



BX 6217 .G5 1773a v.1
Gill, John, 1697-1771.
A collection of sermons and
tracts

A
C O L L E C T I O N
O F
S E R M O N S A N D T R A C T S :
I N T W O V O L U M E S .

C O N T A I N I N G ,

V O L . I .

V O L . I I .

I. ANNUAL SERMONS.	I. ORDINATION SERMONS.
II. OCCASIONAL SERMONS.	II. POLEMICAL TRACTS.
III. FUNERAL SERMONS.	III. DISSERTATIONS.

Several of which were never before P R I N T E D .

By the late R E V E R E N D and L E A R N E D

J O H N G I L L , D . D .

To which are Prefixed,

M E M O I R S

O F T H E

L I F E , W R I T I N G S , and C H A R A C T E R of the A U T H O R .

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A SUMMARY

A

S U M M A R Y

O F T H E

L I F E , W R I T I N G S , A N D C H A R A C T E R ,

O f t h e l a t e R E V E R E N D a n d L E A R N E D

J O H N G I L L , D . D .

DR JOHN GILL was born at *Kettering*, in *Northamptonshire*, Nov. 23. O. S. 1697. his parents were EDWARD GILL and ELIZABETH his wife, whose maiden name was WALKER. They were religious and pious persons; whose circumstances did not reach affluence, but were above contempt. His father was a Deacon of the *Baptist* church at *Kettering*; and was eminent for his grace, piety, and holy conversation. He first became a member of a congregation in the same place, consisting of *Presbyterians*, *Independents* and *Baptists*: in which congregation, besides the Pastor of it, there was a teaching Elder of the *Baptist* denomination, Mr *William Wallis*, who was the administrator of Baptism by immersion, to such adult persons as desired it. For some time this mixed congregation continued in peace and harmony: but, at length, the *Baptists* were rendered uneasy and uncomfortable in their communion, through the opposition made to them by some particular persons. This obliged them to separate, together with their teacher, Mr *Wallis*. They soon formed themselves into a church-state, and chose Mr *Wallis* for their Pastor: which was the rise and foundation of the *Baptist* church at *Kettering*.

About the time of these troubles, Mr EDWARD GILL, who was one of those that had separated, entered into the marriage-state: and as those dissensions pressed him much, and he was often revolving within himself the condition and circumstances of this little interest and new church-state, lately set up,

which had but a small beginning; and what must be the consequence of things; he had strong impressions upon his mind, that the child, his wife now became pregnant with, would be a son, and prove of eminent service in the *Baptist* interest. He was even strongly persuaded, that this child would be a Minister of the word: and he always retained a firm belief of it, when things seemed to be unpromising. He had other impulses, relative to his son, and to other persons and things, which had their exact accomplishment: and this must be acknowledged by all who knew him, that he was not a man of a fanciful and melancholy disposition, nor given to enthusiasm.

The morning this first-born son of his was brought into the world, one *Chambers*, a Woodman, came to his house with a load of faggots for fuel: and, as he was unloading his faggots, Mr GILL came out of his house to him, and, with a great deal of joy, told him, that he had a son born to him that morning. At that very moment, as the Woodman affirmed, a stranger passed by whom he never saw before, nor since, who added, "*Yes, and he will be a Scholar too, and all the world cannot binder it.*" This the Woodman, who was reckoned a man of sobriety, honesty, and veracity, constantly and confidently affirmed at different times, without variation: and even years after when inquired of concerning it; nor could he have any sinister end to avail himself of, in contriving such a story, and persisting in it. However, Mr GILL's son, as soon as he was capable of instruction, discovered a very great aptitude for learning, and imbibed it in as fast as it could be given: so that he was quickly out of the reach, and in no need of a common teacher of children. He was therefore sent to the grammar school, very early; which he attended with uncommon eagerness and diligence: inasmuch that he, soon, not only transcended his co-revels, but distanced even greatly his seniors. Here he continued until he was about *eleven* years of age: during which time, notwithstanding the tedious manner in which grammatical knowledge was then conveyed, and the drudgery boys were put to in learning so many unnecessary rules; he, besides going through the common school-books, read several of the chief *Latin* classics, and made a considerable proficiency in the *Greek*: so that he began to be talked of as a youth of Learning; and was known by several of the neighbouring Clergy, by whom he was sometimes examined at a Bookfeller's shop (which he constantly frequented on market-days, when only it was opened); to which he so regularly repaired, for the sake of consulting different authors, that it became an usual asseveration with the common people in the town, "such a thing is as sure as JOHN GILL is in the Bookfeller's shop".

He

* As the same studious disposition attended him through life, so did nearly the same remark concerning him. Nothing was more frequent, in the mouths of those who knew him, than to use this mode of affirmation, "As surely as Dr GILL is in his study."

He left the grammar school rather early in life. The occasion was this: the school-master insisted, that the children of Dissenting parents, as well as others, should go with him to church, on week-days, at the hours of prayer: upon which the children of Dissenters were taken away from the school, and he among the rest. Those Dissenters, who were in affluent circumstances, sent their children to distant parts for their further education: but this was not the case with his parents. This was a very discouraging circumstance. Several ways and means were thought of by his friends; but all proved fruitless. Some efforts were made by ministers, both of other denominations and of his own, to get him upon one or other of the funds in *London*, and that he might be sent to one of their seminaries of learning. To this end specimens of his progress in literature were sent up to town: but the answer returned by way of objection was, that he was too young; and, should he continue, as it might be supposed he would, to make such rapid advances in his studies, he would go through the common circle of learning before he could be capable of taking care of himself, or of being employed in any public service.

If any credit can be given to the story of the Woodman, concerning what the stranger said on the morning of his birth, which seemed to suppose that some difficulties and obstructions would be thrown in the way of his becoming a scholar, they now began to appear. And yet, notwithstanding all this, such was his desire of learning, that he not only retained what knowledge of the *Latin* and *Greek* languages he had acquired, but he improved himself in both, by constantly reading all such books in those languages, as he could obtain. In process of time he studied *Logic*, *Rhetoric*, *Moral* and *Natural Philosophy*. He likewise, *Suo Marte*, learned the *Hebrew* language, without any living assistance, by the help of *Buxtorf's* Grammar and Lexicon. With only these, he surmounted the chief difficulties of that language: and could soon read the *Hebrew Bible* with great ease and pleasure. In this language he always took peculiar delight. He read books, in various branches of literature, in the *Latin* tongue, to improve his mind with whatsoever was useful: and particularly Systems of Divinity. For some few years his time was daily divided: part of it was employed in his father's business; and the other part of it in close studying. And thus he went on, till he had nearly attained to the *nineteenth* year of his age.

It is now time to look back, and take some notice of the *religious* turn of his mind, and of his inquiries after divine and spiritual things. He had slight convictions of sin, and occasional thoughts of a future state, from his childhood. Sometimes he was terrified with the fear of death, hell and eternity; and strangely elated with thinking on the joys of heaven, the glories of another world, and the happiness of saints made perfect above. But these impressions

were, for some time, both superficial and transitory. When he was about *twelve* years of age, the workings of his mind became more serious, settled and effectual: and especially after hearing a Sermon of Mr *William Wallis's*, on *Gen. iii. 9. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?* For a while it was, as it were, continually ringing in his ears, “Man, “where art thou? What a wretched state and condition art thou in? How “miserable wilt thou be, living and dying, in an unconverted state!” Hence he used to call Mr *Wallis*, if any man, his spiritual father, who died soon after. And now he began clearly to see the depravity of his nature; the exceeding sinfulness of sin; his need of Christ, and salvation by him; and of a better righteousness than his own; even the righteousness of Christ, to be received by faith: and in a short time was favoured with a comfortable hope and faith of interest in HIM, from several exceeding great and precious promises, powerfully applied to his soul. It was, moreover, his happy lot, to have his mind early irradiated with the light and knowledge of *evangelic* truths, by means of the ministry of several gospel-preachers in those parts of the country, whom at times he had the opportunity of hearing: and these truths, coming to him with power, failed not of freeing him from the bondage of the Law, and of filling him with *joy and peace in believing*; yet though he early arrived to satisfaction in his mind about his eternal state, he did not make a public profession of religion until he was almost *nineteen* years of age; partly by reason of his youth for some time, and the solemnity of a profession; and chiefly in the latter part of this period of his life, because he perceived the eye of the church was upon him to call him forth to the ministry, as soon as they conveniently could, should he become a member of it; their then present pastor being greatly involved in worldly business, and much needed assistance.

Nov. 1, 1716, he made a public profession of his faith in Christ, by declaring to the church with which he stood connected, the dealings of God with his soul, to their satisfaction: and was the same day baptized by their pastor, Mr *Thomas Wallis*, who succeeded his father Mr *William Wallis* in that office. The ordinance of Baptism was administered to him by immersion, in a river, in the sight of many spectators: and the following Hymn, composed by himself, was sung at the same time.

Was Christ baptiz'd to sanctify
 This ordinance he gave?
 And did his sacred body lie
 Within the liquid grave?

Did

Did Jesus condescend so low
 To leave us an example?
 And shan't we by this pattern go;
 This heavenly rule so ample?
 What rich and what amazing grace!
 What love beyond degree!
 That we the heavenly road should trace,
 And should baptized be.
 That we should follow Christ the Lamb,
 In owning his commands;
 For what we do, He did the same,
 Tho' done with purer hands.
 And does this offer to my faith,
 How Christ for me did die;
 And how He in the grave was laid,
 And rose to justify?
 Then how should this engage my heart
 To live to Christ that dy'd;
 And with my cursed sins to part,
 Which pierc'd his precious side?

The Lord's-day following, *Nov. 4th*, he was received a member into the church, and partook of the Lord's-supper: In the evening of that day, at a meeting of prayer in a private house, of the members and others, he read the *fifty-third* chapter of *Isaiab*, as suitable to the service of the day, and expounded some passages of it: and, at the close of the meeting, some of the brethren addressed him to this purpose, "Friend, we take this as a beginning of the exercise of your ministerial gift, which we are persuaded the Lord has bestowed upon you." And accordingly, the next Lord's-day, in the evening, at the same place, he delivered a Sermon on *1 Cor. ii. 2.* *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* For a few days he continued preaching in this private manner: the church soon called him to exercise his ministerial gift in public, and sent him forth as a minister of the word.

Quickly after this, at the motion of some of his friends at *London*, who had seen and conversed with him in the country, he removed to *Higbam-Ferrers*, about six or seven computed miles from *Kettering*. His view, and what inclined him to attend to this motion, was to carry on his studies under Mr *John Davis*, with whom he was to board: a gentleman of learning, and who now taught,

taught in that place some branches of literature; being lately come from *Wales*, and settled pastor of a new church just planted at *Higbam*. In this view, however, young Mr GILL was disappointed; but the design of Mr GILL's friends in *London* in this removal of him, was, chiefly to be assisting in this new church, and to the young converts in it, and to preach occasionally in the adjacent villages. Here he continued the year following: and in this time, and at that place, he contracted acquaintance with a young Gentlewoman of great piety and good sense, whose name was ELIZABETH NEGUS; a member of the new gathered church, and whom he married in 1718. The Doctor was always of opinion, that his marriage with this excellent person, was the principal thing for which God in his providence sent him to that place: and he ever considered his marriage to her, as one of the capital blessings of his life. For she proved affectionate, discreet, and careful: and, by her unremitting prudence, took off from his hands all domestic avocations, so that he could, with more leisure, and greater ease of mind, pursue his studies, and devote himself to his ministerial service. This wife of his youth lived with him unto the year 1764^b, and by her he had many children, all of whom died in their infancy, except three: one of which, whose name was ELIZABETH (a most lovely and desirable child for person, sense, and grace) died *May 30*, 1738. when she had entered into the *thirteenth* year of her age, her Funeral Sermon was preached by her father from *1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.* and was printed, with an account of some of her choice experiences^c. The other two are still living: the one, a son, whose name is JOHN, a Goldsmith, who lived in *Gracechurch-street, London*; since retired from business. The other, a daughter, whose name is MARY, married to Mr GEORGE KEITH, a Bookseller in the same street. Both these children have been a great happiness to their parents; and they have always had reason to be thankful to God for their family comfort, peace, and harmony.

But to return: Mr GILL, during his abode at *Higbam-Ferrers*, very frequently preached to the church at *Kettering*; which, as before observed, is but six or seven miles distant. The circumstances of the pastor there requiring assistance, Mr GILL, quickly after his marriage, wholly removed thither: where his ministry, from the beginning, had been blessed, not only to the comfort, but to the conversion of many: some of which seals of his ministry are yet living. But his continuance here was not long; for, in the beginning of the year 1719, the church of Christ at *Horslydown, Southwark*, near *London*, being deprived of their pastor by the death of Mr *Benjamin Stinton*, (son in law to the famous Mr *Benjamin Keach*, and his successor in his office, as pastor of that church) some of the members,

^b She died Oct. 10, 1764, aged sixty-seven years and five months, having been married to the Doctor forty-six years, three calendar months and nineteen days. See his Sermon on her death, page 556.

^c See page 391.

members, hearing of Mr GILL, desired a friend of his to write to him, and invite him to give them a visit, and preach to them; which he did, in the months of *April* and *May*, the same year; and then returned into the country. About two months after, the church at *Horsly-down* wrote to him, requesting his return to them in the month of *August*; which he complied with, and continued preaching to them, till about *Michaelmas*: when they made choice of him to be their pastor, and called him, young as he was, to the exercise of that office; which, after taking some time for consideration, he accepted of. And now he met with much trouble and great opposition from many; partly on account of his youth (he not being quite *twenty-two* years of age), and chiefly because of his evangelical way of preaching. But God was with him, and blessed his ministry to the conversion of many souls; so that large additions were made to the church, year after year, for a considerable time.

In 1723. when he was between twenty-five and twenty-six years of age, it was the will of God to visit him with an *Hætic* fever, and other disorders of body; which greatly wasted and consumed him, and threatened his life: but it pleased God to bless the means made use of, and to restore him to health again; his time not being come, and he having more work to do for God in his church, and for the interest of religion, as the following account will shew.

In 1724. when he was now twenty-six years of age, he began his Exposition of the *Book of Solomon's Song*; which was delivered, on Lord's-day mornings, to the church under his care, in one hundred and twenty-two Sermons, until the whole was finished: of which more hereafter. In this year, he printed a Sermon on the death of Mr *John Smith*, a Deacon of his church, from *Rom. v. 20, 21.* which was the first thing printed by him. And another Sermon, in the following year, intitled, *The Urim and Thummim found with Christ*, from *Deut. xxxiii. 8.*

In 1726. a pamphlet was published called, "*The manner of baptizing with water, cleared up from the word of God, and right reason, &c.*" written dialogue-wise: and it after appeared to have been written by Mr *Mathias Maurice*, an Independent minister, at *Rowel*, in *Northamptonshire*. The Baptists in those parts, and especially at *Kettering*, which was but two computed miles, though long ones, from *Rowel*, thought themselves struck at, and their interest affected by this pamphlet; and therefore sent it up to Mr GILL at *London*, and desired him to write an answer to it. He accordingly undertook it; and soon published his answer, called, "*The antient mode of baptism by immersion, &c.*" to which Mr *Maurice* replied, in a pamphlet published in 1727. and which was answered, the same year, by Mr GILL, in a tract, called, "*A Defence of the antient mode, &c.*" One *Cogan*, an Apothecary, and member of Mr *Maurice's* church, wrote some remarks on Mr GILL's rejoinder, in a most virulent and defamatory

defamatory manner, and which carried its own confutation with it. *Cogan* himself, it seems, was afterwards ashamed of it, and repented of his having written it. Mr *Maurice* sent several of his pamphlets into North *America*; and the *Baptists* there, hearing of Mr *GILL*'s answer to them, wrote for some of them: and accordingly the remainder of the impression were sent over, at the expence of the Baptist-fund; which is one reason of these tracts being so rarely to be met with. On account of this controversy, Mr *GILL* received, from *Tilbury-fort* in *Essex*, a very spirited Letter, without a name, animating him to continue in it, and not be intimidated by his puny adversary; concluding with these lines:

STENNETT at first his furious foe did meet,
 Cleanly compell'd him to a swift retreat:
 Next powerful GALE, by mighty blast made fall
 The church's dagon, the gigantic WALL:
 May you with like success be victor still,
 And give your rude antagonist his fill,
 To see that GALE is yet alive in GILL.

}

In the year 1727. Mr *GILL* finished his Exposition of the *Song of Solomon*: when the church, as well as many others of his hearers, to whom he had delivered it, most earnestly pressed him to make it public: with this he, at length, complied; though with great reluctance. What, however, chiefly induced him to compliance, was, a desire of contributing what he could, to vindicate the authority and credit of this part of the sacred writings; which has not only been ridiculed by Deists, but called in question by some who have pretended to be friends to divine revelation.

The year before he entered upon this Exposition, a pamphlet was published by Mr *Whiston*, called, “*A supplement to Mr WHISTON'S late Essay towards restoring the true text of the Old Testament,*” 8°. 1723. in which, he endeavours to discredit the authority of the book of *Solomon's Song*, and to prove it to be a spurious book, and not fit to stand in the canon of scripture. His objections and arguments against the authority of it, are answered by Mr *GILL*, in his Introduction to this Exposition; or rather in his Exposition of the first verse of the book, which contains the title of it. Whether Mr *Whiston* ever saw this work, is not certain; it seems as if he had not, by a remarkable and very strange passage in the *Memoirs of his own life and writings, published by himself*; Part II. p. 575, which shows his obstinate and inveterate opposition to this sacred book, to the last: his words are these. “About August this year (1748) I was informed of one Dr *GILL*, a particular or Calvinist Baptist, of whose
 “ skill

“ skill in the Oriental languages I had heard a great character: so I had a mind
 “ to hear him preach: but being informed that he had written a folio book on
 “ the *Canticles*, I declined to go to hear him.” A very wise reason indeed! The first edition of Mr GILL’s Exposition of the *Song of Solomon* was published in 1728. with a translation of the *Cbaldee* paraphrase, or *Targum* of that book, and with notes upon that. In 1751 a new edition of it was published, in *quarto*, more correct, and with some additions. His worthy, pious, learned, and ingenious friend, the Rev. Mr *James Hervey* (in his *Tberon* and *Aspasio*, vol. III. p. 145. edit. 5.) was pleased to give this high encomium of it; “ it has
 “ such a copious vein of sanctified invention running through it, and is inter-
 “ spered with such a variety of delicate and brilliant images, as cannot but
 “ highly entertain a *curious* mind; which presents us also, with such rich and
 “ charming displays of the glory of Christ’s person, the freeness of his grace to
 “ sinners, and the tenderness of his love to the church, as cannot but administer
 “ the most exquisite delight to the *believing* soul. — Considered in *both* these
 “ views, I think the work resembles the paradisaical garden described by
 “ MILTON, in which,

“ *Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue*

“ *Appear’d, with gay enamel’d colours mix’d.*”

This Exposition, when first published, served very much to make Mr GILL known, and to recommend him to the esteem of spiritual persons, and the true lovers of Jesus Christ; and, perhaps, no work he ever published has been more useful to private christians and families, than this has been. Dr *Owen*, “ on the
 “ person of Christ,” *chap.* XII. says, “ Blessed is he who understands the say-
 “ ings of that book (the *Canticles*) and hath the experience of them in his heart.” A *third* edition of the Exposition was published 1767, with many additions.

In the year 1728, he also published a treatise concerning *the prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the Messiah*. The occasion of which was this: in 1724, a book was published, called, *A discourse of the grounds of the Christian Religion, &c.* well known to be written by *Anthony Collins* Esq; a Deistical writer. Many answers were written to one part or other of this book: to which the author replied, in another book, called, *The scheme of literal Prophecy considered, &c.* published in 1727, which was chiefly pointed at Dr *Edward Candler*, Bishop of *Durham*, who had written against the former: it was to this latter book, chiefly, Mr GILL made answer, and to which he was led by the following incident: A certain Gentleman asserted in conversation, that no *Calvinist* could write in this controversy to any advantage. What his reason was, for so saying, or whether any was assigned by him, is not remembered. Some of Mr GILL’s friends being present, thought of *Him*; and took an opportunity of moving it to him,

and importuned him to engage in this controversy. Upon which he preached a set of sermons on the prophecies relating to the Messiah, in a regular order, suited to the history of the life of Jesus; and then made extracts out of them, which he published under the title of "*The Prophecies of the Old Testament, respecting the Messiah, considered and proved to be literally fulfilled in Jesus;*" in answer to the above book. This work of his met with the approbation of some men of learning and judgment, and even of the very person above mentioned, whose assertion was the occasion of it.

A list and catalogue of the various pieces published during this controversy, was collected by that most indefatigable Inquirer after books, the learned *Fabritius*, of Hamburg, in his *Salutaris Lux Evangelii*, &c. c. 9. p. 173, &c. *Hamburg*, 1731.

The ministry of Mr GILL being acceptable not only to his own people, but likewise to many in other churches, and of other denominations; some gentlemen moved among themselves to set up a lecture on some day in the week, that they might have the opportunity of hearing him. Accordingly, several met together, and forming themselves into a society, agreed to have a lecture on *Wednesday-evenings*, and set on foot a subscription to support it. Upon their invitation, Mr GILL undertook that lectureship, and continued in it with great constancy, applause, and usefulness. It was set up in the year 1729, and he continued preaching it (very rarely missing) until 1756, near twenty seven years: when he gave it up, by reason of age and multiplicity of work upon his hands; and preached a farewell sermon to the Society, on *Acts* xxvi. 22, 23. which was published that year. This lecture was productive of many of his printed works; not only of single annual sermons on various subjects, but of whole treatises: as on *the Trinity*, and *Justification*, the *cause of God and Truth*, and of several of his *Commentaries* on some of the books, both of the Old and of the New Testament, of all which more hereafter.

In 1730, a set of gentlemen, chiefly of the *Independent* denomination, thought fit to set up a temporary lecture for the winter and spring seasons following; and chose *nine* ministers to preach in it, on some of the most important doctrines of christianity: each having his subject allotted to him. The ministers were, Mr *Robert Bragge*, Mr *Thomas Bradbury*, Mr *John Hurron*, Mr *Thomas Hall*, Mr *Peter Goodwin*, Mr *John Sladen*, Mr *Abraham Taylor*, Mr *Samuel Wilson*, and Mr *John Gill*. These accepted of the invitation given them, and preached two sermons each, on the subject respectively assigned them: and when they had finished the course of them, the gentlemen desired the sermons might be printed; which was accordingly done, in two volumes 8vo. in 1732. Mr *Gill's* subject

subject was the *Resurrection of the Dead*. His two sermons upon it have since been printed separately.

An unpleasing incident happened on the printing the above volumes of sermons. Mr *Taylor*, Mr *Gill*, and another or two of the lecturers, agreed to read their sermons in private concert with each other, before they were printed; that they might have one another's friendly assistance, in the correction and improvement of them, as might seem necessary. Now Mr GILL had observed some passages in Mr *Taylor's* Sermons, when delivered from the pulpit, which he thought injurious to truth, and calculated to offend many worthy persons. He therefore determined, when those sermons should be read at this private and friendly meeting, to have pointed out, in the kindest and most respectful manner, such passages as he wished to see softened or expunged; proposing to give his reasons: but when the sermons were read, these passages did not appear, to the great pleasure and satisfaction of Mr GILL; who supposed that Mr *Taylor* had seen reason in his own mind to strike them out. But when the volumes were published, these passages stood, to the great surprise of Mr GILL, and, as he thought, with additional keenness and severity. This obliged him to send Mr *Taylor* a printed letter on the subject of *God's everlasting love, eternal union*, and some other things which Mr *Taylor* had reproached with great vehemence: having now no other way of doing justice to truth, and vindicating the faithful preachers of it. This letter was written with great respect, temper and candour; without any undue heat, or unbecoming reflections. Nevertheless, this, together with a treatise on *justification*, which Mr GILL had published a little before, put some interested persons on raising an hideous cry of *Antinomianism* against him. The treatise on *Justification* is the substance of some sermons, preached at his Evening-lecture, and which, by the society that supported it, was desired to be printed. The only thing in it objected to when published, was what is said concerning the *date* of justification: and which yet was said in great agreement with some of the best and most learned divines, whose testimonies were produced by Mr GILL in favour of his sentiments. But all this could not protect him from the clamour raised against him, by such as did not wish well to him and his ministry. No answer, however, was given to either of these tracts, or to the arguments in them; but a continued torrent of din and noise flowed from some pulpits, for a long time.

Six years after this, Mr *Taylor* having obtained a degree of Doctor in Divinity, and got himself at the head of an Academy, became still more assuming, imperious and insolent. Continuing to bear Mr GILL a grudge for what was past; he published what he called *An Address to young Students*: in which he cautioned them to avoid some things as leading to *Antinomianism*. This performance had

Several very acrimonious flings at some good men, and their writings; particularly, at Mr GILL, and an expression of his concerning good works, which he represented in the worst light he could, and treated with the most reviling language that could well be made use of: This obliged Mr GILL to write a small treatise concerning *The Necessity of good works to Salvation*: in which having explained, stated, and defended his sense of that matter; at the close of all, being warmed into a quick sensibility of the haughty and insulting language used by his insolent and overbearing adversary, some things were forced and drawn from him, in self-vindication, which he afterwards could have wished had not dropped from his pen.

In 1731, Mr GILL published a *Treatise on the Doctrine of the TRINITY*, which was the substance of several discourses delivered on that subject at the *Wednesday Evening Lecture*, and published at the request of the Society: the occasion of which was, the progress of *Sabellianism* among some of the *Baptist churches*. In particular, one Mr *Davis*, a Physician, and a Baptist member, wrote a treatise called *The great Concern of Jew and Gentile*; with some other little pamphlets, which had a tendency this way; and which, though very trifling things, having scarce any shew of argument and reasoning in them, yet it seemed expedient they should be taken notice of in the course of these Sermons on the Trinity: the Gentleman being a man of a good moral character, and of a soft, insinuating behaviour: his profession also introduced him into several families, where he might have the opportunity of inculcating and spreading his notions.

