? All Sin is an undervaluing thing: a Christian, when he is sinning, does not act like himself; a
Chri-

Christian should scorn all baseness: Is it not a shame, for one that hath fellowship with God and Angels to turn himself into a meer Brute, into a beastly Swine, as the Drunkard does, or into a Beast of Prey, as the Oppressor and Persecutor does? Is it not a shame for such a one to enslave himself to the Embraces of a wanton Harlot, as the Fornicator does? Is it not a shame for such a one sordidly to bow and bend to the Wills, Humors, and Lusts of Men, as the Time-server does? *Shall such a man as I see, says Nebemiah, and who is there, that being as I am, would go into the Temple to save his life?* Neh. 6. 11. He counted it beneath him, and a great undervaluing. This greatness of Mind becomes all Saints, to count all Sin beneath them. You that God has honour'd by his Grace, value your selves, particularly, 1. your Souls; 2. your Bodies.

1. *Your Souls*; these are very near of kin to the Angels. *Separate Souls and Angels* differ very little in their nature. Man, as coming out of God's Hands, is an *Incarinate Angel*, and therefore are the Angels the more ready to minister to Man: They look after his Body and outward estate, as well as his Soul, but 'tis all in reference to the Salvation of his Soul. 'Tis for them, as Heirs of Salvation, that they are ministring Spirits, as says the Text. Your Souls are precious things, else God would never have sent his Son to redeem them, and Angels to minister for them. Our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who best knows the worth of things, judges a Soul of greater value than the whole World. Make much account of your Souls, entertain them from day to day, as is fitting for such excellent Spirits; not with the *Scraps* and *Offal* of the World, *σώβαρα*, as the Apostle stiles such things, *Phil. 3. 8.* which some interpret *Chaff*, some *Dross*, some *Dung*, some *Dogs-meat*, *κύνιστρα*. I mean, not with sensual Delights and Pleasures, more proper for Brutes, nor with secular things that are passing away, but with things suitable to their nature, even things spiritual and eternal: Suffer them not to go naked and hungry, rather than be at the pain and trouble to cloath and feed them: Carefully *put on Christ* every day, even all his *Virtues*, and feed them with pure and wholsom Food, in heavenly and holy Contemplation: hinder not their devout flights for God

Mat. 16. 26.

and

and Heaven, by loading and clogging them with worldly Cares or fleshly Lusts, *Luke 21. 34.* Do not so undervalue your Souls, as to hazard them for Trifles, for Wealth, or Pleasure, or Honour of this World. Oh, what low priz'd things do they make their Souls, that will expose them for such mean and low things! Ministers, God's *visible Agents*, watch for your Souls, *Heb. 13. 17.* yea, and Angels too, his *invisible Agents*, they are call'd *Watchers*, *Dan. 4. 17.* do not you neglect them.

2. Have due and fitting care of your *Bodies* also; Angels are employ'd to look after them too. 'Tis true, your Souls are the principal part of you, they are *your selves*, not your fleshly part; and 'tis brutish to neglect the Soul, to spare or please the Flesh. The Soul is the Heavenly part, the Body is the Earthly part, and as the Heavens are above the Earth, so are your Souls in worth above your Bodies: however, there is an Honour due to your Bodies also. The Apostle tells us, *'Tis the will of God that every one should learn how to possess his Vessel (i. e. his Body) in sanctification and honour, 1 Thes. 4. 4.* God would have men mind the honour of their *Bodies*, and the honour of them is their *sanctification*, as that Text clearly enough proves. The only honour that some care to bestow on their Bodies, is neat and rich Attire, a Vanity too much affected among us; but the Raiment and outward Dress of the Body adds nothing to it, but to be a covering of its shame, and to fence it against the noxious impressions of heat and cold, that it is expos'd to when naked. The honour of the Body is to have the Members of it Instruments of Righteousness, and not of Sin. Therefore our Apostle exhorts, *Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof: neither yield ye your members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield your selves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members instruments of righteousness unto God, Rom. 6. 12, 13.* And again he says, *He that committeth Fornication sinneth against his own body, 1 Cor. 6. 18.* i. e. He abuses and dishonours it; and as it is true of Fornication, so also of every other Sin that the Body is employ'd in, 'tis a dishonouring of the Body: wherefore carefully keep your selves from all Sins of the *Flesh* as well as *Spirit*.

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The Apostle says, *That your bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost,* 1 Cor. 6. 19. I must add here, They are part of the Angels charge, and therefore must not be dishonour'd: there is nothing dishonours the Body but sinning. To have the Body disgracefully us'd by Persecutors, is no dishonour to it. When the Apostles were whipt like Rogues, *they went away rejoicing that they were counted worthy,* Acts 5. 41. Scars and Wounds in the Body are marks of honour, when they are for Christ and his Gospel. *I bear in my body* (says Paul) *the marks of the Lord Jesus,* Gal. 6. 17. And *Christ is magnified in my body,* Phil. 1. 20. Scars and outward blemishes receiv'd in defence of the Gospel, no man hath cause to be asham'd of, they are a man's Glory; but beware of sinning, for 'tis an undervaluing of the Body, when the Members of it are made Instruments of Unrighteousness. To speak a Lye, or prophanely, to curse or swear, is a dishonour to the *Tongue*. To look on a Woman to lust after her, is a dishonour to the *Eye*. To work any unlawful thing, is a dishonour to the *Hand*. What an incongruity is it for us to defile our Bodies, when the Angels have often to do about them? And to dishonour them which the Angels honour, so as to take the charge of them?

Thus are we *Debtors* to our selves, to our own *Souls and Bodies*, for this kind of Honour, on the account of the honour God hath put upon us, in appointing Angels to be ministring Spirits for us.

S E C T. III.

2. **A**S the Saints on this account have reason to value and make account of themselves, so have all men reason to value and make great account of them, whatever their outward quality in this World be. The Angels are ministring Spirits for all the Heirs of Salvation, without exception. *As God is no respecter of persons,* Acts 10. 34. so neither are Angels. Such as God hath chosen out of the World, and separated unto himself by his Grace, be they high or low, rich or poor, bond or free, the holy Angels have the charge of them, and do carefully look af-

ter them. *There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all, Col. 3. 11.* Wherefore,

I. The meanest of God's Saints and Servants must not be despis'd; 'tis their lot many of them to be poor, afflicted, and oppress'd here in this World; nor have they all of them the greatest Parts and Endowments of Nature and Art: *God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, says James, ch. 2. 5. And hath revealed the mysteries of his Kingdom to babes, while he hides them from the wise and prudent, as says our Saviour, Mat. 11. 25. And Paul lays, Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty, 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27.* They may then many of them be poor and mean, yea, weak and silly persons, in the Eye of the World, and yet they ought not to be despis'd: for as God hath chosen them, so the Angels attend and wait upon the meanest and most despicable of them. *The poor man cried, (says David) and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of his troubles. The Angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him, Psal. 34. 6, 7. Lazarus, at his death, was magnificently conducted by the holy Angels to Heaven, tho' a Beggar; and the same Angels, out of doubt, attended him while amongst the Living.* Let none then of those God and Angels so honour be despis'd. Oh, how little reckoning do the men of this World make of the poor Saints and Servants of God! they scorn, and deride, and oppress them, and yet have they often far'd the better for their company: *Potiphar did for Joseph's company, Gen. 29. 2, 3. yet Joseph was then but in the quality of a Bondslave. And Laban far'd the better for Jacob's company, and yet he was then but a poor Fugitive. We have a confession from Laban's own Mouth, I have learned (says he) by experience, that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake, Gen. 30. 27.* Many more like Instances might be produc'd. Masters have reason to prize such Servants above others; and all have reason to prize such company most: They have secret hints and helps from Angels, which others have

have not, which make their Service more prosperous, and their Conversation more advantageous, *Gen. 24. 7.* yet are they little regarded. But no wonder if the World slight and scorn God's poor Saints, this Sin is found also among such as are *Professors of Religion*, and is more unreasonable in them than others. The Apostle *James* reproves it as a great fault, common in those first and purest times of *Christianity*, that they despis'd the Poor, *Jam. 2. 3, 6.* So does the Apostle *Paul*, *1 Cor. 11. 22.* Our Saviour gives the matter in hand as a reason against it, namely, Why we should not despise the meanest Saint, any one of the little ones that believe in him, *Because (says he) their Angels in Heaven do alway behold the face of God, Mat. 18. 10.*

Oh, what intolerable *Pride* is it for any of us Mortals to think our selves too good for the company of such as have fellowship with Angels? The holy Angels disdain not to accompany and converse with them, and is it not absurd that we should? Our Apostle exhorts Christians to be condescending to men of low estate; *Rom. 12. 16. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.* Be they of never so mean condition, if they be the Members of Christ, and Heirs of Salvation, they are worthy of peculiar Respect, and should have it paid unto them.

S E C T. IV.

And 2ly, **I**F they should not be slighted, much less should they be *wrong'd and hurted*, and woe be unto such as have any hand in so doing. Our Saviour Christ says, *It were better for such a one that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the midst of the sea, Mat. 18. 6.* How many Persons have been brought to sad ends, how many Families have been ruin'd, how many Kingdoms have been lamentably broken by this means?

Besides what instances Scripture affords us, observing Men, and such as are conversant in History, can tell us of a multitude that would fill a Volume. What became of *Herod the Great*, that sought the Life of our Saviour, and

Herod Antipas, who beheaded *John the Baptist*? The former died of a very loathsome Disease; the latter, with his *Herodias*, being banish'd into *France*, both liv'd there miserably, and (as *Nauclerus* says) were starv'd to death, *Osiand. Cent. 1.* The other *Herod*, call'd *Herod Agrippa*, who kill'd *James* and imprison'd *Peter*, with an intent to have his Life too, we read *he was eaten out of Lice, Acts 12. 23.* Who knows not what End the persecuting Emperors came to most of them, that has ever read *Ecclesiastical History*? I will not reflect on our times, that I may not give offence to any. What became of *Pharaoh* and his Host, that pursu'd God's People after they had been long oppress'd? You know they were all swallow'd up at once in the Red Sea. And what became of the *Assyrians*, a mighty and victorious Nation? When they fell upon God's Church and People, they were utterly broken by the *Persians*, and God threaten'd them beforehand with Destruction, for that Cruelty they acted against his People. So he threatens *Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, and Ammon*, to send the Fire of his wrath among them for the same reason, even for wronging and dealing cruelly with his People; as you may read in the first Chapter of *Amos*: And the Lord gives this reason why he was angry with all the Heathen Nations; *I am jealous for Jerusalem, and for Sion with a great jealousy: I am very sore displeas'd with the Heathen that are at ease. For I was but a little displeas'd, and they help'd forward the affliction, Zech. 1. 14, 15.* Note here, they that help forward the Affliction of God's People, tho' they be not the sole Causes of it, draw Judgments on themselves.

And no wonder, for such as attempt any thing against God's People, that they bid defiance to the blessed Angels that are their Keepers, and wage War with them.

'Tis God's Pleasure that the Troublers of his People should sometimes be let alone for a while, but when their measure comes to be filled up, they shall fall on a sudden, or waste away by degrees, before the watchful and faithful Guardians of the Church.

'Tis to be noted, those *Horses*, red, speckled, and white, which *Zechary* saw in his Vision, were holy Angels, which God sent forth to walk to and fro thro' the Earth, *ver. 10.* These make report of the present Peace the Nations were in, that had oppressed the Church. *We have walked (say they) to and fro thro' the Earth, and behold all the Earth sitteth still, and is at rest, ver. 11.* They were all quiet, but *Jerusalem* was in trouble. Now one of the Angels makes request for *Jerusalem*, and moves God to the avenging of his People on those that oppressed them. *Then the Angel of the Lord, answered and said, O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the Cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these Threescore and Ten years, ver. 12.*

The Angels were able to bear with *Jerusalem's* enemies no longer, but move God against them. And 'tis said, *God answered the Angel with good and comfortable words, ver. 13.* Then it follows, *v. 14. I am jealous for Jerusalem, and for Sion, with a great jealousy, I am sore displeas'd with the Heathen, &c.* Hereupon *Carpenters* are presently sent to cut down those *Horns* that had scattered *Judah* (so the matter is represented in the Vision) The meaning is, certain Angels had Commission to break those Nations that had afflicted and oppressed God's People. *Then I lift up mine Eyes, and saw, and behold four Horns. And I said unto the Angel that talked with me, what be these? &c. read ver. 18, 19, 20, 21.* These Nations pay dear for it at last.

Oh that *Persecutors* would bethink themselves a little, and consider what they are a doing.

Gamaliel, a great Doctor of the Law, judges such to be fighters against God, and so indeed they are. They assault the Persons, God's Hosts of Angels encamp about. Oh the *Bedlam-frenzy* of poor deluded Mortals! *Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge (says David) who eat up my people as they eat Bread? What are they out of their Wits? Have they abandoned all use of their Reason and Understanding? Yes indeed, they are the Fools that say in their heart there is no God, ver. 1.*

If *Atheism* did not much prevail, if God's Providence were acknowledged, and the Instruments of his Providence,

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the Angels were known, it would cool the Courage of Persecutors, and make them refrain from those Men, that are so magnificently attended by God's special Appointment.

So much of the *Honour* God hath put on his People in appointing Angels over them, and the Duties this obliges to.

S E C T. V.

WE are next to consider the compleat *defence* Angels are, how *safe* God's People are in their keeping, with the Duties which on this account Persons come to be specially obliged unto.

What a compleat *defence* Angels are, and how well provided for every way, God's People are by the Ministry of Angels, may easily be gathered from what has been already said. Here let us note,

1. The Angels are every where, where God's People are in need of them. I do not mean, that the same Angels are at the same time, every where, God only is so every where: But some, or other of the Angels are still at hand, and they move from Heaven to Earth, and from one far distant place to another, in a very little point of time, as was shewed, *Cbap. 3. §. 8.* Whether God's People be on the Seas, or on the Land, whether at home or abroad, whether at Liberty or in Prison, Angels ever attend them. If they have a Call to go to Sea, hear what *David* 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, &c. Then they cry unto the Lord, he maketh the Storm a Calm, so that the Waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet, so he bringeth them into their desired Haven.* God does this, but 'tis by the Ministry of Angels: For there are Angels of the Waters, that attend his People there. So the Angel is called, *Rev. 16. 5. The Angel of the Waters.*

Psal. 107. 23.
ad 31.

If they have occasion to travel into Foreign Countries, they cannot have their Friends about them there, as at home:

home: But these faithful Companions, the Angels, will go with them, and make their way prosperous, as the Angel did go with *Abraham's* Servants, when he travelled into *Syria*, to get a Wife for *Isaac*.

Should they be shut up close *Prisoners*, the Angels will visit them, as they did *Peter*, and others of the Apostles. *Acts* 5. 19. And as they did *John*, when he was an exile in *Patmos*. *Acts* 12. 7. No Walls, nor Gates, can keep them out. *Hagar* had an Angel to comfort her in an howling Wilderness. So our Saviour *Christ* had many Angels ministering to him, *Mat.* 4. 11. after he was led into the Wilderness to be tempted.

2. There is no time when Angels are out of the way. 'Tis not now and then they visit God's People, but they incamp, or pitch their Tents about them. If God do at any time call them off, 'tis for some special Reason, and they return again to their Charge; When they are forsaken by Friends and Acquaintance, they will not leave them. *When my Father and my Mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up*, says *David*, *Psal.* 27. 10.

3. In all their Necessities both of Body and Soul, Angels can relieve them? In War, and Famine, and Pestilence, the Three most dreadful Plagues of God, on the outward Man, they are mighty and wonderful Helpers. In War the Angels go before God's People as their *Captains*, and *Leaders*, and fight for them, *Josh.* 5. 13, 14. *Yea, cover their heads in the day of Battle*, *Psal.* 140. 7. In famine they provide Food for them, as they did *Manna* for the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, *Psal.* 78. 25.

In time of *Pestilence*, they preserve and keep them from the Contagion. *Thou shalt not be afraid* (says *David*) *of the Pestilence that walketh in the darkness, nor for the destruction that waiteth at noon day: A Thousand shall fall at thy side, and Ten Thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. For he shall give his Angels charge over thee*, *Psal.* 91. 6, 7, 11.

In times of *Persecution*, Angels sometimes strangely hide, and deliver God's People: And when they suffer wicked men to try their Faith and Patience, they often mitigate their Pains, and are Messengers of very refreshing

ing Comforts, as has been by many Instances proved in the foregoing Discourse.

And as for the *Souls* of God's People, how helpful Angels are, See *Chap. 7.* When ordinary visible Helps for their Souls fail, when *Ministers* and *Ordinances* are taken from them, this standing Ordinance of God never fails. Angels cannot be kept from meeting with God's People, and preaching to them. Angels can speak to them by way of *Comfort*, and by way of *Counsel* and *Direction*, in spite of their enemies. They shall not want teaching in the worst times.

Thus are God's People well provided for by the Ministration of the holy Angels.

S E C T. VI.

FROM hence it follows, 1. That God's People should be *fearless* however things go.

2. Their enemies have reason to be *hopeless*, because they shall never be able to prevail against them.

1. God's People should be *fearless*. I mean in respect of any dismaying and dejecting Fear: Such a dastardly Fear as puts a Man out of his way, or disheartens him in it; all such Fear God's People have reason to put off.

There is a Fear that hath great and good use in the Life of Man. God himself hath put it into the Nature of Man, to excite him to the use of proper means of self-preservation. To be wholly without this Fear, is to have put off the Nature of a Man, and to become stupid and senseless, which a Christian by no reason should be.

There ought to be a due Resentment of Dangers, but withal, an holy Boldness, and undaunted Courage, and Confidence, with which a Christian should keep on his way, whatever Difficulties he meet with. And good ground he hath for this, considering the Provision God hath made for his Safety.

David says, *I will not be afraid of Ten Thousands of People that have set themselves against me round about, Psal. 3. 6. And tho' an Host should encamp against me, my Heart shall*

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not fear, tho' War should rise against me, in this will I be confident, Psal. 27. 3. And again, God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, tho' the earth be removed, and tho' the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea: Tho' the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, tho' the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, Psal. 46. 1, 2, 3. Here is a Mind composed and fixed, as is becoming one that is a Servant of God, and knows himself in safe hands.

Obj. Some perhaps will Object. Are not God's People as safe in his immediate keeping, as in the hands of Angels? What further Security does the Doctrine of the Angels Ministry afford any? *David* makes no mention of Angels, but only of God's keeping him, and grounds his Confidence thereupon, in the places before quoted.

I Answer. 'Tis (I grant) in God's keeping that all our Safety lies, he is our Salvation: But as hath been sufficiently proved, it is by the Angels as the ordinary Instruments of his Providence, that he keeps us. And tho' in these places he makes no mention of Angels, yet in other places he does. In *Psal. 34. 6.* He says, *The poor man cried and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.* The Lord did it, but how he did it, the next Words shew. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him, and delivereth them,* ver. 7. God doth it, but by his Angels. So *Psal 91.* The reason he gives why the Faithful are so very safe, is the Charge the Angels have of them. He says, ver. 1. *They are under the shadow of the Almighty, he covers them with his feathers, and under his wings they trust,* ver. 4. Wherefore he adds, *Thou shalt not be afraid of the terrour by night, nor the Arrow that flieth by day, nor for the Pestilence, &c. ver. 5, 6. There shall no evil befall thee, neither any plague come nigh thy dwelling.* This he would have the Faithful Man confident of; But why so? What security has he for such Confidence? Why read on, *For he shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways: They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a Stone, &c. ver. 11, 12.* This he superadds to the general Consideration of God's Providence, as having peculiar Encouragement in it. The

Providence of God is as full an Incouragement and Security as can be, in it self, but as to us it is a greater Security that we have Angels appointed over us.

All good things whatsoever come to us from God, as the *first* and *biggest Cause*: But they come down to us by many *subordinate Causes*, and *Mediums*, which the great God is pleased to make use of, as *Pipes* and *Channells*, thro' which he conveys them to us. Hear the Prophet, *It shall come to pass in that day saith the Lord, I will hear the Heavens, and they shall hear the Earth, and the Earth shall hear the Corn and the Wine, and the Oil, and they shall bear Jezreel*, Hof. 2. 21, 22. God is here set forth as he that will feed his distressed People *Jezreel*: And 'tis shewed how he will do it, not immediately by himself, but by several intervening *Mediums*, subordinate one to the other. First God will hear the Heavens, and furnish the Clouds with Water, then they send down their Store, in refreshing Showers, and Dews on the Earth, that looks for it. The Earth doth in its Womb cherish the Seeds, and Plants, and imparts its moisture which it receives from the Heavens, so that the Corn, and Wine, and Oil, are plentifully brought forth, these feed *Jezreel*. God does it, but not without these.

'Tis a very great comfort to consider our selves under God's Care, but it must needs add much to our Confidence to see means prepared to do us good by, because 'tis his manner to work by means. When there is moderate Rain in the season thereof, and refreshing Dews, when the Earth brings forth plentifully, are we not better satisfied that there is no danger of a Famine? When we have not only Succour promised, but Provisions in a Readiness, there is less cause of Fear.

When *Jacob* saw the *Waggons* which *Joseph* sent to carry him, 'Tis said, *The Spirit of Jacob revived*. All that his Sons had told him, could hardly satisfy him, till he saw the *Waggons*. Nor could the Fear of the Prophets Servant be mastered, till his Eyes were opened to see *Chariots* and *Horses*, that is, the Host of Angels that covered the Mountains, and were a guard about his Master. Wherefore 'tis (no doubt) a great help to Faith, to know
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(not only that God's Providence is over us, But) that there is such a Guard of Angels prepared, and always in a Readiness to help us.

And it being so, how undaunted should we be? We have reason to be bold and fearless in God's ways, we may safely venture on any dangers, where we have a call: We need not fear the Power or Policy of Enemies being in the hands of such Keepers as Angels are.

S E C T. VII.

2ly, **A**S God's People have cause to be *fearless*, so their Enemies (on the same account) have cause to be *hopeless*. I mean, hopeless of ever working their ends on God's People. Wicked and ungodly men think to tread down, and root out, and utterly to destroy such as are faithful, and they grow the more confident that they shall be able to do so, while they observe how little Secular Strength is usually on such mens side. The visible Power of God's Church, is but little. *Jacob is but a weak Worm. But hear what the Lord says, Fear not worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel, I will help thee, &c. Thou shalt thresh the Mountains. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Isa. 41. 14, 15. Zech. 4. 6.

All the attempts of the wicked World, against God's People will prove unsuccessful, when such Hosts, whereof God, is the Lord, are for them. *Why do the Heathen rage, and the People imagine a vain thing? 'Tis all to no purpose which they enterprize. There is no fighting with God, and his invisible Hosts of Angels, with any hope of Success. Did not horrible Atheism prevail with such men, as set themselves against the Church and People of God, this would certainly abate their Confidence, and quite dispirit them.*

C H A P. XII.

§. 1. *What is our Duty specially in reference to Angels. As 1. What Honour we must give them. Negatively, Not any Divine Honour. §. 2. Not what only belongs to Jesus Christ the Mediator. Where of the Demons of the Platonists, and that they were Angels. §. 3. How we must not give them any of the Honour belonging to the Holy Ghost. §. 4. That we are not to affect or desire sensible Communion with Angels, and the Reasons. §. 5. A Case answered, What a man should do, and how he should carry himself, if he should have an Apparition of an Angel.*

S E C T. I.

ALL that I further intend is what our Duty is in reference to the Holy Angels themselves, that are sent forth to minister for the Heirs of Salvation.

There is (questionless) a *Respect* and *Honour* due from us to Angels, and there is a *Communion* with them which God allows, and appoints, and which is to be desired and embraced by us: But what this is, and how 'tis limited, and bounded is to be our Inquiry in the next place.

Some have given too much to Angels, and expected too much from them; Some, on the other hand, have too little regard to them, scarce looking upon themselves as any way concerned with them: Both Extreams are dangerous, and what the mean, or middle is that we must aim at, God's Word only is fit to direct us about; we must not follow our own bold and licentious *Fancies*, but *Divine Revelation*.

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I shall in this *Chapter* enquire what *Honour* is not to be given to Angels, and what *Regard* is not to be had to them : In what follows, I intend to shew how we should honour them, and maintain communion with them.

As to the *Negative* part, which here is to be handl'd, these two things I shall endeavour to clear ; 1. That we must by no means give any *Divine Honour* to Angels : 2. That we ought not to affect *visible* or *sensible Communion* and *Entercourse* with them.

1. We must by no means give any *Divine Honour* to them, not any of that *Respect* and *Honour* that properly belongeth to *God* only.

Among some of the *Heathens*, Angels have been reputed Gods, and honour'd as such : And we do the *Papists* no wrong, if we charge them with the like *Idolatry*, while they teach, that Angels and Saints departed this life are to be worship'd with *Religious Worship*. Our Saviour *Christ* says, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Mat. 4. 10.
The *Devil* would have had *Christ* to have worship'd him, and that would have been strange *Worship* indeed : but our Saviour doth not only with abhorrence declare against that horrid *Idolatry*, but teaches us, that no *Creature* whatever must be worship'd, but *God* only ; therefore neither Saints nor Angels. Ver. 9.

We read that *John* the *Evangelist*, in a strange *Transport* of his, seem'd to be about to worship the Angel that appear'd and spake to him ; but the Angel would by no means suffer it ; *See thou do it not,* (says the Angel) *for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God ; i. e. him only.* Rev. 19. 10.

The *Papists* mince the matter by their *subtile distinctions*, but will never be able to clear themselves from being guilty of leading the *People* (that cannot so curiously distinguish) into very gross and heathenish *Idolatry*. To give to any *Creature* what belongs only to *God*, is downright *Idolatry*. Let us therefore take heed we do not ascribe or give to Angels either what belongs to *God* the *Creator*, or to *God* the *Redeemer*, or to *God* the *Sanctifier*.

I. What belongs to God the Creator. 'Tis the incommunicable Property of the Deity even of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be *eternal, uncreated, and without beginning*; yet this some Philosophers have ascrib'd to Angels. Aristotle held, that the Heavens were *eternal*, and without beginning, and that they are mov'd by the Angels, which he calls *Intelligences*; therefore they must be granted to be *eternal*, and without beginning too. The same Opinion he had also of Matter, and all to support that unsound Position of his, That of nothing, nothing is made Both the Heavens and Angels too had a beginning, and were created by God, (as Chap. 3.) tho' the time when they were created be not to us so certain. They are God's Creatures, as we are, tho' of a more pure and excellent make.

Again, *Immutability and Independency* are divine incommunicable Perfections, peculiarly belonging to God, and therefore not to be ascrib'd to Angels. God only is *without variableness or shadow of turning*, as the Apostle expresseth it, *James 1. 17.* and He is the only *I AM*, who is *in and of himself*, and all things of him, and *in him*, and *by him*. *There is none besides thee*, says Hannah in her Song: that is, there is none that in most perfect sense can be said to *Be, viz.* independently.

1 Sam. 2. 2.

Angels are said to be *immortal and incorruptible*, because there is in them no *Passive Principle* by which they may be call'd corruptible or mortal: but in respect of the Active Power of God, on which they do depend, they may be said to be *mortal*, it being only in the Power of God that they are what they are. Nothing ('tis true) but God, by his immediate Power, can destroy them, (and God will not) therefore they shall abide for ever without change as to their Essence: But they subsist not in themselves, but in God, who by a continued act of his creating Power sustains them, otherwise they would lose their being, and return to nothing. There needs no positive act of God's Power to destroy them, they would cease to be instantly, if God should but suspend his Manutency or Sustainment.

And thus depending are they on God, as well to their *working* as to their *being*; for things are in *working* as they
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are in being. Angels can do nothing without God, tho' Operari sequitur esse. (as the Psalmist says) they excel in strength.

Wherefore when we speak of their Agency and Helpfulness to us, our Thoughts must not terminate in them, but mount up to God, whose Instruments they are, otherwise we shall be guilty of ascribing more to them than is their due, even an Honour peculiar to God, which is to be Independent in being and working. Observe how the Psalmist reasoneth, *Psal. 34. 7, 8. The Angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him, to deliver them.* And what then? O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Mark, the Lord is good, he looks beyond the Angels. Angels keep us, oh, God is good! and blessed is the man that trusteth not in Angels, but in God; on him must our Trust revolve, and in him must all our Confidence terminate.

S E C T. II.

2. **W**E must be careful we give not any of that Honour to Angels which properly belongs to God the Redeemer, even to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is both God and man in one Person, and in both Natures is our Mediator. It seems clear to me, that the Superstition of the Gentile Philosophers, especially the Platonists which prevail'd in the Apostles times, and is often taxed by Paul, was a Divine Honour they gave to Angels, namely, that kind of Honour that does properly belong only to Jesus Christ the Mediator.

It cannot be denied, but tho' some held more Sovereign Gods than one, yet the best and most knowing of the Philosophers acknowledg'd but one chief and supreme Deity, and him they call'd *Deum altissimum*, and *Deum optimum, maximum*; the most high, the most good, and great God. And they mean, doubtless, the very God of Heaven and Earth, whom we serve, tho' they knew him not as true Religion teaches him.

Celsus in Origen says of the Demons or Spirits that were their Inferiour Deities, that they were *Summi Dei Satrapæ*, &c. the Peers, Lieutenants, or Presidents of the most high God. And Plato himself speaks of God in the Singular Number.

Θεός ἀρθράπρω εἰ μὴ ἑστῶτα.
Plato in Sym.

How-

However, beside their *Sovereign God*, they had several *Inferiour Gods*, which they call'd *Dæmons*; for we have them oft speaking of *Gods* in the Plural Number. *Laertius* says of *Plato*, that his Opinion was,

Ὅτι οἱ θεοὶ καὶ οἱ δαίμονες ἐφοροῦν
τὰ ἀνθρώπων καὶ δαίμονας εἶναι.
Laert.

That there were *Gods* that did inspect the Affairs of men, and that these were *Dæmons*.

What those *Dæmons* were that they esteem'd as *Gods*, some dispute, *viz.* whether they were *Canoniz'd Souls* of dead men, or else *Angels*. *Mr. Mede* (in that excellent Book call'd *The Apostacy of the latter times*) proves, that tho' *Souls* of very excellent men were taken for *Dæmons* by their *Theologists*, yet there were also an higher kind of *Dæmons* that were never link'd to *Bodies*, and these must needs be the same that we call *Angels*.

Mede Apostacy,
p. 19.

Est & superias aliud angustiusque Dæmonum genus, qui semper à Corporis compedibus liberi.

And *Mr. Mede* further says of this sort of *Dæmons*, *Plato* held, that every man had one for a *Keeper*, which (you know) is the receiv'd Opinion concerning *Angels*.

'Tis true, *Δαίμονες* and *Δαίμόνια* are commonly taken now in an ill sense for *Devils*, and so we translate them when us'd in Scripture: but they were otherwise us'd by the *Platonists*, even for good *Spirits*, such as they honour'd as *Gods*; and the Scripture uses them in the same sense as *Mr. Mede* shews.

They signify *knowing*, *Δαίμων* ἢ *Δαίμων*. *Plutarch* calls *Plato* *Δαίμωνιον* in the same sense that others call him *Divine*, for his great and sublime *Knowledg*. And *Dionysius* calls *Homer* *Δαίμωνότατος*, for his great *Learning*: therefore they are Names very well fitting *Angels*, that excel in *Knowledg*, and the *Dæmons* so much spoken of, the more like to be the same we call *Angels*.

Now the *Gentile Dæmons*, being *Angels*, which were honour'd by them as *Deities*, and call'd *Gods*, (as *Angels* also are sometimes call'd in Scripture) the Question will be, *What Divine Honour they gave to these Dæmons or Angels?*

And if we examine what their *Philosophers* attribute to them, and do compare some Texts of Scripture that relate to this matter, it will appear, that the Honour they gave them was that Honour which of right belongs properly to *Jesus Christ* the *Mediator*. They gave them not the Honour

of the *Supreme Deity*; for, according to their *Theology*, the *Sovereign* or *supreme Deity* is so sublime and pure, that it is beneath him to have any *Entercourse* with mortal men, but he does all for men by these *Dæmons* or *inferiour Deities*. And so are they accounted the *Demons* as *Mediators* between God and men, to present their *Prayers* to God, and to obtain from God good things for them. All things were perform'd by the mediation of the *Dæmons*, and men were wholly to depend on them.

This *Philosophy* was common in the *Apostolical* times, and the *Apostle Paul* does cautionate *Christians* against it, *Col. 2. 18.*

Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of *Angels*. And fortifying the *Colossians* against this *Superstition*, he tells them, that they are compleat in *Christ*, who is the head of all principality and power, *ver. 10.* *Christ* is the Head of *Angels*, and by himself a compleat *Mediator*, and needs not to have any *Angels* joyn'd with him. Whoever look any further than *Christ*, the *Apostle* says, they hold not the Head, *ver. 19.*

Let *Papists* look well to this, for the *Apostle's* words prove them *Apostates* from *Christ*, in that they have recourse to *Saints* and *Angels*, in the very same manner, and on the same reason with the *Platonists*, whom the *Apostle* condemns.

There is another place of *Scripture* that plainly hath respect unto this same *Superstition* of the *Platonists* that we are speaking of; 'tis *2 Cor. 8. 5.* Tho' there be that are called *Gods*, whether in *Heaven* or on *Earth*, as there be *Gods* many, and *Lords* many. Some own'd many *Gods* and many *Lords*, but it was among the *Heathens*, not the *Christians*. Now what means the *Apostle* by *many Gods* and *many Lords*? Why, by *Gods* he means their *supreme* and *sovereign Gods*; for tho' some thought there was but one, others thought there were many *Sovereign Deities*. By *Lords* he means their *inferiour Deities* or *Spirits*, that they address'd them-

Θεὸς ἀνθρώπων ἢ μύηται,
ἀλλὰ διὰ δαιμονίων τῶν ἐν
ὀμιλίᾳ, καὶ ἡ διάθεσις Θεοῦ
πρὸς ἀνθρώπους. Plato.

Dæmones sunt Media Potestates per quas & desideria nostra & merita ad Deos committunt &c. Neque enim pro Majestate Deum Cælestium fuerit hæc curare. *Apol.*

Homines ut commendentur Deis bonis, Dæmonibus ut debent Advocatis. *In. Aug. de Civit.*

selves to as their Mediators. As some had many Gods, so they had many Mediators.

Aug de Civ. Dei, lib. 5. cap. 9. hath this Question in the Title; An Amicitia Cœlestium Deorum per intercessionem Dæmonum possit homini provideri. And Chap. 17. Ad consequendam vitam beatam, non tali Mediatore indigere hominem qualis est Dæmon, sed tali qualis est unus Christus. This shews what was the supposed Office of Dæmons. Mede.

Kueüs, Lord, is a Title that in the Apostles Writings is given to Christ our Mediator no less than a thousand times, (as Zanchy observes) and so with Paul signifies Mediator: wherefore when he says many Lords; he means many Mediators. This was the Theology of the Gentiles; but our Apostle adds, But to us (i. e. to us Christians) there is but one God, the Father, and but one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. That is, (as says Mr. Mede)

by whom are all things which come from the Father to us, and thro' whom alone we find access to him. We Christians must own but one Mediator.

But here we see that the Honour which the Gentiles gave their inferiour Deities, their Dæmons or Angels, was that which belongs only to Jesus Christ, as Mediator between God and man; and we must beware of this Superstition: as we must own but one Sovereign God, to whom we are to direct all our Services, so must we own but one Mediator. This is the Apostle's Doctrine, 1 Tim. 2. 5. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man; the man Christ Jesus; that is, but one.*

There is yet another Text, where the Superstition of the Platonists is spoken of, and where the Apostle foretells that it should prevail even among the Professors of the Christian Faith, which is accomplish'd in the Romish Apostacy in those days; 'tis 1 Tim. 4. 1. where we have the very term *Dæmons*, which their Philosophers us'd, tho' we otherwise translate it: Our Translation runs thus; *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.* Mr. Mede reads the Text thus; *Howbeit the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall revolt from the Faith, attending to erroneous Spirits, and Doctrines of Dæmons.* We translate *διδασκαλίας δαιμονίων*, Doctrines of Devils, meaning Doctrines that Devils are the Authors of: He renders it, *Doctrines of Dæmons*, meaning Doctrines concerning

cerning *Dæmons*, viz. such Doctrines as the Philosophers of those times taught concerning *Dæmons* or Angels, and which some false Teachers among the Christians had entertain'd, namely, that they were *Mediators* between God and men. Mr. Mede sufficiently proves by Instances, that the *Genitive Case* is so us'd in other Scriptures, as he understands it there, viz. *passively*, for the *Object*, as well as *actively* for the *Author*; and that *Δουλοῦντες* hath that signification he pleads for, in Scripture, as well as in other Writings of the ancient Philosophers. Now what were these Doctrines concerning *Dæmons*, which he foretells should prevail, but such Doctrines as led to the Superstition I have been speaking of, the worshipping of *Saints deceas'd*, and *Angels*, (which were the *Gentile Dæmons*) and relying on them as *Mediators*. And the *Papists* have fully verified this Prophecy (as Mr. Mede plentifully shews in that excellent Book of his, *The Apostacy of the later Times*).

Now such Honour we must by no means give to Angels. To address our selves to Angels, as our Peace-makers, to bring us into favour with God, or to be *Intercessors* for us as *Christ* is, is to give his Honour to them: *He ever lives to make intercession*, Heb. 7. 25. 'Tis high Presumption for any Creature to take this Work out of his hand, or to undertake to do it together with him: and so is it for any to attribute this Power to any but *Christ* only, viz. a Power to mediate and intercede for us with God, to receive our Devotions, and present them to the Divine Majesty. To ascribe to Saints or Angels any such Power, is to give them that which is *Christ's Prerogative*; this belongs to him, as sitting on the right Hand of God; therefore are these two joyn'd together, *Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us*, Rom. 8. 34. None is to make *Intercession*, but he that is at God's right hand. Now this sitting at God's right hand, is an Exaltation which no Creature

So Acts 13. 12. *Διπλαρὸν τῷ κυρίῳ*, The Doctrine of the Lord, i. e. concerning him. And Gal. 2. 20. *πίστευε τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, The Faith of the Son of God, i. e. Faith in him. So, Acts 3. 16. *πίστευε τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι*. And Heb. 6. *διπλαρὸν βαπτισμῶν*. Doctrines of Baptisms, i. e. concerning Baptisms.

'Tis true, in the Gospel the word is used for Devils commonly: And yet Luke, the best languag'd of the Evangelists, knowing the word to be ambiguous, doth, the first time he uses it, (to distinguish it once for all) use it with an Explication, Chap. 4. 33. *ἔξωσεν αὐτοὺς ἀκαθάρτου*, i. e. having the Spirit of an unclean Dæmon. Mede.

in Heaven or Earth is capable of; 'tis a *Divine Royalty* belonging to Christ only. *He is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens*, Heb. 8. 1. call'd *the right hand of the power of God*, Luke 22. 69. This qualifies him for *Mediation* and *Intercession*. Now no Saint or Angel is thus exalted. *To which of the Angels* (says the Apostle) *said he at any time, sit thou on my right hand?* Heb. 1. 13. *Christ only is the Angel of God's presence*, as he is call'd, *Isa. 63. 9.* and so it belongs to him alone to *appear in the presence of God for us*; as *Heb. 9. 24.*

A *Mediator* Sinners have need of, to go to God by; but that no meer Creature might share in this Honour, which is properly *Divine*, nor be interpos'd by us in our Devotions and Supplications, God being to give us a *Mediator*, appointed one, that is God as well as man, and plac'd him on his own Throne with him, where no Angel is admitted: Now him we may address our selves to, to deal for us as an *Agent* between God and us, without having any other God before his Face, (a thing God is very jealous of): But we have another God before his Face, when we in our Religious Devotions have any Object in our Eye but God himself.

If the Angels do pray for God's Church and People, as some think, is prov'd *Zech. 1. 12.* they pray for them but as one Christian is to pray for another, to be heard by vertue of the mediation of *Jesus Christ*, by whom the Prayers of men or Angels for them become effectual. Nor may we therefore pray to Angels; we may and ought to pray for Angels help, aid, and conduct, but we must not pray unto them for it, but to God. Our Saviour *Christ* says, *He could have prayed to his Father, and he would presently give him more than twelve Legions of Angels*, *Matt. 26. 53.* If he could have done it, then was it a thing lawful; for, *Id possumus quod jure possumus*, We truly can do no more than we can lawfully do. Besides, *David* did pray for the Angels Ministry, *Let the Angels of God scatter them*, *Psal. 35. 5, 6.* But that we may not direct any Prayers to them, besides what hath been said, this proves: We are uncertain when, and how they are present, and we have no order from our common Lord, and it is a thing
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that may easily draw us to *Idolatry*, as says Mr. *Baxter*. Our Christian Faith teaches us to call on none, but him on whom we believe, *Rom.* 10. 14. and that is God only. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: For it is a peculiar Attribute of God to be *Hearing Prayer*, *Psal.* 65. 2.