A society of young men, who kept up an Exercise of Prayer, on Lord's-day Mornings, at Mr GILL's meeting-house at *Horshy-down*, desired him to preach a Sermon to them *December 25, 1732*, which he did, on the subject of *Prayer*: and, in the year following, on the same day of the month, he preached another, to the same society, on *singing of Psalms*, from *1 Cor. xiv. 15.* which were successively printed at their request. Both these Sermons were, afterwards, reprinted together. That upon *Singing*, some years after the first publication of it, fell into the hands of Mr *Solomon Lowe*, a learned and celebrated Grammarian of *Hammer-smith*: who wrote Mr GILL a Letter upon it, dated *Sept. 1747*, in which he informs him, "he took pleasure, at his vacant hours, to read every thing that is useful, in order to extract the quintessence of its flowers for the use of a *Supplement to Chambers's Cyclopædia*; to the carrying on of which work, he was nominated, to the proprietors, as the properest person, by Mr *Chambers* himself, a little before his death, and had the offer of it, but declined it, because of his stated business. However, having a great regard to that work, Mr *Lowe* was willing to help it forward to the best of his power: and therefore continued to digest whatever offered to that purpose. Meeting with the above discourse on *Singing*, he extracted from That for the article of *Psalmody*; and

was pleased to give the following commendation of it: "I find there is no dealing with you, as with the generality of writers. The afore-mentioned piece is all quintessence: so that, instead of extracting, I have been obliged to copy the greatest part of it, to do justice to the article of Psalmody, and know not where to find any hints for the improvements of it⁴." But Mr *Lowe* dying quickly after, it does not appear that any use was made of his papers in the Supplement published; at least with respect to any extract from Mr GILL's writings.

In 1735, and in the three following years, Mr GILL published his *Cause of God and Truth*, in four volumes, octavo. In the *first* part of this work, those passages of scripture are considered, which the *Arminians* make use of in favour of their sentiments concerning Election and Reprobation, Original Sin, Redemption, Free-will, and the Perseverance of the Saints; and the true sense of such passages is given, and they are vindicated from the false glosses put upon them. In the *second* part, the passages of scripture, which are made use of by the *Calvinists* in support of their sense of the above doctrines, are explained, the true meaning of them defended, and the cavils of the *Arminians* answered. The contents of those two parts are extracts from sermons preached on those several texts, at the *Wednesday Evening Lecture*. The *third* part contains the arguments from reason against these doctrines. And the *fourth* part gives the sense of the ancient fathers, before *Austin*, concerning those points. This last part was nibbled at, by one *Heywood*, a pert, worthless man, who translated Dr *Whitby's* treatise *On Original Sin*: in the introduction to which, he brings some impertinent charges against Mr GILL, with respect to his translation and sense of some passages in the ancients: to which Mr GILL replied, in a postscript to his answer to the *second* part of the *Birmingham* Dialogue writer, 1739; which will be taken notice of hereafter. *Heywood*, upon this, published a pamphlet, called, *A Defence of his Introduction, &c.* full of cavils, calumnies, and defamations: which was answered by Mr GILL, in a tract, intitled, *A Vindication of the Cause of God and Truth, &c.* part 4th. relating to the sense of the ancients about some points in controversy with the *Arminians*, in which more pains are taken, than so paltry an opponent deserved. This was printed in 1740.

In 1736, was published, by an anonymous writer, a pamphlet, called, *Some Doctrines in the Supralapsarian Scheme examined, &c.* the author of it, it seems, was one *Job Burt*, of *Warwick*: a man very ill qualified for polemical writing; being intirely ignorant of the scheme he undertook to examine, as well as of most other things: however, as this was pointed chiefly at some writings of Mr GILL's, and at the doctrines of God's everlasting Love, eternal Union, Justi-

⁴ The chief design of this letter to Mr GILL was, that he would send him every thing he had published, that he might make a like use of what he judged serviceable to the above work.

Justification, &c. he thought fit to give an answer to him, the same year, in a tract called *Truth Defended, &c.* The stupidity, insolence and impertinence of the man, sometimes provoked Mr GILL to use a little more acrimony and severity than perhaps some might think needful.

A new meeting-house being erected by the Baptists, at *Birmingham* in *Warwickshire*; and their interest a little reviving upon it, through the preaching of several ministers who came thither; excited the jealousy, it seems, of one Mr *Samuel Bourne*, a *Presbyterian* minister of the same place: who, hereupon wrote *A Dialogue between a Baptist and a Churchman*, under the name of a *Consistent Christian*, part L in which he set the *Baptist* ministers, that came to preach at *Birmingham*, in a most ridiculous light, and fell foul on the doctrines of Christ's Divinity, Election, Original Sin, irresistible Grace in conversion, imputed Righteousness, Perseverance in grace, and adult Baptism by immersion. The *Baptists* in those parts, thought it was proper that an answer should be returned: and, upon application, Mr GILL undertook to refute it; and the refutation was published in 1737. The author of *the dialogue* then wrote a *second part*, on the same subjects; taking very little notice of what Mr GILL had written, not so much as mentioning his name. To this also he returned an answer in 1739. But had no reply to either of his answers at that time, except some abusive paragraphs in a news-paper, the *St James's Evening Post*, December 31, 1737. in the first of these paragraphs, Mr *Bourne* complains of a false charge of Plagiarism brought against him, or of stealing what he had wrote on the article of election, from Dr *Whitby*: of which Mr GILL made proof, in a postscript to a sermon of his called *the doctrine of Grace cleared from the charge of Licentiousness*, preached Dec. 28, 1737. by placing Dr *Whitby's* words and this author's in parallel columns. In this year he wrote and published *Remarks on Mr Samuel Chandler's Sermon preached to the Societies for the reformation of Manners*, relating to the moral nature and fitness of things.

When Mr GILL first came to settle in *London*, which was in the year 1719; he became intimately acquainted, as he had been in some measure before, with that worthy minister of the gospel, Mr *John Skepp*, author of the *Divine Energy*: the second edition of which Book, in 1751, Mr, then Dr GILL, revised, and divided the work into *chapters*, with contents, for the more easy reading and better understanding it; and prefixed a commendatory preface to it, the memory of that excellent man being dear to him. This Gentleman, though he had not a liberal education, yet, after he came into the ministry, through great diligence and industry, acquired a large share of knowledge in the languages in which the Bible was originally written: and especially in the *Hebrew* language; in which he took immense pains, under the direction of a *Jew* teacher, and

even

even dipped into *Rabbinical Hebrew* and writings pretty deeply. As Mr GILL had taken great delight in the *Hebrew* language, as before observed, his conversation with this worthy minister rekindled a flame of fervent desire to obtain a more extensive knowledge of it; and especially of *Rabbinical* learning, which he then had but small acquaintance with, and little notion of any usefulness from it, which he now began to perceive, and more fully afterwards. This Gentleman dying in a year or two after Mr GILL's fixing in *London*, he purchased most of his *Hebrew* and *Rabbinical* Books; and now went to work with great eagerness, in reading them; and many others, which he afterwards obtained of a Jewish *Rabbi* he became acquainted with. He plainly saw, that as the *New Testament* was written by men who had all of them been Jews, and who, notwithstanding their being inspired, must needs retain and use many of the idioms of their language, and allude to rites, ceremonies, and customs peculiar to that people; so the writings of the Jews, especially the more ancient ones, who lived nearest the times of the apostles, could not but be of use for the better understanding the phraseology of the *New Testament*, and the rites and customs to which it frequently alludes. With this view, he set about reading their *Targums*, the *Mishnah*, the *Talmuds*, the *Rabbat*, their ancient commentaries, the book of *Zohar*, and whatever else, of this kind, he could meet with: and in a course of between 20 and 30 years acquaintance with those sort of writings, he collected together a large number of observations. Having also gone through, in this time, most part of the *New Testament*, in a way of *Exposition*, in the course of his ministry; he put all together, and in the year 1745 proposed to publish an *Exposition of the whole NEW TESTAMENT*, in Three Volumes, Folio. And the work meeting with encouragement very quickly, it was put to the press the same year, and was finished, the *First* Volume in 1746, the *Second* in 1747, and the *Third* in 1748.

Towards the close of this work, in 1748, Mr GILL received a Diploma from the *Marischal* College and University at *Aberdeen*, creating him Doctor in Divinity, on account of his knowledge of the Scriptures, of the *Oriental* languages, and of *Jewish* antiquities, as expressed in the Diploma: along with which, or quickly after, he received two Letters, one from Professor *Osborn*, Principal of the University, declaring to him, that on account of his learned defence of the true sense of the holy Scriptures against Deists and Infidels, and the reputation his other works had procured him in the learned world, as soon as it was moved in their University to confer the degree of Doctor in Divinity on him, it was readily agreed unto: which motion was declared to be without the knowledge of Mr GILL; and that he [Dr *Osborn*] as *Primarius* Professor, made a present to him of what was due to him on such a promotion. The other Letter was from Professor

Professor *Pollock*, Professor of Divinity in the same University, and afterwards Principal of it: in which he signified to *Mr GILL*, that their Society of the *Marisbal* College had, with great cheerfulness, created him Doctor in Divinity, on account of that spirit of learning which appeared in his excellent Commentary on the New Testament; and congratulated him upon it.

In 1749, the Doctor wrote a treatise, called, *The divine Right of Infant-Baptism examined and disproved*; this was occasioned by a pamphlet, printed at *Boston* in *New Jersey*, in 1746, written by *Mr Jonathan Dickinson*, of *Elizabeth Town* in *New Jersey*, and afterwards President of the College there, which was intitled, *A brief Illustration and Confirmation of the divine Right of Infant-Baptism*. What put this Gentleman on writing it, was, the increase of the Baptist interest in *New England*, and the parts adjacent. This pamphlet being boasted of, and multitudes of them being spread about, it being printed in several places in order to hinder the growth of the Baptist interest; the Baptists sent it over to *Dr GILL*, requesting him to write an answer to it: which he did, in the treatise before observed. To this, *Peter Clark*, M. A. pastor of a church in *Salem*, replied, in a book, called, *A Defence of the divine Right of Infant-Baptism*; consisting of 450 pages, or more, stuffed with things impertinent to the controversy, printed at *Boston*, 1752. To this also the Doctor returned an answer, in a Letter to a friend at *Boston*; which was printed there in 1754, with a fourth edition of a Sermon of the Doctor's preached at *Barbican*, upon Baptism, Nov. 2, 1750.

A pamphlet, boasted of as unanswerable, being published under the title of *The Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, founded upon Scripture, and undoubted apostolic Tradition*. The Doctor published an answer to it, in 1751, intitled, *The Argument from apostolic Tradition in favour of Infant-Baptism, with others, &c. considered*: along with which was published an answer to a *Welsh* Clergyman's Twenty arguments for Infant-Baptism; and to the whole were added, *The Dissenters Reasons for separating from the Church of England*; written chiefly for the use of the Baptist churches in *Wales*; and were therefore translated into the *Welsh* language, occasioned by reflections cast upon them by the said Clergyman. On account of the first tract, *The Argument from apostolic Tradition, &c.* the Doctor received two Letters from a *Franciscan* Friar at *Sevil* in *Spain*, (who signed himself *James Henery*) dated in 1754, and in 1755. in the first, he desired to be sent him, by a master of a vessel whom he named, *The Dissertation on the Tradition of the Church concerning Infant-Baptism*: (induced, as it should seem, by the title of the tract) declaring himself a lover of all learned men, of whatsoever profession. The pamphlet was accordingly sent to him. In his second Letter, he owns the receipt of it; says, he had read it with a great deal

of pleasure; and purposed to draw up a few observations upon it in a candid and friendly manner: believing, that Dr GILL would yield to *inspired* apostolic tradition, if clearly made out or proved to him. He concludes with wishing for peaceable times, that he might have the pleasure of a correspondence with him. But the Earthquake at *Sevil*, which was at the same time with that at *Lisbon*, obliged him (as the Doctor understood by a master of a vessel) to go up further into the country: and he heard no more of him afterwards.

In 1752* the Doctor wrote an answer to a pamphlet called *Serious Thoughts upon the Perseverance of the Saints*; written, as it after appeared, by Mr *John Wesley*: who, in another pamphlet, shifted the controversy, from *Perseverance*, to *Predestination*. Mr *Wesley* intitled his piece, *Predestination calmly considered*: in which he mostly contents himself with haranguing on Reprobation. To this the Doctor returned an answer the same year, and to the exceptions Mr *Wesley* had made to part of his *Treatise on Perseverance*, respecting some passages of scripture brought into the controversy: without attempting, however, to answer one argument advanced by the Doctor in vindication of that doctrine.

In 1753, a pamphlet being published, intitled, *Pædobaptism: or, a Defence of Infant-Baptism in point of antiquity, &c.* by an anonymous writer; the Doctor replied to it, in a tract, called, *Anti-pædobaptism: or, Infant-sprinkling an innovation*: to which the same author made a rejoinder; but there being nothing new advanced, nor the antiquity of Pædo-baptism cleared, but mere wrangle and cavil, the Doctor thought fit to take no notice of it.

In 1755 he republished Dr *Crisp's* works, in two volumes, octavo, with explanatory notes on such passages as had been excepted to in them, or needed any explanation; with some Memoirs of the Doctor's Life.

In 1756 he quitted his *Wednesday-Evening Lecture*, as before related, and published proposals for printing his *Exposition of the prophets, both the larger and smaller*, in two volumes, folio: and which were published in the two following years, 1757, 1758; with an *Introduction* to them on prophecy, and with a *Dissertation* at the close of them concerning the *Apocryphal writings*.

* In this year, March 15, the Dr had a very memorable escape from being killed in his Study. That morning, there was a violent hurricane of wind, by which much damage was done to many houses both in London and Westminster. Soon after the Doctor had left his Study, to go to preach; a stack of chimneys were blown down, which forced through the roof into his Study, breaking his writing-table to pieces, and must have killed him if it had happened a little sooner. Reflecting on which remarkable preservation to a friend, who had some time before mentioned a saying of Dr Halley, the great Astronomer, "That close study prolonged a man's life, by keeping him out of harm's way;" he said, *What becomes of Dr Halley's words now, since a man may come to danger and harm in his closet, as well as on the highway, if not protected by the special care of God's providence?*

In the year 1757, a new Meeting-house was erected, by the church under his care, in *Carter-lane, St Olave's-street, Southwark*: which was opened Oct. 9, in the same year, when two Sermons were preached by him on *Exod. xx. 24.* and afterwards printed, intitled, *Attendance in places of religious worship, where the divine Name is recorded, encouraged.*

In 1761 the Doctor published proposals for printing the remainder of his *Exposition of the Old Testament*; beginning at *Genesis* and ending with *Solomon's Song*: the first Volume of which was published in the beginning of the year 1763; the Second, in the beginning of the year 1764; the Third, in the beginning of the year 1765; and the Fourth and last, in the beginning of the year 1766.

In the year 1765, some copies of Mr *Clark's Defence of the divine right of Infant-Baptism*, being imported from *America*, and published here, occasioned the Doctor to reprint and republish his Reply to it. Another treatise also being imported and reprinted here, about the same time, called, *A fair and rational vindication of the right of Infants to the Ordinance of Baptism*, being the substance of several discourses from *Acts ii. 29.* by *David Bestwick*, M. A. late minister of the Presbyterian church in the city of *New-York*; the Doctor made some strictures on that performance, which are published at the end of the *Reply to Mr Clark*.

A little after this, the Rev. Mr *Carmichael*, minister of the gospel in *Edinburgh*, being convinced of the truth of believers' Baptism by immersion, came to *London* to be baptized, and was baptized by the Doctor: at which time, a Sermon was preached from *1 John v. 3.* which, a few days after, was reflected upon in one of the public news-papers. This obliged the Doctor, contrary to his inclination, to publish his Sermon, which he intitled, *Baptism a divine commandment to be observed*: with some marginal notes, vindicating it from the gross abuses, misrepresentations, and cavils of the letter-writer in the news-paper. This affair made a great stir; and many things appeared in the said paper, for and against: until the writer of the news-paper himself put a stop to it, by refusing to publish any more letters on either side.

The Doctor being called upon, in another news-paper, either to expunge, or explain, a paragraph in his *Preface to Mr Clark's Defence*; he chose the latter: and published a tract, called, *Infant-Baptism a part and pillar of Popery*; with a postscript, containing an answer to the Letters of *Candidus*, the other writer before mentioned. This tract gave great offence to some Pædo-baptists; but no reply was made to it.

In 1767 the Doctor published a *Dissertation on the Antiquities of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel-Points, and Accents*: which was treated with candour and ingenuity

ingenuity by the *Critical Reviewers*; who, though they could not agree with every thing in it, particularly concerning the authority of the Points, yet allowed the work was executed with great industry, sagacity, and learning: and, when they object any thing, give their reasons for it: upon which the Doctor, in some loose papers, has made some curious and learned remarks, especially the following: whereas he observes, that $\kappa\alpha\pi\alpha\iota\alpha$, in *Matt. v. 18.* is no other than the Point *Cbirek* made *Greek*, they express their wonder at it; and think he must mistake $\kappa\alpha\pi\alpha\iota\alpha$ for $\kappa\alpha\pi\alpha$. But he observes, the wonder will cease, when the power of the *Hebrew Letters*, of which *Cbirek* consists, is considered: which obtains in other languages; especially in the *Greek*. So κ is pronounced by η . So the City $\eta\eta\eta$, Church, or *Karan*, is, in the *Septuagint* (*Gen. xi. 32.*) called $\eta\eta\eta$: and by *Ptolemy*, *Herodian*, and other writers, $\eta\eta\eta$; and the Point *Cbirek* itself is sometimes, in the *Septuagint*, used as an ϵ , or an η : as in *Seon*, *Cedius*, *Jesse*, *Jezebel*: yea, the very name of it is *Cbirek* with Jewish writers. *Schindler Lexic.* fol. 662. So then you have the first and principal syllable in the word $\kappa\alpha\pi$, and there is only κ at the end of the word to be accounted for: and that and η , in some languages, are used promiscuously: as in *Bebek* and *Bebab*. Besides, in the *Chaldee* or *Syro-Chaldee* language, used in Christ's time, and before; the same word, which ends in $\kappa\alpha$, $\eta\alpha$, has the termination of *ky*, $\alpha\alpha$, or *aia*. Thus *araka* is read *araa* in the same verse, *Jer. x. 11.* and then, put all together, and you have the word $\kappa\alpha\eta\alpha$ or $\kappa\alpha\eta\alpha$. Now as our Lord refers to the least letter (*Yod*) in the *Hebrew* language, and from which all the other letters are derived, as some learned men have observed, this being a part and branch of each of them; so it need not be wondered, that he should refer to the least Point in that language, and from which all the rest come: and, indeed, though the Points are represented as very numerous, yet there is but one Point in the whole language; and that is *Cbirek* [.] diversified, or placed in a different position. Thus *Patach* is only *Cbirek* diteted; *Kametz* is that in a cluster; *Segol* is three of them set in a triangle; *Tzere* is two of them in a direct line; and *Sbeva* is two more in a perpendicular one; and *Kibbutz* is three of them placed obliquely; and, when placed in the middle of *Vau*, or above that, or another letter, it is either an *u* or an *o*. And the like observations may be made on all the compound vowels. To derive this word from the *Hebrew* word $\kappa\alpha\pi$, which signifies an *horn*; as if our Lord referred to some corniculated apices, pricks, or spikes upon the tops of some letters, not in use in his time (as *Capellus* and others); is mere fiction and conceit. There is such a vein of ignorance, dullness, and ill-nature,

^f It is much better to take $\kappa\alpha\pi\alpha\iota\alpha$ for the Point *Cbirek* itself. Dr Lightfoot thinks our Lord refers to the least Vowel or Accent, as well as to the least Letter: and Elias Hutter, in his *Hebrew version*, renders *one tittle* by *one cbirek*: and some, in Dr Hammond on the place, understood it of *Cbirek*.

runs through the whole of what the *Monthly Reviewers* say, that the Doctor thought them too low for him to make any remarks upon. The very learned Professor of the Oriental languages, in the University of *Edinburg*; Dr JAMES ROBERTSON, had another opinion of Dr GILL's performance: for, in a Dissertation on the antiquity of the Points, prefixed to his truly learned and useful *Clavis Pentateuchi*, Dr Robertson has these words: "Vir Doctissimus JOANNES GILL, et qui in Rabbinnicis scriptis versatissimus esse videtur, in Dissertatione suâ de punctorum vocalium antiquitate, summâ cum industriâ et doctrinâ, ne vestigium quoddam masoretharum, ut pote punctorum vocalium auctorum, in totâ historiâ Judaicâ, a nato Christo ad annum 1037, adesse affirmat, probatque."

In the same year, Dr GILL collated the various passages of the Old Testament, quoted in the *Misnab*, in the *Talmuds*, both *Jerusalem* and *Babylonian*, and in the *Rabbotb*; and extracted the variations in them, from the modern printed text; which he sent to Dr Kennicott, at *Oxford*, then collating the several *Hebrew* manuscripts of the Old Testament to be met with in any of the libraries in *Europe*; and which Dr Kennicott thus acknowledged his receipt of, in his state of that collation, published in the year 1767: "I have been highly obliged by the Reverend and Learned Dr GILL, who has extracted and sent me the variations from the modern Bibles in the passages quoted in the *Talmuds*, both of *Jerusalem* and *Babylon*, and also in the *Rabbotb*: which variations, in these ancient books of the Jews, affect the *Hebrew* text of the *Old Testament*, as the variations in the ancient christian fathers affect the *Greek* text of the *New*."

In the year 1769, he published a *Body of Doctrinal Divinity*, in Two Volumes, Quarto; which contain the substance of what he delivered from the pulpit to the people under his care, for the space of upwards of five years: and gave the public reason to expect a *Third* Volume, then preparing, which would contain a *Body of Practical Divinity*, and which he proposed to do when he began his course of doctrinal Divinity, as his Introduction to that shews.

In the year 1770, his *Body of Practical Divinity* was published: which, with the other Two Volumes, completes his whole scheme of Divinity; which he thought would be the last work published by him. At the end of it, is a *Dissertation concerning the Baptism of Jewish Proselytes*: This the Doctor had upon his mind for many years to write; supposing it not very probable, that any of the Baptist denomination might soon rise up and take the pains in the study of Rabbinical literature he had done, and which yet was necessary for such a performance. He therefore thought proper to draw up the whole compass of the argument, in the above dissertation, and leave it behind him, that any one might make himself master of it, who should chuse it, and use it as occasion should offer. It has since been published separately, in 8vo.

Having

Having collected together such outlines, as we were able, of the LIFE and WRITINGS of this excellent and learned Divine; we shall close these MEMOIRS with giving a short CHARACTER of him.

IT pleased God to endue Dr GILL with strong mental powers, and with an eager and intense desire after improvement in knowledge. This appeared very early, in his ardent thirst after learning; which he diligently sought for, and the best means to obtain it; and with great industry improved every opportunity afforded him: so that, in a few years, he made a considerable progress in the knowledge of the learned languages, and all kind of useful literature.

As he grew up in life, he pursued his studies with indefatigable diligence, and the closest application: by which means, under the blessing of God, he attained to a very superior degree of solid and useful learning, and acquired an established character for it, amongst the learned of all denominations.

His natural and acquired abilities were very considerable. He had a quick and clear understanding, a solid and penetrating judgment, a fertile invention, with a strong, capacious, and uncommonly retentive memory. Blessed with these gifts, he was enabled to improve them to the glory of God, which was the grand object he had in view. But, above all, his *soul* was enriched with a considerable measure of GRACE, and the gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT; whereby he was abundantly fitted and qualified for, and made an able Minister of the New Testament. He was favoured with a large experience of the grace of God; great acquaintance with the scriptures; and clear light into the gospel of JESUS CHRIST.

As a minister, his deportment in the pulpit was grave and solemn: his language plain and expressive: his method natural and easy: his reasoning strong and nervous: his addresses affectionate: his matter substantial, clear and consistent, well digested, and delivered with great fluency and accuracy, which failed not to command and fix the attention of his hearers. In *prayer*, he poured out his soul with great freedom and fervency, with much importunity, familiarity and liberty; and, like another *Apollos*, was mighty in the scriptures, and had the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season.

The great doctrines of the gospel which he espoused, and which he at first set out with in the work of the Lord, and constantly and firmly abode by through life, even unto death; were such as respect a *Trinity* of persons in the godhead—particular and personal *Election*—the *everlasting love* of God—the *Covenant* of grace—the *Fall* of *Adam*, and the consequences of it—*Particular Redemption*, through the Incarnation, Obedience, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection and Intercession of the Son of God—*Pardon* through his blood—*Justification* by his righteousness—the

the *Efficacious Grace* of the holy Spirit in Regeneration—the *perseverance* of the Saints in Grace to Glory—the *Resurrection* of the dead—and *eternal Life*—these truths, with all those doctrines connected with or dependent on them, this faithful servant of Jesus Christ did constantly labour to explain, illustrate, and defend: at the same time, never omitting to recommend and enforce the several *duties* which are enjoined us in the sacred oracles of eternal truth. He did not shun to declare the *whole counsel* of God, and kept back *nothing* that might be profitable to the people; constantly affirming, that those who *believe* should be careful to maintain *good works*. His ministry, by the blessing of God, was very much owned, and greatly succeeded to the awakening, conversion, comfort, instruction, edification, and establishment of many, who enjoyed the opportunity of attending upon it. And it is worthy of notice, that three persons, who had been converted under his ministry, were afterwards called to that important work themselves[†].

As a *Pastor*, he constantly and carefully watched over the flock committed to his charge, and of which he had taken the oversight, with great affection, fidelity and love; and filled up his place in the house of God with honour and usefulness. In which office he continued to his death, *above FIFTY-ONE years*; labouring, with great assiduity, for the good of souls; earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints; and zealously concerned for the honour of the Redeemer, his cause and interest in the world. And nothing more filled him with grief, than when the deity and divine filiation of the Son of God were denied, or any attempts made to lessen, or sink the dignity of his person, the virtue and efficacy of his blood, and of that full and compleat salvation that is alone in him. Nor was he in the least moved from the glorious truths of the gospel, by the subtilty of any of its adversaries. He expressed the comfort he received from those words in *Acts* xx. 24. *But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* And through divine grace he was enabled to hold out to the last, and valiantly to contend for the truth on earth.

As an *Autor*, this great man of God discovered uncommon abilities. His numerous publications, all writen with his own hand, are, and will be, standing proofs of his indefatigable industry. Indeed, his labours were so numerous, that it may well appear, to posterity, almost incredible, that any *one* person should be the author of them. Especially considering the vast variety of authors he must have read: as appears by the many *criticisms* he has made on the languages in which the scriptures were written. The judicious elucidations

of

† The Reverend Messieurs John Brine, William Anderson, and James Fall.

of the *historical* parts of scripture, the clear explanation of the *Types* and *Metaphors*, the *Parables* and *Prophecies*; the illustrations of the *TRUTHS*, *Doctrinal* and *Practical*, to be found in his elaborate and voluminous *Exposition of the OLD and NEW TESTAMENT*; sufficiently shew, that this eminent minister of the gospel had, by an uncommon blessing upon his labours, attained to a large compass of useful knowledge.—Great was his acquaintance with the sacred scriptures; with *Jewish* learning; the *Oriental* tongues; the *Rites* and *Customs* of Eastern nations; *Greek* and *Roman* Poets and Historians; the liberal *Arts* and *Sciences*; *Ecclesiastical History*; the writings of the *Fathers*, and the several *Controversies* carried on in defence of Christianity.