Moreover, tho' Angels be employed to teach, instruct, and admonish men, yet is not the Honour of Christ's Prophetical Office to be ascribed to them. When they speak to us 'tis not in their own Names, but in Christ's Name, and from him. We are not to believe Angels, if they should preach any other Gospel, *Gal.* 1. 8. We are to have no other Master but *Christ*. He is the only *Rabbi* whose *ipse dixit* is to satisfy, *Mat.* 23. 8, 9, 10. To believe an Angel on his own word, in Matters of Faith, is to give him the Honour that belongs only to *Jesus Christ*. And if we may not give Angels this Honour, much less may we give it to any mortal Man. The *Papists* give more Honour to their *Pope* and *Clergy*, than may be given to the Holy Angels themselves. Thus we must give none of Christ's Honour to Angels.

S E C T. III.

3. **W**E must be careful we do not give them any of that Honour that belongs to the *Holy Ghost*. It must be acknowledged (as has been shewed *Chap.* 7.) that Angels do not only minister to mens Bodies, and outward Man, but to their Souls also. They do much towards the enlightning and converting, and renewing of men, and they work in a more inward way than men do, who are said to be *Co-workers with God* in turning men to him. But now you must know, there is a Work peculiar to God's Spirit, which may by no means be ascribed either to Men or Angels. Angels do teach and instruct, but it is only by offering things to the mind, and what they do on Mens Wills, is only in a way of persuading, or inclining, as one Man may instruct, and persuade another; only with this difference, Men apply themselves to the outward Senses of those they would instruct, but Angels to the inward Sense, or Imagination. The Angels do

do not immediately and effectually illuminate the Understanding, as God's Spirit does. When Angels have made a Composition of the *Pbantasms* in the Imagination, and set it before the Mind, the Mind does not alway take it; and however they incline the Will by presenting Objects, and suggesting Reasons, they cannot determine the Will, nor effectually cause it to determine it self, but this God's Spirit does. They cannot bring new things into the Imagination, but only make use of such *Images* as they find there, as has been noted *Chap. 7. §. 3.* So much has been said there that there needs nothing to be added here. Angels do more than Men can do, but they cannot do what God's Spirit does. That which is properly the Spirits Work, the Angels meddle not with, nor must we ascribe it to them. 'Tis not easy to define what is the Work of God's Spirit on the Soul, but it is some Work on the *Mind* and *Will*, over and above what other *Causes* can effect, which makes mens Knowledge more sound and powerful, and their Acts more perfect, and all saving; and this we may by no means ascribe to Angels.

Let me add by way of Caution. We cannot rationally expect from Angels such Benefits as they are ordinary dispensers of, any further than we are careful and diligent in using the means that on our part are to be used. 'Tis a great Presumption and sinful Tempting of God, to expect help from Angels, or from God, whose Servants Angels are, and all the while make no Conscience of a Man's own Duty. The Promise we have of Angels help runs thus, *They shall keep thee in all thy ways.* When we have used, or at least are in the use of means, Angels help comes in seasonably. *Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, Ps. 37. 34.*

When Christ had been conflicting with the Devil, and resisting him stoutly, then came the Angels to him, and comforted him. Angels Ministration is ordinarily in, and with the regular use of means. If we keep in God's way, and carefully do our Duty, we may expect such help as Angels are wont to afford, but to expect more from them, as to be our *Mediators*, or *Sanctifiers*, this is to give Divine Honour to them, which we must be careful not to do.

S E C T. IV.

2. **A**S we must not give any Divine Honour to Angels, so neither must we affect or desire *sensible Communion* with them, which is a thing God very rarely vouchsafeth to any. We should not affect *Apparitions* of Angels and *Conferences* with them.

This some have had, but it is extraordinary, and not the common way appointed of God. I gave Two Reasons, *Chap. 9. §. 8.* Why *sensible Communion* with Angels is neither so safe nor so convenient for us Mortals, ordinarily: Now for a further Proof of the Matter in hand, *viz.* That we may not affect such sensible intercourse with Angels, Take these *Reasons* following.

1. We have no *Promise* of any such thing. We have a Promise that they shall pitch their Tents about us, and keep us in all our ways; But we have no Promise that we shall see them, and have *familiar Conferences* with them, and hear them speak to us with an audible Voice, this we have no Promise for, and therefore may not expect or desire it.

2. We do not know what belongs to such Intercourses, nor have Understanding or Skill to use them: Yea, (which is most worthy Consideration) we have no certain way to discern whether they be good or evil Spirits that do appear to us, supposing an *Apparition*. *Apparitions* cannot be certainly distinguished by such Rules as are commonly given for that purpose.

Petrus Thyraeus gives this for a Note or Sign by which a Man may know the Apparition of a good Angel, from the Apparition of an evil Angel, and *Pineda* approves the same. Good Angels (says he) when they appear, do at first disturb mens minds, but at last leave the mind quiet, and undisturbed: But Devils on the contrary, do at the first sweetly insinuate themselves, and afterward, at parting, leave the mind disquieted, and disturbed. But this is no good and sound Rule, we may quickly be deceived if we trust to it. When the Angel of God appeared to

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Samson's Parents, we find it happened quite contrary to this Rule: For they were nothing troubled at the first, but afterward, at the Angels parting from them, they were greatly frightened, *Judg. 13, 15, 22.*

The best *Token* I know of, by which Spirits appearing may be known one from the other, is the Message they come with. But neither is this a sure and infallible Test, for Devils come sometimes, with very good Words in their Mouths, and do put Men on actions, for matter honest, and holy, as *Bodin* shews, *Demon. l. 3. c. 6.* And so did the evil Spirit that possessed the *Damsel*, *Acts 16. 17.* 'Tis said, *She followed Paul, saying, These are the Servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of Salvation.* Here was very sound and true Doctrine. But *Paul* was grieved at this Testimony. Devils may speak the Truth, but it is ever with some bad intent, and therefore are not to be listned to. Whereas some conclude they are always good Angels that do appear in comely decent Form, and Shape, and with an amiable and pleasing Countenance, neither is this always true, for the Devil has often so appeared, and the Apostle says, *That Satan sometimes transforms himself into an Angel of Light, 2 Cor. 11. 14.* In the History of the Life of *Martin* it is at large related, how the Devil did appear to him covered with a *bright light*, having on him a *Royal Vestment*, with a *Diadem of Gold*, in this habit, and with a serene and chearful Countenance, he appeared to him as he was at Prayer, pretending that he was *Christ*. But when *Martin* believed him not, he vanished, leaving a noisom Smell behind him. Many such Frauds malignant Spirits have used, so that there is danger of being deceived, if we give heed to Apparitions.

3. Seeing we cannot easily know whether it be a good or bad Spirit that appears, as we may be misled by their Counsel, so may we be drawn to give Honour to the Devil, who is God's most avowed Enemy; and should they be good Angels that appear, if their Apparitions should be ordinary, or frequent, it would be a Temptation to an inordinate Adhætion to, and honouring of them, as has been before noted. 'Tis hard (says *Mr. Baxter*) to receive

Mercy

Mercy by the hand of any Creature, and not to adhere too much to that Creature.

4. 'Tis a sinful Tempting of God, for us to seek to put the Angels out of their way, and to desire that the ordinary Course of God's Providence should be alter'd. We must satisfy our selves with what God thinks fit to allow us.

5. Whatever help Angels may be to us, in furthering our Knowledge (*suo modo*) in an invisible way, they are none of the Teachers that we are directed of God to have recourse to. We are no where advised to go to them to learn. When the Apostle reckons up the several sorts of Teachers that God has given to his Church, Angels are not mentioned, *1 Cor. 12. 28. Ephes. 4. 11.* For us therefore to be desirous of entercourse with them, is to slight and undervalue God's instituted Means. *Christ* tells the rich *Glutton*, when he would have his Brethren instructed by an *Apparition*, *They have Moses and the Prophets*, pointing at them as the ordinary instituted means which men ought to content themselves with. Angels are not appointed of God to be our *Teachers*, in an open and visible way, and therefore we are not to desire any such thing. 'Tis true, we read, that when an Angel had appeared to *Manoab's Wife*, *He prayed that he might come again*, But 'tis clear he knew it not to be an Angel, that appeared to his Wife, till afterwards: He thought it to be a Man, or else he would not have presumed to make such a Request. This appears by the fright he was in, when he perceived at last that it was an Angel. Wherefore we may not affect or desire such sensible Communion with Angels, but content our selves with that Converse with them that God hath appointed: However, neither must we run into the contrary Extream, as some do, that for fear of over-valuing Angels, and ascribing too much to them, will not acknowledge any ordinary help we have from them at all. We may not reject Angels for fear of over-valuing them, any more than we may reject Magistrates, or disown our Parents, for the like Reason.

Luke 15

Judg. 13 8.

V. 16.

V. 22.

The Belief of the invisible Ministry of Angels can have no danger in it, because it is revealed in God's Word.

And we should the more abstain from affecting other intercourse with them, because God has appointed them ordinarily tho' invisibly, to minister to us, that way being more safe and convenient for us.

S E C T. V.

Qu. **B**UT you will say, what shall a Man do if he should happen to have an Apparition of an Angel, as some have had?

I Answer. 1. If thou hast an *Apparition*, thou shouldest not too easily conclude, that it is an Angel of Light that appears to thee, for notwithstanding any thing that to thy Sense doth appear, it may be an evil Angel, as was shewed in the foregoing Section.

I question not but those Holy Men of God, to whom God sent Angels, to speak to them, they had some way by which they were assured that they were Angels of Light; But that we now have any such certain way of discerning good Spirits from evil Spirits, is more than I know. *Pincus* says, *Daniel* knew that the Angel that came to him was an Angel of God, by the Illumination of the Spirit. But that all have such an Illumination, that have an Apparition, cannot be proved.

2. If thou hast afore-time affected such Intercourses with Angels, thou hast the more Reason to suspect it may be a Spirit of Delusion that appears to thee. For God may this way punish that irregular, and presumptuous appetite of thine.

3. If thou do meet with an Apparition, betake thy self to Prayer, and in most humble manner profess that thou desirest nothing more than to acquiesce in the Revelation of God's Will, that is in the Scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles, earnestly testifying that thou may'st not believe an Angel from Heaven, if he bring any other Gospel; and most devoutly and feelingly acknowledging thy self unworthy to have the visible Presence of an Angel of God, and to converse with him, it being an honour God hath seldom granted, but to some eminently holy Persons. If thou entertain the Apparition with such
humble

humble and devout Meditations, there will be less danger of thy being imposed upon by the Devils Frauds.

4. Supposing that thou knowest it to be an Angel of Light, that appears to thee, thou oughtest to receive him with very great reverence. Thou must not worship him (as *John* was about to do, when an Angel appeared to him, *Rev. 19. 10.*) Angels are utterly against having any such Honour. *The Angel said to John, see thou do it not.* Yet great honour and reverent respect is to be given to an Angel appearing to a Man. If it be but a great *Minister of State* to some earthly Prince, we receive him in most lowly manner, doing him honour: Now, I question not but an Angel is more worthy of honour than the greatest Person upon Earth.

The *Jews* were wont to entertain the Apparition of an Angel with very great awfulness, and trembling, it being (it seems) a vulgar Opinion among them, that if any Person had the Vision of an Angel, either Death, or some great Evil, would suddenly befall them, so tremendous was the Presence of an Angel accounted. Wherefore when *Manoah* perceived it was an Angel that had been with him, he said to his Wife, *We shall surely die, because we have seen God.* And *Gideon* (in the like case) said, *Alas O Lord God, for because I have seen an Angel of the Lord face to face. And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die.* It seems he was in a great Fear. Some think this Opinion was taken up from *Exod. 13. 20.* where 'tis said, *There shall no man see me, and live:* Now he that did see an Angel, was counted to see God, there being no appearance of God more glorious than by an Angel. No doubt they were in such a fear, because they judged themselves unworthy of such a sight. Great Reverence is therefore due to the visible Presence of an Angel of God.

5. Such as are admitted to any such familiar Converse with Angels, had need take great care they be not puffed up with *Pride*. There is no small danger of it, as appears in the Apostle *Paul*, who had more of such extraordinary Communications than other men. He says of himself, *Lest I should be exalted above measure thro' the abun-*

dance of the Revelations, there was given me a Thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure, 2 Cor. 1, 2, 7.

The Apparition of an Angel, is an extraordinary approach of God to Man, and tho' it naturally tend to the humbling of him, yet thro' the Corruption that is in our Nature, we are apt to be lifted up therewith, as we are with any thing that we have more than others.

'Tis true, there have been few whom God hath dealt so familiarly with, but very holy Persons. I say but few, Yet some there have been, that have had extraordinary intercourse with Angels, that have been wicked men. Baalam was none of the best men. (he goes commonly for a Sorcerer) and yet he had frequent converse with an Angel. To have Power over evil Spirits is as great a matter, as to have familiar converse with good Spirits: But our Saviour would not have his Disciples to rejoice or glory so much in this. *In this rejoice not, that the Spirits are subject to you: But rather rejoice that your names are written in Heaven,* Luke 10. 20. We may converse with Angels here, and yet be Companions for Devils hereafter. *Many shall say, We have prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name have cast out Devils, &c. But he will profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me,* Mat. 7. 22. 'Tis not rational to be proud of that which a Man may have, and go to Hell. Be not high minded but fear.

6. Know for a Certainty, that *if an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel than that you have received, he ought to be accursed,* Gal. 1. 8, 9. 'Tis, I confess, a thing impossible that an Angel of Light, should come to men with another Gospel: But could such a thing be, he ought not to be credited. And the Reason is obvious. The Gospel that we have received is grounded on a better and greater Authority, than the Testimony of an Angel, even the Authority of Christ himself, who is above Angels. If an Angel should come to us with any Doctrine that agrees not with the Gospel of Christ, we may be sure 'tis not an Angel of Light, but a Spirit of Delusion.

Quest. Some perhaps will here enquire, what if an Angel should declare somewhat, that (tho' it be not contrary

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trary to the Word of Christ, yet) is diverse from it ; or should advise to the doing of some action, the lawfulness of which, by ordinary Rules, is questionable (as was the Advice to *Joseph* to take *Mary* to be his Wife, when she was found to be with Child) or should give some new Interpretation of a doubtful Text of Scripture ?

Answer. What has been said of Suggestions and Impulses, *Chap. 7. Sect. 7.* may suffice for an Answer to this Enquiry ; for tho' an inward suggestion and impressiion be not so much as an Apparition of an Angel speaking with an audible Voice, yet as long as 'tis uncertain whether it be an Angel of Light that appears or no, we can be no further bound by the one than by the other: In both we have reason to be afraid of delusion. And know this.

God sends not Angels now to propose new Articles of Faith, or to give any new Laws to men, he having fully finish'd the Rule of our Religion by *Jesus Christ*.

And as for Interpretations of Scripture, none must be receiv'd that agree not with the Context and the Analogy of Faith.

Joseph was sure it was an Angel of God that spake unto him, but we cannot be sure (by any Rule that I know of) that 'tis a good Angel that appears to us. So far as a man has reason to believe that 'tis an Angel of Light that speaks to him, he ought to give heed to him, and to follow his Advice in what is not against the stated Rule that God has transmitted to us with such ample Testimony from Heaven as the Pen-men of Scripture came with.

And so much of the Honour and Respect which must not be given to Angels, and the Communion with them that we ought not to seek or affect.

C H A P. XIII.

§ 1. *What Honour or Respect is to be given to Angels shew'd positively ; 1. To acknowledg them. § 2. 2. To love them. How we can love them when we do not see them. § 3. 3. To be careful not to offend them. § 4. To do our best to maintain that Communion with them which here we may ordinarily have. § 5. How we may give them Advantage. Our Conversion is a great Advantage. § 6. But this is not all the Advantage we may give them. § 7. 'Tis of great concernment that the Body be kept in a good temper.*

S E C T. I.

Altho' Divine Honour must not be given to Angels, nor sensible Communion with them affected, yet is there an Honour that is due unto them, and Communion with them that is to be imbrac'd ; and what this is, I am now to shew.

1. And in the first place it is (out of doubt) our Duty to *acknowledg* what excellent Creatures they are, how near they are to us, our concernment with them, and their usefulness and serviceableness to us: These (so far as they are reveal'd) must be acknowledg'd, and we must esteem them accordingly. It is a fault to slight any of the Creatures of God; he that does so, must needs be guilty of slighting their Maker. Now Angels are the Master-pieces of the whole Creation, the most excellent Creatures that ever God made. Man is the chief in the visible World, Angels in the invisible, and such as they are, we must account and acknowledg them to be, and carry in our Minds a fuitable esteem of them.

Christian Religion obligeth us to esteem and honour all men according to their worth and to their place among us. *Render* (says the Apostle) *to all their due, &c. fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour is due,* Rom. 13. 7. There is a peculiar Respect due to our Superiors, to Masters, Parents, Ministers, Magistrates, and of Magistrates to the King as Supreme the highest Honour belongs, and to Governors under him a proportion of Honour suiting their places, 1 Pet. 2. 13. and such as do excel others in *Wisdom* or *Holiness*, must be acknowledg'd as such. Now if Men must be respected according to their worth and place, so must Angels too; and they being every way superiour to men, deserve a suitable acknowledgment.

Divine Honour (as has been shew'd) is not to be given them; but let us look on them as the Creatures of God, and so account of them, and we cannot think too highly of them.

Devout and learned Bishop *Hall* says, "Worship is not to be given to them, — but we come short of our Duty to those Blessed Spirits, if we entertain not in our Hearts an high and venerable conceit of their wonderful majesty, glory and greatness, and an awful acknowledgment and reverential awe of their glorious presence."

And as they have a supereminent excellency of Nature and Dignity, so are they nearly ally'd to us, and we much concern'd with them; and this also 'tis our Duty to acknowledg.

Tho' Angels are much above us in Nature and Dignity, yet may we claim *Kindred* with them in respect of our *Immortal Souls*, whose nature little differs from the Angelical; and by *Jesus Christ* Angels and men are made friends, and brought together into one *Kingdom*, and the *Lord* of both, as was shew'd *Chap. 4. Sect. 3, 4.*

Moreover, being entrusted with the Tuition of us, they do most dearly love us, especially when we are sanctified; they love us better than the best Friends we have in the World: They have a most perfect love of God, and therefore love the Saints, that have God's Image upon them, better than the best men do.

Again.

Again, Angels have much of the same work to do that we have: Their work is to adore, and serve, and obey the same God we do, and 'tis a part of their Joy to see it go well with us, *Luke 15. 10.*

To conclude, We are design'd for the same Bliss and Felicity, and are to be their Companions for ever; for we shall be like unto the Angels, and inhabit the Heavenly *Jerusalem* together with an innumerable company of them.

Heb. 12. 22.

Wherefore we are to reckon our selves not Strangers and Foreigners, but fellow-Citizens with the Angels, and they with us, and Brethren. The Angel acknowledges so much to *John, I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, Rev. 19. 10.* This nearness of Angels to us we should not overlook.

Again, We are unconceivably beholden to the Angels, (as has been sufficiently evinc'd in the foregoing Discourse) and can we discharge our Duty if we be not thankful for this? And can we be thankful for it, if we do not acknowledge it?

'Tis true, 'tis to God that we are chiefly bound, but God, that will himself be own'd in all, does allow us and enjoyn us to be thankful to those by whom he communicates his Favours to us: He would have us to acknowledge and be thankful to *Magistrates, Ministers, Parents, Friends.* The least that we can do in requital of their Love and Care, is to make acknowledgment of the Good we receive by them. *Daniel* saith, *My God hath sent his Angel, and hath shut the Lions mouths, Dan 6. 12.* After such a manner 'tis very fitting we should make some mention of Angels, when we are speaking of the great and wonderful Works of God, seeing they are ordinary Instruments of his Providence.

S E C T. II.