His writings were not only received with great approbation in these kingdoms, but also in various parts of *America*. Many were the Letters he received from the ministers and others in those parts, expressing the high esteem they had for him and his works, and the great benefit they received from his labours. He was much solicited to cultivate an extensive correspondence; but this he was obliged to decline, as it would have proved too great an avocation from his studies.

His controversial tracts abundantly display his consummate ability and skill in pointing out the evil nature and tendency of erroneous principles. The weakness and fallacy of the arguments brought to support them, and the inconclusiveness of the objections raised against the truth: and in clearly stating and solidly defending the gospel, so as to silence its adversaries, and confirm the faithful in their adherence to Christ and his Religion.

The numerous *SERMONS* published by him, are fraught with rich, solid, evangelical truths; deep christian experience; and the most cogent motives to every good word and work. The *Body of Doctrinal and Practical DIVINITY*, which he lived to see finished and published, shews his profound, clear, and extensive understanding in the mysteries of God; the respective branches of practical religion; the nature, use, and extent of the divine law; and the positive institutions of Jesus Christ.

Notwithstanding his exalted attainments, he was *meek* and *humble*, of a *tender* and *sympathizing* spirit; *weeping* with those that *wept*; and *rejoicing* with them that *rejoiced*: ever ready to acknowledge, that all he had, of parts, learning, and grace, was freely bestowed upon him by that God, from whom comes every good and perfect gift. His conversation quite through life, was honourable and ornamental; such as became the gospel of Christ, which he professed and laboured in.

His last labours, among the people of his care, was from that part of the song of *Zachariab*, the first chapter of *Luke*, the latter part of the 77th verse,
and

and former part of the 78th verse. *By the remission of their sins,—through the tender mercy of our God.* This was the last text he preached from. His health had been on the decline for some time; and he himself thought his work was done. The decay of nature was, however, very gradual. His complaint was loss of appetite; and frequently a violent pain in his stomach: his appetite continued to fail more and more, till at last, for some time before his death, it was totally lost. He bore his visitation with great patience, composure, and resignation of mind to the divine will; without uttering the least complaint; without ever saying to God, *What dost thou?*

He could have wished to have finished the song of *Zacharias*; and also the dying song of good old *Simeon*, in which, he thought, there was something similar to his own case. And especially he longed to be at his *nunc dimittis*; *Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace*, with what follows. This was much upon his mind, and he thought, should he live to go through that, it might be, God would then give him his dismissal, and let him also depart in peace.—But his decline increasing daily upon him, he grew weaker and weaker; so that he could not proceed in his delightful work: and yet, notwithstanding he was rendered incapable of appearing in public, he continued to be employed in his study, till within two or three weeks of his death; and always appeared calm, serene, and cheerful. His faith was steady, and his hope firm, to the last.—To a relation he thus expressed himself: “*I depend wholly and alone upon the free sovereign, eternal, unchangeable and everlasting love of God; the firm and everlasting covenant of grace, and my interest in the persons of the Trinity; for my whole salvation: and not upon any righteousness of my own, nor any thing in me, or done by me under the influences of the holy Spirit; nor upon any services of mine, which I have been assisted to perform for the good of the church; but upon my interest in the persons of the Trinity, the person, blood and righteousness of Christ, the free grace of God, and the blessings of grace streaming to me through the blood and righteousness of Christ; as the ground of my hope. These are no new things with me; but what I have been long acquainted with; what I can live and die by. And this you may tell to any of my friends. I apprehend I shall not be long here*”

He expressed himself nearly in the same manner to other friends. To one that visited him, he said, “*I have nothing to make me uneasy:*” and repeated the following lines from Dr WATTS,

*He rais'd me from the deeps of sin,
The gates of gaping hell:
And fix'd my standing more secure
Than 'twas before I fell.*

This tranquillity of soul, and inward joy and peace of mind, never left him. The last words he was heard to speak were, "O my Father, my Father." And then gently fell asleep in Jesus, without a sigh or groan, on the 14th day of October, 1771, at his house in Camberwell, Surry; aged seventy-three years, ten months and ten days.

[What follows is drawn by another hand.]

SUCH were the indefatigable labors, such the exemplary life, and such the comfortable death, of this great and eminent person. If any one man can be supposed to have trod the *whole circle* of human learning, it was Dr GILL. His attainments, both in abstruse and polite literature, were (what is very uncommon) equally *extensive* and *profound*. Providence had, to this end, endued him with a firmness of constitution, and an unremitting vigor of mind, which rarely fall to the lot of the sedentary and learned. It would, perhaps, try the constitutions of half the *literati* in *England*, only to *read*, with care and attention, the Whole of what he *wrote*.

The Doctor was not one who considered any subject superficially, and by halves. As deeply as human sagacity, enlightened by grace, could penetrate, he went to *the bottom* of every thing he engaged in. With a solidity of judgment, and with an acuteness of discernment, peculiar to few, He *exhausted*, as it were, the very soul and substance of most arguments he undertook — His *style*, too, resembles himself; it is manly, nervous, plain: conscious, if I may so speak, of the unutterable dignity, value, and importance of the freight it conveys; it drives, directly and perspicuously, to the point in view, regardless of affected cadence, and superior to the little niceties of professed refinement.

Perhaps, no man, since the days of *St Austin*, has written *so largely*, in defence of *the system* of GRACE: and, certainly, no man has treated that momentous subject, in all its branches, more *closely*, *judiciously* and *successfully*. What was said of *Edward* the Black Prince, That he *never fought a Battle, which he did not win*; What has been remarked of the great Duke of *Marlborough*, That he *never undertook a Siege, which he did not carry*; may be justly accommodated to our great Philosopher and Divine: who, *so far as the Distinguishing DOCTRINES of the Gospel are concerned*, never besieged an *Error*, which he did not force from its strongholds; nor ever encountered an *Adversary*, whom did not baffle and subdue.

His learning and labors, if exceedable, were exceeded only by the invariable *sanctity* of his *life and conversation*. From his childhood, to his entrance on the ministry; and, from his entrance on the ministry, to the moment of his dissolution; not one of his most inveterate opposers was ever able to charge him with the least shadow of immorality. HIMSELF, no less than his *writings*, DEMONSTRATED, that THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE DOES NOT LEAD TO LICENTIOUSNESS.

Those, who had the honour and happiness of being admitted into the number of his friends, can go still *farther* in their testimony. They know, that his moral demeanor was *more* than blameless: It was, from first to last, consistently *exemplary*. And, indeed, an *undeviating Consistency*, both in his views of *evangelical Truths*; and in his *obedience*, as a servant of GOD; was one of those qualities, by which his cast of character was eminently marked. He was, in every respect, a *burning and a shining light*. *Burning*, with love to GOD, to Truth, and to Souls: *Shining*, as "an ensample to Believers, in Word, in Faith, in Purity;" a pattern of good works, and a model of all holy conversation and godliness.

The Doctor has been accused of *Bigotry*, by some, who were unacquainted with his real temper and character. Bigotry may be defined, *Such a BLIND and FURIOUS attachment to any particular principle, or set of principles, as disposes us to WISH ILL to those persons who differ from us in judgment*. Simple Bigotry, therefore, is, *The spirit of persecution, without the power*: and *persecution* is no other than *Bigotry, armed with force, and carrying its malevolence into act*. Hence it appears, that to be *clearly convinced* of certain propositions, as true; and to be *bedfast* in adhering to them, upon that conviction; nay, to *assert* and *defend* those propositions, to the utmost extent of argument; can no more be called *Bigotry*, than the shining of the Sun can be termed Ostentation. If, in any parts of his Controversial Writings, the Doctor has been warmed into some little neglects of ceremony toward his assailants; it is to be ascribed, not to *Bigotry* (for he possessed a very large share of Benevolence and Candor) but to that complexional sensibility, inseparable, perhaps, from human nature in its present state; and from which, it is certain, the Apostles themselves were not exempt.

His Doctrinal and Practical Writings will live, and be admired, and be a standing blessing to posterity; when their opposers are forgot, or only remembered by the refutations he has given them. While true Religion, and sound Learning, have a single friend remaining in the *British Empire*, the *Works* and Name of GILL will be *precious* and revered.

May the Readers of this inadequate sketch, together with him, who (though of a very different denomination from the Doctor) pays this last and unexaggerated tribute of justice to the honored memory of so excellent a person; participate, on earth, and everlastingly celebrate in heaven, that SOVEREIGN GRACE, which its departed Champion so largely *experienced*—to which He was so distinguished an *ornament*—and of which He was so able a *defender*!

JULY 29,
1772.

The following Latin Inscription is engraved on the DOCTOR'S Tomb in Bunhill-Fields.

IN HOC CÆMETERIO
CONDVNTVR RELIQVIÆ
IOANNIS GILL S. T. P.
VIRI VITÆ INTEGRİ
DISCIPVLI IESV INGENVI
PRÆCONIS EVANGELII INSIGNIS
DEFENSORIS FIDEI CHRISTIANÆ STRENVİ
QVI
INGENIO ERVDITIONE PIETATE ORNATVS
LABORIBVSQVE PERMAGNIS SEMPER INVICTVS
ANNOS SVpra QVINQVAGINTA
DOMINI MANDATA FACESSERE
ECCLESİÆ RES ADIVVARE
HOMINVM SALVTEM ASSEQVI
FERVORE PERPETVO ARDENTE
CONTENDIT
IN CHRISTO PLACIDE OBDORMIVIT
PRIDIE ID. OCTOBRIS A. D. MDCCLXXI.
ÆTATIS SVÆ LXXIV.

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SERM. 36.	Occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Mr WILLIAM ANDERSON. 2 T I M O T H Y IV. 7, 8. <i>I have fought a (or the) good fight, I have finished my (the) course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing,</i> - - - - -	592

E R R A T A.

PAGE 4. Line 1. for righteousness, read righteouſneſs. P. 13. l. 18. no ſin his people, r. no ſin in his people. P. 100. l. 19. deſtroy they utterly, r. them utterly. P. 236. l. 1. ſome renner it, r. render it. P. 270. l. 24. his Father's glory, r. the brightneſs of his Father's glory. P. 397. l. 17. laid in grave, r. laid in the grave. P. 400. l. 32. extravagant forms, r. extravagant forms. P. 443. l. 11. we and hope ceases, r. we have them and hope ceases. Ibid. l. 12. nor have them. r. nor are the things of this preſent life. P. 589. l. 17. is Chriſt Jeſus, r. which is in Chriſt Jeſus. P. 592.. l. 5. for 6, 7. read 7, 8.

A N N U A L

ANNUAL SERMONS.

SERMON I.

*The Doctrine of GRACE cleared from the Charge of Licentiousness :
Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture in Great-Eastcheap, Dec. 28, 1737.*

I TIM. VI. 3.

—*And to the doctrine which is according to godliness.*

THE apostle *Paul* well understood the doctrine of the gospel, and its natural tendency to influence the lives of men; and was very much concerned for the honour and credit of it; that the conversations of professors might be as became it, and that they would in all things adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. He was very desirous of instructing men of the meanest capacities, and in the lowest situation of life; as *servants*, to behave agreeably to their masters, *that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed*, ver. 1, 2. He charges *Timothy* to teach these things, and exhort men to their duty; and adds, ver. 3. *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, &c.* plainly intimating, that the words of Christ, or the salutary doctrines of the gospel, perfectly accord with practical godliness; and that a dissolute life and conversation is very disagreeable to them. My view in reading these words is to vindicate the doctrine of grace from the charge of licentiousness, and to prove it to be a godly doctrine, and tending to godly edification; or that it is, as expressed in the text, *a doctrine according to godliness*. The method I shall take in treating on this subject, will be as follows:

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- I. I shall explain what is necessary in the proposition, "That the doctrine of grace is according to godliness."
- II. Consider the charge of licentiousness, which is brought against it, and the nature of it.
- III. Make some concessions concerning the abuse of the doctrine, by evil and wicked men. And,
- IV. Prove that the doctrine itself is pure and innocent, and free from the imputation of libertinism.

I. I shall explain what is necessary in the proposition, "That the doctrine of grace is according to godliness." By *the doctrine of grace*, I mean that system of evangelical truths which is commonly called Calvinistical; as, that God has from all eternity loved some of the human race, and has chosen them unto everlasting salvation, by Jesus Christ; that he has made a covenant of grace with his Son on the behalf of the chosen ones, which is absolute and unconditional; that Christ in the fulness of time assumed human nature, suffered and died, to redeem a special and peculiar people to himself; that by bearing their sins, and all punishment due unto them, he has made full satisfaction to the justice of God; that a sinner's justification before God is only by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, without any consideration of works done by him; that pardon of sin is only through the blood of Christ, and for his sake, according to the riches of his grace; that God sees no sin in his justified and pardoned ones, so as to condemn them for it; that regeneration and conversion are by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; and that those who are effectually called by grace, shall persevere to the end, and be eternally saved. This is the doctrine of the Bible, of the *scriptures given by inspiration of God*, and which are *profitable for doctrine*^a; for explaining, stating, and defending this doctrine. This is *the doctrine of Christ*, which if a man brings not with him, who pretends to be a preacher of the gospel, he is not to be received, nor *bid God-speed*^b. This is the doctrine of the apostles: *we are steadfastly to continue in and abide by*; and is summarily comprised in that excellent chain of truths, *Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified*^c.

By

^a 2 Tim. iii. 16.

^b 2 John 9, 10.

^c Acts ii. 42.

^d Rom. viii. 29, 30.

By *godliness* I understand not any particular grace, or the exercise of it; which seems to be the sense of the apostle, when he says, *Add to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness*^c; nor the whole of internal religion only; though that is the main and principal part of godliness, and is what an inspired writer means, when he observes, that *bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things*^d; but by it I understand the whole of practical religion, both external and internal, the exercise of every grace, and the discharge of every duty: which is what the apostle designs, when he thus concludes; *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness*^e?

By the doctrine of grace being a godly doctrine, or a doctrine according to *godliness*, I mean, that *godliness* is the very life and soul of it; that it runs through every part of it, and is breathed by it; that it is *the truth which is after godliness*^f; that there is a perfect harmony and agreement between them; the mystery of Christ, of his person, and grace, being *the great mystery of godliness*; and that nothing more powerfully and effectually teaches and engages men to *deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world*^g, than the doctrine of the grace of God, which *bringeth* the news of free and unconditional *salvation* by Jesus Christ.

II. Though such is the nature and tendency of the doctrine of grace, a charge is brought against it, as encouraging looseness of life, and opening a door to libertinism; and it is urged, that "if God has chosen some infallibly to salvation, and made a covenant with them in Christ, to give them grace and glory, in an absolute and unconditional way; if Christ has redeemed them by his blood, and they are justified alone by his righteousness, and being called by his grace shall never perish; then they may live as they list, and take their whole swing of sin, since their state is safe and unalterable." But this charge is no other than a suggestion of Satan; the reasoning is borrowed from him; the argument is an aping of him; it is shaped according to his plan; and perfectly agrees with what he said to our Lord; *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone*^h: which is, as if he should say, "if this is the case, thou mayest do what thou wilt with thyself, no damage can arise unto thee, no hurt can be done thee." Moreover, Satan never more transforms himself into an angel of light, than when he sets up for a preacher of holiness, in opposition to the doctrine of grace; nor do his ministers ever more act the same part, than when

B 2

under

^c 2 Peter i. 6, 7.

^f 1 Tim. iv. 8.

^e 2 Peter iii. 11.

^h Titus i. 1.

^d Chap. ii. 11, 12.

^g Matt. iv. 6.

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under the guise of *ministers of righteousness*, or preachers of good works, they endeavour to undermine and sap the foundations of gospel-doctrine. This charge springs from malice and ignorance; and it is hard to say which is the most predominant in it; the men that bring it, are, *as concerning the gospel, enemies for our sake*¹, and do as *Diotrephes* did, *prate against us with malicious words*^m; their *carnal minds* being *enmity against God*, and whatsoever is spiritually good; and being without any spiritual discerning of the things of the Spirit of God, they pronounce them foolishness, and *speak evil of the things they understand not*. The charge is false and groundless, and to be treated as mere slander and calumny, and must be rejected with the utmost abhorrence and indignation; and ought to have no other answer than what the apostle gives; *What shall we say then, Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*ⁿ? However, this may serve somewhat to relieve and alleviate our minds under this horrid and heavy charge, that it is no other than what was levelled against Christ and his apostles. The spiteful and ignorant Jews charged our Lord with being an Antinomian, both in doctrine and practice; in doctrine, as appears from his vindication of himself; *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil*^o: In practice, as is evident from those words of his; *John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say he hath a devil*^p; he is an unfociable man, he will not be conversed with in any form: *The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners*; but, adds he, *Wisdom is justified of her children*. And that the apostles of Christ were treated after this manner, is plain from what the apostle Paul says; *And not rather, as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just*^q. All which should confirm us in the doctrine of grace we hold and maintain as true; since the same objections are made unto it, as were to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles.

III. It will be allowed, that the doctrine of grace may be, and has been abused by evil and wicked men. The apostle Jude speaks of some men in his days, who were *turning the grace of God into lasciviousness*^r: where by the *grace of God* is not to be understood the love and favour of God shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit; for that can never be turned to such a purpose, it always working in a contrary way, as it did in David; *Thy loving-kindness, says he, is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth*^s: nor the principle of grace wrought in the soul by a divine power; for that being of a spiritual nature

¹ Rom xi. 28.

^r Chap. xi. 18, 19.

^m John 10.

^q Rom. iii. 8.

ⁿ Rom. vi. i, 2.

^s Jude ver. 4.

^o Matt. v. 17.

^p Psal. xvi. 3.

lusteth against the flesh, and can never be turned into it: But by it is meant the doctrine of the gospel, which, though lasciviousness is not in the nature of it, nor has it any natural tendency to it, yet wicked men *μεταδιδωτες*, transfer it from its original nature, design, and use, to a foreign one: Just as *unlearned* and *unstable* men, who have no spiritual understanding of the word of God, nor any scheme of truth consistent with it, *wrest the scriptures to their own destruction*. But then, as the scriptures are not to be thought the worse of, because of these mens wresting them; so neither is the doctrine of grace a whit the less to be valued, because it is abused by ill-disposed men. Let the characters of the men that turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, be enquired into; and *first*, they appear to be *ungodly men*, *ασητοι*, men devoid of the fear and reverence of God, and devotion to him; who are not worshippers of him. Now who are they that neglect the private and public worship of God? Who are they that walk abroad in the fields on Lord's-days? or take their horses and ride, seeking their own pleasure? Who are they that frequent taverns and public houses, when they should be attending the house of God? Are these the men who are commonly called Calvinists, the asserters of the doctrine of grace? Should the examination be strictly made, the above persons will be found, if not to a man, yet by far the greatest part, Arminians, if capable of giving any account of their religious sentiments. And *secondly*, the other part of their character looks with a dreadful aspect upon, and plainly points out those who are on the other side of the question; *denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. Who are the deniers of Christ's person, of his proper deity and equality with the Father, of his plenary satisfaction and expiatory sacrifice, of his imputed righteousness, and the efficacy of his blood? The deniers of these things are the men that turn the grace of God into lasciviousness; either by asserting it to be a licentious doctrine; or by treating the doctrine of special grace in a wanton and ludicrous manner, scoffing at it, and lampooning it; or by making the doctrine of grace universal, extending it equally alike to all mankind, and thereby harden and encourage men in sin.

Again: Be it so, that some who have notionally received and professed the pure doctrine of grace have abused it to vile purposes; the doctrine itself is not to be rejected on that account, but the abusers of it. The best things in the world may be ill used by wicked men; yea, even the perfections and providences of God. Mercy is a perfection of the divine nature, and what God delights in: God is merciful, and therefore, says a profane sinner, I will take my fill of sin, and doubt not, if I have but opportunity at last to say, "Lord have mercy on me," all will be well. God is patient, long-suffering, bears with sinners, and does not stir up all his wrath immediately: What effect has this upon them?

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them? Does it lead them to repentance? It should do so: But they *despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance*¹. Yea, as the apostle Peter says, and we have lived to see it verified, *There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*².

Which is as if they should say; we see no likelihood of the coming of the Judge, nor of the awful judgment, or dreadful doom that shall befall ungodly persons, which have been talked of; this is all dream and enthusiasm; and therefore we will take our own pleasure, and walk after our own lusts. Thus, *because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*³. Now must it be said that God is not merciful, patient, long-suffering and forbearing, or that he ought not to be so, because sinners make such an ill improvement of these things? How are the common mercies of life, and the most kind instances of divine providence abused, by the worst of men! Yea, even *Jeshurun* himself, when he *waxed fat*, he *kicked, then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation*⁴. But must we deny the providences of God, and reject the instances of his goodness, because of the ill use that is made of them, through the wretched depravity of human nature? Nor should we discard the doctrine of grace on such an account: At this rate, the best of things, the plainest facts, and clearest truths, must be denied and rejected.

Once more: It will be owned, that there have always been some bad men in the best of societies. There was a *Judas* among Christ's disciples; there has always been chaff upon his floor, and will until the winnowing time comes; and tares among the wheat, wolves in sheeps clothing, and foolish virgins among the wise, until the bridegroom appears. But then the faults and blemishes of some are not to be imputed to the whole body, nor these to principles held and professed. If this must be admitted the measure and rule of judgment, no church or congregation, no society or sett of men whatever, have been, or can be free from the vilest imputations. But are the generality of those who are called Calvinists, or Antinomians, men of bad characters? Or are there more immoral persons among them, than on the other side of the question? Let them look at home, we are ready to compare notes and numbers with them; we are obliged in defence of ourselves, since our principles are charged, to use some sort of boasting, and say, in like manner as *Samuel* did; *Here we are, witnesses against us, before the Lord, and before his anointed: Whose ox or ass have we taken? Whom have we defrauded, or oppressed*⁵? This is worthy of notice, that the doctrine of grace never had a run among rakes and debauchees; whereas

¹ Rom. ii. 4.

² Peter iii. 3, 4.

³ Eccl. viii. 11.

⁴ Deut. xxxii. 15.

⁵ 1 Sam. xii. 3.

whereas it is well known the opposite to it has been, and is embraced by such. Strange! if the doctrines of free grace are of such a malignant nature and influence, have such a tendency to licentiousness, and give so much encouragement to sin, as is said, that such persons should not greedily catch at them and embrace them; at least make trial of them; when it is plain they are ready to give into all the absurd and wretched schemes of Infidelity and Atheism, in order to keep their lusts; but, instead of this, none shew a greater hatred to them: And indeed, these are as forward as any to be our accusers; though the charge comes with an ill grace from such who are abandoned to the worst of crimes, and are avowed enemies to holiness of life. One thing more I would observe, and that is, That when any who have embraced and professed the doctrine of grace fall into any open and scandalous sin, there is immediately a great clamour and uproar about it; whereas when it is the case, as it frequently is, on the opposite side, little or no notice is taken of it. What should be the reason of this? Because the case is common on one side, and comparatively rare, and but seldom heard of on the other: So that the noise that is made, and the notice that is taken, do but indeed make to our credit and reputation in general. But supposing the instances of immorality were more than they are, and whenever they happen, are matter of lamentation; yet,

IV. I aver, that the doctrine of grace itself is pure and innocent, and not to be charged with the faults and blemishes of any of the professors of it; nor does it give any encouragement to sin, but is all the reverse: And this will be made to appear, by considering the several particular doctrines contained in it. As,

1. The doctrine of God's everlasting and unchangeable love to his elect, in every state and condition and circumstance of life into which they come. This is no ways contrary to the purity and holiness of the divine nature; for though he loves the persons of his people, and delights in them as considered in Christ, he takes no delight in their sins; sin is the abominable thing he hates; he is of purer eyes than to behold it with approbation and delight; *he is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with him*: nor does he encourage them in sin; or connive at it, but rebukes and chastises them for it in a fatherly way; though at the same time he does not take away his loving-kindness from them; for he takes pleasure in their persons, though he bears a displeasure to their sins; nor does this doctrine in the least lead men to sin, but on the contrary, most strongly engages to the love of God, and a cheerful obedience to him: his love to them indeed does not arise from their love to him, it being prior to theirs; but then they love him because he first loved them*; and this love in them to him, constrains them to a willing obedience; when their hearts

are

* John iv. 19.

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are enlarged with it, then do they run with alacrity *the ways of his commandments*; when this loving-kindness of God in choosing them in Christ, redeeming them by his blood, and calling them by his grace is before their eyes, and they have a sense of it upon their hearts, they *walk in his truth*^b; in the truth of his gospel, and have their conversations as become it. This love, according as it is shed abroad in their hearts, *casts out fear*, and influences them to *serve the Lord without fear, in righteousness and holiness all the days of their lives*^c. What can lay a man under a greater obligation to love the Lord, fear and obey him, than this consideration, that he loved him when he had no love in his heart to him, nay was an enemy to him; and that his thoughts were concerned about his everlasting salvation, when he had no thoughts of God, nor any for himself? Such a consideration as this, must work much more powerfully upon him, as it must upon any ingenuous mind, than such a one as this; that the Lord began to love him and continued to do so, because he loved him and was obedient to him; and would continue to do so as long, and no longer. That is the purest obedience that is influenced by love; it is the obedience of a child, and not of a slave; and must be the most acceptable unto God; nay, there is no other service that is acceptable to him, but what springs from love influenced by his own.

2. The doctrine of the eternal, personal election of some of mankind unto everlasting salvation. Good works indeed are not the causes of God's act of election; *For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*^d: Nothing that is temporal can be the cause of that which is eternal; nor the will of man, nor any thing done by it, be the cause of the will of God; but yet good works are what *God has fore-ordained*, that his chosen people *should walk in them*^e. Holiness is a means that is fixed in election, and an end that is secured by it; all those who from the beginning, from everlasting, are chosen unto salvation by Christ, are chosen to it *through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*^f; all that are *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*, are so *through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus*^g: which sanctification is as infallibly secured, as salvation itself; for though men are not chosen because they were, yet they are, *that they should be holy*; and in consequence of electing grace become so through the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God. Election is the source and spring of all true and real holiness: There would not have been such a thing

as

^b Psa. cxix. 32. and xxvi. 3.

^c John iv. 18. Luke i. 74, 75.

^d Rom. ix. 11—13.

^e Ephes. ii. 10.

^f 2 Thess. ii. 13.

^g 1 Peter i. 2.

as holiness in the world, since the fall of *Adam*, had it not been for electing grace; except the Lord had left a seed, and reserved a remnant for himself, according to the election of grace, the world had been as *Sodom* and as *Gomorrab*: And so it is, where there are no instances of this grace. Strange then, that this innocent doctrine, so friendly to holiness and good works, should be thought to open a door to licentiousness! Besides, holiness of heart and life is an evidence of election; the internal grace of sanctification is an evidence, being a fruit of it to the person himself: *Knowing, brethren, says the apostle, your election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance*^b. External holiness, or that which appears in the outward conversation, is the evidence of election to others. Hence that advice is given to the saints, to *give diligence to make their calling and election sure*^c; that is, by good works, as in some copies it is read, and as the sense requires; since both calling and election are to be made sure by some third thing. Not that they can be made surer in themselves, or to the believer, than they are; but a more sure and certain evidence may be given of them to others. Nor does any thing, nor can any thing more powerfully engage men to holiness and good works, and to honour and glorify God that way, than the consideration of this; that they are *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*; that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light^d.

3. The doctrine of the absoluteness and unconditionality of the covenant of grace, is far from being a licentious one. It is true indeed, that the good works of men do not put them into this covenant, nor their evil works, their transgressions and sins, turn them out of it, who are in it; yet this does not suppose that God overlooks and connives at the sins of his people; since it is expressly said, and it is a part of this covenant, *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips*^e. Besides, nothing more fully provides both for internal and external holiness, than the covenant of grace; and that by the most absolute and unconditional promises: It provides for internal holiness, by such promises as these; *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh*^f. And in another place, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*^g. It provides for external holiness, and that in the most

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effectual

^b 1 Thess. i. 4, 5.

^c 2 Peter i. 10.

^d 1 Peter ii. 9.

^e Psa. lxxxix. 30—34.

^f Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26.

^g Jer. xxxi. 33.

effectual manner; since God in it promises, saying, *I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them*^o. Nor is there any thing under the influence of divine grace that so powerfully operates upon, and stirs up the desires of the saints, their care, diligence, and industry, to discharge their duty, than the absolute and unconditional promises of grace; such as these: *As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty*^p. Wherefore, says the apostle, *having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filibiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*. Add to all this, that God in the covenant of grace provides in an absolute and unconditional way for the saints final perseverance in faith and holiness; saying, *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*^q.

4. The doctrine of particular redemption by Christ, is free from any imputation of libertinism. It is indeed a redemption from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of the law; but does not exempt from obedience to it, as it is in the hands of Christ; for saints are still *under the law to Christ*^r; nor do any more delight in the law of God after the inward man, or more cheerfully serve it with their mind, than those who are most sensible, that they are become dead unto it, and delivered from it by the body of Christ. Redemption is a deliverance from sin, from all sin, original and actual; and that not only from the guilt of sin, and the punishment due unto it; but in consequence of redeeming grace, the redeemed ones are delivered from the dominion and governing power of sin, and at last from the being of it. Christ saves his people from their sins; he does not indulge them in them; the deliverer that *comes out of Zion, turns away ungodliness from Jacob*. Strange! that a redemption from a vain conversation should ever be an encouragement to one; or that a person's being ransomed out of the hands of Satan, and taken as a prey out of the hands of the mighty, should be an argument with him to give up himself to him and his service; or can be thought to have any tendency to engage him in a state of bondage to him, to be led as a captive by him at his will. Besides, the great end of Christ's giving himself for any of the sons of men, is, *that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*^s. Nor does any thing lay such an obligation upon men to glorify God with their body and spirit, than the consideration of this, that they are *not their own, but are bought with a price*^t, even with the precious blood of Christ; nor can any thing like the love of Christ, the redeeming love of Christ, constrain men to obedience, *so live not unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again*^u.

5. The

^o Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

^p 2 Cor. vi. 16, 18. and vii. 1.

^q Jer. xxxii. 40.

^r 1 Cor. ix. 21.

^s Titus ii. 14.

^t 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

^u 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

5. The doctrine of Christ's bearing our sins, and making satisfaction for them to the justice of God, is another pure and holy doctrine: For though Christ has bore all the sins of his people, all the guilt and filth of them, and all the punishment due unto them; has taken all away, for his blood cleanseth from all sin; it removes all that is in sin, and belongs to it; yet this gives no encouragement to sin; for one end of Christ's bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, was, *that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness*^w.

Though Christ as a priest has satisfied justice, by fulfilling the law, yielding perfect obedience to its precepts, and bearing the whole penalty of it; yet this does not free those for whom he has made satisfaction from obligation to regard the law, as held forth by him as King of saints; whom they own, and look upon themselves obliged to own, as their judge and lawgiver; and indeed consider themselves under still greater obligation to obey his laws and commands, since he has finished transgression for them, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Though they *through the law are dead to the law*, yet it is, that *they might live unto God*^x; the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself a pure and spotless sacrifice for sin, *purges their consciences from dead works, that they may serve the living God*^y: it is only such who *walk in the light*, and have fellowship with Christ, whom his blood cleanses from all sin, for *if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth*^z. Christ's suffering, *the just for the unjust*, the punishment due to sin, was *to bring us to God*^a; not only to reconcile us to him, and to enjoy his favour, but to walk with him, to walk in his ways, and to walk humbly before him; whereas if it gave a loose to sin, and encouraged in it, it would set us at a greater distance from him: Christ's satisfaction for sin does not at all weaken our obligation to duty, but increases it.

6. The doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, is a doctrine according to godliness, however it may be traduced as a licentious one: It neither makes void the law; nor discourages the performance of good works; nor encourages in sin; it does not annul, or make the law useless: *Do we, says the apostle, make void the law through faith*, that is, by the doctrine of justification through the righteousness of Christ, received by faith? *God forbid: yea, we establish the law*^b; since we assert that men are justified by a perfect righteousness, which is every way agreeable to the demands of the law, and by which that is magnified and made honourable. Nor does it at all discountenance the discharge of duty, but is the greatest motive and inducement to it. Thus, the apostle, having observed that we are not saved by works of righteousness done by us, that we are justified by the grace of Christ, and are made

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heirs

^w 1 Peter ii. 24.^x Gal. ii. 19.^y Heb. ix. 14.^z 1 John i. 6, 7.^a 1 Peter iii. 18.^b Rom. iii. 31.

heirs according to the hope of eternal life, adds, *This is a faithful saying; and these things*, that is, these doctrines, *I will that thou affirm constantly* *; that thou assert them without any doubt or hesitation about them; and that thou dwell upon them in thy ministry, and frequently inculcate them; *that, viz.* to this end and purpose, *they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works*. Nothing like these doctrines will induce them thereunto. Nor does this doctrine give any countenance to sinful practices; for though God justifies the ungodly, yet he does not indulge them in ungodliness. Christ's righteousness justifies from all sin, but does not justify persons in a continuance in sin. Besides, *faith*, which *receives this blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of salvation* †, which is the reason why men are said to be justified by it, *works by love* ‡; is an operative grace, is attended with the fruits of righteousness, is evidenced by good works, made perfect by them, and is without them dead. Yet some will say, the doctrine of justification by faith is no licentious doctrine, but the doctrines of eternal justification and eternal union are. This comes from another quarter, from a set of men who should know better. What diabolical charm? what satanic influence can there possibly be in a *date*? If justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone, without the works of the creature, has no bad influence upon the life and conversation; the moving of the date of it higher than where it has been commonly put, can never be attended with any bad consequence that way; nor can any consequences arise from it, but what must also unavoidably follow upon eternal election: And as for eternal union with Christ, it is the foundation of all the good things Christ has done for his people, of all the good things the Spirit works in them, and of all the good works which are done by them; and therefore can never give birth and countenance to evil practices.

7. The doctrine of free and full remission of sins, according to the grace and mercy of God, and by the blood of Christ, and for his sake, and not on account of our repentance and good works, as procuring it, has no influence to make the conversation of a truly sensible sinner bad, but the reverse; sin never appears so odious, and in its true colours, or as exceeding sinful, than it does in the glass of pardoning love; a soul is never more ashamed of sin, and confounded on the account of it, or blushes at it, than when he is most sensible and most satisfied that God is *pacified towards him for all that he has done* §; and that all is forgiven through the blood of Christ: nor does he ever more truly and heartily, and in an evangelical manner, *mourn* over sin, or is humbled before the Lord for it, than when he *looks* to Christ, and views all his iniquities bore by him, and washed away in his blood ¶; nor can any thing more powerfully

engage

* Titus iii. 8.

† Psa. xxiv. 5.

‡ Gal. v. 6.

§ Ezek. xvi. 63.

¶ Zach. xii. 10.

engage men to forsake their evil ways, and course of living, and turn to the Lord, than this consideration, that he does *abundantly pardon*^b; and indeed the end which the Lord has in setting forth Christ in his purposes to be the propitiation for sin, and procure the remission of it, and in providing this blessing in the covenant of his grace, and in sending Christ to obtain it, through the shedding of his blood, and in publishing and proclaiming it in his gospel, and in applying it by his spirit, is that he might be heartily and sincerely feared and worshipped; *there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared*^c. He would have been feared with a slavish fear, or dreaded, as he is by devils, if there had been none; but he would never have been feared by sinful men, with a filial and godly fear, or have been worshipped in sincerity and truth, had it not been for pardoning grace and mercy through the blood of Christ; and such must be very disingenuous indeed, that can abuse such a doctrine as this, that because God has pardoned them, therefore they will sin the more against him; if there are any such that go on in sin upon such a presumption, that their sins are pardoned, they manifestly shew, that they never had any true sense of sin, or application of pardon to them.

8. The doctrine of God's seeing no sin his people, is spoken against as an immoral one, and giving liberty to sin; but is pure, holy and innocent: For this doctrine does not suppose sin not to be sin; or that that is not sin which is done amiss by them; or that God does not in any sense take notice of their transgressions. Though they are, as considered in Christ, *holy and unblameable, and unproveable in his sight*^d; yet, as considered in themselves, they have and do many things which are faulty and blameworthy. Though God sees no sin in them, with respect to the article of justification, yet he sees all their sins, with respect to the article of his omniscience; or though he sees them not with his avenging eye of justice, yet he sees them all with his eye of omniscience. Again: Though he sees no sin in them, to condemn them, yet he takes notice of their iniquities and transgressions, so as to rebuke and chastise them in a fatherly way on the account of them. *There is indeed no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*; but then these are described as such *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*^e. God has nothing against his people, as they are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and washed in his blood; but he has many things against them, which he takes notice of in a providential way, for their good, and his glory: *Nevertheless, says Christ to the church at Ephesus; I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent*^f.

This

^b Isa. lv. 7.

^c Psal. cxxx. 4.

^d Col. i. 22.

^e Rom. viii. 1.

^f Rev. ii. 4, 5.

14 THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE CLEARED FROM

This is the true state of this doctrine: Let any one judge, whether, in this view of it, it can be thought to be a licentious one.

9. The doctrine of efficacious grace in conversion, or of effectual vocation by the powerful and insuperable grace of God, can surely never be reckoned to have any tendency to lead persons into a vicious course of living; since they that are called by it, are called with an *holy calling*, and *unto holiness*: They have new principles of grace and holiness implanted in them; they are formed anew for God, are made new creatures, new men; and have *put on the new man, which after God is created in, or unto, righteousness and true holiness*: They are *created in Christ Jesus unto good works*; and are put into the best capacity of performing them, from the best principles, with the best views, and to the best ends.

10. The doctrine of the saints final perseverance can never be chargeable with encouraging immorality; unless continuance in faith and holiness is an immorality; or that it can be thought, that the way to persevere in holiness, is to abound in sin. Nor does this doctrine make the use of means, or exhortations to diligence, care and watchfulness, unnecessary. The apostle *Peter*, though he asserts that those who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and are begotten again according to his abundant mercy, *are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*; yet exhorts these same persons to *gird up the loins of their mind, to be sober, and hope to the end, to be holy in all manner of conversation, and to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear*; and makes use of their sure and certain redemption by the precious blood of Christ, from a vain conversation, to move and engage them to a regard to these things. And indeed, though there is no danger of true believers falling, so as to be lost, and perish; yet inasmuch as through the weakness of the flesh, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this world, they may so fall, as to dishonour the name of God, wound their own souls, and stumble others, there is good reason why *he that thinks he stands, should take heed lest he fall*. It is, indeed, in the way and use of means, that the Spirit of God leads on the saints in faith and holiness to the end.

Thus we have seen that the several peculiar doctrines of grace are pure and innocent, having no manner of tendency to licentiousness; but the genuine nature and design of them are, to promote holiness of life and conversation. We might easily recriminate, by shewing that the charge of licentiousness may be brought with much more truth and justice against the opposite doctrines: As for instance; if Christ has redeemed all mankind, every individual of human nature, then may
a prophane

^a Eph. iv. 24.

[•] 1 Peter i. 5.

[†] Ver. 13, 15, 17.

[†] 1 Cor. x. 12.

a prophane sinner say, "I am redeemed by the blood of Christ, and shall undoubtedly be saved, let me live as I will; for Christ could not die, or his blood be shed in vain." Should it be said, that though it is asserted that Christ died for all men, yet none can receive any benefit by his death, but such as believe, and repent of their sins: Be it so; since it is affirmed that man has a power to believe and repent when he pleases; the profane sinner may go on to say, "Seeing this is my case, I am endued with a free-will, I can believe and repent at a pleasure, I will take my fill of sin, and at a convenient time, I will reform, repent and believe, and doubt not but all will be well with me." So the doctrine of the saints apostacy may be improved by wicked men, to encourage them to continue in sinful courses, and to procrastinate all concerns as yet about a future state: For may the sinner say, "if this is the case, that a man may be truly converted, be a true believer, and penitent, and a real child of God, and yet so fall and apostatize, as to be in the same state he was before; may amend, and fall away again, and in this way go on to the end, so that it is very uncertain and precarious in what state he will die; then I may, for the present at least, indulge myself in sinful pleasures; for certainly it will be acting the wiser and more rational part, for me to amend, repent, and put myself into a good state, since these are in my power, toward the close of my days, when it may be more rationally concluded I shall continue therein, and so die in a happy situation." Thus, I say, we might easily recriminate; but I choose not to load principles with consequences which are denied; nor should our opponents charge ours as they do, when we declare our abhorrence of every thing of this nature.

To conclude: Let us, notwithstanding these imputations, value and esteem the doctrine of grace, and not entertain the less opinion of it on this account. Let us stand fast in it, abide by it, and earnestly contend for it. Let us endeavour, by the assistance of the grace of God, to have our conversations as become the gospel; to adorn the doctrine of Christ in all things; to *hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience*; and so to live, as to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and such to the blush, who falsely accuse the doctrine of grace, and our conversation in Christ.

S E R M O N II.

The Watchman's Answer to the Question, What of the Night?

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture in Great Eastcheap, Dec. 27, 1750.

ISAIAH XXI. 11, 12.

The burden of Dunab. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: If ye will enquire, enquire ye; return, come.

THERE are several prophecies in this book, both in the preceding and following chapters, which are called *burdens*; which contain sad and heavy judgments, grievous calamities and distresses, that should come upon nations; and foretel the ruin and destruction of kingdoms and states, and which may be the reason why they are so called; though it must be owned, that there are some prophecies which bear this name, that bring good tidings of good things, yet more rarely. There are no less than three prophecies of this name in this chapter. The words of the text are one, and there is one before them, and another after them. The chapter begins with *the burden of the desert of the sea, or plain of the sea*; which describes the city of *Babylon*, afterwards named; and which was built on a plain, and in a watry place, by the river *Euphrates*; and it is usual with Jewish writers, inspired or uninspired, to call any confluence of water a *sea*; whose destruction is foretold as what would be by the Medes and Persians; and these are mentioned by name, *ver. 2.* as well as signified by a chariot with a couple of horsemen, *ver. 7.* and its ruin is declared in express words, *ver. 9.* and the whole is delivered out in such a manner, as may easily be accommodated to *mystical Babylon*, who is represented as in a wilderness, sitting upon many waters, agreeable to *ver. 1.* whose destruction will be by the *lion of the tribe of Judah*, see *ver. 8.* and which is expressed by the self-same words as are in *ver. 9.* and that for the comfort of the Lord's people, *ver. 10^b.*

The prophecy in our text is called *the burden of Dumab*; whether it respects the Arabians, particularly the Dumean Arabians, or whether the Edomites or Idumeans,

^a Vid. Zach. ix. 1, 9. and chap. xii. 1, 10.

^b Rev. xvii. 1, 3. and chap. v. 5. and xix. 11—20. and xviii. 2, 4.

Idumeans, is a matter of question: some think the former, because *Dumab* was a son of *Ishmael*, Gen. xxv. 14. and of him *Aben Ezra* and *Kimchi* interpret it here; and there was a place in *Arabia* called *Dumatha*^c: but others are of opinion, that the latter, the Edomites, or Idumeans, are intended; and the Septuagint version renders the words *the vision of Idumea*; and the Arabic version calls them a prophecy concerning *Edom* and *Seir*; and so *Jarchi* by *Dumab* understands *Edom*: and the rather the Edomites may be thought to be here meant, since a distinct prophecy concerning *Arabia* follows after; and because mention is made of *Seir*, which was inhabited by the Edomites^d: *he calleth to me out of Seir*; or there was a cry out of *Seir*; one called from thence to the watchman, and asked him a question, to which he returned an answer, and also gave some advice. Now let it be observed, that this prophecy may refer to the time when *Edom* should be a possession, and *Seir* also should be a possession for his enemies; that is, be possessed by the Jews, as is foretold^e they would; and which was fulfilled before the coming of Christ, when the Jews and Idumeans were mixed together; and the latter, at least many of them, embraced the Jewish religion^f, and so had knowledge of the Messiah and his coming; and perhaps some of them savingly believed in him; and these, some one or more of them, or however, the Jews that were in *Seir* or in *Idumea*, may be thought to be here enquiring after him, when he would come and put an end to the then present night of darkness, and make the morning of the gospel-dispensation: and it may be further observed, that as *Esau* or *Edom* may be considered as a type of antichrist, the Edomites may represent the antichristian party. *Jerom*^g says, that some of the Hebrews read *Roma* for *Duma* here, and suppose that the Roman empire is designed; and certain it is, that nothing is more common with them, than to call the Roman empire, and *Rome* itself, *Edom*, and the Romans or Papists, Edomites^h. Now, as in the darkest times of Popery, there were some that rose up as witnesses to the truth, there were others that embraced it; who doubtless enquired of the witnesses, the watchmen, when the night of popish darkness would be over, and gospel-light break forth; and it is easy to observe, that a little before the destruction of *Babylon*, God will have a people in her, whom he will call to come forth out of the midst of her, that they partake not of her sins, nor of her plaguesⁱ; and these, sensible of the state of darkness they are in, may be supposed to be enquiring after latter-day-light and glory. These short hints may serve to give us a little light into this obscure passage; and which will open more and more as we go along, considering the following things.

VOL. I.

D

I. Who

^c Vid. Hiller. Onomasticon Sacr. p. 797.^d Gen. xxxvi. 8, 9.^e Numb. xxiv. 18.^f Joseph. Antiq. l. 13. c. 9. §. 1.^g In loc.^h Vid. Buxtorf. Lexic. Talmud.

col. 39, 31. &c.

ⁱ Rev. xviii. 4.

- I. Who the *watchman* is that is here applied unto.
- II. The question that is put to him and repeated; *Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?*
- III. The Watchman's answer to it, *The morning cometh, and also the night.*
- IV. An Exhortation upon it, which may serve for the use and improvement of the whole; *If you will enquire, enquire ye; return, come.*

I. Who the *watchman* is, that is addressed; and to whom the question in the text is put.

1. Some by the watchman understand God himself^k: the name and title of a watcher is sometimes given to him, and indeed to all the divine persons, who are called *watchers* and *holy ones*, Daniel iv. 17. where the affair of *Nebuchadnezzar* being driven from his throne and palace, to dwell among the beasts of the field, is said to be a matter by the decree of the *watchers*, and the demand by the word of the *holy ones*. I know this is commonly understood of angels, and they are watchers by office, being the guardians of God's people, and holy by nature; they may be said also to declare and execute the decrees of God; but then his decrees are never called theirs; and besides, this decree is expressly called the decree of the Most High, ver. 24. and these watchers and holy ones are represented as having others under them, whom they call upon to execute this decree, ver. 23. and where they are called the *watcher* and the *holy one*, as before, the plural number is used, to denote the plurality of persons in the Godhead, there the singular, to secure the unity of the divine essence.

Acts of watching are ascribed to God, sometimes in a bad sense, and sometimes in a good one: I mean, that sometimes he is said to watch over men for evil, and sometimes for good; his eyes are upon the ways of all men, good and bad, and he sees all their goings, and watches their sins to chastize or punish for them; he watches over the sins of his own people, to correct them for them, in a fatherly way, but not in a way of strict justice; not so as to demand satisfaction of them, or inflict vindictive wrath upon them; should he mark iniquity in such a manner, there would be no standing before him; though sometimes they think he does so: thus *Job*^l, *now thou numberest my steps, dost thou not watch over my sin? my transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity*; in order to bring it forth one day, as he thought, against him, to his condemnation. God does indeed watch over the sins of wicked men, of a rebellious and impenitent people, to punish them for them; and he watches upon the evil of punishment, to bring it on such for the evil of sin; as *Daniel* says^m, *therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us*: and as he sometimes watches over a people

^k So Jarchi and Abarbanel in loc.

^l Job xiv. 16, 17.

^m Dan. ix. 14.

a people to pluck up and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so he watches over them, to build and to plant, or to do them good; he waits upon his own people to be gracious to them, and watches the set time for that purpose: his eyes are always on them, and are never withdrawn from them; they are engraven on his hands, and they are continually before him.

The Hebrew word שומר, here translated a watchman, is used of God in *Psalms* cxxi. 4, 5. and is there rendered *keeper*; and well agrees with him who is the keeper of his *Israel*, both in a way of providence, and in a way of grace: he is the preserver of men, yea, the Saviour of all men, as the God of providence, especially of them that believe; he keeps them from evil; he preserves their going out and coming in; he watches over them night and day, lest any hurt them; and indeed, *except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain*: and he is the keeper of his people in a way of grace; they are sensible of their own weakness, and of their need of his power, and therefore apply to him for preservation; one says, *keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me*; and another says, *keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins*; and the Lord does preserve the souls of his faithful ones; they are kept by his power through faith unto salvation.

To all which may be added, who so proper to apply unto, to know the time of night, as to God, who hath put the times and the seasons in his own power, and who has determined the times before appointed, for the performance of every thing that is done in this world? for to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; every thing is done as it was purposed, and at the time it should, and which is known to God; particularly the time of Christ's first coming into the world, as agreed and fixed upon between the Father and the Son, called the fulness of time, and was known to them both, and made known in the word: and the time of his second coming is also appointed; God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Christ, and him he will shew in his times; though of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, but the Father only.

2. Others by the watchman think Christ is meant; so the Jews say, this is *Metatron*, the Keeper of *Israel*, which with them is one of the names of the Messiah; and to whom this character of a watchman agrees, as he is a shepherd; one part of whose business it is to watch over the flock by night and by day: Christ does the whole work and office of a shepherd to his flock: he feeds his flock like a shepherd; he guards and protects it, as *David* his type did; he secures it from the lion and the bear; and being the proprietor of the flock,

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whose

n Jer. xxxi. 28.

o Psal. cxvii. 1.

p 1 Chron. iv. 10.

q Psal. xix. 13.

r Acts i. 6. and xvii. 26.

s Eccles. iii. 1.

t Gal. iv. 4.

u Acts xvii. 31.

v 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Matt. xxiv. 36.

w Cocceius in loc.

x Zohar. in Exod. fol. 54. 2.

whose own the sheep are, will not flee as an hireling does when the wolf cometh, but expose his life to danger for them; and indeed he laid down his life for the sheep. This character of a watchman agrees with him, as the keeper of his people; they are put into his hands, and there they are, out of which none can pluck them; they are preserved in Christ, who is able to keep them from falling, and who keeps a watchful eye over them continually, and will take care that not one of them should be lost or perish, but have everlasting life. And now, as he is the omniscient God, he knows and can declare *the end from the beginning, and from antient times the things that are not yet done*^a. He knew the time of his first coming into the world, and so likewise of his going out of it. *Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father*^b; and he knows the time of his second coming also, and of all intermediate events; of every thing that should happen from his first to his second coming; he knows the things that are, and which shall be hereafter: the book of the Revelation, is called, *the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to shew unto his servants, things that must shortly come to pass*^c; wherefore whither should we go but to him, to know what of the night it is? But perhaps it may be thought to be too bold, too free and familiar, to address God or Christ under this character, and in such language, *Watchman, what of the night?*—Therefore,

3. I choose rather to join with those, who think that a prophet or minister of the word is intended by the watchman: it was usual under the Old Testament, for prophets to be called watchmen; the prophet *Isaiab* was one, and perhaps is intended in *ver. 6, 8.* and in the text; and so was *Jeremiab*; and so was *Ezekiel*; to whom it is said, *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel*^d. Gospel-ministers are also called watchmen^e; *the watchmen shall lift up the voice, &c.* and this in allusion to shepherds, which is one of their titles and characters; *pastors*, which God gives *after his own heart*, to feed his people *with knowledge and understanding*^f; who, having taken the oversight of the flock, ought to take heed to themselves, and to that; and one part of their work is to watch in all things; and they do watch for and over the souls of men, as they that must give an account. Moreover, they are called watchmen, in allusion to watchmen in cities, of which there are two sorts; some that go about the city, and others that are set on the walls of it; and to each of these the ministers of the word are compared in *Cant. iii. 3.* and *chap. v. 7.* see also *Isai. lxii. 6. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, &c.*

The qualifications for such an office are quickness of sight, vigilance, constancy, courage and faithfulness: watchmen ought to have their sight, and keep a good look-out; they ought to be awake, and not asleep, and constant in

^a *Isai. xlv. 10.*^b *John xiii. 1.*^c *Rev. i. 1.*^d *Ezek. iii. 17.*^e *Isai. lii. 8.*^f *Jer. iii. 15.*

in their post; should be men of resolution and intrepidity in time of danger, and faithful to give warning of it; and so should the ministers of the word. Sad it is, when *Zion's* watchmen are blind, and yet we read of such. The four living creatures, mentioned in the book of the *Revelation*⁴, are emblems of Gospel-ministers; and they are said to be *full of eyes* within, and before, and behind; and they have need of all the eyes they have, to take heed to themselves, and to watch over others: they ought to be *sober* and *vigilant*, and in their watch-tower, and on their guard; for while men sleep, the enemy sows tares of error, heresy, and division: they should be “*stedfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*;” they should watch, and stand fast in the faith, and quit themselves like men, and be strong; and they should not conceal any thing that ought to be known, or keep back that which is profitable, but declare the whole counsel of God.