AS it is our Duty to *acknowledg* Angels, so also to *love* them, and that both for what they are in themselves, and for what they are to us; for those amiable Perfections Divine Goodness hath enrich'd them with,
and

and for that Love they bear to us, and the Good they do for us.

First for those amiable Perfections God hath enrich'd them with. That is the purest Love, the reason of which is the intrinsic Excellency of the Object. When God is lov'd purely for himself, for the perfection of his Nature, he is more perfectly lov'd than when he is lov'd for the Good we receive or expect from him: So when we love Angels for the *amiable Excellencies* that are in them, our Love is more pure and holy than when 'tis for their Goodwill and Beneficence to us.

The blessed God himself is *primum amabile*, other things are to be lov'd for him, or for being like him. Now the amiable Perfections of God's Nature shine out in Angels most, no meer Creatures are so like him as they are, on which account they are to be lov'd best. We owe a special Love to the Saints, because they are more like God than other men are; *they are renew'd in Knowledge and Holiness after the image of him that created them*: But whatever Holiness is in Saints on Earth, it is in them with a mixture of the contrary. There is in them the Love of God, but there is also an inordinate Love of other things; there is Holiness in them, but there is Sin too. But now in the blessed Angels there is such a pure and perfect love of God, as makes them adhere and cleave entirely and wholly to him, without any of the least diversions: They are as holy as meer Creatures can be, there is no Sin or Folly in them. 'Tis true, *Eliphaz* says of God, That *he charged his Angels with folly*; but either this is meant of those Angels that fell, or by *Folly* is meant no more but *defectibility*, or a possibility of sinning. This was found in the Angels in their primitive state, they were mutable Creatures, and might sin; but if there were actually any Sin in them, Heaven could be no place for them.

Job 4. 18.

Oh, how lovely are very holy Men, how sweet and endearing is their Converse! and yet there is some folly and weakness found in the best of them. Angels have not any of the smallest blemishes on them, therefore must needs be more lovely.

And as they are most holy themselves, so 'tis their business to promote Holiness in men. What is the reason we have in us such a rooted detestation and abhorrence of Devils, that we can scarce think of them without some Horrour? Why, they are haters of God, and of all that is good, and are Tempters of men to Sin and Unholiness. This should be the reason of our abhorrence of them, rather than their enmity against us. On the contrary, the reason of our love to Angels should be, that they are so holy in themselves, and labour to make others so.

— But *Secondly*, We have reason also to love Angels, because they love us so as they do: Indeed they love us much better than we love one another: Their Love, (as 'tis more pure, so) 'tis more strong and active. They do more for us, and are more helpful to us than the best Friends we have; therefore we should love them, and love them more than we love any men on Earth.

Obj. But you'll say, How can we love Angels, when we cannot see them?

Ans. I answer; We cannot see God, and yet we are bound to love him, and to love him above all that is lov'd. Nor can we see *Jesus Christ* with our bodily Eyes, yet the Apostle *Peter* tells us how the Saints come to love him, *1 Pet. 1. 8. Whom having not seen ye love, whom though you see him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce.* 'Tis by Believing we come to love *Jesus Christ*, and rejoyce in him, not by seeing him. The same way have we to come to love the Angels. Unbelief is the great cause we love God, and Angels also, no better than we do. When we come to Heaven our Love to God will be perfected, because then we shall have a perfect sight of him: and when we shall come to be joynd to the company of Angels, and see fully what they are, and what Benefits we have receiv'd by them, we shall love them more too.

In the mean while there is now equal cause of loving them, tho' not equally noticed: Angels are the same now, and they are with us, and help us, and are friendly to us every day and hour of our Lives: This, tho' unseen, we have sufficient ground to believe, as has been evinc'd from God's Word. And (no doubt) one reason of God's appointing

Quid non afficiamur in causa est infidelitas, vel saltem incogitantia vestra. *Calv.*

pointing Angels to be ministring Spirits for us, and revealing it so fully to us, is to cherish friendship between them and us; for friendship is maintain'd by beneficence. Angels love us the more still the longer and the more they exercise Kindness towards us; and our knowing of it is reason to us why we should love them the more.

Let no man think that this is an empty airy Speculation; for, I tell you, the exercise of Love to Angels unseen, conduceth to the facilitating our Love to the invisible God, which is the Soul of all true Religiousness; and it helps our Love to Jesus Christ, whom we see not with our bodily Eyes any more than we see Angels. We come up to the infinitely-distant Majesty of God best by Steps; by loving him in his Saints on Earth, then in the Angels of Heaven, we come to love him in himself.

Learned and pious Mr. Baxter says, "The neglect of our due Love and Gratitude to Angels, and forgetting our relation to them, and receivings by them, and communion with them, and living as if we had little to do with them, is a culpable overlooking God as he appeareth in his most noble Creatures, and is a neglect of our Love to God in them, and a great hindrance to our higher and more immediate Love. Therefore by Faith and Love we should exercise a daily converse with Angels, as a part of our Heavenly Conversation, *Phil.* 3. 10. *Heb.* 12. 22. and use our selves to love God in them; as says that *great Divine*.

S E C T. III.

A Nother Duty we owe to Angels is, to be careful not to offend and grieve them by our Sins, but to look to our Conversation the more for their sakes. Where there is Love, there will be Tenderneſs as to this: *Res est solliciti plena timoris amor.* Love will make us careful to shun whatever may give distaste or be ungrateful to such as we love.

It was good Advice of an *Heathen*, That whatever a Man is a doing, he should imagine some grave person to be ever present, looking on, whom he would not offend.

And the Apostle uses the Angels presence as an Argument against all Undecencies: he would have Christian Women to be modestly attir'd in their Assemblies, because of the Angels, *1 Cor. 11. 10.* and he presses *Timothy* with the same Argument, *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these things; 1 Tim. 5. 21.*

“ O ye holy Spirits, (says Bishop Hall) ye are ever by
 “ me; ——— I walk awfully, because I am ever in your
 “ Eye; I walk confidently, because I am ever in your
 “ Hands. And again speaking of Angels, he says, I abhor
 “ my self to recount their just Dislikes, and do willingly
 “ profess how unworthy I am of such Friends, if I be not
 “ hereafter jealous of their just Offence.

Angels see us when men do not; they are privy to such passages of our Lives as come not under humane cognizance, let us therefore take heed. God's presence and the presence of *Jesus Christ* should chiefly move us: but (you know) the Apostle puts the Angels presence also into the Argument; *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels.*

All Sins that come under the cognizance of Angels (as most do) are offensive to those holy Spirits; but there are some that they have a greater antipathy against than ordinary, and are more offended at them, as being more in their Eye, and lying more in their way, obstructing and hindering their holy designs on men. Of this kind are the Sins of the *Flesh, Uncleanneß, Fornication, Adultery,* and such *Impurities* and *Immodesties* as lead thereto.

I may with the more reason note such Sins as 'specially distastful to the holy Angels, because when *Paul* urges their presence as an Argument, 'tis to prevent *Immodesty*, *1 Cor. 11. 10.* And when he presses *Timothy* with the same Argument, one thing he is perswading him to be careful about is, not to permit wanton young Women, that liv'd in pleasure, to be taken into the place of Widows, *1 Tim. 5. 11, &c.* Some matter of this nature is usually in hand when the Argument from the Angels presence is made use of; whence we may probably infer, that these holy pure Spi-

Spirits have a special abhorrence of all Sins of the *Flesh*, and whatever leads to or borders on the same.

The Sin of *Uncleanness* is spoken of as a Sin that is against the *Body*. *Every sin that a man doth is without the Body, but he that committeth Fornication sinneth against his own Body*, 1 Cor. 6. 18. In other sins the *Body* is *Organum*, the Instrument only, but in this Sin it is also *Objectum*, the Object against which a man sins: And it does leave very odious and dangerous Impressions behind it. Now the *Body* as 'tis *the Temple of the Holy Ghost*, as the Apostle says, so we may say, It is the *Angels Shop*, wherein they frame all their Work for mens Souls good. They have not immediate access unto the Mind and Will, but work on the *Phantasy*, and that is dangerously corrupted by the Sin of *Uncleanness*: For one that is given to it, imagines nothing almost but what relates to it, so that there is no room for the Angels to go on with any Work. The Pleasure of this Sin carries away a Man's thoughts, so as that he is seldom capable of any good Impressions. But little hope is there of a Man that hath once given up himself to this Sin, he will scarce make Conscience of any other Villany. Therefore the Apostle says of such *hurtful Lusts*, that *they drown men in perdition*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. And Solomon says of an *Harlot*, *None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of Life*, Prov. 2. 18, 19. A terrible word indeed. There is a special Contrariety in this Sin, both to the holy Spirit of God that sanctifies, and also to the Holy Angels who are ready to do their part to forward the Work of Holiness in Men.

Wherefore if we would not offend, and grieve, those beneficent Spirits that attend us for our good, we should be very careful, as to keep our selves from all Sin, so especially from this, which they so much loath, and to walk holily and circumspectly, because this is most grateful to them.

S E C T. IV.

A Nother Duty we stand obliged to in reference to Angels, is to do our best to maintain and promote such Communion with them, as here in this Life we may ordinarily have.

Apparitions of Angels, and *familiar Conferences* with them, is not a *Communion* that God thinks fit ordinarily to allow us (tho' some have had it) and therefore 'tis not lawful for us to affect it, as has been proved, *Chap. 12. §. 4.* But a *Communion* with Angels we are capable of, by God's own appointment. We may have much help from them, they do attend us tho' unseen. They are our *Keepers*, they are *Purveyers* for us, they *teach*, *admonish*, *comfort*. They *observe* and take knowledge of us, they *understand* us, and our ways, and are concerned in what we do, and rejoice when we do well. Here is *Communion* with them: And note, there is somewhat on our part that is to be done in order to the promoting of this *Communion*. Now Two things we are to do. 1. To engage the Angels all we can for us. 2. To give them all the advantage we are able.

1. *First*, We should do all we can to *engage* them to be our *Friends*, and the way to make them our steady friends, is to be friendly unto them: For Friendship is cherished and strengthened by a mutual and reciprocal Exercise of it. Wherefore, as we must not offend and grieve them (as was shewed in the foregoing Section) so we must endeavour to be as grateful, and pleasing to them as we can, and that in living holy Lives, and in a ready assenting and yielding to their Suggestions and Motions.

Our Friendliness to Angels in the *General* lies in the Holiness of our Lives. We cannot please them better, than in keeping in the ways of God, and this will surely engage them for us: For they know their *Commission*, and will strictly observe it, *viz.* to keep men in all Gods ways, and to encamp about them that fear him. They cannot take us to be their Friends if we be not God's Friends, and 'tis by a holy and regular Conversation that we skew our
selves

elves Friends of God. And in nothing can we be more friendly and grateful to Angels than in being precise this way.

Our Saviour *Christ* advises those he spake to, *to make themselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness*, he means their Wealth and Riches, *Luke 16. 9.* And how so? Why by a liberal Distribution to the poor, that they may pray for them (for the poor will pray for them that are bountiful to them) and by making their advantage of being rewarded of God, according to his Promise to that purpose. Thus should they make friends of the *Mammon of Unrighteousness*. Why so we must make the Angels our friends, not by praying to them (as the rich Man must not pray to his Bags of Money to befriend him) but by *holiness* and Purity of Conversation. This will oblige those Holy Spirits to do their best, and will bring us within the Promise of their Tuition.

And as this in the general, is our Friendliness to Angels, so our ready assenting, and yielding to, and complying with their Suggestions and Motions is so more especially. Oh how many holy Motions do Angels make to men! The Devils are busy in tempting to Evil, and the Angels no less active in moving to Good. Let us not slight, refuse, resist, any holy Motions. In so doing, God's Spirit is resisted as well as the Angels. *You do always resist the Holy Ghost* says *Stephen*, *Acts 7. 51.*) God's Holy Spirit moves the Angels, and hath a special hand in the Angels Motions too, carrying them oftentimes more home to mens Souls, than Angels can: Therefore they that resist holy Motions, resist the Holy Ghost. But tho' this be the grand aggravation of the Sin, yet it is no small thing for Angels to be slighted, when they move for God, and from him.

At the least, 'tis Unkindness to them. We should resist the Devil, *James 4. 7.* but Angels we should comply with. But alas, 'tis much otherwise, *Satan's* Motions are yielded to, when the good Motions of Angels are refused. This is not the way to engage them for us, and make them our Friends.

Secondly, To promote our *Communion* with Angels, we should give them all the advantage we can to minister to the good of our Souls, which is a chief part of their work. We may this way be helpers (as I may say) to the Angels in pursuing the holy Designs they have upon us.

The *Power* Angels have tho' it be great, yet is it but a finite and limited Power, and they cannot work alike on all Persons, in whatever Circumstances, and however they be qualified, and disposed. They cannot work on grossly ignorant Persons, as they can on such as have some Knowledge, nor on wicked men, as they can on such as have good Inclinations in them; and where the Phantasy is disturbed, or corrupted, they cannot do with such Persons as with others.

We must be in some posture to receive their Impressions, or their attempts on us, for our good, will be ineffectual, and without success, which will discourage them. They must have fit matter to work upon, and then they can with more ease, and better success, instruct, persuade, and comfort.

Now, as the *Devil* waits for advantages to tempt men, so the Angels wait for advantages to move them to good. 'Tis said of the *Devil*, *That he goes about seeking whom he may devour*, that is, he waits for advantage to undo men in their Souls: When advantage is given, he seduces and corrupts them with ease. Wherefore the Apostle advises the *Corinthians* to receive again the *Incestuous* Person, upon his Repentance, *lest Satan get an advantage*, 2 Cor. 2. 11. Even so there are advantages that Angels look for, to promote our Souls good. If we give them any advantage, they will be sure to take hold of it, and this we should labour to do.

S E C T. V.

I Shall open and explain this a little, how we should see to give them *advantage*.

Now *first*, the *principal* and grand *advantage* that Angels have on men, is their being *renewed* by the Grace of God, and so habitually inclined to good. In such Persons

as are gracious there is fit matter for them to work upon, and this encourage them to be more doing with them. The great advantage the *Devil* hath on men is the *Corruption* and Depravedness of their Natures. Were it not for *Original in dwelling sin*, it would be hard for him to do his Work with any. It is said of our Saviour *Christ*, *That the Prince of this World* (that is the Devil) *cometh to him, but hath nothing in him*: He could find nothing in him, that is *Nil Sui*, nothing of his own, no Sin; and therefore he could fasten nothing upon him. The Devil cannot infuse evil into men, he can but work on that which is there before, heightning it, and inflaming it, and drawing of it forth. Had not *Achan* been a man of a *Covetous disposition*, the Devils laying of the *Wedge of Gold* and the *Babylonish Garment* in his way would not have tempted him so effectually. The Corruption of mens Nature, and the evil Inclinations that are in them, is the grand advantage the Devil has upon men.

Now on the contrary, the great advantage Angels have on men, is their being renewed by the Grace of God. If they be enlightned in some degree, and have gracious *Habits* and *Dispositions* planted in them, here is fit matter for them to work upon. The Devil (as was said) came to *Christ*, and found nothing in him, therefore he quickly left him: Angels come to some men, but finding little or nothing in them to work upon, they go their way without doing them any spiritual good. But now if they find the mind in any degree enlightned, and some virtuous Dispositions planted in them, they have matter to work upon, and great advantage of doing them good, which they will be sure to improve.

If Persons have some *Knowledge*, the Angels can revive the Notions they have, and bring things to remembrance, yea, and by putting several things together, that may lie confusedly in their heads, they may much increase and enlarge their Knowledge. And if there be in Men *gracious Habits*, Angels can do much towards the bringing of those *Habits* into *Act*. As by setting some moving Objects in mens way, so by stirring and heightning such Affections, or Natural Passions, as do move or incline

A Discourse of Angels,

the Will; as Love, Joy, Fear, Desire, &c. For Angels can work on the *Humours* of the *Body*, and *Spirits*, in and by which such *Passions* do stir, and so heighten them. This way they may very much promote good and virtuous actions, where some *Habitual Inclinations* to them are found, tho' they be but weak.

The poor Man that fell among Thieves, and was stript naked, wounded, and left half dead, *Luke 10.* was a moving Object of Charity, but yet it did not work on the Priest that passed by and saw it, nor on the *Levite*; they having no compassionate and charitable Disposition in them, but it did effectually move the compassionate *Samaritane*. Some such *virtuous Dispositions* are found sometimes, where there is no true *Grace*, and the Angels make great advantage of them: But where there is true *Grace*, there is ordinarily more opportunity of suggesting and promoting what is good and holy.

And methinks this being considered, should make unregenerate men more unsatisfied with the State they are in (if they could discern it) It should make men unwilling to abide in a State of Ignorance and Sin, because while they are in this State Angels cannot do so much for their Souls as otherwise they might, and would.

And this proves that the Devils have a greater advantage on the Generality of men, than the Angels have: For the Devils always find matter to work on ready, even *Original Corruption*, besides *evil Dispositions* contracted by Practice: But there are no truly gracious Dispositions in Men for Angels to work upon, till they be wrought in them by the Spirit of God.

However Angels are doing with Men unconverted, and often with good success, being the means of their Conversion, God's Spirit concurring with, and making effectual what they do towards it. The Sight of the *Martyrs* Courage and Patience in suffering, hath been a means of converting some *Heathens* to the Faith. *Justin Martyr* is said to be converted this way. And that *Waldo* that gave Name to the *Waldenses* was converted by seeing a Man suddenly fall down dead. And how often the Angels help forward Mens Conversion, by working on their Imaginations,

inations, and Affections (presenting things to the Mind, and pressing them with some vehemency) we cannot tell, no doubt they do frequently. Wherefore Regeneration, or Conversion, is not the only advantage Angels have on Men to do their Souls good, for they do much towards Conversion it self.

S E C T. VI.

LET me further add, *Conversion* or *Regeneration* (by it self) is not a sufficient advantage: For where there is true Grace, a Person may bring himself into such a case, as to be very uncapable notwithstanding of such Soul helps, as those Celestial Agents are wont to minister, and that for want of Carefulness in keeping the Body in good temper, and in governing the bodily Senses: Both which are very great advantages to the Angels in their entercourses with Men. A Christian's Care about his Body, is a Duty, (tho' little minded, yet) of great Concernment, in that the Soul in all its acts and exercises, does much depend upon its Condition and State, both in its receiving by Instruction, and in its laying out in virtuous Acts. As the *Body* is said to be *the Temple of the Holy Ghost*, so it may be said to be the *Shop* in which the Angels frame all their Work, they working on its *Spirits* and *Humours*. If the Body be not lookt after, and kept in good temper, if it be disordered or discomposed any way, it must needs be less manageable to Wisdom and Virtue. If it be either too much *pamper'd* on one hand, or too much *neglected*, and *severely dealt* with on the other hand, as we cannot govern our selves so well, neither can we be so well managed by such as have the Conduct of us either Men or Angels. We shall not be so capable of being helped and benefited, by the External Ministry of Men, or by the Internal Ministry of Angels, no nor of the Holy Spirit of God: For he is resisted and hindred by such *fleshy Lusts*, as the Apostle says do *war against the Soul*, when they become predominant. Wherefore the Apostle *Paul* tell us, that he did keep under his Body. *I keep under my Body (says he) and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have*

Acts 7. 51.
Gal. 5. 17.
1 Theff. 5. 19.
23.
Matt. 23. 37.
1 Pet. 2. 11.
1 Cor. 9. 27

preached to others, I my self should be a cast away. The chief thing Paul designed was to keep his Lusts and Corruptions under, but because fulness and delicate pampering of the Body, much strengthens its Lusts, and makes it more un-governable by the Rules of Holiness, he was resolved to keep that under : and the Discipline he used to tame, and subdue his Body, was, *watching and fastings*, and (which he counselled *Timothy* to) *enduring hardness as a good Soldier.*

2 Cor. 6. 5.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Our Saviour Christ's advice is, *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness.* Surfeiting and Drunkenness (you know) are an overcharging of the Body : But the mind and heart is thereby loaded and clogg'd also, and becomes unfit for any thing that is good. *Intemperance and Excess* does *disable Reason, weaken Memory*, make dull, and heavy, and unfit for Instruction, and Counsel : And those bodily Diseases and Distempers which it causes do so too. For all bodily Distempers, as they come upon us by Sin, so they do much befriend Sin that caused them, (as Mr. *Baxter* well says) and so they give advantage to the Devil, and if so, they must needs hinder the Angels Work, which is contrary to the Devils. What makes men dull and heavy, or peevish and passionate, unsits them for Business and Converse with men ; and so it must for Communion with Angels too.

And as the *Body* must not be too much *pamper'd*, so neither must it be *neglected*, and too *severely* dealt with. Paul, that commends watching and fasting, or Abstinence, does notwithstanding advise *Timothy*, *Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy Stomachs sake, and thine often infirmities.* The Body should be kept in that Condition (as near as we are able) that is fittest for the Service of the Soul, and the Strength and Cheerfulness of it is to be kept up, so far forth as no greater hurt be done another way, as says Mr. *Baxter*: But if it be too severely dealt with, it will be weakned, and those Spirits will be wasted, and so found wanting, that are of singular use upon all occasions.

1 Tim. 5. 23.

S E C T. VII.

AND as it is of concernment that the Body be kept in good temper, so is it no less needful to watch the *outward Senses*, by the which comes into the Imagination whatever is there; and what is there ('tis certain) both good and evil Spirits make great use of. Angels have no way to speak to mortal men, but either by forming an audible Voice, (which they very rarely do now) or by making use of such *Phantasms* or *Images* of things as are lodg'd in the *Internal Sense*: Now all that comes in there coming in by the *External Senses*, it must be very necessary that these should be very carefully watch'd and guarded, especially the *Eye* and the *Ear*. *David's Phantasie* took in that by the *Eye* that the *Devil* made use of to entice him to *Adultery*; he gaz'd on *Bathsheba* naked, washing her self, by this means was he entangl'd. And it is by the *Ear* that *evil communication* corrupts good manners, as the Apostle I Cor. 15. says.

Such evil things as we see or hear, the Devil can bring them again frequently before us, and present them to our Minds (be they filthy sights or naughty words); he can often present them to us, and so sollicit and urge us unto Sin; and this he does. Wherefore for men to entertain their *Eyes* with ill Objects, (as they do that follow *Plays*, that read wanton *Romances*, that will gaze on the nakedness of others, even on those parts that Nature teaches to cover, or on lascivious Pictures) and for them to entertain their *Ears* with wicked and filthy Discourses, it is to give the Devil a great Advantage. Some men will be apt to think there is no harm in listening to, or looking on ill Objects, as long as they intend no evil; but how can that be an harmless and innocent thing, that gives the Devil (our own and God's great Enemy) an advantage to tempt us to Sin? 'Tis against the Apostle's Advice, *Ephes. 4. Neither give place to the Devil*; that is, Give him not any advantage. To give the *Eye* and *Ear* full liberty, gives the Devil great advantage to tempt us: Why so, on the other hand, we give the holy Angels great advantage to excite
and

Eccles. 7. 2.

and move us to Good, when we are careful to entertain our Senses with good things. 'Twas prudently resolv'd of *Job*, to make a Covenant with his Eyes: and *Solomon* testifies that it is better to go into the house of mourning, than into the house of feasting; Why? Because a Man's Eyes and Ears are like to be better entertain'd in the House of mourning, (even with things tending to seriousness) whereas in the House of feasting commonly little is seen or heard but what is frothy and idle, and leads to Vanity.

And for this reason it is very necessary you should be careful of your Company, and be with none but such among whom you may hear and see good things; by which means your Imaginations (where the Angels use to be at work) will be better furnish'd for them.

And by the way let me note, that Parents should take encouragement hence to begin with their Children betime, to teach them their *Catechism*, and other good things, and put them upon reading the Word of God, and other good Books; for, tho' (perhaps) for the present they can have but little understanding of the sense of the things that are taught them, and which they read, being so young, yet is it not to be thought a vain thing thus to exercise them, (as some have very odly taken it to be) for when there is such a store of wholesome words treasur'd up in their Memories, they are more capable (as they grow up) of Angels teaching, and it may please God, that many years after, when their Teachers are dead and gone, those things which they learnt in their Childhood may (by the Ministry of the Angels) be so represented to them, that (God's Spirit concurring) they may be brought to a saving knowledge of them. Thus may we be an help to Angels, giving them Advantage to promote our Soul's good. And this is our Duty.

C H A P. XIV.

- § 1. Of the Angelical Life, or our imitation of Angels. § 2. How Angels can be Patterns for our imitation, seeing they are invisible and incorruptible. § 3. We must become dead to this Animal Life. § 4. And rise to a Spiritual Angelical Life. § 5. This Angelical Life consists, First, in understanding and knowing God. § 6. Secondly, in Love to God, and Complacency in him.

S E C T. I.

THere is one great Duty more relating to the Angels, of which I shall more liberally discourse than of any of the former, and close this Treatise with it, *viz.* our Imitation of them.

The Imitation of Angels is a Branch of our Communion with them, and also a part of that Honour that we are bound to give unto them. He that taketh another for a Pattern, and imitates him, makes him, and acknowledges him his Superiour, and so does him Honour; for Inferiours do imitate such as are superiour to them, not on the contrary. Learners imitate their Teachers, Children their Parents, and such as are less expert, those that they judge excel them: and this Honour we owe to the Blessed Angels.

The Life of Angels (no doubt) is a most perfect Life, and therefore worthy to be a Pattern, and a Pattern for us, seeing we are design'd to be made like unto the Angels in the other World: and that Life that is to be liv'd by us in the other World, is to be begun in this. Our Calling, as we are Christians, is call'd an *Higb* and *Heavenly Calling*, Heb. 3. 1. Eternal Life, that is the Inheritance of the Saints, is not all in reversion, some of it is in hand.

Our

Our Saviour *Christ* says, *This is eternal life, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, Joh. x7. 1.* Eternal Life begins in that acquaintance with God that we have here; therefore the Apostle says, *This is the record that God hath given us, eternal life, and this life is in his Son: He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.* Mark, he saith, he hath it, not shall have it. He hath it not only in Title, but in Possession, tho' not fully, yet by the Earnest of it, which here he receives; for the Spirit of Sanctification, which is here given unto the Saints, is call'd *the earnest of their inheritance, Eph. i. 14.* Now an Earnest uses to be some little part of that same thing which is to be receiv'd in full. Divines commonly say, that *Grace* here, and *Glory* hereafter, differ only gradually: *Grace* is *Glory* inchoate and begun, *Glory* is *Grace* consummate. Their meaning, no doubt, is sound. However, I count we shall never be able precisely to tell what the *Glory* of the other World is, until we come into it: But this is out of question, that here in this World there is a beginning of part (at least) of that Life which we shall more perfectly live when we come to Heaven. *Our conversation is in Heaven* (says the Apostle). He does not say it shall be, but it now is in Heaven; we have begun this Life already.

S E C T. II.

NOW as to this Life, we have Angels not only for *Helpers*, but also for *Patterns*.

Obj. It may be here objected, How can Angels be *Patterns* for us to imitate, when they are invisible? Examples and *Patterns* must be seen, that they may be follow'd.

Ans. To this I answer; 'Tis true, Angels cannot be seen by our bodily Eyes, but we may be certain, by the Word of God, what they are, and how they live, and so may imitate them. We are commanded to be *followers of God as dear Children*, and yet we cannot see God: and the Lord *Jesus Christ* is propos'd to us as our prime *Pattern*, by which we must be directed in following other *Patterns*,

Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ: and yet we know, 1 Cor. 11. 1. nothing of his Life, but as it is discover'd to us in the *Gospel*. We never saw any thing of what *Christ* did, yet are we bound to imitate him: Why even so may we imitate Angels, and should, tho' we see them not, nor what they do, because God's Word acquaints us with what their Life is, (tho' not fully, yet) so far as is necessary for us to know it, that we may take a Pattern from it.

Obj. Some may further object; It is an impossible thing for mortal men to live as the Angels live, and therefore irrational to aim at it. We are not in nature like Angels, and therefore cannot live as they live: Angels are most pure Substances, simple Spirits; we are compound Beings, consisting of Souls and Bodies, Bodies mortal and corruptible, having need of being constantly reliev'd by Meat, and Drink, and Sleep. 'Tis true, *Christ* says, *We shall be as the Angels of God in Heaven*; and when we are as the Angels, we may live as they do; but 'tis not till the Resurrection that *Christ* says we shall be as the Angels. In the Resurrection, he says, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven. When this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall we be in a manner all Spirit, for our Bodies shall be Spiritual Bodies, as the Apostle says, and we shall no more live an Animal life, as now we do: then, 'tis true, we shall live as the Angels live, but we cannot do so now. Mat. 22. 30.

Ans. To this I answer: The present condition of our Nature will not (I confess) permit us to live now altogether as the Angels live, we having frail, mortal, corruptible Bodies, that must be supported by things corporeal, which Angels need not; and all the Souls Operations being in this Body, we must needs come short of the Angels. But seeing we have Souls as well as Bodies, and these are much the same in nature with the Angels, we are capable of living in some degree as they live.

The Soul of Man is a most pure Substance, and tho' it be in the Body, yet it is not corporeal, nor depending on the Body, either as to its Existence (for it remains after death in a separate state) or as to all its Operations; for

as for Intellection, it does perform the same in the Body by its own faculty and natural action, even by it self, not needing any corporeal Organ or Instrument. *Est & operatur in corpore* (says Zanchy) *sed non omnia operatur per corpus, i. e.* the Soul is in the Body, and worketh in the Body, but it doth not work all by the Body: the Soul is not only exercis'd about corporeal things, but things purely immaterial and spiritual. The Soul is capable of knowing and loving God, and it does understand it self, and its own acts that are most inward. It conceives of *Angels, &c.*

'Tis true, the Apostle says, *The natural man* (*ψυχικός*, the man with a meer natural Soul) *receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them.* But this Incapacity is come upon the Soul by Sin; and tho' before Renovation it be so estrang'd from God and things divine and spiritual, that it cannot perceive them, yet it is capable of being restor'd and rais'd to the perceiving of them, by the Holy Ghost, which is promis'd to be given to them that do believe: Wherefore such as have the Spirit of God may perceive and delightfully entertain themselves with the things that are Divine and Heavenly; and while they do so, they may be said to live (in some sort) as the Angels do in Heaven.

S E C T. III.

WHAT the Life of the Blessed Angels is, we shall know better hereafter, when we come to settle with them in Heaven: but by what God's Word discovers of them, and of their Work, we may guess what it is, and no doubt it is a very sublime and Heavenly Life. Angels Habitation is in Heaven, even in the highest Heavens, where God's Throne is, for which cause they are call'd the Angels of Heaven, and the Hosts of Heaven, therefore their Conversation must needs be suppos'd to be Heavenly: and so should a Christian's be. You know the Apostle says, *Our conversation is in Heaven*, Phil. 3. 20. Yea, a Christian's Life should be divine, 'tis call'd *The life of God*, Eph. 4. 18. and *the life of Christ*, Col. 3. 4. and Christ said to be *a Christian's Life*, Gal. 2. 20. and *to live in him*.

This

This *Heavenly and Divine Life* have all true Christians begun in them. He that hath the Son, hath *Life*. Every one that is in Christ hath this *Life*, and no man alive hath this *Life* in him but the true Christian; for it follows, *He that hath not the Son, hath not life*. Tho' he hath *Life*, yet he hath not this *Life*: from whence it may be inter'd, that there is a twofold *Life*, viz. an *Animal* or *Natural Life*, which a Christian lives in common with other men, and a *Spiritual Life*, which none live but such as are real Christians.

Now the Angels are utter Strangers to that *Animal Life* which men live here, their *Life* is wholly *Spiritual*. And if you would know how Christians must imitate the *Life* of Angels, and live as they do, take this brief account (and what follows will explain it): The more they cease from, and are dead to their *Animal Life*, and the more vigorous the motions of their *Spiritual Life* are, the more like Angels do they live.

This then we must do, become dead to an *Animal Life*, and rise to a *Spiritual*.

Of both these the Apostle speaks very expressly, as things our Christianity obliges us to, *Col. 3. 1, 3. If ye be risen (says he) with Christ, seek those things that are above, &c. for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* Ye are dead, that is, by profession you are so, and initially dead: If you be not fully so, yet you ought to be so, being risen with Christ, and become Christians, you are oblig'd to be so. But how dead? He means as to that *Life* which was all the *Life* they had before they were converted, namely, a meer *Animal* or *Natural Life*, a *Life* that consisteth in eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and in being conversant with the things of Sense; this is the *Life* that unconverted persons live, very little differing from the *Life* of Brutes. Now as to this *Life*, the Apostle says, *they were dead*, as before, i. e. in a sort dead, not in most full and proper sense dead: he does not write to dead men, they had not made away themselves, nor were about any such thing; he writes to such as were then alive, and in the *Body*, yet says they are dead, that is, by *Profession*, and

initially dead unto their *Animal Life*, being rais'd unto a new Life in *Christ*, the Root of their Life.

Thus should every Christian become dead to this Life, and cease from it, not wholly (for that cannot be while we have mortal Bodies) but so far as our present state and condition will permit.

Quest. And how far is that, you will say?

Ans. Why, *First*, so far must all good Christians come off from this *Animal* or *Natural Life*, and the things appertaining to it, as not to be *Servants* and *Drudges* thereto, as *Sensualists* are, and *Worldlings*, yea, all unconverted persons. These persons scarce ever mind any thing else, at least the the Care of this Life, and the things of it, is predominant, and sways and governs them; they care for these things more than they do for any other: They are caring for *what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewith they shall be cloathed*; how they may grow rich and great, and live in ease and pleasure, and for this they labour: This the Apostle calls *making provision for the flesh*, Rom. 13. 14. *Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.* Some have nothing else to do all their lives long, they are *Drudges* to the *Flesh*, and study and labour to gratifie it in all its desires; they can deny themselves in nothing that may further the Pleasure of their *Animal Life*, and so are perfect Slaves to it. Such now live better like the Beasts than like Angels. The Brutes are wholly govern'd by *Sense* and *Appetite*, they have not Reason to govern them, and so are wholly govern'd by *Appetite*. The Men spoken of before have Reason, but they use it not, they are not govern'd by it: They have reasonable Souls, but brought into slavery and subjection to their Bodies and Bodily Appetites, and so live like Brutes, or rather worse than Brutes.

1 Pet. 2. 11. *Abstain from fleshly lusts or desires*, says the Apostle, do not always yield to them. Again, *Fulfill not the lusts of the flesh*; that is, be not Slaves to it, as you are if you please it in every thing. And the Apostle gives a reason of the Gal. 5. 16, 17. prohibition in the next words, *For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit.* When your Reason renew'd by Grace does incline

incline you one way, and your carnal Appetite another, for you to walk after your Appetite, is to play the Brutes. And such as thus walk after the Flesh, they very commonly live in gross Sins, Drunkenness, Uncleaness, Covetousness, Fraud, Oppression, and so are many of them little better than incarnate Devils. A Christian must not be thus a Slave to the Flesh, or his Fleishly Life. But this is not all.

A Christian must be so weaned from this Life, as not to count it as his Life, nor to value it as he doth that Life he hath in Christ. He must not care inordinately for it, or be fond of it, but be able to spare it, or any of the things pertaining to it, for that better Life he hath in Christ. We are said in Scripture Phrase to be *dead* to that which we do not make *much reckoning* of: So Paul says, *He was crucified to the World*, because he did not *much care* for it. Gal. 6. 14.

A Man may care for his Body so as to see to give it its due, but yet not value it as he does his Soul, or the Life of his Body as he does the Life of his Soul. We must ever reckon our Spiritual Life, to be our Life.

Life is a very precious thing. Satan says, *All that a man hath he will give for his Life*. So will carnal Persons for their bodily Life, they will say or do any thing, and let go any thing, how valuable soever, even a good Conscience, that is better than all the World, to save Life: But a Christian must not be so fond of his Bodily Life. Yea, if he love it at all, it must be in Subordination to God, and for him, that he may glorify him, and do him Service, and it must be in God, who is the Fountain and Spring of it. Job. 2. 4.

By the Law of Man's Creation the Soul is to have a Love to the Body, and a Love of its own Union with it, which is Life, this is natural to the Soul: But Religion teaches that this should be only *in* God, and *for* God, and in Submission to him. If God will take away a Man's Life, he must be well content: Yea, Man must be willing and ready to lay down his Life when thereby he may glorify God.

This may seem an hard saying, But 'tis no more than many faithful Servants of God have done. 'Tis said of some

some, *Rev. 12. 11. They loved not their Lives unto the death,* that is, they valued them not in the Cause of God. Our Saviour *Christ* says, *If any man come to me, and hate not*
 Luke 14. 26. *Father and Mother, &c. yea and his own Life also, he cannot*
 Acts 20. 24. *be my Disciple. And Paul* says, *I count not my Life dear un-*
 Acts 21. 13. *to me, that I may finish my Course with joy. And again, I*
am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for
the Name of Jesus.

What hath been said of Life, may as fitly be applied to the things pertaining to it, and that are Accommodations of it: Riches, Honours, Pleasures, &c. We must be weaned from all these things, and even dead to them. We must live above them on better things, even upon the Blessed God himself, who is all in all. The less we care for the things of this Life, the less dependance we have on them, and the more easily we can part with them, the liker we are to the Blessed Angels. Such things are nothing to them, they have no dependance at all on any corporeal or earthly things whatsoever, they stand in no need of them.

'Tis true, there are some such things that we cannot be without while here in this *Animal State*; But they are but few things that we so need. The Apostle tells us what things they are, and wishes us to be content with
 1 Tim. 6. 8. *them. Having food and raiment (says he) let us therewith be content.* Now as we can confine our desires to these, and easily quit the rest, yea, and when we can quit these also, and Life it self at God's Pleasure: When we enjoy and use the things of this Life *from*, and *under* God, and *for* God rather than for our selves, and for the Flesh, when
 Mr. Lawrence of Ang. we use them (as one says) as Angels have sometime used Bodies, and corporeal things, for holy ends, rather than their personal and particular Satisfaction, I say, when we use them so, we may be said to cease from this *Animal Life*, and to be dead to it, so far as our present Condition will permit, and to approach the Life of Angels, as near as Mortals can.

And this all good Christians should be aiming at, and endeavouring after, growing weary of their low kind of living here, and longing for that more perfect Life above,
 where

where they shall have no need to be beholding to any thing but the Blessed God himself.

S E C T. IV.

YOU have seen how far we must become dead to this Animal and Bodily Life. Now it must be further noted that there is a *Spiritual Life* that must be maintained, and cherished, and what this is comes to be considered.

Some General Account of it the Apostle gives, in the same place where he speaks of being dead, *Col. 3.* He says they were dead, and yet supposes them to be alive, that is, in respect of a *Spiritual Life in Christ.* And what this *Spiritual Life* is, he explains in part. *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the Earth.* To mind, and seek, and affect, τὰ ἄνω, things that are above, God, and Christ, and Heaven, and Holiness to mind and affect these things, is the *Spiritual Life, the Souls Life.*

The true Life and Happiness of the Soul consists in the free and vigorous Exercise of its *Faculties* about *Objects* most suitable to its Nature, and what more suitable to the Soul (whose Original is from Heaven) than things above, more especially the most High and Blessed God himself, who in the Life to come, will be *All in All,* yea indeed now is so? For what is Christ and Heaven, and Holiness (things above which Christians should mind) but the Blessed God communicated? What is Christ, but *God manifested in Flesh, the Splendour and Brightness of Gods glory,* the shining forth of his Transcendent Excellencies? And what is Heaven, but the full Fruition of him? And Holiness, what is it, but God's Image or Likeness? Wherefore to be taken up with God, to live on him, and to him, is the Blessed Life we are called to.

And this is the Life of Angels, as Christ himself teacheth us, *Mat. 18. 10.* There (in a few words) we have an account of their Life. *In Heaven the Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven.* This is their Life. They see God, they see his face, they see him

as he is in Heaven, the Throne of his Glory. They have the view of him in his most perfect communicated Glory, and they see him with most ravishing and beatifying Love and Complacency; This must be supposed, being inseparable from a clear Vision of him. And they see him alway. Therefore is it their Life. They contemplate God's infinite Perfections, and are unspeakably pleased with him. 'Tis Love and Complacency is active in praising of him, and doing his Will. In this consists the Angels Life. 'Tis founded in the Knowledge and Vision of God (which only is exprest in Christ's Words) From this results Love and Holy Activity. In these, *viz. Viewing, and Loving, and Praising, and Serving* God, consists the *Angelical Life*. It must be specially noted in the Words of Christ, that 'tis said, They do *always* behold; That shews that 'tis their Life: For that which they always do may most fitly be said to be their Life. Whatever other inferiour things they are conversant with, 'tis God in them that they are taken up with, God is all in all to them.