Their work is to warn sinners of their evil ways, and of the danger they are in by them; to shew them what an evil and bitter thing sin is, and that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against it; that the wages of sin is death eternal; and that destruction and misery are in all their ways, in which they will issue, if grace prevent not; and to convince them of the worth of their precious and immortal souls, and that the loss of them is irrecoverable, and that nothing can be given in exchange for them. Also their business is to arouse and awake sleepy saints; the wise as well as the foolish virgins sometimes fall asleep, and it is the duty of the watchmen to awake them, and let them know how unbecoming it is for persons of their characters to be asleep; *they that sleep, sleep in the night*; — *but let us who are of the day be sober: let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch*⁵. Children of the light and of the day, should not sleep as those who are of the night and darkness; the watchmen should tell them, it is high time to awake out of sleep, and jog them and stir them up; and if this will not do, they should “*cry aloud, and spare not, and lift up their voice like a trumpet,*” and say, *Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*⁶. Moreover, another part of their office is, to give the time of the night: as it is the business of a watchman on the walls to look out, and if he descries an enemy, to observe his motions and advances, and give notice of approaching danger to them within the city; so it is the business of the watchmen that go about the city, as to take up strolling persons and examine them; so to give the inhabitants the hour of the night, that they may know how much of it is gone, and what is yet to come; and this is the office of the ministers of the word: the watchmen of the Old Testament, the prophets, gave the time of night then; they *enquired and searched diligently, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which*

was:

⁴ Rev. iv. 6, 8.

⁵ 1 Thes. v. 5—7.

⁶ Ephes. v. 14.

was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow^f. And so the watchmen of the New Testament, the ministers of the Gospel, it becomes them to enquire what time it now is, that they may be able in some measure to give an answer to such a question as is here put, *what of the night?* in order to which, it is necessary to study the prophetic part of the New Testament, particularly the book of the *Revelation*; and which, according to its name, is a revelation, and not a secret; an open, and not a sealed book: and *blessed is he that readeth* this book, not only privately, but in public, in order to explain it unto others; and *blessed are they that bear the words of this prophecy*^g explained by their minister; so the one will be ready to ask, and the other ready to answer the question here proposed, which is the next thing to be attended to; wherefore I pass on to consider,

II. The question put to the watchman, *Watchman, what of the night?* and which is repeated, *Watchman, what of the night?* This is usually done when persons are in a panic, or they fear the watchman did not hear them the first time; or it may denote one coming after another in a fright, asking the same question. The sense is, either *what from the night*^h? as the words may be rendered; what has happened since it was night? hast thou observed nothing? is the enemy near, or danger at hand? or *what sayst thou concerning the night?* the night of darkness and affliction in which we are, when will it be over? or what time of night is it? what o'clock is it? how much of the night is there gone? and what is there that remains to come?

Now let it be observed, that there was a night both in the *Jewish* and *Gentile* world, preceding the first coming of Christ: the former dispensation was a night of darkness with the Jews themselves, in comparison of the Gospel-day, or that famous day, so much and so often spoken of in this prophecy of *Isaiab*; which was made by the rising of the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings; and which reaches from the first coming of Christ unto his second coming; and of which it may be said, during that time, *now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation*ⁱ: but before this it was night; and it may be, that in reference to this, as well as to the darkness which overspread the Gentile world, and which was in a great measure removed by the preaching of the Gospel, the apostle says, *the night is far spent, the day is at hand*^k: it is certain, however, that there was a great obscurity in the *Mosaic* dispensation; the law was given amidst blackness, darkness, and tempest; there was a veil over the face of *Moses* when he spoke unto the people; and there is another on their hearts, in reading the Old Testament, *Moses* and the prophets; and which remains untaken away from them

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^f 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.^g Rev. i. 3.^h מה כלילהⁱ 2 Cor. vi. 2.^k Rom. xiii. 12.

to this day, but will be removed when they shall be turned to the Lord ; the doctrines of grace though then delivered, yet very obscurely in types and figures ; the way of salvation by Christ, and unto eternal happiness, was pointed out, but not so clearly as now ; the way into the holiest of all, was not so manifest, as now the veil of the temple is rent in twain. The shadows of the ceremonial law were stretched out at that time ; the law was only a shadow of good things to come, and was not so much as the very image of them ; which shadows were done away, when Christ, the body and substance, was come : to which the church refers, when she says, *until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense*¹. There were indeed, in this dispensation, the stars of light, the prophets, and ministers of the word to instruct the people : but then the appearance of these shews it was a night-season ; they had the word, which was a light unto their feet, and a lamp unto their paths ; they had the scriptures, which were profitable for doctrine and instruction in righteousness, and able to make men wise unto salvation ; they had the moon of the ceremonial law to lead them to Christ ; this perhaps is meant by the moon under the church's feet, *Rev. xii. 1.* one part of it lay in the observation of new moons, and its solemn festivals were governed and regulated by them ; it had its spots and imperfections as the moon, and was changeable as that is ; and is now done away because of the weakness and unprofitableness of it : it is true, it reflected and gave light to the saints under that dispensation ; but then as the moon is the lesser light, and which rules by night, this shews it was as yet a night-season, and the day was not come ; as yet the bright and morning-star had not appeared ; the day-spring from on high had not visited man ; and the Sun of righteousness as yet had not risen, and made the glorious Gospel-day. It may be to this gradual progress of light, through the various dispensations of the church, Christ may have respect, when he says^m, *who is she that looks forth as the morning, in the patriarchal state ; fair as the moon, under the ceremonial law ; clear as the sun, under the Gospel-dispensation ; and terrible as an army with banners, in the latter day, when she will enjoy purity of doctrine, discipline and ordinances, as well as have honour and authority ?* Thus it was with the Jewish church before the coming of Christ ; and as to the Gentile world, it was a time of gross ignorance with them, which God winked at, overlooked, and took no notice of, or used any methods to remove ; they knew not God, the one only living and true God, and much less God in Christ ; they were without him, and without the Messiah, and any knowledge of him ; were aliens from the commonwealth of *Israel*, and strangers to the covenants of promise ; they sat in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death, till Christ

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¹ Cant. iv. 6.^m Cant. vi. 10.

came a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of his people *Israel*.

Now the question may be with respect to this night of Jewish and Gentile darkness, what of this night it was? how near it was to an end? when that would be, and the day break? There were some general rules with respect to this matter, or several prophecies which pointed to the time of Christ's coming, and served as a direction to it, and furnished with an answer to this question: the tribe of *Judab* was not to cease to be a tribe, nor rule and government to cease from it; it was to be the seat of it, until the Messiah came, according to *Jacob's* prophecy; *the scepter shall not depart from Judab, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come*^m: and by other prophecies it appears, that the second temple would not be destroyed until he came, for he was to *come* into it as *the Lord*, the owner and proprietor of it; which coming of his into it would give it a *greater glory* than the first temple hadⁿ. There were frequently hints given out by the watchmen, the prophets, with relation to the coming of Christ, and to his speedy coming; when the faith of the Lord's people was almost worn out, because his coming was so long deferred; one of these watchmen is bid to *say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, and will save you*^o; and another, when on his watch-tower, says, *the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry*^p; and another of these watchmen brings good tidings, and calls upon *Zion* to rejoice, saying, *behold thy King cometh*; he is just ready to appear, and will be here quickly, and describes him and the creature he was to ride upon^q; and the last of them declares, that *the Lord, and messenger of the covenant, would suddenly come to his temple*^r: *Daniel*, he fixes the very time of his coming, and says^s, that *seventy weeks were determined* or cut out for it, even weeks of years, four hundred and ninety years from a date which he gives. By these hints of the watchmen, and especially by the last, the people knew what time of night it was, and how long it would be to the coming of the Messiah, and lived in expectation of it. *R. Nebumiah*, that lived about fifty years before the coming of Christ, gave out, that the time of the Messiah signified by *Daniel* could not be protracted longer than those fifty years^t; and about the time that he did come, we find that there was among the people of the Jews a general expectation of him: good old *Simeon* was waiting for the consolation of *Israel*; and *Anna* the prophetess spoke of him to them that looked for redemption in *Jerusalem*; and when *Jobu* the Baptist

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^m Gen. xlix. 10.

ⁿ Mal. iii. 1.

^o Hag. ii. 7, 9.

^p Isai. xxxv. 4.

^q Hab. ii. 1, 3.

^r Zach. ix. 9.

^s Mal. iii. 1.

^t Dan. ix. 24.

^u Apud Grotium de Veritat.

his forerunner appeared, all the people were in expectation, and mused in their hearts whether he was the Christ or no.

It might be further observed, that as there was a night of darkness preceding the first coming of Christ, when at certain times the watchmen were applied unto, to know what time it was; and who gave several hints, which were directions in this matter, and served to keep up the saints faith and expectation of it; and by which they knew in some measure whereabouts they were, and when that would be; so there will be a night of darkness which will go before both the spiritual and personal coming of Christ again, and to which this question may also relate: but of this more hereafter; we shall find a more proper place for the consideration of it under the next head, to which I hasten.

III. The watchman's answer to the question, *The morning cometh, and also the night*: there is a morning at hand, and a night will follow; a morning of prosperity and a night of adversity; and as sure as the one comes, so sure will the other; there will be a constant succession and revolution of these unto the end of time.

The first coming of Christ was as the morning; so the Jews interpret these words of the morning of redemption to the righteous, and of the night of darkness to the wicked; or as they elsewhere express it, "the morning is for the righteous, and the night for the wicked; the morning for *Israel*, and the night for the nations of the world;" whom they exclude from all benefit by the Messiah. It is said of him, the righteous ruler over men, that *he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds*; of no other can this be so well understood as of Christ; of whom it is expressly foretold, *his going forth is prepared as the morning*: this was attended with joy and cheerfulness, as the morning; in a clear morning, when the sun rises, all nature looks brisk and gay, pleasant and delightful; hence those words, *who is she that looks forth as the morning*? The news of Christ's birth, brought by the angels to the shepherds, at the time of his incarnation, were *good tidings of great joy, which should be to all people*. The apostles and disciples, when they first had the knowledge of him, in what an exulting manner do they express themselves, *We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ*? The first preaching of the Gospel by his forerunner, by himself, and by his apostles, raised joy and gladness wherever it came with power, whether in *Judea*, or in the Gentile world; especially the latter, and particularly in *Samaria*; of which place it is said, that *Philip preached Christ, and there was great joy in that city*.

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* Luke ii. 25, 38. and iii. 15. * Gloss. in T. Bab. Bava Kama. fol. 3. a.

† T. Hierof. Taaniot. fol. 64. 1. † y 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. † Hof. vi. 3. † Cant. vi. 10.

‡ Luke ii. 11. ‡ John i. 41. ‡ Acts viii. 5, 8.

The coming of Christ dispersed the shadows of the ceremonial law; these vanished and disappeared when Christ was come, and suffered in the flesh, who was the body and substance of them; and the morning of the Gospel-dispensation dawned; and as it dispelled the darkness of the law, it introduced light. *John*, the forerunner of Christ, was not the light itself, but he came to bear witness of the light; which is Christ, the light of the world; who brought light into it; and is that great light which shined on men sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death. The gospel which came by him, and he gave his apostles to preach, is a glorious light; and this shone out and appeared to all men, Jews and Gentiles. This, like the morning-light, spread itself all over the world; the apostles had a commission to go into all the world, and preach it to every creature; and the sound of it by them did go into all the earth, and their words or doctrines unto the end of the world: before the destruction of *Jerusalem*, the Gospel was preached unto all nations; one of the apostles, the apostle *Paul*, preached it fully from *Jerusalem*, round about unto *Illyricum*: And this, like the light of the morning, moved on irresistibly; nothing could stop it, as nothing can the morning-light; it had a free course, and ran, and was glorified; notwithstanding the rage and fury of persecutors, the word of the Lord grew and multiplied; though the whole world was against it, Jews and Gentiles, the most powerful, wise and learned, it made its way, and bore down all opposition to it; the ministers of it triumphed in Christ, and diffused the favour of his knowledge, and the light of his word, in every place.

But then as sure as this morning came, so sure a *night* followed, and that very quickly, to the Jews; the light of the Gospel was in a little time taken from them, they despising, contradicting, and blaspheming it; even whilst Christ the light was with them, they rejected him; they loved and chose darkness rather than the light; there were only a few, a remnant according to the election of grace, that received him, the rest were *blinded*; and the blindness which happened to them continues unto this day, and will continue till the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in. It has been a long night with them, and when it will be otherwise, cannot be precisely said; the veil of darkness and ignorance in reading *Moses* and the prophets, and especially in those things which respect the Messiah, remains untaken away; but will be done away in Christ, and be removed when they shall be converted, and turn to the Lord. And though the light of the Gospel continued longer in the Gentile world, and may be thought to have been in its meridian in the times of *Constantine*, yet thenceforward it visibly declined; an evening came on, a night of darkness prevailed; which was brought on in the eastern part of the world, by the arising of the false prophet *Mahomet*; who having *the key of the bottomless pit*, opened it, and let out *the smoke* of his false

false doctrine, contained in his *Alkoran*, by which *the sun and the air were darkened*; and also his *locusts the Saracens*, which ran over the East, and spread his doctrine and worship every where^c: about the same time, *the man of sin, the Romish antichrist*, was revealed, being come to his maturity and ripeness; and that which lett or hindered his appearance, the Roman emperor, being taken out of the way; whose coming was after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness^d; and spread darkness all over the western part of the world; and then those times came on, the Spirit expressly speaks of, that many should depart from the faith; give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speak lies in hypocrisy; forbid to marry; and command to abstain from meats God has created to be received with thanksgiving^e; which are manifestly popish tenets. This dark state of things is represented by the Thyatirian church-state; in which were the depths of Satan, and the blackness of popish darkness; when the woman Jezebel taught and seduced the servants of the Lord to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols^b; and a long dismal dark night it was, which lasted till the Reformation.

But when the Reformation came on, another morning appeared; and which is expressed by *the morning star*^f, promised to the overcomers of the errors and superstitions of the Thyatirian state; and which the Sardian church-state brought in: then the Gospel broke out in a most glorious manner, and spread itself like the morning-light, swiftly and irresistibly, over these western parts, *Germany, Poland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Holland, and these isles of Great Britain and Ireland*, and other places; and brought with it great joy and gladness every where; and things went on in a very comfortable and promising manner; and it looked as if the old apostolical times were coming over again; and indeed the first Reformers proposed to go upon the plan of the apostles' doctrine and practice: hence part of the same character is taken by the writer to this church of *Sardis*, as to the church at *Ephesus*, which represented the truly apostolic church; *these things, saith he that bath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars*^g; for great gifts were now bestowed on men, and who shone as stars in Christ's right hand; but then it is not added, *who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*; for though the first Reformers went a great way in restoring true doctrine, they yet fell short in reforming the discipline of the churches, and therefore their works were not found perfect before God: there were many bright Gospel-ministers, but few, if any churches formed according to the primitive model; and in process of time, there was an entire stand put to the Reformation itself, and things went backwards instead of forwards; and of late years, there has been a very visible decline; and a night is coming on, which

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^c Rev. ix. 1.^d 2 Thes. ii. 3, 7, 9, 10.^e 1 Tim. iv. 1—3.^f Rev. ii. 20, 24.^g Rev. ii. 29.^h Rev. ii. 1. and chap. iii. 1.

we are entered into; the shadows of the evening are stretching out apace upon us, and the signs of the even-tide are very manifest, and which will shortly appear yet more and more. A sleepy frame of spirit has seized us; both ministers and churches are asleep; and being so, the enemy is busy in sowing the tares of errors and heresies, and which will grow up and spread yet more and more. Coldness and indifference in spiritual things, a want of affection to God, Christ, his people, truths and ordinances, may easily be observed: the first love is left; iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold, and it will wax yet colder and colder; and will issue in a general forsaking of assembling together, and in an entire neglect of the ministers of the Gospel; when such who have been professors themselves will be shy of them, and carefully shun them; will not care to own them or speak to them, and much less receive them into their houses; and still less hear them; which, I think, is meant by, or at least is one part of the meaning of the dead bodies of the witnesses not being suffered to be put into graves¹: the sun of the Gospel will be set, and its light for a while wholly withdrawn; the witnesses will be slain, their dead bodies lie unburied, and so cease prophesying, their testimony being finished; this will be a dismal dark night indeed; only it will be a short one.

If it should be asked, what time it is with us now? whereabouts we are? and what is yet to come of this night? As a faithful watchman, I will give you the best account I can: I take it, we are in the Sardinian church-state, in the latter part of it, which, as before observed, brought on the Reformation, and represents that; we are in the decline of that state: and there are many things said of that church which agree with us; as that we have a name; that we live and are dead; the name of the reformed churches, but without the life and power of true religion; and that there are a few, and but a few names among us, even in our Sardis, which have not defiled their garments^m with false doctrine or superstitious worship. The times we live in are just such as are described in Zech. xiv. 6, 7. *that the light shall not be clear nor dark, but it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night*: not clear, not full day, as at noon, as it was in the times of Christ and his apostles; when the Sun of righteousness was risen, and the shadows of Jewish and Gentile darkness vanished, and the Gospel shone out in the ministry of the apostles; when the church had on her head a crown of twelve stars, was clothed with the sun, and had the moon under her feet: nor is it so clear day with us as even at the reformation; for though there may be some ministers and churches which may have more clear, distinct, and evangelic light than there was at that time; yet take the Protestant churches in the bulk, and there is not so much light now as then: nor is it such clear day as it will be in the spiritual reign of Christ, when will be *the brightness of Zion's rising*

¹ See my Exposition of Rev. xi. 9.

^m Rev. iii. 1, 4.

rising; not to take notice of the kingdom-state during the thousand years, which will be all day and no night; nor of the ultimate glory, the inheritance of the saints in light: and yet it is not totally dark, or quite night; not so dark as it was with the Jews under the former dispensation, who could not see to the end of that which was to be abolished; much less as it was with the Gentiles before the coming of Christ; or as in the dark times of popery; nor as it will be at the even-tide of the present dispensation we are under, before described; it is a sort of a twilight with us, between clear and dark, between day and night. As to what of the night is yet to come, or what will befall the churches, and will bring on the dismal night before us; they are, the slaying of the witnesses, and the universal spread of popery all over Christendom; and the latter is the unavoidable consequence of the former.

The slaying of the witnesses, which I understand not so much in a literal sense, or of a corporal death; though there may be many slain in this sense when it will be; but in a civil sense, with respect to their ministry, being silenced by their enemies, and neglected by their friends; this is an affair that is not yet over: some have thought that it is, and that the prophecy of it had its accomplishment in the burning of the protestants in *Queen Mary's* time, which lasted about three years and a half; or, according to others, in *King James the II^o's* reign, which was about such a length of time; but this is not at all likely, since then the witnesses had liberty granted them to prophesy: it is more likely, that it should be fulfilled in the case of the protestants of the valleys of *Piedmont*, who were driven out from thence for nonconformity to the Romish religion, by the duke of *Savoy*; and who recalled and re-established them by an edict just three years and a half after; but these instances, with others which are proposed, were only hints or pledges of what is hereafter to be done: these were at most only partial slayings of the witnesses; whereas this will be universal; it will not be in one place only, but every where, wherever there are any. Besides, the outward court must be given to the Gentiles, ere the witnesses, which are in the inward court, can be come at and slain, which is not yet done. The Gentiles are the papists; the outward court is the bulk of the Reformed churches, which will fall into the hands of the papists again; since the Reformation has been at a stand, and things have been upon the decline, the papists have got ground, and have regained some part of the outward court, as in *Germany, Poland, &c.* But they have not, as yet got the whole into their hands, as they will, and which they must, ere they can make this universal slaughter of the witnesses: an house that has an outward court, or a court-yard unto it, the court is a fence to the house, and there is no coming at the one without entering the other; and so all churches established by the laws of the countries where they are, or all those civil and

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worldly establishments, are fences and guards about the witnesses; so long as these are out of the hands of the papists, they cannot come at the witnesses, they are safe; but when these are once gained over, then they will be slain, and not till then. Moreover, the witnesses have not yet finished their testimony; they are still prophesying, though in sackcloth, or under some discouragements; whereas it will be when they have finished their testimony, and at the close of the 1260 days or years of antichrist's reign, that they will be killed. And had they been slain at any of the times before-mentioned, they would have risen long before now; for the time between their death and rising is but three days and a half, that is, three years and a half; they would have ascended up to heaven before now, which denotes a most glorious state of the church; and the ruin of antichrist would have come on long before this time; for that will immediately follow the rising and ascension of these witnesses*; for at the same hour that they shall ascend, will be a great earthquake, or a revolution in the papal state, and the tenth part of the city, or of the Romish jurisdiction, shall fall; that is, one of its ten horns, kings or kingdoms belonging to it, and perhaps the kingdom of France is meant; and seven thousand men of name will be slain, and the rest be affrighted, and give glory to God; nothing of which has as yet been done: to which may be added, that upon the fulfilment of the above things, the second woe will pass away, and the third woe will take place; the second woe brought the Saracens and Turks into the empire, and the passing away of it relates to the destruction of the Turkish empire, or will issue in that; for when that is over, the Turkish empire will be at an end; whereas it is still in being, and in great power; and the third woe, or the sounding of the seventh trumpet, will bring on the kingdom of Christ; but as yet, there is no appearance of the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ. From all which it may be concluded, that the slaying of the witnesses is yet to come, and will make the dismal part of that night we are entering into, and which will be accompanied with an universal spread of popery: popery will be once more the reigning, prevailing religion in Christendom; and indeed how should it otherwise be? For when the witnesses will be slain, there will be none to oppose the power and progress of it; there will be an universal triumph among the inhabitants of the earth; the popish party upon this will rejoice; and send gifts to one another; the outward court being in their hands, and the witnesses slain: and that mystical *Babylon*, or the whore of *Rome*, will be in *statu quo*, and in all her glory and grandeur at the time of her destruction, is evident from her saying, *I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow*; every thing now being according to her wishes; having regained all her former power and glory, and nothing to fear from the witnesses who

* See the Exposition as before.

o Rev. xi. 13. and Exposition in *ibid*.

f Rev. xi. 10.

who had before tormented her, they now being slain; but her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burnt with fire¹; even in the ruff of all her glory; which does not seem to comport with her present state and circumstances: she will have more flesh upon her than now she seems to have, when the kings shall hate her, and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire²: before the utter destruction of antichrist, *he shall go forth again with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many*; yea, *he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain, or the mountain of delight, of boliness*; and what place is there in all the globe, to which this description so well answers as *Great Britain*? This will be done before, and but a little before his ruin; for it follows, *yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him*³.

And I am the more confirmed in all this, by the present appearances of things in the world; as, the very great increase of popery in our own land, and in other countries; for though the Pope of *Rome*, as a secular prince, and with respect to the exercise of his power and authority as such, is not what he was, and is much declining, and has not that regard paid him by the kings of the earth as formerly; yet popery itself is far from being on the decline, or losing ground: as also the great departure of the reformed churches, so called, from the doctrines and principles of the reformation; and even of protestant dissenters, who are gone, and are going more and more into doctrines and practices which naturally verge and lead to popery: to which may be added, the various sects which within a few years have sprung up among us; the doctrines and practices of some of them being similar to those of the church of *Rome*: I will not say that in general they have it in view and design to encourage and increase the Romish religion; yet I am very jealous that this is the view of some; but be this as it will, I am very much of opinion, that these things will at last issue in popery; and that some of those persons will be suffered as instruments to spread it, both here, and in all our colonies and plantations abroad.

Now in all that I have said upon the whole, I do not pretend to any extraordinary impulse from God, or to any prophetic spirit, but I ground all upon the word of God; and if what I have said does not appear from thence, and upon the face of things in providence, I have no pretensions to any thing else to support my opinion with; and as such only I deliver it. But then after this dark night,

There will be another *morning*, the spiritual reign of Christ, which the *Philadelphian* church-state will introduce; and a bright glorious morning it will be; when it shall be said to the church, *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee*; and then *the light of the moon shall be as the light*

¹ Rev. xviii. 7, 8.² Rev. xvii. 16.³ Dan. xi. 44, 45.

light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days : then will the witnesses rise and ascend to heaven ; then will the vials of God's wrath be poured out upon the antichristian states, and the kings of the earth will hate the whore and burn her with fire ; and then the gospel will be spread every where ; there will be an open door for it, and none will be able to shut it ; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased ; the earth will be filled with it, as the waters cover the sea ; the watchmen will see, eye to eye, all truths very clearly, distinctly, and in agreement with one another ; multitudes will be converted every where ; and churches set up according to gospel-order in every place ; the doctrines of the gospel will be purely preached ; its ordinances administered as they were first received from Christ, and gospel-discipline strictly attended to ; the fulness of the Gentiles will now be brought in, and the nation of the Jews born at once. It will be a time of great joy and gladness to the saints : now will those voices be heard in heaven, the church, *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; the four and twenty elders*, the representatives of gospel-churches, will *fall upon their faces*, and give thanks to Christ, because he has taken to himself his *great power and reigns* ; those that have got the victory over the beast and his image, will stand upon *the sea of glass*, with harps in their hands, and sing the song of *Moses and the Lamb* ; the voice of much people will be heard, saying, *Allelujah, salvation, and glory, and honour and power, to the Lord our God* ; both because of his judgments on the great whore, and the revenging of the blood of his servants at her hand, and because the marriage of the Lamb will be come : it will be a time of great prosperity, both temporal and spiritual ; in those days of Christ's spiritual reign, the *righteous will flourish*, both in things outward and inward ; and *abundance of peace*, both from without and from within, shall be had as long as the moon endures : Christ shall have *dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth* ; kings shall bring *presents* to him, shall *fall down* before him, and *all nations shall serve him* ; for kings will now come with their subjects, to the brightness of the church, and embrace the doctrines, and submit to the ordinances of it, and will be *nursing fathers* unto it : and yet as sure as this morning comes,

A *night* will follow ; not of persecution of the churches of Christ ; for after the slaying of the witnesses, there will be no more persecution ; but a night of coldness, deadness, sleepiness, and carnal security, brought in by the Laodicean state ; of which church Christ complains, that it was neither *hot* nor *cold*, but *lukewarm*, and therefore threatens to *spue her out of his mouth* ; that is, unchurch her : and indeed after that, he will have no other church on earth in an imperfect

¹ *Iſai* lx. 1. and chap. xxx. 26.

² *Rev.* xi. 15—17. and chap. xv. 1, 2. and xix. 1—8.

³ *Pſal.* lxxii. 7, 8, 10, 11. *Iſai.* lx. 3. and chap. xlix. 23.