S. S. his Ang.
Life.

All Creature Excellencies are in Angels Eyes, as broken Beams of God's most pure and perfect Original uncreated Excellency, all flowing from him, subsisting by him, and running again into him. All created Life, Beauty, Wisdom, Goodness, which we see in the World, is to them no other than God's Infinite and uncreated Perfection spreading it self over it. And they consider it not so much as the Perfection of this or that particular Creature, as God's Perfection imprinted on it. Thus do the Angels alway behold the Face of God, which is their Life.

This Life should we be aiming at, and reaching after. We may attain to more of it daily by a vigorous endeavour, and laborious constant Exercise. And for our Encouragement and quickning, let us consider, we have great Helps and Advantages for such a Life, and not a few Examples that prove it practicable.

First, We have great Advantages.

1. We have Souls made for such a Life. Souls that would chuse no other, if they were not enslaved, clogg'd

Mark 14. 38.

and hinder'd by sinful Flesh. *The Spirit indeed is ready (lays Christ)*

Christ) but the *Flesh is weak*. 'Tis but disintangle the Soul and set it at Liberty, and it will flie straight to God. Its own Inclination is upward, 'tis the Body that weighs it down: But we must know the Body was not made to rule the Soul, but to be ruled by 'it. The Soul is of an *Angelical Nature*; and therefore fitted for an *Angelical Life*.

2. We have the Word of God which shews us what this Life is, and how rational it is that we should live it. It shews us that indeed God is All in All, that he is the only supreme, pure, perfect, independent Good. And that there is none Good but God only, and that whatever Goodness is in any Creature 'tis from him, and by him, yea his own Goodness communicated. Now if it be so, how highly reasonable is it that we should live wholly on God, the Life I am speaking of.

3. We have the Spirit of God promised to assist us to such a Life. This gives the Soul a *Moral* and more immediate Capacity. God's Spirit takes the Soul by the hand to lift it up, it doth flush and prune its Wings, that it may take its flights, to Heaven and God the better. It must be confest, a Man in his natural State, before he be born again, cannot live this Life. *The natural man* (so we render the Word, 1 Cor. 2. 14.) *receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, because they are spiritually discerned*. The meer natural Man cannot. *Ψυχικος*, this rendred *Sensual Man*, Jude 19. and there explained *Ψυχικὸν πνεῦμα ἔχοντες*, *Sensual Men, not having the Spirit*. Such Natural, or Sensual Men, Men that have Souls only, and have not the Spirit, they cannot discern Spiritual things, nor relish them, and so cannot live Spiritually. They are quite dead as to any such Life. *You hath be quickened* (says the *Apostle*) *who were dead in trespasses and Sins*. Eph. 2. 1. Dead, being without the Spirit. But now such as are true Christians have the Spirit of Christ given them. *Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts*, Gal. 4. 6. And by the Presence and Operation of the Spirit, they are fitted for an higher and nobler Lite than others live. *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities*, Rom. 8. 26. *The Spirit searcheth all things*, 1 Cor. 2. 10. *Where the*
 O O Spirit

Spirit is there is liberty, 2 Cor. 3. 17. Yea and there is Strength and Power too, according to the Apostle, Eph. 3. 16. *Being strengthened with all might by his Spirit, in the inner man.* Wherefore 'tis but for us to yield up our selves to the Conduct of this Spirit, and we shall be assuredly brought to this Heavenly Life.

The bent of a Soul quickned by the Spirit of Christ, is God-ward, and Heaven-ward, but our Flesh, our Sensuality is opposite, and the Soul as by Sin subjected to the Power of bodily Passions and Appetites, is of a contrary Inclination. So says the Apostle, Gal. 5. 17. *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.* By Spirit he means a Soul assisted by God's Spirit dwelling in it. This inclines to God, and things above, and this we should be led by, not by the Flesh. *If we live in the Spirit* (says the Apostle) *let us walk in the Spirit.* That is, if we have received the Spirit, the Principle of Spiritual Life, we should follow the Conduct of it, and not walk after our Sensual Appetites, as the Brutes do, which is called *walking after the Flesh.*

Rom. 8. 1. *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* And if we walk after the Spirit, it carries us to God. We read not only of *walking after the Flesh*, but of *judging after the Flesh*, and *knowing after the Flesh*, and *living after the Flesh*, and *glorifying after the Flesh.* And all these are spoken of as unworthy of, and beneath a Christian.

But you'll say (perhaps) Are we not in the Flesh while we are here in this World. How can we chuse then but walk after the Flesh?

I Answer, If you mean by being in the Flesh, nothing but being in the Body, as sometimes the Phrase signifies, I grant, we are while here, in the Flesh: But in the Sense of the Phrase, in which it is commonly used, the faithful Servants of Christ are not in the Flesh. The Apostle speaking to the Saints at Rome, says, *Ye are not in the Flesh, but in the Spirit*: And again, *They that are in the Flesh cannot please God.* The Saints then are not in the Flesh, but in the Spirit, and being not in the Flesh but in the Spirit, they should by no means live after the Flesh, but after the Spirit;

Gal. 5. 25.

Rom. 8. 1.

Joh. 8. 15.

2 Cor. 5. 16.

Rom. 8. 12, 13.

2 Cor. 11. 18.

Phil. 1. 24.

Rom. 8. 8, 9.

Spirit; nor should they know after the Flesh, nor judge after the Flesh, nor glory after the Flesh, but all after, or according to the Spirit, which is to see and enjoy the Blessed God in all.

Secondly, As we have many *Helps* to such a Life, so have we many *Examples* of it, which prove that what I insist upon is not impracticable. We have had many mortal Men, subject to like *Passions* with our selves, that have thus lived. *Enoch* lived thus, 'Tis said that *he walked with God*. So did *Noah*. *David* says, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* Gen. 5. 22. *And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Gen. 9. 8. Nothing but God was *David's* Heart upon, that is, while he was himself, 'twas otherwise with him at times, under *Temptation*, but for the main this was his Temper, God was all to him. *Paul*, and the believing *Philippians* he joins with him, lived thus. *Our conversation is in Heaven*, says he, *Phil. 3. 20.*

We may live in the Body, and not live to the Body. How much do some Religious Persons live above other Men, and such, by taking a little more Care and Pain, may soar higher, and live above what they were wont to do themselves. Those Holy Men I instanced in before, did begin an Angelical Life, which is that I would press all to. Let us begin it, and advance in it as far as we can, and as our present Animal State will permit, and let us not allow our selves in, nor content our selves with any lower Life, but let us look upon it as our Imperfection and Weakness that we do not live alway with God, and upon him alone, and let us strive (as far as may be) to mind nothing else, to know nothing else, and to value nothing else, I mean without God.

S E C T. V.

I Have yet, but in a more general way, proposed this *Spiritual and Angelical Life*, I have a mind more distinctly and particularly to explain wherein this Life doth consist, and how the Mind, and Heart, and whole Man are to be exercised about and for the Great and Blessed

God, in Imitation of Angels. Know therefore that the *Angelica. Life* consists.

1. In understanding and knowing God.
2. In loving of him, and Complacency in him.
3. In Holy Activity, in praising and serving of him.

These answer to the Three *Essential Faculties* of the Soul of Man, the *Understanding, Will,* and *Vital active Power,* in the free and vigorous Exercise of which Faculties is the Life of the Soul, or Spiritual Life.

1. It consists in *Understanding* and *knowing* God, in seeing, and viewing of him. In seeing him in all things, and all things in him. This is the most noble and proper Exercise of the Mind or knowing Faculty. And we should study the Knowledge of the great and blessed God, and contemplate his Perfections. The Angels (as hath been shewed) always behold the Face of God in Heaven. And our Saviour Christ says, *this is eternal Life to know thee the only true God,* that is, our Life is founded In this Knowledge. Wherefore let us study his infinite and boundless Perfections. Let us labour to know him as the Fountain and Root of all Being, and of all Goodness: As the God from whom, and by whom, and in whom, and to whom are all things: As the most wise, the most mighty, the most good and gracious God. Let us acquaint our selves with him, and meditate much on him. He is an Object most worthy to be pitcht upon. He is the chief of all Beings, the most amiable and perfect, including in his infinite Essence all possible Perfections, both in kind, and degree, and a Good and Truth that we are most nearly concerned in, we having all from him, and by him: We cannot therefore employ our Meditations on a greater and better Subject, yea not on any other in which our Souls can find Satisfaction.

This should oblige our Understandings to the strictest attendance to him, and most vigorous Exercise about him. We should not content our selves with slight and transient thoughts of him, with some short glances of him, now and then, but stay and dwell in the Contemplation of him.

him. We should accustom our Minds to the thoughts of God, for when they become familiar, they will become much more grateful to us, and yield us such a Pleasure as will make us love to be alway with him. *I will remember thee on my Bed* (says David) *and meditate on thee in the night watches. My Soul followeth hard after thee. Mine Eyes are ever towards the Lord. And whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* He was alway looking on God, and with much Intention, was taken up with nothing else.

Pfal. 63. 6, 8.

Pfal. 25. 15.

Pfal. 73. 25.

Indeed God is All in All. and therefore we should (in a sort) take notice of nothing else but God, and know nothing but him, I mean nothing apart from him, nothing without respect and relation to him: For indeed, there is nothing that is, without him. There is nothing that is independent in Being, there is nothing subsisting in and by it self without God. Wherefore we can have no true Notion of things, unless we consider them in their relation to God. We do not understand our selves, or any thing else unless we conceive our respect to God, and the respect and relation of that thing, whatever it be we think of, unto God. I mean, unless we know and conceive of things as Effects of God's Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness, and as Representations of his Divine Perfections, and as means leading to him; unless we thus know and conceive things, we have have no right and true understanding of them.

Every thing we look upon and consider, must carry us to God. Our thought must not terminate and stay in any Creature, or in any created Beauty, or Excellency, but we must climb up by it to the Blessed God.

To know things without God, *i. e.* not taking Knowledge of him in them, is to know things no otherwise than as illiterate Persons, and Children do know Letters: They may see their Shape, and Colour, and Bigness, but they know not their meaning, and so know them not as all as Letters.

To know things meerly as they are by themselves, or in-relation to one another, or to our selves, is to know them after the Flesh, and not rightly as we ought to know them.

² Cor. 5. 14. them. The Apostle saith, *Henceforth know we no man after the Flesh; yea tho' we have known Christ after the Flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more*, i. e. We should not know any Persons or things after the Flesh: Henceforth, i. e. from such time as we came to be inlightned, we

Sub carnis nomine comprehenduntur ea omnia quæ ad hanc animalem vitam attinent: uti sunt cognitio carnalis, status, regnum, & alia hujus seculi propria. *Vorst. in Poli Syn. Civit.*

Non moramur carnalia; Famam, Nobilitatem, ac maximè humanas amicitias, cognationes, favores. *Id. Ibid.*

should know none so. And what is it to *know after the Flesh*? Why 'tis to know and consider Men under any *Fleshly respects*. To consider them as *rich*, as in worldly *honour*, as having *Wit, Learning, Strength*, or any like *Accomplishments*. To consider them as our *Friends, Kindred, Acquaintance, Favourites, or Benefactors*, or in respect of any of those things that pertain

to this Animal Life, this is to know them after the Flesh: And a Christian must know no Man after the Flesh.

Those carnal respects before-mentioned may be considered so far forth as to move us to such Duties as are owing to persons in such Circumstances, and they ought to be so far considered, but otherwise to be counted as trivial things.

^{Mat. 12. 47.} When some came and told *Jesus* that his Mother and his Brethren waited without to speak with him, he seems nothing to regard it, but answers, *Who is my Mother, and who are my Brethren?* And pointing to his Disciples, he says, *Behold my Mother and my Brethren.* So *Thomas Watts*, Martyr, a little before his Death, said to his Wife and Children: "My Wife, and my good Children, I must
 " now depart from you, therefore henceforth know I you
 " no more: But as the Lord has given you to me, so I
 " give you again to him. While he was yet alive, he was in a manner dead to them, no more considering them as his, but as the Lords. Mothers, and Brethren, and Wives, and Children, ought to be dear, but only in the Lord, and chiefly for what they have of God in them. And to know and consider our selves and them, in the Lord, rather as his, than ours, and as for him rather than for us (as indeed all Persons and things are, for the Apostle says that even we are not our own) I say, to consider
 all

all so, will much conduce to the quieting and satisfying of the Mind under all the Changes, that by the Divine Will are appointed, and ordered in this World. And this is to know God as Angels know, and behold him, even to see God in all things, and all things in God.

S E C T. VI.

THE *Second Branch* of this *Spiritual and Angelical Life*, is *Love and Complacency*, the proper Act of the *Will*. 'Tis to love God above all, and all things for him. God is an Object well deserving our chief Love, and Choice; yea, well deserving all our Love. He is essentially, originally, all-sufficiently, and infinitely good: His Essence contains in it all that is amiable, and (as our Saviour *Christ* says) *there is none good but God only*. Wherefore the great Commandment is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind*. This (*Christ* says) is the *First and Great Commandment*. Now if God must be loved with all the Heart, Soul, and Mind, then must he alone be loved. We must not only not love any thing above him, but not any thing with him, as sharing with him in our Love. We have no Love to bestow when God has his due, for his due, is not some of, but all the Heart.

We must not love our selves at all, or any other Creature, but in Subordination to God, and in, and for him; not Houses, nor Lands, not Father, nor Mother, nor Wife, nor Children, not any Person or thing, but in God, and for him.

If this Rule were observed, there would be no inordinacy in our Love of Creatures, we could never love any thing too much. Our great danger we are in here, is of over-loving Creatures, but if we love them only in, and for God, we cannot love them over-much. There will be no impure, and unholy Love, all our Love will be Religious and pious Love. And indeed all a Christians Love should be so, Religious, Holy, and Divine Love, (not excluding Love of Creatures, but) including the Love of God. He that loves Creatures in, and for God, in loving them he is still loving of God. There

Rom. 13. 8.

There is a Love that we owe to Creatures. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* This is a Debt

Cætera debita solvuntur nec manent; Dilectionis debitum semper & solvitur, & manet. *Grat.*

Ut perpetuum est debitum, sic perpetuo solvi debet. *Lud. de Dieu.*

which when never so duly paid remains a Debt still, and must be alway a paying. He that said of the Love of God, *This is the First and Great Commandment,* did add in the same Breath, *The second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neigh-*

Matt. 22. 38, *bour as thy self.* 39.

Love of others is therefore lawful, and a due. We may also love our selves, and every one naturally does so, and God allows it in making Love to our selves the Rule and Measure of our Love to our Neighbour, in those Words, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.*

Love to the Brethren is so great a Duty, that the faithful Performance of it is made a sign of Spiritual Life begun. *We know* (says the Apostle) *that we are passed from death to life, because we love the Brethren.*

Yea, a Christian must love all men, even his very enemies, *Mat. 5. 44.* Wherever hath any Goodness in it (and all the Works of God are good) must accordingly be loved and esteemed.

But now what is that that is valuable, and amiable in any Creature? Is it not somewhat that is from God, and by him, and for him? Is it not some Beam of God's own Goodness? Is not he the Root and Spring of all? How then can we love the Creature but we must love God too? Can we love and prize the Beams, and not consider the Sun whence they issue?

All Creature-Excellencies are God's Excellencies; therefore when we are considering them in Creatures, our thoughts must not stay there, but mount to God the fountain of all good.

If say, they are God's Excellencies, they are not the Creatures Excellencies so much as God's. No Man can call any good he hath his own. The Apostle says, *We are not our own,* and if we be not our own, then nothing we have is ours.

If any thing may be lookt upon as a Man's own, one would think the Qualities of his Soul, and the Actions which he does should be lookt upon so: But in the Apostle *Paul's* reckoning

kinging, even these are not so much a Man's own, as God's and Christ's. Observe how he expresses himself: *Notwithstanding I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* Gal. 2. 20. I live, that is, I have true Grace in me, This he says, but then corrects himself. I said too much in saying I live, I am gracious; 'tis not I, but Christ in me. His virtuous Inclinations, and Dispositions, were not his but Christ's.

And again, *I laboured more than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.* 1 Cor. 15. 10. Here his Actions were not reckoned his own, but God's. Wherefore when we discover any Eminency of Wisdom or Grace in Persons, we should love, and prize such Persons, but still in the Lord. We should not have Mens Persons in Admiration: But say, Oh here is a Beam of Divine Wisdom! Here is a Taste of God's infinite Goodness! Here is the Glory of God shining forth in mortal Men.

God must be in your Love Christians, or 'tis not right. Beware lest any Creature do steal away your Hearts in any part from God. God is no looser by your Love of Creatures, as long as 'tis in, and for him, that you love them: But if you love them merely for themselves, or for your own sakes, you rob God of his Due, which is to have all the Heart, and all the Soul, and all the Mind. Love God alone, and delight your selves in him alone.

What is Love in most strict and proper Sense, but a being pleased with a thing? Now be you throughly pleased with God, and satisfied with him, and labour to see how reasonable 'tis, you should be so. *David says, There is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee:* He does not say, not so much as thee, but none besides thee. He was fully satisfied with God alone. So he says in another *Psalms, My soul shall be satisfied as with Marrow and Fatness.* He means with God, as appears by what goes just before. *Ob God thou art my God, early will I seek thee — To see thy Power, and thy Glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary.* Then follows, *My soul shall be satisfied.* Hear how he blesses himself in God as his Inheritance. *The Lord is the Portion of my inheritance and of my Cup. The Lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, yea I have a good heritage.* As if he should have said, Oh happy Man am I, that God is fallen

A Discourse of Angels,

to my Lot! He is a Blessed and rich Portion. He seems much affected with his own Happiness, on this single account, that he had an Interest in God and Communion with him. Therefore he goes on, *I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel. I have set the Lord alway before me.* This yielded him incessant Delight and Solace, it was a continual Feast to him. *Thou hast put gladness into mine Heart* (says he) *more than in the time when the Corn and Wine increased.* Thus should we delight our selves in God, feasting our Souls upon him, and upon him alone. Thus Angels live in the Delights of the Presence of the Blessed God alone, whose Face they alway behold. They have no earthly Possessions, no Lands, and Livings, no stately Houses, and pleasant Gardens, to retire to for Diversion, no Silver, nor Gold, no delicate Meats and Drinks to delight themselves in, they have no need of them, God is all to them; Let him be so to us, Let us live upon him alone, contenting our selves with him. This is to live on Angels Food. The *Manna* that the *Israelites* had provided for them in the Wilderness is called *Angels Food*, Psal. 78. 25. But that Food was for their Bodies, and was called Angels Food, because brought to them by the Ministry of Angels: But that which that Manna typified is Angels Food indeed, namely, such as the Angels themselves do feed upon. What Manna typified *Christ* tells us, *Job. 6. 32, 33. Moses gave you not that Bread from Heaven, but my Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven: For the Bread of God is he that cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World.* 'Tis God in *Christ*, is the true Manna, that *hidden Manna*, Rev. 2. 17. *I am the Bread of Life* (says *Christ*) *he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* How incessantly are poor Mortals here afflicted with diverse Appetites? What hungry and thirsting is there, now after this, then after that? One would be Rich, another would have more Ease and Pleasure. All the Senses are perpetually clamorous. The Eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Ear with hearing, nor the Palate with tasting: But now Acquaintance with God in *Christ*, and Communion with him in Faith and Love, will kill all

this

this Hunger, and mortify all inordinate Appetites. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. When we come to Heaven this shall be fully verified, there God will be all to us. We shall live most delightfully upon the most Blessed God alone, without being beholding to any thing else, as now Angels do.

'Tis true, here we have Bodies that must be provided for, they must have corporeal Food to sustain them, and Raiment to cover them: But tho' we cannot live without such things, yet may we live above them, even above all Creature-Comforts upon God himself.

Quest. You'll ask me, how a Man may in the use of Creature-Comforts, live above them upon God?