⁴ *Rev.* iii. 15, 16.

imperfect state, for that will issue in his personal coming; and with this entirely agrees the account our Lord gives of men at that time, that there will be little grace in exercise; when he comes he will find scarce any *faith on the earth*, in exercise on himself: and with respect to his coming, these days will be like the days of *Noah* and *Lot*, when men were eating and drinking, and marrying, and giving in marriage, and had no thought of what was coming upon them: this will be the last night to the church; and then,

Another *morning* will come, when Christ, *the bright and morning-star*, shall appear, and bring on that *day*, which will last a *thousand years*, and which *thousand years* will be as *one day*. Upon Christ's personal coming, the dead in him will rise first; they will *have dominion in the morning* of this day, the morning of the resurrection, which will now take place; for the rest of the dead will not live till the evening of this day, or rather till the thousand years are ended. And in this state, there will be *no need of the sun, or of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb will be the light thereof; the sun shall be no more the light of men by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light; but the Lord shall be an everlasting light, and the days of mourning shall be ended*; there will be no night in this state, no setting of the sun, or withdrawing of the moon; and after this, there will be no more night to the faints; but there will be an everlasting one to the wicked; who will rise at the end of the thousand years, and be judged, and be cast into the lake of fire, into outer darkness, even blackness of darkness, where will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Thus there will be a constant succession of morning and night, unto the end of time; which will issue in an everlasting day to some, and in an everlasting night to others*. I now proceed,

IV. To the exhortation upon all this; *If ye will enquire, enquire ye; return, come.*

If you will *enquire* about the time of night, and when the morning will come, *enquire* in good earnest; enquire seriously; search the scripture; look into the prophetic parts of it; the several prophecies of the Old and New Testament, respecting both the spiritual and personal coming of Christ, and particularly the book of the *Revelation*; which is a prophetic history of events, that should befall the church and the world, from the first times of christianity to the end of all things; many of which have been fulfilled, and others remain to be fulfilled: carefully read over these accounts, and get the best help you can from those who have made it their study to understand, and explain the things written

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therein;

* Luke xvii. 26—29. and chap. xviii. 8.

* Rev. xxi. 23. *Isai* lx. 19, 20.* So the *Targum* paraphrases these words, "the prophet said, there is a reward for the righteous, and there is vengeance for the wicked;" taking them to relate to the world to come.

therein; whereby you will in some measure know what is come to pass, and what is yet behind. And to reading add prayer and supplication, as *Daniel* did; who, after he had understood by books, by reading the prophecies of *Jeremiah*, when would be the end of the *Babylonish* captivity, the night he and his people were then in; set his face to seek the Lord by prayer and supplication, and had the time of the Messiah's coming made known to him^b: and whilst you are enquiring either after the spiritual reign of Christ, or his second coming to judgment, enquire with modesty and humility; not indulging a vain curiosity, or looking into things that you ought not, and which are not written; or fixing times and seasons which God has put in his own power. Return to the Lord by faith and repentance, from whom you have backslidden in doctrine and practice; who invites you so to do with promises of a gracious reception, and with the healing of all your backslidings: as you are of the *Sardian* church, hear what is said unto you; *be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die;—remember how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent*^c; remember from whom and from what you have gone back; and do your first works of faith and love, and hold fast the old doctrines of the Reformation, then heard and received, and abide by them. Come to the Lord as humble penitents; let backsliders come for the fresh application of pardoning grace and mercy; let sensible sinners come to the person, blood and righteousness of Christ for justification and salvation; let them come to his word, and to his ordinances; *The Spirit and the bride say, Come*; and *whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely*^d; and such who come to Christ aright, will hear another day those words spoken to them; *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*^e.

^b Dan. ix. 2—4.^c Rev. iii. 2, 3.^d Rev. xxii. 17.^e Matt. xxv. 34.

S E R M O N III.

The Practical Improvement of the Watchman's Answer.

Preached at a *Wednesday's Evening Lecture* in *Great-Eastcheap*, Jan. 1, 1752.

I CHRON. XII. 32.

And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do: the heads of them were two hundred, and all their brethren were at their commandment.

IN this chapter we have an account of the persons that associated with *David*, shewed him favour, and assisted him when he was obliged to flee from *Saul*; and also of those of the several tribes of *Israel*, and the numbers of them, that came to him in *Hebron* after the death of *Saul* and *Abner*, to make him king over all *Israel*. And among the rest, those of the tribe of *Issachar* are mentioned; who, though but few, but *two hundred*, when those that came out of the other tribes were several thousands; yet being the principal men of the tribe, and having *all their brethren at their commandment* and beck, it was as well as if the whole tribe had come in a body; and besides, being men of skill and understanding in certain affairs, had an influence over all the tribes; for they *knew* and could tell all *Israel* what they ought to do; and so must be very beneficial and useful to *David* at this juncture.

What the *understanding* of these men lay in is not easy to say; interpreters are divided about it: some take them to be chronologers or astronomers, whose skill lay in the computation of times, in fixing the beginning of the year, and the beginning of the month, and in the intercalation of the year; and so were very serviceable to *Israel* to let them know when the new year began, when it was new moon, when it was right to intercalate the month *Adar*; as they sometimes were obliged to intercalate a whole month together, to make their account of time come right; and when to keep their feasts of Pass-over, Pentecost, and Tabernacles: hence it is thought this tribe is said to *call the people to the mountain*; to the place of worship, the tabernacle or temple in mount *Zion*; *there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness*: and this is the general sense of the Jewish

* Deut. xxxiii. 19.

writers^b. Were this the true sense of the words, and known to be so, since this is the day in which a late act of parliament^c, concerning altering the style of the year, begins to take place, it might be thought that my view in reading this passage of scripture was to amuse you with the difference of old and new style, and to shew you the superior excellency and usefulness of the one to the other; but as this is an affair that is not within my province, so I have that which is of greater moment and importance to lay before you. Others choose to call them astrologers, who had skill in the motions and revolutions of the heavenly bodies^d, and their influences upon the earth, which they had learnt from their neighbours the Phœnicians: or else, being a people much employed in husbandry, hence it is said of this tribe, that *it saw that the land was pleasant, to till and manure; it delighted in agriculture; and bowed his shoulder to bear^e, and carry in the corn when ripe; and dwelt in tents, to keep its fields, or look after its flocks; they by frequent and constant observations had acquired a sort of rustic astrology^f, and could discern the face of the heavens, and prognosticate what weather it would be; and they knew the proper times and seasons of doing business; and so could inform Israel, or the rest of the tribes, when they should plow, and sow, and reap, and plant, and the like. Others think they were historians and annalists, such as those in *Esther* i. 13. where the same phrase is used of those whom *Abasuerus* consulted, when *Vashti* his queen refused to come into his presence at his command, to know of them what had been done in such cases in times past^g: and so these men were well versed in the history of ancient times, and had made their observations on things that had been done in former times; and were capable of giving advice what should be done in like circumstances. Though others seem more rightly to interpret this understanding of theirs of political prudence; they were men that knew how to time things,*

^b The *Targum* of the place is, "of the children of *Uasbar* there were such who were skilful in the knowledge of times. (that is, chronologers) and wise to fix the beginnings of the years, and the beginnings of the months, and to intercalate the months and the years; dextrous at settling the new moons, and fixing the feasts (or appointed times) in their seasons; well versed in the solar revolution; astrologers that had understanding in the planets and stars, to know what were fit for the house of Israel to do." To which agree *Kimbi*, *Ben Melech*, and *Talkut* in loc. and *Berebit Rabba*, §. 72. fol. 64. 2. See also the *Targum*, and *Tarshi* on Deut. xxxiii. 19.

^c Entitled, An Act for regulating the commencement of the year, and for correcting the calendar now in use, made in the twenty fourth year of the reign of his majesty king *George the Second*.

^d Hence it is said, that the standard of this tribe was dyed black, and had painted on it the sun and moon, because it is said of them, 1 *Chron.* xii. 32. of the children of *Uasbar*, that had understanding of the times, &c. *Bemidbar Rabba*, §. 2. fol. 178. 3.

^e Gen. xlix. 35. Deut. xxxiii. 18.

^f Vid. *Poli Synopf.* in loc.

^g By whom *Aben Ezra* understands either astrologers, or such who knew the time that was passed in the reigns of antient kings, that is, historians; and the *Targum* on the place expressly interprets it of the children of *Uasbar*.

things, when was the fittest opportunity to do any thing : and whereas the present business was to turn the kingdom to *David*, they saw, and so acquainted the rest of the tribes, that this was the proper time to do it in, now *Saul* was dead, and *Abner* also, a powerful commander in the interest of his family ; and *David* was the most likely person to humble the Philistines, who of late had been so victorious over *Israel*. Besides, they knew that there was the word of the Lord ^a for it, *ver. 23.* or a prophecy that had been given out, that he should be king, which was known in *Saul's* life-time, and with which he himself was acquainted ; for so said he to *David*, *I know well, that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand*¹ : And these men knew that the time was now come, and all circumstances concurring, they told *Israel* what they should do at this juncture². The use that I shall make of this, shall be to accommodate the passage to the prophetic times, and the knowledge of them to the present ones, or what may be coming on ; and shall sum up the whole in the following observation :

“ That those who have any understanding of prophetic times, relating to the church of God, and interest of Christ, should inform the true *Israel* of God, what they ought to do in them, or in the prospect of them.”

I. There are some times fixed in prophecy, which by diligence, attention, and application, men may arrive to some understanding of. There are indeed some times and seasons, the knowledge of which is not to be attained unto ; and it would be wrong, as well as in vain, curiously to search into them. *It is not for us to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power ; for he has determined the times before appointed*, when every thing that he has purposed or promised should come to pass ; and he has fixed a *time for every purpose under the heaven*, for the performance of every thing he has designed shall be ; a *time to be born, and a time to die*, and for every intermediate event³ ; but these times are not known beforehand, until things are brought into execution. There are others, and very remarkable events, the times of which are pointed at in prophecy ; and which with diligence and application, the knowledge of them may in some measure be attained unto : as for instance, the first coming of Christ into this world to save men ; the time for it was not only agreed upon, and settled between the Father and the Son, called *the fulness of time*⁴, but there were several prophetic hints of it ; nay, not only was it described by some general circumstances, as that it should be before the second temple was destroyed, since
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^a The decree of the word of the Lord, as the *Targum*.

¹ 1 Sam. xxiv. 20.

² *Jarchi's* note on the place is, “ for they knew how to give counsel according to the nature of every case ; for *David* had need to take advice how the kingdom might be confirmed from before the children of *Saul*.”

³ Acts i. 7 and chap. xvii. 26. Eccl. iii. 1. 2.

⁴ Gal iv. 4.

he was to come into it, and while the scepter was in the tribe of *Judah*; but the precise time was fixed by *Daniel's* seventy weeks, or 490 years, which were to commence from a date given him; and before the expiration of which, the Messiah was to come: and so, as he, by reading *Jeremiah's* books, knew the time when the *Babylonish* captivity should end; another, by reading his prophecies, might know when the Messiah would come; and accordingly about the time when those weeks were drawing near to an expiration, there were many that were looking for the Messiah, and redemption by him, as knowing that it was about the time, by these weeks, that he should come^a. There is a time set for his second coming, and God in his times will show him, or cause him openly to appear; and though he will come in an hour we know not of, yet there are some circumstances pointed out in the word of God, by which it may be known that it is nigh at hand; as that the day when the Son of man shall be revealed shall be as the days of *Noah* and *Lot*, when men indulged themselves in pleasure, lived in great security, unaware of the ruin coming upon them; and that when the Son of man cometh, *faith* will not be found in the earth^b; whether this be understood of the grace or doctrine of faith, or of faith with respect to Christ's coming: and when we compare these things with the present times, and consider the luxury, love of pleasure, carnal security and infidelity that abound among us, we might conclude that the coming of Christ is just at hand; were it not that there are many things, which require time, yet to be fulfilled, previous to it; as the destruction of antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles. So the last judgment, which will take place at the second coming of Christ, and is most certain, being early known, and often spoken of; *Enoch*, the seventh from *Adam*, prophesied of it, and of Christ's coming to it; the day is appointed when it will come on, though "of that day and hour knoweth no man, not the angels in heaven, but the Father only:" but then the principal things that should come to pass, relative to the church, between the first and second coming of Christ to judgment, are signified to us in the book of the *Revelation*; and by diligence, attention, and application, the understanding of the times of their fulfilment may be come at. The state of the church in all ages is described by the seven churches of *Asia*, which were prophetic emblems and representations of it. The truly apostolical church is signified by the church at *Ephesus*, which could not bear them that were evil either in doctrine or practice: the church under the ten persecutions is represented by the church at *Smyrna*, which had tribulation ten days. And those that lived in the times of *Constantine*, that had a spiritual discerning of things, when they saw the riches and glory of the world brought into the church, might know that they were

^a See the Watchman's Answer, &c. p. 24, 25.

^b Luke xvii. 26, 28. and chap. xviii. 8.

were in that state which was pointed at by high towering *Pergamos*. And such who were in the darkest times of Popery, who had any spiritual light into things, might see that they were in the Thyatirian church-state, in which *Jezebel* taught her pernicious doctrines, and the depths of Satan, and the mysteries of iniquity were practised. As we now, by comparing our case with what is said of the church at *Sardis*, may perceive that we are in the Sardinian church-state; and so may arrive to some understanding of the times in which we are, and what are yet to come; as the Philadelphian church-state, which will bring on the spiritual reign of Christ, in which there will be an open door of the Gospel, large conversions of Jews and Gentiles, much holiness and brotherly love, and great spirituality; after which the church, being proud of its gifts, and the spirit withdrawn, it will sink into lukewarmness and security; which will bring on the Laodicean state, which will issue in the general judgment, as its name signifies, the judgment of the people^p. Moreover, there are certain very memorable events, the dates of which are peremptorily fixed; as the treading of the holy city forty-two months; the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and under discouragements, a thousand two hundred and threecore days; during which term of days also the church is to be nourished in the wilderness even for a time, and times, and half a time; and power is given to the beast, or antichrist, to continue forty and two months^q. All which began, and will end together; for these dates are exactly the same, one thousand two hundred and sixty days being equal to forty-two months, and forty-two months to one thousand two hundred and sixty days, reckoning thirty days to a month, as was used in the Eastern nations; and could we be certain when these dates begin; we should have no difficulty about the expiration of them, or how long it is to it; good men have been mistaken in their calculations for want of this: however, though we can come at no certainty as to the precise time when these things shall be, yet some degree of understanding of these times may be come at; and from the circumstances of things it may be concluded, that these dates cannot reach beyond an *hundred and fifty* years more, and it may be they may expire much sooner.

In the annual sermon delivered to you about this time last year, and since published, you will remember I gave you some account of the revolutions of morning and night which have been, and will be to the second coming of Christ; and how that we are entering into a dark night, the thickest darkness and midst of which will be the time of the slaying of the witnesses; after which a glorious morning will break forth; and it shall be said to the church, *Arise, shine, for thy light is come*. And now what I shall further do, and which is my principal view in reading these words, is to shew that this affair is not to be considered

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^p See Dr *Morse* on the seven churches, and my Exposition of the *second* and *third* chapters of the *Revelation*.

^q Rev. xi. 2, 3, and chap. xii. 6, 14, and xiii. 5.

as a mere nicety, as a matter of speculation only, but as what should influence our practice. Theory without practice is of little avail; all knowledge is to be reduced to practice; and seeing these things shall be, and these times will come, *what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?* I shall therefore attempt a practical Improvement of these things, and what you may call, if you please, an Application of my former discourse referred to; which brings me to observe,

II. The things which those who have skill in prophetic times should make known to the *Israel* of God, as what they *ought to do* in such times, or in prospect of those to come. And,

First, There are some things which true Israelites ought always, and at all times to do; even *every good work*, which they should be always *ready* unto, and should pray to God to *perfect* and fit them for, and make them *fruitful* and *establish* them in'. I shall briefly consider, 1. What these are. 2. The necessity of doing them, and why, and for what purposes they *ought* to be done. And, 3. That of all men, *Israel*, or Israelites indeed, ought to do these things.

1. What these good works are that should be done; and it may not be amiss to shew *first*, what a good work is: it is often said that not *nouns* but *adverbs* make good works; that it is not merely doing *bonum* a good thing, but doing that good thing *bene* well; which is what the apostle calls *well-doing*': an action may be *materially* good, when it is not *circumstantially* so. The circumstances requisite to a good work, and by which it may be defined, are, that it must be according to the declared and revealed will of God; must spring from love, be done in faith, in the name of Christ, and to the glory of God. If any of these circumstances are wanting, it is not properly a good work. It must be a part of that good, perfect, and acceptable will of God; or otherwise it will come under the denomination of *will-worship*, or *voluntary humility*, and will be rejected by the Lord, as not being required by him. By this rule many things will be excluded from the name of good works, which may have a shew of devotion and sanctity; as the traditions of the elders among the Jews, and many things done by Papists and others, which may carry an appearance of religion and piety in them. It must also spring from love to God; "charity is the end of the commandment, and love the fulfilling of the law;" this is not only the matter of it, but the source of obedience; which should be yielded to, not through fear of punishment, or hope of reward, but without any sinister, selfish, and mercenary views, in pure affection to God that requires it; and that work is best done that is done in the view, and under the influence of the love of God. It must be also done in faith, the thing itself must be believed as right to be done;

† 2 Peter iii. 11. * Tit. iii. 1. Heb. xiii. 21. Col. i. 10. † 2 Thess. ii. 17. † Gal. vi. 9.

done; for *whatsoever is not of faith, is sin*^a: and it should be done in the exercise of faith on God that enjoins it, and on Christ, in whom alone it is acceptable; for *without faith it is impossible to please God*^b; and therefore what is without it cannot be a good work: the apostle puts the superior excellency of *Abel's* sacrifice to *Cain's*, not so much upon the matter of them, though there was a difference between them in that respect, as upon the manner of performing them, the one being done in faith, the other without; *by faith Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain*^c: as faith without works is a dead faith, so works without faith are dead works also. A good work must be done in the name and strength of Christ, without whom we can do nothing spiritually good and acceptable to God. If we pray, it must be in the name of Christ, which is always prevalent; if we give thanks, it must be to the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus; if we give an alms-deed to any of his people, it must be in his name, and because they belong to him; *whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*^d: and every good work must be directed to the glory of God; if men seek themselves, the applause of men, their own glory by what they do, as the Pharisees did by their prayers and alms-deeds, their works cannot be properly called good works. But to proceed to the particulars of those things which true Israelites ought always to do.

(1.) Every thing that relates to God, his will, and his worship. Every thing that is of a moral nature, or belongs to the moral law; for though the law is abolished, as it was a ministration of *Moses*, and as it is a covenant of works; and as to justification by it, and the curse and condemnation of it; yet is it to be regarded as a rule of walk and conversation; and believers are not *without law to God*, and are *under the law to Christ*^e, as king and lawgiver. Morality, in its utmost extent, in all its branches, ought to be attended to, not only what is in the decalogue or ten commandments, but whatever is to be found elsewhere. The decalogue is a good system of laws drawn up for the use of the Jewish people; but as all that is in it is not moral, so the whole of morality is not contained in that body of laws; and not only what is in that, but every thing of a moral nature that is to be found in any part of the word of God, either in the Old or in the New Testament, whether in *David's* psalms, *Solomon's* proverbs, the writings of the prophets, *Christ's* sermons, or *Paul's* epistles, or any others, is to be observed and done.

Likewise, whatsoever is of divine appointment, of positive institution, relating to the worship and service of God; not indeed any thing of this kind that was under the former dispensation, such as circumcision and other rites of the ceremonial law, the law of commandments contained in ordinances now abolished;

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^a Rom. xiv. 23.^b Heb. xi. 6.^c Ibid. ver. 4.^d Col. iii. 17.^e 1 Cor. ix. 21.

let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, &c. that is, let no man condemn you for the non-observance of these things; *which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ*^a: but every thing of this nature under the Gospel-dispensation ought to be carefully observed and complied with; the ordinance of Baptism ought to be submitted unto, and the Lord's Supper should be kept as it was instituted, and all things which Christ has commanded should be done; all his precepts should be esteemed, and impartially regarded; *Israel* should "walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;" the assembly of his saints should not be forsaken; his word should be constantly heard, and every ordinance kept as delivered; and the Lord our God should be worshipped, and he only should be served.

Particularly, the duty of prayer should be attended unto; men should pray without ceasing; our Lord put forth a parable to encourage his people to pray always, and not faint: prayer in the closet should be constantly kept up; *when thou prayest, says Christ*^b, *enter into thy closet, &c.* and prayer in the family should be daily used; if neglected, God will resent it: he will *pour out his fury on the families that call not on his name*^c: prayer is a powerful means of keeping up the spirit and life of religion, and without it, it cannot be kept up with vigour. Praying, says a good man^d, will either make you leave off sinning, or sinning: will make you leave off praying.

(2.) Every thing which concerns our fellow-creatures, whether as men or christians, ought to be done by the *Israel* of God; they should love their neighbours as themselves, and do that to men, which they would have done to themselves; nay, it becomes them to love their enemies, to do good to them that hate them, to feed them when hungry, and give them drink when thirsty, and to overcome evil with good. And as for their fellow-christians, they should by love serve them both in things temporal and spiritual; they should do good to all, but especially to the household of faith; they should "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ;" they should "support the weak, and comfort the feeble-minded;" they should give advice and counsel where it is wanting, pray with, and for one another, "build up each other in their most holy faith." But I go on to shew,

2. The necessity of doing these things, or why *Israel*, or the people of God, ought to do them: there are certain *necessary uses*, as the apostle^e calls them, for which good works are to be done; the question is, what they are? And,

(1.) Negatively: they are not to be done in order to procure the love and favour of God; as, *if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be condemned*^f; so if he was to perform ever so many good works, and

^a Col. ii. 16, 17.

^b Matt. vi. 6.

^c Jer. x. 25.

^d Mr Vavasor Powell.

^e Titus iii. 14.

^f Cant. viii. 7.

and those ever so well, they would not obtain the love of God, which is altogether free and unmerited; nothing out of God can be the cause of it: the reason why he loved *Israel* of old, and why he loves any, is, because he would and will love them; *he will be gracious to whom he will be gracious*^s: nor are they to be done to make atonement for sin, or to make peace with God. Was a man to bring *thousands of rams, or ten thousands of rivers of oil*, or do ever so many works of a ceremonial, moral, or evangelic nature, they would never atone for his sins; present service due to God, can never make atonement for former transgressions, or reconcile sinners to God: atonement and reconciliation for sin, and peace with God, are made by another hand, and in a better way, even by Christ and the blood of his cross. Nor are they to be done to justify us in the sight of God, and to render us acceptable to him; there is no justification before God by the works of the law; were there, men would have whereof to glory in his presence; but boasting is excluded by the law, or doctrine of faith, by the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness: if righteousness was by the law and its works, the death of Christ would be in vain, and his obedience and sufferings useles; but it is certain that a sinner is justified without the works of the law, and by a righteousness imputed to him without them: nor are they necessary to salvation, or to be done in order to procure it; salvation is neither according to them, nor by them; it is wrought out by Christ, and is so compleat and perfect, that nothing can be added to it to make it more so: he is the sole author of it, his own arm has brought it in; it is in him, and in no other. Nor are they to be performed with a view to merit any thing at the hand of God: it is impossible for a creature to merit any thing of God by what he does: men may talk of enthusiasts and visionaries, but they are the greatest, who dream of the merit of their good works; the least thing cannot be merited by us, not a morsel we eat, or a rag we wear, much less the above things relating to eternal salvation. That by which we merit should be profitable to him of whom we merit; but "can a man, or any thing he does, be profitable unto God?" It should not be due to him of whom we merit; but all our works are due to God, he has a prior right to the performance of them: what is done in a way of merit, should be done in our own strength, without any assistance from him of whom we would merit; whereas our best works are done in the strength of the Lord, and by the assistance of his grace: to which may be added, there should be some proportion between that which is merited, and that by which we merit; but there is none between eternal salvation, and our works; wherefore these are not the necessary uses for which they are to be done. But,

(2.) Positively: these things *ought* to be done, and there is a necessity of doing them, with respect to God; because it is the will of God they should be done,

he has commanded them, and because they are approved of by him, and are well pleasing to him through Christ when rightly done; besides, they are the means of glorifying God, not only by the persons that do them, but by others that behold them; for which reason our Lord directs unto them^b; *let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* They are necessary with respect to men; they are good and profitable unto them; it is setting them a good example, and may be a means of recommending religion to them, and of softening their minds to an attention to the truths of the gospel, and of winning such without the word, who are not won by it; and, however, of putting to shame and silence such who are forward to accuse the good conversation of the saints. They ought to be done on account of the people of God themselves; to testify their subjection to God, and gratitude to him for mercies received from him; to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour, and to evidence the truth of their faith, and the sincerity of their profession. And they should be done on account of the works themselves, because they are good, honestly good; they are things "honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report;" they are pleasantly good, there is a pleasure enjoyed in them; great peace have they which love the law of God and obey it; and they are profitably good, though not to God in the instances before mentioned, yet to men. But I proceed to shew,

3. Why *Israel*, the people of God, of *all* men, *ought* to do these things; and there are two reasons for it:

(1.) Because they are under the greatest obligations to do them. They are chosen of God unto them; though they are not chosen because they were holy, yet that they might be holy in heart and life; though the act of election passed before they had done either good or evil, and so is irrespective of their works; yet they are such *which God hath fore-ordained that they should walk in them*¹; and it becomes them to *make their calling and election sure*^k; which should be done, as it seems, by some third thing, that is, by good works; and so some copies read the text. They are redeemed by Christ for this end, that they should be *a peculiar people, zealous of good works*^l; and unless they are performed, this end is not answered; since they are redeemed from a *vain conversation*^m, they ought not to follow one; and since they are not their own, but are bought with the price of Christ's precious blood, they should *glorify him in their body and spirit*, which are his. The "love of Christ should constrain them to live to "him who died for them, and rose again":" they are effectually called by his grace, and though not according to their works, yet with an holy calling, and unto holiness: such who are called ought to be holy, as he that has called them is holy, and should by their lives and conversations shew forth the praises of him who

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^b Matt. v. 16.

¹ Eph. i. 4. and chap. ii. 10.

^k 2 Pet. i. 10.

^l Tit. ii. 14.

^m 1 Pet. i. 19.

ⁿ 1 Cor. vi. 19. 20. 2 Cor. v. 14.

“ has called them out of darkness into marvellous light.” They have received many exceeding great and precious promises from the Lord, that he will be with them, and not leave them, or forsake them; that he will help and strengthen them, and assist them in every duty, and work in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure; will carry on and perform his good work in them until the day of Christ, and will be their God and Father, and they shall be his sons and daughters, and ever continue in this relation: *and having therefore these promises, says the apostle*, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord:* to which may be added, that they have received many mercies and favours from the Lord, both temporal and spiritual, which they are unworthy of; and these should influence and engage them to the performance of good works: this is an argument the apostle Paul uses to this purpose; *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service*†.