Ans. I answer, *First*, By seeing and tasting more in them than the bodily Senses can reach, even the goodness of God. There is somewhat in Creatures that the bodily Senses are entertain'd with, somewhat that affects the Ear or the Eye, or the Palate, and that is all Carnal People have in them: But now there is the Wisdom and Power, and Goodness, and Bounty of God, to be seen and tasted in them also, by an exercised Faith, and Love: And he that feasts his Soul on these, in the use of Creature-Comforts, lives above them, and so should every Christian do. All sensible good things, they are effects of his Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness, and have his impresses on them. He makes them to be what they are, and this is to be resented. They are all God's gifts, he bestows them on us, and makes them yield us the Refreshment we have by them. Oh what a special sweet relish must this needs give things, when over and above what Sense discovers, God's Love and Goodness, his Care and Providence is tasted in them. Here both Soul and Body are each of them feasted at once on its proper Fare. The bodily Senses are entertain'd with what is corporeal, and the Soul at the same time, entertain'd with what is Divine. Pleasant Sounds, and pleasant Tasts, and pleasant Sights, strike the Bodily Senses; and God's Love, and Goodness, and Bounty, affect the heart at the same time, and in the same things. This is to

live above Creatures in the use of them, and is a Christian's Duty.

Secondly, A Man lives above Creatures upon God, when in the use of them he looks higher than the gratifying of his bodily Senses, and Appetite, even unto God, directing the use of them unto him as the End. This the Apostle exhorts to, *1 Cor. 10. 31. Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the Glory of God.* We must eat and use all other our Refreshments, yea do every thing we do, with such an holy aim, and in such a manner as agrees with God's Will, and this holy end. We must look further than the accommodating of the Flesh; even that we may honour and serve God. That is our chief end, and all things Divine Bounty gives us, should be used as means to this end. Our Riches, our Honour, our secular Power and Interest render us more capable of doing God Service; so do our Meat, Drink, Sleep, Recreation, and such like, when used regularly, and with Moderation: Now when this is specially intended, we live above these things, in the Enjoyment and use of them.

Thirdly, When God himself is (as it were) singled out by us, for our chief good, for our prime and proper happiness, and our Souls adhere and cleave to him as such, and are delighted and solaced in him apart, and abstractedly consider'd then do we live above Creatures.

Let Creatures be never so liberal to a Christian, and yield him as much sweetness as they have in them, and surround him with the greatest Variety of all imaginable Delight they can afford, he hath reason to say, this is not my Happiness. These things are sweet, but God's Presence and Favour is sweeter. Now, when we can feelingly say so, yea, and turn away from these to God, and solace and delight our selves in him, as infinitely better than all things else, having a mind prepared to quit all for him: When we can feast our selves on the thoughts of God apart, and be satisfied and contented with him, really accounting all things nothing to him, then do we live above Creatures upon the Blessed God himself, and this 'tis our Duty to do.

And

And indeed that new Principle that is put into the Soul of a Christian, in Regeneration, inclines him to live after this manner on God alone. So far as the Soul is renewed it likes no other Fare. The Child likes the Mothers Milk better than a Strangers. Christians are born of God, therefore his Breast must be most proper for them.

The Jews report of *Moses*, that he when exposed by his Parents for fear of the King, and *Pharaoh's* Daughter chanced to find him, and was minded to nurse him up as her own Child; several *Egyptian* Women were sent for to give him suck, but he would suck none till it was so ordered that his own Mother was sent for, and came, and then he took the Breasts presently, but he would not suck a Stranger. Such an Inclination to God is there in the renewed Soul. And when we in such manner cleave to God alone, relying and depending on Almighty Power, referring our selves to Infinite Wisdom, and unbounded Love, and satiating our selves with Infinite Goodness, we come as near the Angels Life, as our present State will admit.

And that we may work up our hearts to this holy Complacency in God, as we should be frequently representing to our Minds the Infinite Reason we have to love him, setting his Love and Beauty before them, urging and pressing them with Consideration (as was directed in the foregoing Section) so we should be very careful, by the constant practice of what is agreeable to God's Nature and Will, to reconcile our Minds and Tempers to him (as shall be shewed in the following Sections) For till by Practice of what is pleasing to God, we have so far reconciled our Natures to him, as that our Hearts and his are bent and disposed the same way for the main, we shall never throughly be pleased and delighted in him. And so much of the *Second Branch* of the *Angelical Life*.

C H A P. XV.

§. 1. *A Third Branch in which the Angelical Life consists is Holy Activity. This must be express'd in Adoring and Praising the Divine Majesty. §. 2. And Jesus Christ the Redeemer, §. 3. And also in serving God and obeying his Commands in Humility. §. 4. In Patience and long suffering. §. 5. In Charity. §. 6. In Integrity, Universality, and Punctualness of Obedience. §. 7. In Zeal and Diligence. §. 8. In Constancy and Unweariedness.*

S E C T. I.

IN the Third and last Place, This Life consists in *Holy Activity*, even in a vigorous Exercise of the Souls Vital-Active Power, and that in both *adoring* and *Praising* of God, and in *servings* him in faithful obeying all his holy Commands.

This is the Work we find Angels constantly busied in, and they are engaged and even necessitated to it by the Contemplation of God's Perfections, which they live in, and the Love which that generates and cherishes; of both which in the foregoing Sections.

First, The Angels are always *adoring* and *praising* of God, and *Jesus Christ* the Redeemer: I shall speak of these distinctly.

They are ever *Adoring* and *Praising* of the *Divine Majesty*, whose Face they are always beholding.

In the Vision that the Prophet *Isaiab* had, *Chap. 6.* He saw the Throne of God, and 'tis said, *above it stood the Seraphims, each one had six wings, with twain he covered his face,*

face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried to another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his Glory. Here I shall note Two things, what they do, and then what they say.

That which they are said to do, (that is to our present purpose) is, *they cover their faces and their feet with their wings*, as they stand before God's Throne.

That which they say is one to another, and they cry *Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, &c.*

Their covering their *Faces* and *Feet*, is in token of their profound *Reverence* of God's Infinite Majesty, and shews the awful regard they had to him that sat on the Throne. In covering their *Faces* the Angels or Seraphims acknowledge the Splendour of his Perfections to be such as they were unworthy and unable to behold. And in covering their *Feet* they confess some Impurity in themselves, in comparison of God's infinite Purity. By the *Feet*, in Scripture, those parts of the Body are signified (sometimes) which Nature teaches us to cover, our *uncomely* 1 Cor. 12. 23. parts, as the Apostle calls them. So *Gen. 49. 10. Exod. 4. 25. Deut. 28. 57. Ezek. 16. 25.* and in other places. Now the Angels in this Vision, assuming humane Shape, are said to cover those parts (*Quibus respondent in Angelis imbecilitas quædam s; Deo comparentur*) as conscious to themselves of some Weakness being compared to God. I say, they did it in this Vision, for otherwise Angels have no *Faces* or *Feet* to cover, or *Wings* to cover them with. But so they are represented to signify the Posture of their Minds in all their Addresses to God.

And if Angels do address themselves to God, and stand before him, with such Reverence, and Awfulness, how much more should we despicable Worms, come before him with the most humble Prostration of our Souls, when we are to speak to him in Prayer, or hear him speaking to us in the Word, or are to have to do with him, in any Religious Exercise? *Serve the Lord with Fear* (says David) *and rejoice with trembling.* God expects to be Psal. 2. 11. sanctified

Isa. 8. 13.

sanctified of all that draw nigh to him. *Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your Fear, and let him be your Dread, and he shall be for a Sanctuary.* We must, in Spirit, do him Homage, and bow our Souls to him in all our Addresses to him, yea, and outwardly express our Reverential Esteem of him, by such humble gestures of Body, as are most apt to testify it to others. Yea, we should never mention, or think of his sacred Names, without inward Veneration.

Ezra 9. 6.

What an awful Sense of God had the Prophet when he had the Vision of his Glory, *Isa. 6. 5. Then said I, wo is me, for I am a man of unclean lips.* And when Ezra went to God in Prayer, observe how he expresses his devout Fear of him. *O my God! I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my Face to thee, my God.* To approach the Divine Presence thus on all Occasions, is but our just and due Acknowledgment of his infinite Greatness and Excellency, and if Angels pay such Homage to him, much more should we.

It is furthermore to be noted in that Vision of the Prophet, that these Angels cry one to another, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, &c.* They extol and praise him. And in *Rev. 4. 8.* where *John* had a like Vision, 'tis said, *They rested not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy.* It was their daily Work to praise God, they spent their whole time in it. And how can they chuse but alway praise him, who are alway beholding his Face? Praise is the expressing and setting forth of Excellency represented: Now they living alway in the View of God, his Glory ever shining full in their Faces, they must needs be moved to set forth and declare it. And as they live Lives of Praise, so should we. No doubt the Angels praise God in a more sublime and excellent way than we Mortals can: but let us do it as we are able. We have Tongues given us to praise God with: With them we can declare to one another our Sentiments of his Perfections. Angels speak to one another too, but in another way, which we can give no certain account of: Let us in our way praise him Day and Night. In our Prayers to God, and in our Communications one with another, let there be much
of

of Praise. Divines commonly make *Thanksgiving* one of the parts of Prayer, and indeed it is not fit it should be left out of any of our Solemn Prayers. See *Phil. 4. 6. Col. 4. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 1.* *Thanksgiving* and *Praise* are commonly taken as one and the same; But indeed, Praise is a greater, and more comprehensive Duty, it contains in it *Thanksgiving* and somewhat more. *Thanksgiving* is an exalting and magnifying of God, for what he does for our selves, or ours; But *Praise* is a magnifying of him also for what he is in himself, and in all his Works. Now both these should be in our Prayers. They are the best Prayers in which is most Praise. If there be not a due mixture of this, our Prayers will make little Melody in God's Ears. 'Tis a defect no doubt in Prayers, when much is said in confessing Sin, and in way of Petition, but scarce any thing to represent God Glorious, and to set forth what he is, and what he hath done. In that short *Direction* *Christ* gave his Disciples for Prayer, 'tis to be noted, that it begins and ends with *Doxology*. Our Father which art in Heaven, so it begins, with a Recognition of the Sublimity of his Majesty: And it ends with *thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory*. God says, *whoever offereth Praise glorifieth me*. How many times does *David* in his *Psalms* speak of praising God? I think near Two Hundred times. Oh my Friends! Praise is a rich Sacrifice. Praise ye the Lord (says *David*) for it is good Psal. 147. to sing Praises to our God: For it is pleasant, and Praise is comely.

But 'tis not only in our Prayers to God that we must praise him, but in our Communications and Discourses one with another. We should speak more and oftner of God, to his Praise as occasion is offered, when we happen to be together. *David* says, *My Tongue shall speak of thy Righteousness, and of thy Praise all the day long*: that is, ever and anon, upon all Occasions. He would be still dropping somewhat of God in every Company. *Every day* Psal. 145. 2, 5. will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous works. It seems to be meant of his Occasional Discourses he had with others, for it follows in the next

Verse, Men shall speak of the might of thy terrible Acts, and I will declare thy greatness. When any Discourse did arise in his Company about God's Works, he would not let it fall to the ground, but promote it. *Thy Saints shall bless thee, they shall speak of the Glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy Power.*

V. 10. 11.

Psal. 30. 12.
Psal. 16. 9.

It is not for nothing that our Tongue is, by the Spirit of God, called our *Glory*. *To the end that my Glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent.* And again, *Therefore my heart is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth: that is my Tongue.* Now the Tongue is called our *Glory*, not only because Speech is a gift that differenceth Man from a Beast: But because the Tongue is the Instrument of glorifying God, and was made chiefly for this end, that with it we might glorify him. We cannot put our Tongues to a more proper and worthy use, than to glorify and praise God with them, and they are never so much our *Glory* as when we so employ them.

When the Heart conceives honourably of God, and of his Properties, and Works, 'tis the Tongue that must set this forth to others View, and this is to praise God. We should get our Hearts as full as possible of the *Glory* of God; and when our Minds and Hearts are well furnished with such Treasure, our Tongues should be employ'd to bring it forth for others Benefit.

Psal. 45. 1.

David says, that *his Tongue was as the Pen of a ready Writer.* The Tongue quickly transcribes what is in the Mind, for others to read the same. What good thoughts we have of God, while they keep within in our Breasts, others are nothing the better for them, but when our Tongues write them out, when they may be read of all: And as God is glorified, so others are benefited, yea and we our selves are benefited too; For as a Man by writing out things often does grow more perfect in them, and imprints them more on his Mind, so is it with good Discourse, we shall not only profit others by it, but our selves too.

Oh in what idle and childish Tattle are our Tongues employ'd ordinarily! 'Tis certainly our Shame. *Solomon* saith, *In the Lips of him that hath Understanding Wisdom is found: And again, The Lips of the Righteous feed many.*

Prov. 10. 13.
V. 21.

Mens

Mens Souls receive their Food by the Ear chiefly, and the Lips minister it. How charitable an Act is it to feed the hungry, and needy? Good Discourse feeds hungry Souls. Possibly some Acquaintance of thine may perish in their Sins, that might, likely, have been recovered by thy dropping some savoury Words seasonably in their way.

Let no corrupt Communication (say the Apostle) proceed Eph. 4. 29 *out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister Grace unto the Hearers.* Good Discourse then, ministers Grace to them that hear it. And let me tell you, there is no Discourse more likely to do others good to Salvation, than such as most commends God to them, and represents him such a one as he is, Wise, Holy, Great, Good, Mighty, and always present with us.

We read of speaking with the *Tongues of Angels*, and 1 Cor. 13. 1. they may be said to do so that speak of God, so as to make Psal. 66. 2. *his Praise glorious.*

S E C T. II.

AND as 'tis the Angels Work to adore and praise the *Divine Majesty*, so in like manner also, *Jesus Christ*, the Redeemer. The Lord Jesus Christ in respect of his Divine Nature, is one with the Father, and equal to him, in Power and Glory; But in respect of his Humane Nature, and as Mediator, he acknowledges himself to be Inferiour to his Father, *My Father is greater than I.* But tho' he be (as Mediator) his Father's Servant, and Inferiour to him, yet is he (so considered) advanced above all created Beings, Men and Angels, being made Lord of all. The Man Christ Jesus being also God, is the proper Object of Divine Worship and Honour. And the Apostle tells us, that when God sent him into the World, he gave Command that *all the Angels should worship him.* So Heb. 1. 6. *Again when he bringeth in his first begotten into the World, he says, And let all the Angels of God worship him.* God charged them to do so, wherefore no question they did so, for *they do his Commandments bearkening to the voice of his words.* Psal. 103. 21.

- And we read how at his Nativity an Host of Angels appeared to the Shepherds, and gave their Testimony to him. *And the Angel said, Fear not, &c. For unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the Angel, a multitude of the Heavenly Host, praising God, &c.* And *John* tells that in the Vision he had, he beheld, and heard the voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the Beasts and the Elders, and the Number of them was Ten Thousand times Ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands, saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain (that is Jesus Christ) to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* This you see is the Work of Angels, to give Honour to Christ, and to exalt and magnify him. And we find them with much Veneration, and devout Affection, contemplating the Mystery of Christ, and searching into it. Wherefore the Apostle
- 1 Luke 2. 10,
11, 13, 14. *says, Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the Flesh.* And this Mystery (he says) was not only preached unto the Gentiles, but seen of Angels, that is, lookt upon with Adoration and devout Affection. And *Peter*, speaking of the things delivered to us by the
- 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Prophets concerning Christ, says, which things the Angels desire to look into.*
- 1 Pet. 1. 12.

Now then it is our Duty, and it belongs to a Spiritual and Angelical Life highly to prize and value the Knowledge (as of God, so) of *Jesus Christ*, and to exercise our minds in it. This is a Mystery so profound and heavenly, as will find us Work as long as we live, and minister to us unconceivable Pleasure, as we grow up in Acquaintance with it. That little God's People have attain'd to, they find very sweet, but there is much more in Christ, than the most knowing Persons yet see. There is a depth in him that cannot be fathomed. *Unsearchable riches*, as the Apostle's Word is, such as a Man can never come to the other end of. We shall find more and more in Christ, the longer and the more we study

^a ἀνεπίγνωτον πλάσιν, Eph 3. 8. Ab
a &c. ignos vestigium. Quod nullis
vestigis indagari potest.

him. If the Blessed Angels were Learners (as the Apostle testifies) and perhaps are so still, as to this Sublime Knowledge,

Knowledge, how short must the best Christians on earth come of what may be known. Let us daily search and pry into this Myſtery. Let us look into it with Deſire, as the Angels do. Let us welcome, and make great account of whatever further Diſcovery of it we meet with. A little of this Knowledge is more worth than a great deal of any other Knowledge. Who would not count it well worth his while to go to School with Angels, and to be a Learner in that which they affect to know.

And let us extol and magnify Jeſus Chriſt in his Perſon and Offices. Let us give him all the Honour that is due to him. God hath highly exalted him for this end. *He hath given him a name above every name* (i. e. an Eminency of Dignity, and Power above all Creatures) *that at the name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow, and every Tongue confeſs* — i. e. all Men and Angels give him Honour, Worſhip and Praise. He muſt have the ſame Honour given him, that is given to God the Father himſelf. *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men ſhould honour the Son, as they honour the Father,* Joh. 5. Nothing comes to us, but by his hands. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; The only begotten Son, who is in the boſom of the Father he hath declared him,* Joh. 1. 18.

He bringeth down God to us, and 'tis he that bringeth us up to God. *I am the way, the Truth and the Life* (ſaith Chriſt) *no man cometh to the Father but by me.* God and ſinful Mortals had been for ever Strangers if Chriſt had not come. He makes Peace. He procures Pardon. *He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World.* *He is the only Mediator between God and Man.* No Enter-
Eph. 2. 15.
 Joh. 1. 29.
 1 Tim. 2. 5.
 Eph. 1. 6.

He is the King of Saints, yea *παρασολεὺς* **Universal Sovereign Monarch of Heaven and Earth.** *All Power is given unto him in Heaven and Earth.* What Power any Creatures pretend to they muſt derive from him. Earthly Kings and Princes are his Subjects, who is Lord of all. In a word, he is *Immanuel* God with us. Now let us ac-
Matt. 28. 18.
 Matt. 1. 23.

cordingly honour him, believe in him, receive his Teſtimony, and be ſubject to him. Yea, let us openly confeſs

fels him, and vindicate his Dignity, Authority, and Power, against all the Enemies of it.

Our Adversaries the *Papists* horribly inroach upon his Royalties. They set up other Mediators, Saints and Angels, as the ancient Heathens did their *Demons*. They take his Kingly Power from him, giving it to their *Pope*, and *Bishops*, allowing them to make new Laws for the Church that Christ never made. Let us abhor whatever approaches such Impiety,

Phil. 3. 18.

Debauched Christians also amongst our selves are very enemies to the Honour of Christ, though in another way. *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies to the Cross of Christ.* They profane his sacred Name which they are called by, they trample on his Laws, he has but the Name, not the Power of a King among them.

The *Papists* dethrone him *Doctrinally*, these *Practically*. Let us walk worthy of Christ, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord, that the Name of Christ may be glorified in us, as it is in them that live holily. Thus must we live a Spiritual and Angelical Life, in Adoring and Praising of God, and Jesus Christ the Redeemer.

S E C T. III.

AS the Angels are active in Adoring and Praising God, so in *servi*ng him, in doing what he commands them to do. How they are Servants of God's Providence in this World, and do minister to God, and Jesus Christ the Redeemer, for the good of Men, more especially of the Faithful Servants of Christ, has been largely set forth, in the foregoing Discourse: Now let us review what hath been said of this, and consider it more thoroughly, and we shall discover several things in the course of their Ministry, very worthy to be copied out by us in our Lives. The things I purpose to insist upon are these. *Humility, Patience, Charity, Integrity, Zeal, Constancy.*

Mr. Ball.

I will begin with Humility, which (as one says) is the first, second and third thing in a Christian Life, it must go before, accompany, and follow all our Actions. 'Tis a singular

singular Ornament to be put on whatever a Christian is a doing. *Be cloathed with Humility.* Other Virtues lose their Beauty, if this be wanting. Christ commends this in his own Life, as especially to be imitated by us, *Learn of me for I am meek and lowly.* And the Apostle tells us, that for his humbling himself even unto Death, *God highly exalted him.* To be humble, lowly and condescending, makes a Man's Conversation very pleasing and acceptable both to God and Men. Therefore the Apostle earnestly presses it. *Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.* 1 Pet. 5. 5. James 3. 13. Phil. 2. 8, 9. Rom 12. 16.