(2.) Another reason why of all men the Israel of God, or his own special people, ought to do good works, is, because they are in the best capacity of doing them; nay, they are the only persons that can perform them aright. There is no good thing in unregenerate men, and therefore no good thing can come out of them, or be done by them; they have no true knowledge of that which is good, and much less to do it; they have no inclination or desire, nay, an aversion to it; they have no free-will thereunto, nor power to perform; it may as reasonably be expected to gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles, as good works to be done by an evil man; a wicked man is to every good work reprobate and unfit: but Israelites indeed, they are good men, and so capable of doing good works: a man must first be a good man before he can do good works: men begin at the wrong end, when they propose to do good works, in order to make themselves good men; the first concern should be to have a good work of grace upon the heart, which is the Lord's work; for unless there is a good work begun within, there will be no good works done without; the tree must first be made good ere the fruit will be good. Moreover, such are made alive by the grace of God; the Spirit of life from Christ has entered into them; Christ himself has said to them *whilst in their blood, live*‡. Principles of grace, life, and holiness are wrought in their hearts, and so they are in a capacity, under the influence of divine grace, of producing acts of holiness, or of performing good works; whereas men dead in trespasses and sins are not able to do any thing spiritually good, and at most and best their works must be dead works. Spiritual Israel are such as are regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God, and so are meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work:

* 2 Cor. vi. 17. and chap. vii. 1.

† Rom. xii. 1.

‡ Ezek. xvi. 6.

work: the Spirit of God is put within them, to *cause* them to *walk* in the *statutes* of the Lord, and to *keep* his *judgments* and *do* them¹. They are strengthened by him with all might in their inward man for this purpose. Besides, they are *created* in *Christ Jesus* unto good works²; they are made new creatures in him, and by him for that end; they are branches in him the vine, and by virtue of union to him, and through abiding in him, bring forth fruit; without whom they can do nothing, though all things through him strengthening them: to add no more, they are believers in Christ; and so, as they are under obligation as such to be *careful to maintain good works*³, they are the only persons that can perform them in faith, without which a man can do nothing that is pleasing to God. Faith is an operative grace, it works by love, and is always attended with the fruits of righteousness and good works; for good works, as one⁴ calls them, are second acts necessarily flowing from a life of faith.

Secondly, There are some things particularly, which are to be done according to the times in which the *Israel* of God live, or are in prospect of. In the annual discourse for the last year, and which has been published, I observed to you that the times in which we are, are those of the *Sardian church*, which represents the reformed churches; and the latter part of those times; in which that church, and those it is an emblem of, would have no more than the name of one, or the name of religion and christianity, without the life and power of it; and but few whose garments would be undefiled; and when there would be a letting go, and departing from the doctrines of the reformation, before heard and received; and which exactly describe the times in which we live: and therefore what is recommended to that church, as what ought to be done by them, should be observed by us; *be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die:—remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.* And,

1. We ought to *be watchful*. This concerns not only ministers of the word, whose special business it is to watch over themselves and others, to take heed to themselves, and to their doctrine, and to take care of the flock, over which they are placed as overseers, and see to it, that they are fed with wholesome food, and are not infected with false doctrine; but this is incumbent on members of churches also; what is here exhorted to belongs to them, as our Lord said to his disciples; *what I say unto you, I say unto all, watch*⁵; against sin and the prevailing vices of the age, Satan and his temptations, false teachers and their pernicious doctrines; we live in ensnaring times, and therefore ought to be on our watch and guard. Times of great profaneness and immorality, in which not only the men of the world, but professors of religion, give themselves

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 21.² Ezek. xxxvi. 27.³ Eph. ii. 10.⁴ Titus iii. 8.⁵ Amef. Medulla Theolog. l. 2. c. 7. § 35.⁶ Mark xiii. 37.

elves great liberties, and indulge to a vain conversation; and the more wicked the times are, the more cautious should we be, that we are not drawn aside by ill examples; and the more so, as they are set by such that profess the same name we do. Satan is very busy in laying snares in the way of a professing people, in using all devices, and wiles, and stratagems, to decoy them from the paths of truth and righteousness; wherefore we ought to *watch and pray*, that we *enter not into temptation*⁷: false teachers are every where lying in wait to deceive, and therefore we ought to guard against them, and be careful that our minds are not *corrupted* by them, *from the simplicity that is in Christ*⁸; and that we are not carried away with *the error of the wicked*⁹; and seeing *the end of all things is at hand*, not only of the world, and the things of it in general, but of that church-state in which we are in particular; let us *therefore be sober, and watch unto prayer*¹⁰.

The word here used in the exhortation to the church at *Sardis*, is by some rendered *awake*; which suggests it to be a time of night, and so of sleepiness, as indeed it is now with us; they that sleep, sleep in the night; night coming upon us, we are fallen asleep; we are like the virgins, wise and foolish, who while *the bridegroom tarried*, not coming so soon as expected, all *slumbered and slept*¹¹; very little lively exercise of grace, or fervent discharge of duty; great coldness, lukewarmness, indifference, and backwardness to spiritual exercises; much sluggishness and slothfulness, and a general contentment at most in the outward form of religion; *it is high time therefore to awake out of sleep*¹², lest the day of Christ should come upon us unawares. The exhortation to the apostle is very suitable to us; *awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*¹³: which words are not spoken to dead sinners, but to sleepy, drowsy professors, got into the company of carnal men, dead in sins, from whose conversation, which encourages a drowsy frame, they are called. And now being called to awake, and being awake, we ought to keep so, and not fall asleep again; and the rather, since the grand enemy of Christ and his churches, is busy in sowing his tares of false doctrines, which to do is now his proper time and opportunity; *while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares*¹⁴.

2. *Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die*: meaning not so much good works, though these may be said to be dying in our day, as to the performance of them, and may be said to be strengthened, when men are diligent to do their first works; nor the graces of the spirit, for however these in appearance may seem expiring, when not in exercise, yet in reality they cannot die, being the immortal incorruptible seed of the Spirit of God; besides, it is the Lord's work to strengthen these; rather the truths of the gospel, preached

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⁷ Matt. xxvi. 41.⁸ 2 Cor. xi. 3.⁹ 2 Peter iii. 17.¹⁰ 1 Pet. iv. 7.¹¹ Matt. xxv. 5.¹² Rom. xiii. 11.¹³ Eph. v. 14.¹⁴ Matt. xiii. 25.

at the beginning of the reformation with great vigour and liveliness, but now almost lost, dead, and buried; and therefore, should be restored, established, and confirmed: but it seems best of all to understand the words of the members of this church-state, the $\tau\eta\lambda\omicron\tau\eta\varsigma$, the rest of them, those that are left of the great number of them that have apostatized, and are yet in a sickly state, ready to give up their religion and profession; like those in the Corinthian church, of whom the apostle says, *many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*²: some were wholly gone, had entirely apostatized, and others were weak and tottering, and ready to give up all; now means should be used, and attempts made to recover these persons, whilst there is any hope of them, to bring them back from whence they have partially departed, to invigorate them with zeal for Christ, and to establish them in the truths of the gospel; as our Lord said to Peter, *when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*³.

3. Remember how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. Call to mind the doctrines of the reformation, how they were received when first heard; with what attention and reverence they were listened to; with what affection and joy they were received, though now despised, discarded, lost and buried in forgetfulness; such as justification by the righteousness of Christ, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice: and you that know the worth and value of those truths, and still have them in esteem, *hold them fast*, do not let them go, do not part with them at any rate, no not the least branch of truth; give up nothing; if you would keep the enemy from within, preserve your outworks, stand by them, quit not even such as may seem of the least importance; dispute every inch of ground; give not way in any thing, nor for any time, *no not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel may continue with you*¹: it is this giving up of one thing after another that is the ruin of us; what is the reason that Deism has had such a spread among us of late years? Among the rest, not only is it owing to the books wrote against christianity, but to the weak answers to them, and feeble defences of it; one truth of the Bible being given up after another, till at length there is scarce any thing left worth contending for. And so it is in other controversies among those that are called christians; something is generally given up on the side of truth, for which the writer is complimented as an ingenuous man, and a man of good sense: this proves a snare to him, and whenever he writes again, he will give up something more to confirm his character; or another will start up, and take the same method, observing which way the the stream of reputation runs; whilst those on the other side secretly laugh at them: and thus are we likely to be wheedled and cajoled out of truth, by artful and designing men, on one hand, and through the weakness of some, on the other: and we shall have more and more of this giving

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 30.

² Luke xxii. 32.

³ Gal. ii. 5.

giving up of truth, as the night we are entered into grows darker and darker; what therefore we ought to do, is, to get what gospel-light and knowledge we can, and keep what we have, and part with none; but *repent* of our coldness and indifference to gospel-truths, our inattention to them, forgetfulness of them, and unfruitfulness by them, and *do our first works* of faith, love, and zeal: and to these things, we ought to do in the present times, may be added, what the apostle directs to, when he says; *watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong*^k; the former of these exhortations is the same as before given, and the rest agree. Wherefore,

4. *Stand fast in the faith*; in the grace of faith, and in the doctrine of it, and in the profession of both: do not depart from the faith of the gospel, though you live in times that others do; and have lived to see the times foretold, that *some should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits*^l; but in these departing times let it be your honour to stand fast without wavering; *be not moved away from the hope of the gospel*; from the gospel itself, and that hope which it gives of salvation by Jesus Christ, and eternal life through him; *stand fast in one spirit*^m: let your whole soul and spirit be in the gospel, and be zealously affected to it, and be united in your endeavours to promote it; *striving together for the faith* of it against the common enemy; *contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*ⁿ; which is attempted to be wrested out of your hands, and is in great danger of being so. Let *none of those things* move you from your close adherence to it, which are objected to it, or you meet with on account of your profession of it. Abide by it, though the greater number of men is against it, and those the rich, the wife, and learned; and though it may be charged with novelty and licentiousness, and attended with reproach and persecution.

5. *Quit ye like men*; play the-man; behave like men of courage and valour; be *valiant for the truth upon the earth*^o; do as the guard about Solomon's bed did; let *every man have his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night*^p: it is a night-season with you already, and it will be darker still; you will hear the noise of the enemy, be not terrified at it; guard against the fears that may seize and surprize you; fight the Lord's battles manfully: *if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do*^q? What indeed will they have to work or build upon, or even stand on, when the foundation of all faith, hope, peace, and joy is removed? But then they should not look on as idle and unconcerned spectators of these things: *what can the righteous do*? They should build up as fast as the others pull down; do as *Nebemiah* and his people did, work with one hand, and hold a weapon with the other^r; a trowel in one hand, and a sword in the other.

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^k 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

^l 1 Tim. iv 1.

^m Col. i. 23.

ⁿ Phil. i. 27. Jude, ver. 3.

^o Jer. ix. 3.

^p Cant. iii. 8.

^q Psalm xi. 3.

^r Neh. iv. 17.

6. *Be strong*; not in yourselves, but in the Lord, and in the power of his might, in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; go to him for strength under every trial and exercise, to carry you through every service and suffering for his name's sake; and to oppose every enemy, and to maintain your ground against them. Go not forth in your own strength, but depend on him, and his grace, which is sufficient for you; encourage yourselves in the Lord your God; let not your spirits sink, your hearts fail, and be discouraged; but take heart, *be of good courage*; consider you are engaged in a good cause, fight under the great captain of your salvation; you may be sure of victory in the end, and that the issue will be a crown of life and righteousness: *wait on the Lord*; in the way of his appointments, which is your duty, with patient submission to his will, until the time of your deliverance and salvation comes, and he will *strengthen your heart*; fortify your minds against fear and danger.

7. Keep close to the word of God; make that the rule and standard of your faith and practice; *believe not every spirit*, or every man that pretends to be a spiritual man, and to have the Spirit of God; do not believe every thing he says under that pretence, but *try the spirits whether they are of God*; try the spiritual doctrines he professes to deliver by the word of God; do as the noble *Bertrams* did, *who searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so*, as they were represented by the apostles; and the more reason there is for such care and caution, *because many false prophets are gone out into the world*, and deceive men, and destroy their souls by their false doctrine, *to the law, and to the testimony*, to the doctrine of the gospel testified in the sacred writings, bring every thing they say, and examine it by: *if they speak not according to this word*; if their doctrines do not agree with it, cannot be proved and confirmed by it, *it is because there is no light in them*; though they may pretend to great light, and even revelations from the Lord, yet if what they deliver cannot be seen by the light of the divine word, their light is but darkness: the *word* of the Lord is *a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path*; and you would do well to make use of it; and when is a lamp or light more proper for use, than in a night-season? The night is coming on, therefore take your lamp and light in your hand, the word of God, and walk by it: *this is the more sure word of prophecy*, by which you may safely go; *whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts*; whilst the night you are in continues, and until the morning comes, and the day breaks by the glorious appearing of the Sun of righteousness; or, in other words, until the spiritual reign of Christ begins.

8. Abide

* Psalm xxvii. 14.

† 1 John iv. 1.

‡ Acts xvii. 11.

¶ Psal. viii. 20.

* Psalm cxix. 105.

‡ 2 Peter i. 19.

8. Abide with the churches of Christ, and ministers of the gospel, in the worship of God, and in the ordinances of his house: it is said, to the commendation of the tribe of Judah, *Judah yet rulereth with God, and is faithful with the saints*^a; by no means forsake the assembling of yourselves together, but keep close one to another; and so much the more as you see the day approaching^b; or time and hour of temptation coming that is to try them that dwell upon the earth; where the shepherds sent us, do you fix yours, and there abide; let nothing divert you, or cause you to turn aside from the churches of Christ to which you belong, nor from his faithful ministers; no, let not a cry concerning Christ himself move you from thence: our Lord has cautioned his followers against this; *if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or there, believe it not*^c; Christ is where you are; he is preached by his ministers, and in the churches you attend upon, and that is enough for you; this you are certain of; it may not be where the cry is: however, what separates you from the churches and ministers of Christ, can never be right; Christ and his ministers, and churches, are not to be divided: there were some in the Corinthian church for Paul, in opposition to Apollos; and others for Apollos, in opposition to Paul; and some for Cephas, in opposition to Paul and Apollos; and others were for Christ, in opposition to them all; they were for Christ without his ministers; *is Christ divided*^e? from his ministers, and from his churches? No, he is not; and such are they who are for Christ, and no order; Christ, and no ordinances; Christ, and no ministers.

9. Since there is a time of darkness, a night-season coming on, *prepare to meet thy God, O Israel*^d; with submission to his will, with dependence on him, and with expectation of support under the trying exercise and deliverance out of it. Remember it is thy God, thy covenant-God and Father, who will never leave thee, nor forsake thee; wherefore,

10. Do not be discouraged, for though the affliction will be sharp, it will be short; the severity of it will last but three days and a half, that is, three years and a half; and then a glorious time, and a glorious state of the church will follow: and Christ has promised, that such as *keep the word of his patience*, he will *keep from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, so try them that dwell upon the earth*^e; and therefore when you perceive it coming on, and the signs of it, *look up, and lift up your heads*; do not be cast down; rather rejoice, *for your redemption draweth nigh*^f: the night of weeping will soon be over, and joy will come in the morning.

And now as to the morning that will follow after, this you should most firmly believe; though scoffers may mock at it, and carnal professors be unconcerned

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^a Hof. xi. 12.^b Heb. x. 25.^c Matt. xxiv. 23.^d 1 Cor. i. 12, 13.

Amos iv. 12.

^e Rev. iii. 10.^f Luke xxi. 28.

about it, and give no credit to it; yet assure yourselves, “a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry;” pray for his kingdom and coming; give him no rest day nor night, till he arise and has mercy on Zion, and make his *Jerusalem* the praise of the whole earth; be hasting in your warm affections, and earnest desires, after those glorious times, which God will hasten in his own time; and in the darkest season look for this morning, for *at evening-time it shall be light* [†]; and a glorious one it will be, as a morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds. I shall close all with those words of our Lord; *let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord.* And now, as I have shewn you what Israel ought to do in those times, *blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing* [‡].

[†] Zech. xiv. 7.

[‡] Luke xii. 35, 36, 43.

S E R M O N IV.

The Glory of the Church in the latter Day :

Preached at a *Wednesday's Evening Lecture in Great Eastcheap, Dec. 27, 1752.*

PSALM LXXXVII. 3.

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God! Selah.

SOME think this psalm was written by *David*, under a prophetic view of the temple to be built by his son *Solomon*; others, that it was composed by one that returned from the *Babylonish* captivity, for the comfort of those that wept at the laying of the foundation of the second temple: but let it be wrote by whom it will, or on whatsoever occasion; it is pretty evident that the subject-matter of it is the church of God in gospel-times, especially in the latter-day-glory; when there will be abundance of converts in the places herein mentioned. The title of the *Syriac* version is, “concerning the redemption of *Jerusalem*.” It begins in a very abrupt manner, as the *Song of Songs* does, with a relative without an antecedent; *his foundation is in the holy mountains*: the foundation of the Lord which he has laid, who loveth the gates of *Zion*, and whose

city

city is here spoken of, which is founded by him; or its *foundation*, the foundation of the city of God, the church, which comes to the same sense; for the church's foundation is the Lord's, being of his laying*. In allusion to the mountains of *Zion* and *Moriab*, on which the temple stood, a type of the church; or to the mountains round about *Jerusalem*, which also frequently signifies the church; this foundation is said to be *in the holy mountains*, or *mountains of holiness*, the purposes and decrees of God, those mountains of brass, *Zeck. vi. 1.* particularly the decree of election, the *foundation of God that stands sure*, and is the source of all true holiness; likewise the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises, sure and immoveable, and which provides both for internal and external holiness; and especially Jesus Christ, the rock of ages, the sure foundation laid in *Zion*, the holy One of *Israel*, and the sanctification of his people.

It follows: *The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob*; he loves the church, which often goes by the name of *Zion*; and therefore he has chosen and founded it, and took up his rest and residence in it; and he loves her *gates*, or public ordinances, and them that attend them; the work done by them, their prayers and praises, and exercise of graces, and every act of religious worship: and though he loves *the dwellings of Jacob*, the private habitations of his people, having fixed the bounds of them from eternity, and delighted in these habitable parts before they dwelt in them; though he loves the persons that dwell there, and what is done in them, their closet and family devotion; yet he prefers public worship and ordinances to them, where he is more openly worshipped, and by more; and which makes more for his manifestative glory: hence follow the words first read, *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God*; which is not to be understood literally of the city of *Jerusalem*, though great and honourable things might be spoken of that; as that it was a magnificent city, compact together, full of stately buildings, the metropolis of *Judea*, and the seat of the kings of *Judab*, and above all, the city of the great God; where his temple stood, in which were many glorious things; where God was worshipped, and he granted his presence: and many glorious things have been said of it, and which have been fulfilled; as that the Messiah should come into this temple, and give it a greater glory than the second temple had, which he accordingly has done; here he preached his glorious doctrines, and wrought his glorious miracles; near this place he suffered, died, was buried, rose again, and ascended to heaven; and here he poured forth his holy spirit in an extraordinary manner; and from hence went forth the word of the Lord,

* The Jewish writers connect these words with the title of the psalm, and make the sense to be this; the *foundation* or argument of it, the psalm, is concerning the holy mountains of *Zion* and *Jerusalem*. So *Aben Ezra*, *Jarabi*, *Kimbi*, and *Ben Melech*: the *Targum* joins them together thus: "by the fons of *Korab* is said a song that is founded by the mouth of the fathers that were of old."

Lord, and doctrine of the gospel, throughout all the earth : but rather this is to be understood figuratively of the church of God, which is often in scripture compared to a city, and is a city of God's building, and where he dwells ; the name of it is *Jebouab Shammah, the Lord is there*^b ; of which glorious things may be said ; as that it is the city of the King of kings, its foundation is Christ, its walls and bulwarks are salvation, its gates praise ; here glorious ordinances are administered, and glorious truths are preached ; and so the words may be rendered^c, as they are in the Syriac version, *Glorious things are spoken in thee, O city of God*. There are many glorious things which have been spoken of the church, which have been fulfilled already in the first times of the gospel ; when there was an increase of it in *Judea*, and in the Gentile world ; when the gospel was spread, when the apostles triumphed in Christ, and diffused the favour of his knowledge in every place ; when Christ went forth in their ministry, conquering and to conquer ; when paganism was demolished, and Christianity established throughout the Roman empire : and so likewise many glorious things spoken of the church were accomplished at the time of the *reformation* from popery ; when gospel-light broke forth and spread itself throughout several nations of *Europe* ; but my intention is to give an account of the glorious things spoken of it, which yet remain to be fulfilled.

In my two last anniversary sermons at this time of the year, I have touched upon future things. In the former^d, I took notice of the several revolutions of nights and mornings from early times to the end of the world, and shewed you the dark side of the cloud, and what a dismal night we are now entering into. In the latter^e, I pointed at those things which *Israel*, or the people of God, ought to do in the prospect of such times ; and now I shall hold out unto you the bright side of the cloud, and give you in one view an account of the glorious things spoken of the church of God in the latter day ; and which will be accomplished both in the *spiritual reign*, and in the *personal reign* of Christ ; which two are very distinct things, and lie at some distance from each other, and ought to be carefully distinguished, and not confounded : by help of which distinction, we may better understand many prophecies of the Old Testament, which are to be ranged under these different heads, and to be referred to these distinct periods of time ; which are too often huddled and jumbled together by those that speak and write of these things. And,

I. I shall begin with the *spiritual reign* of Christ ; by which I mean a future period of time eminent for spirituality ; for otherwise Christ now reigns, not only in heaven, at his Father's right hand, where he must reign until all enemies

^b Ezek. xlvi. 35.

^c נכבדות מדבר בך.

^d Intituled, The Watchman's answer to the question, What of the night ? on Isai. xxi. 11, 12.

^e Called, The practical improvement of the Watchman's answer, on 1 Chron. xii. 32.

mies are put under his feet, but also in the hearts of his people, by his spirit and grace; into which he enters as the king of glory, causing the everlasting doors to open to him; where he implants his grace as a governing principle, sets up his throne, and dwells there by faith, and erects a kingdom, which lies in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost; and here he reigns in a spiritual manner, and so he has done in all ages, and now does: but this period of time I speak of, will be remarkable for his spiritual presence among his people; when he will *come down*, in the communications of his grace, *like rain upon the mowen grass, as showers that water the earth*^f; when there will be a large and plentiful effusion of his spirit; when his people in general will be more spiritual in the temper of their souls, and in the frames of their mind; more spiritual and savoury in their discourses, and in the whole of their behaviour and conversation, and will eminently worship God in spirit and in truth: not that they will arrive to a perfection of spirituality; though there will be a great deal of light and glory break out, yet there will be a mixture of darkness, obscurity, and imperfection; in which this state will differ from the personal reign of Christ in the new *Jerusalem*; of which it is said, *the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there*^g; which of this state is thus differently expressed, *thy gates shall be open continually, they shall not be shut day nor night*^h: it will be only in the personal reign that the church's *sun shall no more go down, neither shall her moon withdraw itself*; when *the Lord shall be her everlasting light, and the days of her mourning shall be ended*ⁱ. In the spiritual reign there will be the ministry of the word for the conversion of sinners, and the administration of ordinances for the comfort and edification of saints; all which suppose an imperfect state: whereas in the personal reign there will be none of these things, nor any need of them, or use for them; the new *Jerusalem* church-state will have *no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it*; no need of the gospel, and gospel-ordinances to be administered as now, for the light and comfort of the saints; *for the glory of God will lighten it, and the lamb will be the light thereof*^k. In the spiritual reign *the temple of God will be opened in heaven, and the ark of the testimony will be seen in it*^l; public worship will be set up and restored to its primitive purity; but in the personal reign, or new *Jerusalem* church-state, *no temple will be seen there*; *for the Lord God almighty, and the Lamb are the temple of it*^m. The spiritual reign of Christ will be on this earth as it now is; and the same natural and civil actions of life will be performed as now, as eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, procreation of children, carrying on trade and commerce, and attention to the several callings and duties of civil life; neither of which will have place in the personal reign:

it

^f Psal. lxxii. 6.^g Rev. xxi. 25.^h Isai. lx. 11.ⁱ Isai. lx. 20.^k Rev. xxi. 23.^l Rev. xi. 19.^m Rev. xxi. 22.

it is the present *earth* that will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; the kingdoms of *this world*, that will become Christ's, when his *dominion* shall be from *sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth*^a, as now situated: whereas the seat of the personal reign will be *the new heaven, and new earth*, in which *no sea* will be seen^b: for at the personal appearance of Christ, the earth and the heaven, that now are, will flee away. This spiritual reign of Christ will take place upon the rising, and ascending, of the witnesses into heaven, which denotes a more pure, spiritual, and heavenly state of the church; it will be introduced upon the blowing of the seventh trumpet, when *the kingdoms of this world* shall be subjected to Christ, through the power of his spirit, and grace accompanying his word; when the four and twenty elders, the representatives of gospel-churches, shall give him thanks, *because he has taken to himself his great power and has reigned*^c: this state is no other than the Philadelphian church-state; all that is said of that church perfectly agrees with this, and which will follow upon the Sardinian church-state, in which we now are; so that we may hope it is at hand: and whereas the Laodicean church-state is between this and the personal reign of Christ; it appears that they are two distinct things, very different, and at some distance from each other. But to proceed, and take notice of the glorious things which shall be during this interval, or period of time. And,

1st, The destruction of antichrist is the grand leading event to the glories of this state. This is hinted at in the epistle to the church at *Philadelphia*, the emblem of the spiritual reign; it will be the last struggle of the beast that will cause that *hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try the inhabitants of it*^d: when the seventh trumpet will be sounded, which will bring on the spiritual kingdom of Christ throughout the world, he will *destroy them which destroy the earth*^e; meaning the Papists, who have destroyed the inhabitants of the earth with their false doctrines, superstitious worship, and with those bloody wars, murders, and massacres, they have been at the bottom of. And till this is done, the spiritual reign cannot take place, especially in its full compass, and in all its branches; for so long as antichrist reigns, the church will be more or less in an afflicted state: the dates of the church's troubles, and of the reign of antichrist, are alike, and will expire together: the power given to the beast, is to continue forty and two months; and so long the holy city, or church, is to be trodden under foot; and so long the witnesses will prophesy in sackcloth, even one thousand two hundred and threescore days, which are equal to forty-two months; wherefore there can be no truly good and happy days, till these dates are ended.

The

^a Isai. xi. 9. Rev. xi. 15. Psal. lxxvii. 8.

^b Rev. xi. 15—17.

^c Rev. iii. 10.

^d Rev. xxi. 1.

^e Rev. xi. 18.

The destruction of antichrist will be by *the spirit of Christ's mouth*, and the *brightness of his coming*^a; that is, by his coming in a spiritual way; or through the word of his mouth, his gospel, attended by his spirit and power; which will shine out with so much lustre, splendor, light and glory, as will chase away the darkness of popery, and enlighten the minds of people, to see into all the fopperies, absurdities, and wickedness of that religion, and cause them to cast it off; yea even to open the eyes of the kings and princes of the earth, to behold and lothe the abominations of the whore of *Rome*, they have committed fornication with; and fill them with wrath and indignation against her; as to hate her, make her bare and desolate, and burn her with fire^b.