There are different Estates and Conditions of Men here in this World, some are rich, some poor, some bond, some free, some high, some low. These Civil Distinctions or Differences are not wholly to be disregarded. Religion does not take away all Consideration of them, but it does lessen the regard of them in certain cases, it judges them to be such little things as are not to be stood upon, when we have any good before us to be done.

The Disciples of Christ while they were yet but Novices in Christianity, wonder'd to see their Master discouraging singly with a poor *Samaritane* Woman. They counted it was a thing beneath him: Joh. 4. 27.

But we see he would not stand upon such a Point, when he had an Opportunity of doing her Soul good. Let proud Flesh think what it will to the contrary, it is a noble, graceful, and well-becoming thing for Persons of superiour Quality to be lowly and condescending, to stoop sometimes to Familiarity with Persons much beneath them, and to put their hands to any inferiour Work, when need requireth it.

It is said of *Alphonsus* (a King not very well liked of by some) that when he saw a poor Man pulling his Beast out of a Ditch, he put his hand to help him, after which his Subjects ever loved him much the better. We read, *Rom. 12. 16. Condescend to men of low estate.* Others translate it, *Stoop to things low, and mean.* This accords best

Ευκοσμοει. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Signif. Innodare a κέντρος nodus. To tie Knots as delicate curious Women use to do of ribbons to adorn their Heads or Bodies. As if Humility were the Ornament of every Grace. Svide, κοσμηματα sunt κοσμηματα Ornamenta & κοσμηματα pro κεντραμισματα five ornari est in Epicharmo. Gat. Cin.

best with the Words immediately foregoing, *Mind not high things*, ὑψηλὰ ἀλλὰ τοῖς ταπεινοῖς, why not the same Gender with ὑψηλὰ? And so 'tis, *Mind not high things*, but condescend or stoop to low things, *i. e.* Any mean, inferior Offices, when others Necessities calls for the same.

How much are mortal men beneath the Blessed Angels! Yet are they busy at work with them, and for them. There is no Office so mean but Angels are ready to undertake it, when their help is needed. They will visit poor Cottages, and nasty Prisons, and Dungeons. They will attend upon the poorest Beggars, as they did on *Lazarus*. Our proud hearts will be apt to suggest to us in many Cases, 'tis unbecoming our Quality, to do so, or so. But if Angels count not such Works beneath them, why should we?

Oh let us learn from Angels to serve one another in Love. Brethren (says the Apostle) *ye have been called unto Liberty, only use not Liberty, for an occasion to the Flesh, but by Love serve one another.* He that is not bound to serve by any Civil tye, may be by Charity obliged: Tho' he be not bound to men, yet may he be to God. *We are your Servants* (says Paul) *for Jesus sake.* Paul was no Servant, but a Free man, he was born a Free man, and was well bred; yet, hear what he says, *Tho' I am free from all men, yet have I made my self a Servant unto all men, that I might gain the more.* Being a Free man by Birth, and Privilege, he became a Servant of Choice.

Nor should any count this a Disparagement, for Angels condescend more than so. But enough of this here, having said somewhat of it before.

S E C T. IV.

ANother thing in the Angels which we are to imitate is *Patience*, and *long suffering*: Bearing with, and forbearing one another.

We must expect sometimes to meet with that which is provoking from such as we have to do with here, even from such as need our help. But what says the Apostle?

Rom. 12. 21. *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* Be
kind

kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. And again, Put on therefore (as the Elect of God, Holy, and Beloved) Bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, &c. This is becoming Christians: And it should make us like a patient forbearing Temper the better, because Angels are such signal Examples of it. We cannot think Patience to be Pusillanimity (as some proud Spirits do) when those Heavenly Spirits are Patterns of it.

How unkind, how froward and peevish do the Holy Angels find sinful Mortals, when they have to do with them, and yet they leave them not but bear with them.

When the Angels came to deliver Lot and his Wife and Family from the Flames that were to destroy Sodom, how did they linger, till those beneficent Spirits were fain to lay hands on them, and forcibly bring them forth of the City.

Hagar took an ill course, when in a pet she ran away from her Mistress. Such Irregularities must needs be distasteful to their Holy Angels, yet even then an Angel kindly visited her.

Ishmael had done very naughtily in mocking of Isaac, yet presently thereupon an Angel came to relieve him in his Extremity.

How rebellious were the Israelites in the Wilderness? And yet the Angels provided them Manna then, daily.

Yea, how full of abominable Wickedness is the whole World? And yet the Angels are still busy in it for the good of it, as Servants of God's Providence. 'Tis (I confess) as Servants of God's Providence that Angels manage things here, he has not delivered up the Government of the World to them, tho' he uses them in it: And 'tis, I think, a good reason that one gives why God commits not the Disposal of all things intirely to Angels, namely, " That we can scarcely think their finite Nature capable of so much Goodness, as to bear the innumerable Debaucheries, Villanies, Blasphemies, vented in one Year, one Week, one Day, one Hour throughout the World.

Their Zeal for their Creator would likely move them to greater and more speedy Severity, than is now used. Wherefore Infinite Goodness still holds the Helm in his own hand, and gives the Angels Instructions what to do, when to strike and when to spare, and they execute his Commands most punctually: But their Patience must needs be much exercised while they have to do with so very many wicked ones.

One says, "The Angels are often with us as Physicians are with those that have filthy Ulcers, they stop their Noses and administer the Medicine: So do they. Our Sins extremely offend them, as they do God, yet their Obedience to God, and Love to us, keeps them steady to us."

Oh let us learn more Tenderness towards others! Let us not be easily provoked, but slow to Anger. Let us deal with men not always as they deserve, but rather as they need, for so the Angels do.

S E C T. V.

A Third Virtue which we should learn the exercise of from Angels is *Charity*. Angels are ever at work for us, they are Guarding of us, Purveying for us, Teaching, Admonishing, Comforting. They cease not to be relieving, and assisting of us, some way or other, they are ever doing us good: So that we have in them an excellent Pattern for our Charity. The Apostle *John* that breaths nothing else almost, but Love in his Epistles, does in a few words, direct the Exercise of it. *My little Children, let us not love in Word, neither in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth. Not in Word,* that is, not only in Word. 'Tis a barren Charity that yields nothing but good Words, fair and pitying Speeches: It hath little Power, if it can command the Tongue only and not the hand. To love therefore in Word and Tongue is not enough. Well, How then must we love? Why it must be *ἔργῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ*, i. e. In Deed, or Work, and in Truth. That is, with Hand, and Heart. Let us love others. *ἔργῳ* in Works and Deeds. Let us express our Love in cheerful Beneficence, doing all.

1 Joh. 3. 18.

all the good we can for others: Feeding the hungry, Cloathing the naked, Helping the distressed, Visiting the Fatherless and Widow. *To do good, and communicate, forget not* (says the Apostle) *for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased.* Read and consider what the Apostle James saith, Chap. 2. 15, 16. *If a Brother or Sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them depart in peace, be you warmed, and filled, notwithstanding you give them not those things that are needful to the Body, what doth it profit? This is to love in Word only. Whosoever hath this Worlds good, and seeth his Brother hath need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, the Apostle says, He hath not the Love of God in him.* God bestows more upon some than upon others, that they may have an advantage of attaining the Honour of imitating his Beneficence. We must not monopolize Gods Goodness to our selves, eating our Morsels alone. The Apostle complains of it as a great *indecorum* that all, that is, the Generality, *sought their own things.* They minded their private advantages, caring little what became of others. Angels Employment is a Ministry for Men. Let us affect to be like unto them.

Are they our Guardians, Let us be Guardians one to another, every one endeavouring to defend the Names, Estates, and Persons of others all we can. *Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction* (says Solomon) Plead the Cause of the poor and needy. Prov. 31. 8.

Are they (*viz.* the Angels) Purveyors for us? Let us deal our Bread to the Hungry, and bring the poor that is cast out into our Houses, and when we see the Naked cover him, and not hide our selves from our own Flesh. Do they teach and tutor us, excite us to our Duty, keep us from sinning, comfort us in our Sufferings? Let us do the like for others. Let our Lips be alway dropping some good thing. Consider one another to provoke one another to love and good Works. Warn those that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak. There is Charity exercised towards mens Souls, as well as their Bodies, and the Angels Ministry extends to both, Isa. 58. 7.

as has been plentifully shewed. Thus we should love as Angels do, ἐργῶ in Work. And so we must also ἀληθείᾳ in Truth. *Let Love be without Dissimulation* (says the Apostle) ἀνυπόκριτος. Let it not be a mere piece of Pageantry, a Flourish, and shew, to get us Credit, but let it be hearty and unfeigned. The Greek Word is render'd *unfeigned*, in 1 Pet. 1. 22. where is mentioned of unfeigned Love of the Brethren. Design not your own Praise or Profit.

First, Let it not be to be seen of Men. So our Saviour Christ teaches touching Alms. *When thou dost Alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth, that thine Alms may be in secret.* Angels do all their good turns (ordinarily) in an invisible way, they do all unseen, they seek not their own Praise, but our Profit. In *Ezekiel's* Vision, they are represented as having the hands of a Man, but their hands were under their Wings. Angels Actions are seen, but not their hands: These they purposely conceal, keeping them under their Wings. So do they conceal their Names too. We find not the Names of above Two Angels in all the Word of God. And when *Manoah* would have known the Angels Name that appeared to him, he refused to tell him, *Judg.* 13. 17, 18.

Our Saviour Christ says, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works.* He doth not say, that they may see you, but that they may see your Works. We should make our Works visible and notable, but not our selves, so do the Blessed Angels.

Again in your Acts of Beneficence, design not any advantage to your selves. Some are liberal in hope of an answerable Requital, expecting as much again. Hear what Counsel Christ gives touching Invitations, 'tis as applicable to all Acts of Beneficence. *When thou makest a Dinner, or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.* We must not make Merchandize and Traffick of our Charity. Angels well know poor Mortals can make them no Requital for the good Offices they do them, and yet are they most liberal of them. Let our Charity be like theirs.

S E C T. VI.

A Nother thing that we may learn from Angels, is *Integrity, Universality, and Punctualness of obedience* to God's Commands. They keep precisely to their Instructions, and fail not to set about and do whatever God puts them upon. The Psalmist says, They are Ministers of his that do his Pleasure. *They do his Commandments hearkening to the voice of his words.* They never dispute any of his Orders, what he bids them do, they dispatch without delaying or demurring at all, let the Service be what it will. Oh that there were in us such an Heart, to follow the Lord fully, as 'tis said *Caleb* did. But we are for some Work, and not for other some: We are for easy, honourable, gainful, safe work, but not for laborious, painful, expensive, and such as exposes to danger, or disgrace: This will not so easily go down with us.

Ephraim was for treading out the Corn, but not for plowing, as the Lord says, by the Prophet *Hosea*. *Ephraim is an Heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the Corn, &c.* And why so? Why the Ox or Heifer that treads out Corn, was not to be muzzled, but might take its mouth full when it list'd while in that work: But it was not so in Plowing, there was no biting. When our Saviour Christ said to the young Man, *Go sell all thou hast, and give to the Poor, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.* This is shameful patching with God. I confess the holy Angels have here great advantage of us. No Work is painful to them, they do all with ease, nor do they suffer any damage or loss by any Service they perform. They have no Interest of theirs that may be prejudiced one jot by their attendance on their Work: But 'tis otherwise with us. Some Works that are enjoind us, cannot be done without Pain and Trouble in the Flesh, and we may suffer much for well-doing, we may suffer in our Names, in our Estates, in our Persons. Wherefore our Saviour Christ says, that he that will follow him must deny himself, and take up his Cross.

Whether it may be said that Angels exercise a kind of *Self-denial* in some of their Ministries to mortal Men, even in such as are so much beneath them, or seem to be, I shall not dispute: 'Tis but improperly they can be said to do so, and when they do, 'tis without any pain or loss to them. But to our Flesh, or outward Man, there is a real Burthenfomness in such Acts of Self-denial as we are sometimes called to. Yet I may say also, that they are all the while, easy and grateful to the Spirit, so far as 'tis renewed, even as the Angels Work is to them. *The Spirit indeed is ready* (says Christ) *but the Flesh is weak.* The Flesh is weak and weary, is pain'd and tir'd, this cannot be helpt; but let it be so, while the Spirit yields not at all, we keep our Innocency. But when the Spirit becomes weary, and unwilling, and withdraws from any commanded Service, this is highly culpable.

Psal. 119. 6.

A Man can never justify his Obedience to God, unless it be universal. *Then* (says David) *shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.* Such an indifferent Respect do Angels carry to all God's Commands. The Reason they have for doing is their great Master's Will, and where this is the reason of doing, one thing will be done as well as another. If we do some things commanded, and not other some, as we list, we do not God's Will but our own, and serve not God, but our selves.

Indeed, so far as the Love of God is perfected in us, God's Will and ours, are in all things one, and the same. And the Angels Wills ever are so. And 'tis not so much an external Law that moves them, as a most free Principle within, even their own Nature, and they do all they do with Pleasure, and of Choice, as seeing it good so to do. And this is that *more excellent way* which the Apostle would shew the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 12. 31.

Now when this Internal Principle moveth a Christian to action, nothing that is commanded will be declined, for he will see the same Goodness in all that is commanded, which will move him to chuse to obey; and in obeying, he will do his own Will as well as God's. The Spirit of that holy Man of God, was in a more than ordinary

nary Elevation, that prayed, *Fiat voluntas mea Domine.* Let my Will be done Lord. What was God's Will, was his Will also.

Thus to serve God in Universal Obedience, of free Choice, is to do God's Will on Earth as it is done in Heaven, for which Christ teaches us to pray, and at which we should be aiming.

S E C T. VII.

THE *Fifth* Particular imitable in those Ministering Spirits, is their *Zeal and Diligence.* The Apostle would have Christians not to be *slotbful in business, but fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord.* Rom. 12. 11. *οκνητος*, which we render *slotbful*, signifies one that is a *Loiterer*, that makes no hast to dispatch Business. *ζεω* signifies *boiling hot*: one that is so in Spirit, will not loiter and linger, but be diligent and expeditious. Of *Apollos* it is said, that *being fervent in Spirit, he taught diligently the things of the Lord.* Acts 18. 25.

The Angels are called *Seraphims*, from burning heat: And the Psalmist says, *He made his Ministers a flaming fire*, which may be said of Angels, both for the *Ardency* of their Love and Zeal, and for their *Agility* and *Quickness* in dispatch of Business.

For the *Ardency* of their *Zeal*, warmth of Affection, and invincible Resolution in working. They are intent upon their work, and alway warmly go about it. The Love of God is flaming forth in all they do: Such a Fire is burning in them, as easily consumes and makes riddance of whatever stands in their way.

With such warmth should we go about every work of God, not dully and heavily, not with Hesitancy and a divided Heart, but with Hearts fully set to do it: So should we pray, hear, and do every good work. It is said of our Saviour Christ, that in his Agony *he prayed more earnestly.* Luke 22. 44. Not with a greater Intention of Love to God than at other times (for Christ received at the first such a Fulness of all Grace as was uncapable of any further degrees) but there might be higher Expressions of his more perfect Love and Zeal, at one time, than at another; and

and so there were at this time. He was now in an Agony, and the Evils he had before him making more Impression on his humane Nature, he sweating Drops of Blood, there were higher Expressions of his Earnestness. *Grotius* says, that in his former Prayer, *ver.* 39, 40. he did but fall on his Knees, but in this he fell to the Earth on his Face, as may be gathered from the other *Evangelists*. But tho' Christ was not capable of praying with more inward warmth at one time than at another, yet we are; and should be endeavouring to come as near as we can to that Perfection that was always in him.

Paul commends *Epaphras* for labouring in Prayer fervently, ἀγωνίζουμος ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς, being in a kind of *Extasy* and *Rapture* in his Prayers.

And so would the Apostle have Christians love one another, ἐκτενῶς fervently. The word signifies with all their might, vehemently. So have fervent Charity among your selves, ἀγαπᾶν ἐκτενῶς an extended or stretched out Charity.

Apollos in his Preaching (as was noted before) was ζέων πῶ πνεύματι, fervent or boiling hot in Spirit. And so would the Apostle have Christians to be in hearing, περιστοργῶς προσέχειν to give more earnest heed. Thus should Christians be in all Exercises of Godliness.

God loves not a *Laodicean Temper*. He is sick of their Services, that are neither hot nor cold.

The Fire must be kept burning on the Altar. And the Apostle says, 'Tis good to be zealously affected. always, in a good thing. Good works are quite marred in doing, when we do them not with warmth.

Again, Angels are compared to Fire for their *Agility* and *Quickness* in dispatch of Business: They loiter and linger not, but are diligent and expeditious. They are still going from one work to another, as they finish them, they are never idle.

'Tis said of the living Creatures in *Ezekiel's Vision*, *Chap.* 1: That they ran, and returned, as the appearance of a Flash of Lightning, *ver.* 14. By the Living Creatures Angels are meant, as has been shewn. Now what can be more quick and speedy in Motion than a Flash of Lightning?

ning? 'Tis from one end of the Heavens to the other in the twinkling of an Eye. 'Tis said, *ver. 12. They turned not when they went.* This Verse seems to contradict the other, but it doth not so indeed. They went streight on their way, nothing could stop or make them turn back, nothing could divert them till they had brought their work to an issue: This is the meaning of *ver. 12. They turned not when they went, i. e. They went on with their work, and with the Speed of Lightning, till they had finished it:* But when they returned to him that sent them, to give an account of their work, and to receive new Commands, and that's the meaning of *ver. 14.*

Our Motion in God's Service should be like the Motion of the Angels, direct and speedy. If it be not direct it cannot be as speedy as it should be. No time must be lost in wandring or roving. Many that do not turn back yet, turn aside, but our work lies to doing all the while we divert to Impertinencies. When Christ sent forth his Disciples, he charged them, *Salute no man by the way.* Such *Luke 10. 4.*

ceremonious Salutations as were in use among the *Eastern* People, could not be without the loss of much time: For as *Grotius* notes, They were not wont to salute with a light gesture, or word, but entertain'd one the other with many Cringings, Embraces, and Kisses, and with several Questions, &c.

Salutationes istæ apud Orientes populos, non fiebant levi gestu, verbore, sed multis percunctationibus, bonisq; omnibus trahebantur, non sine multis corporis flexionibus, osculis, amplexibus. *Grot.*

Now such Luxuriances of Courtesy Christ forbids, as a wasting of time. His meaning is not, that he would have them to be uncivil to such as they met with, forbearing all saluting, but to prefer their Business before any trifling Diversions, that some entertain themselves with when they meet.

Oh what little toyish things do devour abundance of our Time, that is given us for better Purposes.

Some load themselves with such a multitude of worldly Businesses, that they have little leisure for the work of God, and their Souls, cumbering themselves (as *Mary* did) with so many things, that the one thing necessary cannot be duly minded.

Others more idly lose their time in Sports, in needless Visits, and unprofitable Tatle. They are playing when they should be praying.

Angels are alway at their work; But these are seldom at theirs. *Work out your Salvation* (says the Apostle) *with fear and trembling. And give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure. Again, walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time.* Here is a Christian's work, which must be plyed, and no time lost.

Oh how do we linger in God's work, and put it off from time to time! They in *Haggai* say, *The time to build the Lords house is not yet come.* They thought they might do it better hereafter. 'Twas time to build their own Houses, but not to build God's yet. God says, *To day, &c.* we think to Morrow, or hereafter will serve the turn.

Hag. 1. 2.

Oh Friends! God affects Speed in his Service. And Angels they are swift as Eagles, yea as Lightning, they lose no time, so neither should we, but imitate their Zeal and Diligence.

S E C T. VIII.

Lastly, **T**HE *Constancy and Unweariedness* in their Ministry should be a Pattern for us in serving God. Tho' they be ever at work, yet are they not in the least tired with it. *Let us not be weary of well-doing,* says the Apostle. If we be weary in our Bodies, yet we should not in our Spirits. Some Services will unavoidably tire the Body, but such Weariness is none of our Sin, if our Spirits be not tired, but we continue patient in well-doing.

Gal. 6. 9.

Angels are as fresh and lively at the end of a Work as at the beginning of it, and when they have done it, look out for new Employment. Their Motion in going forward about their Work, and in returning for new, is said to be as the Appearance of a *Flash of Lightning.* One Sin fits Men for another, and they are never weary of that Trade: Why should not one Duty fit us for another.

F I N I S.

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