This work will be greatly effected by the pouring out the seven vials of God's wrath, or the inflicting the seven last plagues upon the antichristian states, upon the western and eastern antichrist, the Pope and Turk; who must be both removed to make way for the spiritual reign of Christ. These seven vials will be poured out, or those plagues inflicted by Angels; by whom we are to understand protestant kings, and princes, and generals of armies; and these will be given them by *one* or the first of the *four beasts*, or living creatures, the emblems of gospel-ministers; who having some notice of the time of antichrist's destruction being at hand, will stir up and animate the christian princes and potentates to take this work in hand; and who are therefore said to go forth from *the temple*, the church, the place of divine and spiritual worship, and where they themselves are worshippers; and from thence they have orders to go forth and do their work^c.

The first *five* of these vials concern the western antichrist, and his dominions; between which, and the trumpets, there is a great correspondence, though they respect different times and persons. The *first* vial will be poured out upon *the earth*, and designs those popish countries which are upon the continent, as *France* and *Germany*, especially the latter; and as the first trumpet brought the Goths into *Germany*, so the first vial will bring great distress upon the popish party in the empire, and issue in a reformation from popery. The *second* vial will be poured out upon the *sea*, and may intend the maritime powers belonging to the see of *Rome*, particularly *Spain* and *Portugal*; and as the second trumpet brought the Vandals into these places, so this vial will effect the same, and bring wars and desolations into them, and make a change in their religion. The *third* vial will be poured out upon the *rivers, and fountains of water*, which may point to those places adjacent to *Rome*, as *Italy* and *Savoy*; and as the third trumpet brought the Huns into those parts, so this vial will bring in large armies hither, which will cause much bloodshed, and a great revolution in church

^a 2. Thess. ii. 8.^b Rev. xvii. 16.^c Rev. xv. 1, 6, 7. and chap. xvi. 14.

and state. The *fourth* vial will be poured out upon *the sun*, which must denote some person, or persons of great dignity and influence; and as the fourth trumpet brought destruction upon the emperor of *Rome*, the sun of the empire, and upon governors under him, signified by the moon and stars; this vial will bring on the ruin of the pope of *Rome*, the sun of the antichristian empire, with all his cardinals, bishops, priests, &c. The *fifth* vial will be poured out upon *the seat of the beast*, which is *Rome*, the seat that the dragon, the devil, gave to the beast, and will produce great darkness in his kingdom; though as yet it will not be utterly destroyed, which is reserved to the seventh vial. Now these several vials, as they will be so many plagues on the western antichrist, and make so many breaches and ruins upon his states and dominions, so they will be so many gradual steps to the advancement of the glory and kingdom of Christ, and issue in the reformation of these places from popery. The *sixth* vial will be poured out on *the river Euphrates*, which designs the Turkish empire, in the midst of which that river is; and as the sixth trumpet let loose the four angels, or heads of the Ottoman family into *Europe*, so this vial affects the same empire, and brings destruction on it, signified by the drying up the waters of that river, as *Babylon's* destruction is expressed by the drying up of her sea, *Jer. li. 36.* which will make way for *the kings*, or kingdoms of *the east*; the kingdoms of *Persia* and *Tartary*, and others, to receive and embrace the Christian religion: This is the second or Turkish woe, which shall pass away; when the kingdoms of this world will become Christ's, and his dominion will be from sea to sea, from the Mediterranean sea to the Persian sea; and from the river *Euphrates* to the ends of the earth. The seventh vial will be poured out upon *the air*, the whole kingdom of Satan, in all the branches of it, who is the prince of the power of the air; and this vial will clear the whole world of all the remains of Christ's enemies, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, which the other vials left or did not reach*; and now will Christ's kingdom be in its full glory. Now the Heathens, Papists, Pagans, and Mahometans, will *perish out of his land*, and these sorts of sinners will be *consumed out of the earth*, and such wicked ones will be *no more*†.

It may be observed, that there is a great likeness between these vials and the plagues of *Egypt*; the noisome sore on men under the first vial, agrees with the plague of boils and blains on man and beast; the sea, rivers, and fountains of waters, being turned into blood, under the second and third vials, are the same with the plague, which in like manner affected the waters of *Egypt*; the beast's kingdom being full of darkness, under the fourth vial, much resembles the grofs and

* See more of these vials in my Exposition of the xvth and xvith chapters of the *Revelation*; and *Besford's* notes on *Kidder's* Demonstration of the Messiah, part 3. p. 41, 42.

† *Psal. x. 18.* and *civ. 36.*

and thick darkness the Egyptians were in for some days; and under the fifth vial there is a manifest reference to the frogs that plagued *Pbaraob*, and his court; and the great hail-storm under the seventh vial, bears some resemblance to the plague of hail. And this observation may confirm the application of these vials or plagues, to the great city, which is spiritually called *Egypt*: and *Sodom*: and it may be also observed, that as the plagues of *Egypt* were very quick one upon another, so it may be thought that those vials, when once they begin pouring, will soon be poured out; God will make a short work in righteousness, upon the enemies of his church: as yet I take it, none of them are poured out, though some great and learned men have so thought; as yet there have been no such devastations on the continent, as in *France* and *Germany*, as to produce the above effects; nor in the countries of *Spain* and *Portugal*; nor in *Italy* and *Savoy*, and the like places near *Rome*; nor in the seat of the beast, *Rome* itself; nor on the pope and his cardinals; the river *Euphrates* is not dried up; the Ottoman empire is yet in being; the Turkish woe is not passed away; and much less the world cleared of all the enemies of Christ and his church; no, before this work is done, the outer court must be given to the Gentiles, and the witnesses must be slain. Had they begun to be poured out at the time of the reformation, as some have thought, in all likelihood they would have been finished before now; and antichrist would have been destroyed, and better times than we are now in, would have succeeded: but, however, this we may be assured of, that as the plagues in *Egypt* issued in the destruction of *Pbaraob*, and in the deliverance of the Israelites, so these vials will end in the ruin of antichrist, and in the salvation of the church of Christ. As soon as these things will take place, nay, as soon as you hear of those seven plagues, immediately you hear of persons on a sea of glass, triumphing over antichrist, having the harps of God, and singing the song of *Moses* and the Lamb^v; and no sooner is it said, that *Babylon* is fallen, but voices are heard in heaven, ascribing salvation, glory, honour, and power to God, for his judgments on the great whore; declaring that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; that the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride made ready; and proclaiming them happy that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb^z; all which respect the spiritual reign of Christ, now introduced by the ruin of antichrist.

2dly, There will follow upon this a general spread of the gospel; for which way will be made into the several nations of the world by the pouring out of the vials. The gospel had a very great spread in the first times of it. The apostles having a commission to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; accordingly carried it not only into the several parts of *Judea*;

^v Rev. xv. 1—3.^z Rev. xix. 1, 2, 6, 7, 9.

Galilee, and Samaria, but into neighbouring countries and islands, Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and even into all the Gentile nations; the apostle Paul himself went from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum, preaching the gospel of Christ, which he says was come into all the world, and preached to every creature under heaven; and by one or other of the apostles it was carried into all the then known parts of the habitable world^a; as it seems it was to be before the destruction of Jerusalem; for our Lord says, *the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come*^b; the end of the world to the Jews, the end of their civil and church-state, when their temple should be destroyed, and not one stone left upon another. And ever since it has been preached in one place or another; and sometimes has had a greater spread, and sometimes a lesser; but now it is brought into a very narrow compass, and lies in a very few hands; there are but few persons that preach it in the purity of it; the times are now, or near at hand, which Dr Owen seems to have had in view; of whom it is reported he should say, that "the time is coming when a faithful minister would be *more precious than fine gold, even than the golden wedge of Opbir*;" meaning, they would be scarce and rare; referring to the passage in *Isai. xiii. 12.* and few there are that receive the gospel in the power of it, cordially embrace it, and sincerely profess it, and walk according to it: it looks like the time our Lord speaks of when he should come, and would not be able to *find faith*, the doctrine of faith, *on the earth*^c. But though the gospel is now within such narrow limits, ere long it will have a free course, and run and be glorified. The *earth*, the inhabitants of it, will be *filled with* a spiritual and saving *knowledge* of God and Christ, communicated by it, and of the truth of it; and that not in a superficial way and manner, but even *as the waters cover the sea*^d, which are very deep, and large, and spreading; and which knowledge will be communicated to a large number of persons. This will be, when the *angel*, not any particular minister, as *Luther*, or any other, but a set of gospel-ministers in the latter day, so called from their office, *shall see in the midst of heaven*; discharge their office with great readiness and swiftness, and in the most public manner, in the church of God; *having the everlasting gospel*; not a little dry morality, but the gospel of the grace of God, the good news of life and salvation by Jesus Christ; which consists of everlasting things, of everlasting love, an everlasting covenant, an everlasting Saviour, and everlasting salvation; and which was ordained before the world, as well as will continue to the end of it; *having* this not in their heads only, but in their hearts, and in their mouths, and a commission to *preach it to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people*^e. These will be

^a Vid. Fabricii Lux Evangelii, p. 83.

^b Matt. xxiv. 14.

^c Luke xvii. 8.

^d *Isai. xi. 9.*

^e Rev. xiv. 6.

be very diligent and industrious, spare no pains, be indefatigable in their work; they will be *many*, and *will run to and fro*; and by this means *knowledge* will be *increased*^f: this will be the time, even in the Philadelphian state; when there will be an *open door set*, which *no man can shut*^g; an opportunity of preaching the gospel every where, and which will be taken and used; a wonderful *door of utterance* will be given to ministers of the word, who will open their mouths freely, and boldly, and with great success. The doctrines of the gospel are the *living waters*, so called for their refreshing and quickening nature, both to dead sinners and drooping saints, that at this time *shall go out of Jerusalem*, the church of God; *half of them towards the former sea*, or the eastern sea^h, as the Targum; the Persian sea, which lay east of Jerusalem, and so before it; and *half of them towards the hinder sea*, or the western seaⁱ, as the same paraphrase; the Mediterranean sea, which lies to the west of Jerusalem, and so behind it; and both denoting the spread of the gospel in the latter day, east and west, for the conversion of the eastern nations in *China, Tartary, Persia, &c.* and for the conversion of the western nations in *Europe*; *in summer and in winter shall it be*^k. These waters will be ever flowing, these doctrines will be constantly preaching; nor will the ministry of the word be hindered by any heat of persecution, or by any coldness or indifference to it.

3dly, There will be very large conversions every where, in the several parts of the world: in all popish countries, and antichristian states; even the ten kings, that have given their kingdoms to the beast, have been associates of antichrist, and reigned with him, shall withdraw from him; they and their subjects shall revolt from him, and be converted, and embrace the pure gospel: as it will be the christian princes and potentates that will pour out the seven vials on antichrist, they will carry the gospel with them wherever they go; or however, the ministers of it will follow closely at their heels, way being made by the former for them; whose ministry will meet with great success every where, and those that escape the judgments of God in these nations, will not only be *affrighted* at them, but will be truly converted by the gospel, and *give glory to the God of heaven*^l. In the Mahometan nations, the Turkish woe being past, and that empire being destroyed, and way made for the gospel to be carried into the eastern kingdoms, great and large conversions will be made by it; there is a most glaring prophecy of this in *Isaiab* lx. 7. which whole chapter concerns the spiritual and personal reign of Christ; *all the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.* Now Kedar and Nebaioth were the sons of *Ismael*, Gen. xxv. 13. who settled in
Arabia,

^f Dao. xii. 4.^g Rev. iii. 8.^h כְּדוּמָא יִכָּא.ⁱ יִכָּא כְּעֵרְבָנָה.^k Zech. xiv. 8.^l Rev. xi. 13.

Arabia, the country now possessed by the *Turks*^m; so that this is a prophecy of the conversion of multitudes in those parts, whereby the interest of Christ will be increased, and his church glorified. Moreover, in all Pagan countries the gospel will make its way, and be successful; the *covering and veil* of blindness and ignorance, *cast and spread over all' people and nations*^o, will be removed by it; not only the darkness of Popery and Mahometanism, but the gross darkness of Paganism shall flee away at the light and brightness of *Zion's* rising; the Gentiles shall come to it; the fulness and forces of them shall be brought into the church, being converted by the word: and not only vast multitudes of the common people, but great personages also; kings shall be enlightened by it; these shall come to Christ, fall down before him, and worship him; these shall come into his church, and become members of it; kings shall be *nursing fathers*, and queens *nursing mothers* to his people; they shall bring their riches, honour, and glory into his house; and his saints shall *suck the breasts of kings*^o, be enriched, honoured, and protected by them. This will be the time when *the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High*ⁿ; not that there will be any change or alteration in the form and order of civil government, which will be the same as now; there will be kings and queens then, as at this time, as these prophecies shew; it will not be until the personal reign of Christ takes place, that *all rule, authority, and power, will be put down*^q: civil magistracy, in the spiritual reign, will continue as it is; only it will change hands, it will be entirely in the hands of christian kings and princes all the world over; and no doubt but it will be better exercised, be more orderly and regular; and that truth and righteousness will prevail every where. But I must not forget the conversion of that considerable body of people, the Jews, who have been preserved a distinct people for several hundreds of years, for this purpose; the conversion of these people will be sudden, and of them, altogether, *a nation shall be born at once*^r. It looks as if their conversion would be like that of the apostle *Paul*; and he seems to hint that it will, when he says, that he in obtaining mercy, was a *pattern to them which should hereafter believe*^s; meaning, perhaps, his own countrymen, that should believe in Christ in the latter day, whose conversion would be similar to his; that as his conversion was sudden, in the midst of all his ignorance, unbelief, and rebellion, and without the word, by the immediate power, and grace of God, so will theirs be in like manner; nor is it likely that their conversion should be by means of the word, since there

is.

^m The *Targum* paraphrases these words, "all the sheep of the Arabians shall be gathered unto thee," &c. as it does the beginning of the preceding verse; "the multitude of the Arabians shall cover thee round about."

ⁿ *Isaiah* xxv. 7.

^o *Isaiah* lx. 1, 2, 3, 5, 11, 16. and chap. xlix. 23. *Psal.* lxxv. 10, 11.

^p *Dan.* vii. 27.

^q *1 Cor.* xv. 24.

^r *Isaiah* lxvii. 8.

^s *1 Tim.* i. 16.

is such an aversion in that people to the hearing of it; and a rare thing it is to see a Jew in a christian assembly. But, however, all *Israel* shall be called, converted, and *saved*†. There is a famous prophecy of this in *Hosea* iii. 4, 5. in the first of these verses it is said, *the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince*; without any civil government of their own, the scepter having departed from them many hundred years ago; *and without a sacrifice*; daily or yearly, or on any occasion; they believing it to be unlawful to sacrifice any where but in their own land, and at *Jerusalem*, and on the altar of God there; *and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim*; without any manner of idols, or idol-worship; they being not addicted to idolatry, since their return from the *Babylonish* captivity: and now as all these things are exactly fulfilled in them, so will in like manner that which follows; *afterwards shall the children of Israel return*, by faith and repentance, from their evil way, from their impenitence and unbelief, and rejection of the *Messiah*; *and seek the Lord their God, and David their king*; the *Messiah*, the son of *David*, their king, as their own *Targum* paraphrases it; *and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter day*; in the spiritual reign of *Christ*; and it is hinted at in the *Philadelphian* state, *Rev.* iii. 9. then will the children of *Israel* appoint themselves one head, which is *Christ*, whom they will own and acknowledge to be their head, lord and king; and *they shall come up out of the land*, or countries, where they are, to their own land, *and great shall be the day of Jezreel*‡; and this will make a considerable part of the glory of *Christ's* spiritual reign.

4thly, There will be at this time a large effusion of the spirit of God: the prophecy in *Joel*, quoted in *Acts* ii. 17—20. was very applicable indeed to the case of the apostles at the day of pentecost, but was not fully accomplished then; the spirit was not poured upon all flesh; nor were those signs in heaven, in the full extent of them, seen then, predicted in it; the pouring forth of the spirit then was only a pledge and earnest of what will be in the latter days; some drops as it were, were only let down then; hereafter the Lord will *pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters*‡: it will be owing to this that the above events will have their accomplishment; the destruction of antichrist will be by the spirit of *Christ's* mouth, which will blow a blast upon him; the success of the gospel every where, and the large conversions of men, must be attributed to the plentiful effusion of the spirit that will attend it; particularly the conversion of the Jews, will be owing entirely to the spirit of grace and supplication* poured out upon them, when they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn; and it will be in consequence of this extraordinary pouring out of the spirit, that the following things will take place in this reign.

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† Rom. xi. 26.

‡ Hosea i. 11.

‡ Numb. xxiv. 7.

* Zach. xii. 10.

1. The light of the gospel, both in the preachers and professors of it, will be very great, clear, and distinct; *the light of the moon*, as in the present dispensation, to which it may be compared, *shall be as the light of the sun*, to which that dispensation shall be like; and *the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days*; as if the light of seven days were collected together, and shone out at once; hyperbolical expressions, setting forth the exceeding greatness of gospel-light in those times: not only *the watchmen*, ministers of the word, *shall see eye to eye*, all truths clearly and distinctly; their ideas and sentiments shall be regular and uniform; there will be an entire harmony, and agreement between them; but even private christians, common members, *shall all know* the Lord, and the things of the gospel, in a very clear and comfortable manner, even *from the least of them, unto the greatest of them*; when God shall lay *Zion's stones with fair colours*, and her foundations with sapphires; make her windows of agates, and her gates of carbuncles, and all her borders of pleasant stones; then all her children shall be taught of God^b, to such a degree as they never were before, so clearly, fully and universally.

2. There will be great purity of gospel-worship and ordinances; *the temple of God will be opened in heaven*; the true worship of God will be restored, and observed according to the primitive pattern; the *ark of the testimony*^c will be seen in it; the ordinances of the gospel will be administered according to their original institution; there will be no disputes about the form or order of church-government; every thing relating to it will appear evident; the ordinances will be kept as they were delivered; nor will there be any doubts about the manner of performing them, or the subjects to be admitted to them, or the ends to be answered by them; all these things will stand in a clear light; and there will be no objector to them, or any division about them; nor will they be ever corrupted any more.

3. Brotherly love, which is now waxen cold, will be in its height and glory, agreeable to the name of this state, *Philadelphia*, which signifies brotherly love: there will be no more contentions, animosities, and quarrels: *Ephraim shall not envy Judah*; on account of pre-eminence of office, gifts, and grace; and *Judah shall not envy Ephraim*^c; by any haughty and over bearing carriage, or with wrangling debates, and opprobrious language; the two sticks of *Ephraim* and *Judah*, shall be one in the hand of the Lord; there will be perfect harmony and love, nothing to disturb, distress, and make uneasy, or tend to alienate the affections of one from another; there will be no *pricking briar*, nor *grieving thorn*^d among them; they will be like the first christians, *of one heart, and of one soul*, being of *one mind*, and of *one judgment*; all studying *to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*.

4. Holiness,

¹ Isaiah xxx. 26.

² Isaiah lii. 8.

³ Jer. xxxi. 34.

⁴ Isaï. liv. 11—13.

⁵ Rev. xi. 19.

⁶ Isaiah xi. 13.

⁷ Ezek. xxviii. 24.

4. Holiness, which becomes the *house* of God for ever, will now adorn every member in it; nor will there be so much immorality in the world as at this present time; holiness will be as common as profaneness is now; *in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, holiness to the Lord:—yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts*^f: Christ therefore takes his titles in writing to the church at *Philadelphia*, the emblem of the spiritual reign, suitable to its state; as truth and holiness shall then prevail, he addresseth it thus, *these things saith he that is holy, he that is true*^g; truth and holiness go together; truth influences the heart, and that the life and conversation.

5. There will be great peace and prosperity of all kinds, inward and outward, spiritual and temporal; in those days of the Messiah's spiritual reign, *shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth*^h: as the saints will enjoy great peace of conscience and tranquillity of mind, so they will have nothing to disturb them without; there will be no more persecution; there will be none to *hurt or destroy in all the Lord's holy mountain*ⁱ; as there will be no discord among themselves, so no distress from any enemies; *violence shall no more be heard in their land, nor wasting and destruction within their border*^k: O happy, halcyon days!—I go on to observe,

II. The glorious things which are spoken of, and will be done in the personal reign of Christ: Towards the close of the spiritual reign, things will be upon the decline; the Laodicean church-state will take place; there will be great coldness, and lukewarmness, in spiritual things, which will be very offensive to Christ; the Spirit of God will withdraw his gracious influences; and there will be little left but external gifts, and outward riches and honour, on which great strefs will be laid; and there will be great boasting and bragging of them, as being *rich and increased with goods, and in need of nothing*; when, as to spiritual grace and the exercise of it, they will be *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*^l; and need the advice that Christ gives them, of applying to him for *gold, white raiment, and eye-salve*: a general sleepiness will seize professors of religion; the wise as well as foolish virgins will slumber and sleep, when the approach of the bridegroom is near; immorality and profaneness will again spread in the world; and it will be as in the days of *Noah and Lot*; and in this condition will Christ find the world, and the church, when he comes a second time; which is what will introduce the glory of the following state.

1st, There will be a personal appearance of the Son of God, and a glorious one it will be: he will personally appear; *the Lord himself shall descend*^m; not by his Spirit, or by the communication of his grace, or by his gracious presence, as before; but in person he will descend from the third heaven, where

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^f Zach. xiv. 20, 21.^g Rev. iii. 7.^h Psalm lxxii. 7.ⁱ Isaiah xi. 9.^k Isaiah lx. 18.^l Rev. iii. 15—18.^m 1 Thess. iv. 16.

he is in our nature, into the air, where he will be visible; *every eye shall see him*, when he cometh with clouds^a; or in the clouds of heaven, which will be his chariot; he will descend on earth at the proper time; and his feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives^b; on that spot of ground from whence he ascended to heaven. *Job* seems to have this descent of his in view, when he says, *he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*^c; which seems to respect not so much his first coming as his second; since it is connected with the resurrection of the dead.

This appearance of Christ will be a very glorious one; it is called *the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*^d; for he will appear under both characters to his people: when he appeared the first time, it was in the form of a servant; he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; but now he will come as King of kings, and Lord of lords: then he was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, to bear the sins, and work out the salvation of his people; but now he will appear without sin, to put them into the full possession of the salvation obtained for them: he will *come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels*^e; he will appear in the glory of his deity, and all the perfections of it; who is *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person*^f; it will then be evident, that he is the *Lord God omnipotent that reigneth*; and that he is omniscient, the searcher of the hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men^g: and he will be seen in all the glory of his human nature, and with that glory he has with the Father, as mediator; all which, in some sense, may be said to be his Father's; because his divine glory is the same with his Father's, and his human and mediatorial glory is what he has from him; and he will come with all that power and authority vested in him by his Father as the judge of the world: he will be attended with his holy angels, as when on mount *Sinai*, and as when he ascended to heaven; whom he will employ in one kind of service or another, and who will make a considerable figure in this apparatus: to which may be added, that all the saints will come along with Christ; the souls of all that have departed from the beginning of the world, in order to be re-united to their bodies, which will now be raised; there will be *Adam*, and there will be *Abraham*, and all the ante-diluvian and post-diluvian saints, old and new testament-ones; when Christ will be glorified in them, and admired by them, and they shall appear with him in glory.

2dly, There will be a resurrection of the bodies of the saints; *the dead in Christ*, who died in union with him, believers in him, and partakers of his grace, *shall rise first*^h; they will have the dominion over the wicked in the morning of the resurrection, who will not rise until the end of that day; there will

^a Rev. i. 7.

^b Zach. xiv. 4.

^c Job xix. 25.

^d Titus ii. 13.

^e Luke ix. 26.

^f Heb. i. 3.

^g Rev. xix. 6. and chap. ii. 23.

^h 1 Thess. iv. 16.

will be a thousand years distance between the resurrection of the one and of the other; hence the *resurrection of the just*^a, as that is named in distinction from that of the unjust, is called *the first resurrection*^a.

This resurrection will be a very glorious one; it will not only be by the power of Christ, and in virtue of union with him, but in entire conformity to him; as by him will be the resurrection of the dead, and every one will rise in his order, and they that are his at his coming, and because they are his; so they will be *fashioned like unto his glorious body*^b: though they are laid vile bodies in the grave, they will rise glorious ones; the body that is *sown in corruption*, will be *raised in incorruption*; and though *sown in dishonour*, will be *raised in glory*; being *sown in weakness*, it will be *raised in power*; and from a *natural body* will be *raised a spiritual one*^c; and the *righteous*, in soul and body, *shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father*^d.

3dly, The next thing will be the change of living saints: this is the *mystery* the apostle says he would shew the *Corinthians*; and perhaps he was the first man that was led into it, or however, the first that shewed it to others; that *we shall not all sleep*, or die, *but we shall all be changed*^e; even those that die: such as will be alive at the coming of Christ, shall undergo a change equivalent to death; their bodies shall be changed from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible ones; and their souls shall become at once perfectly pure and holy. I have sometimes thought, that that change which passes upon the hearts of the people of God at the instant of death, or will pass upon living saints at the time I speak of, when hearts so full of sinful lust, pollution, and wickedness, will be at once cleared of all, is a greater evidence and display of the power of God, than the change that passes upon their bodies, either at the resurrection, or at this time. This being done, these living saints, changed, *shall be caught up together* with the raised ones, *to meet the Lord in the air*^f; where it seems as if he and they should stop awhile, until an after-event is accomplished.

4thly, The precious dust of the saints being collected out of the earth, and their bodies raised and united to their souls, and living ones changed, and both taken up from hence, and with the Lord, the general conflagration will begin; *the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up*, with all the wicked in it; *for the heavens and the earth that now are*, that is, the earth with its surrounding atmosphere, *are kept in store, reserved unto fire, for the perdition of ungodly men*^g; when,

5thly, There will succeed new heavens, and a new earth, which God has promised; and which, the apostle *Peter* says, saints *look for according to his promise*;

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and

^a Luke xiv. 14.^b Rev. xx. 5, 6.^c Phil. iii. 21.^d 1 Cor. xv. 42—44.^e Matt. xiii. 44.^f 1 Cor. xv. 51.^g 1 Thes. iv. 17.^h 2 Peter iii. 7, 10.

and which the apostle *John* had a vision of*. In this new earth Christ will descend and dwell; here *the tabernacle of God* will be *with men*; and *he shall dwell with them*^f: this will be the seat of Christ's personal reign; here he will reign before his antients gloriously; here he will have his palace, and keep his court, and display his glory, and the greatness of his majesty; and here his people will dwell with him, who will now be *all righteous*, perfectly so, even righteousness itself; for in these new heavens and new earth will *dwell righteousness*^g; nothing shall enter into this glorious new *Jerusalem*-state, that makes an abomination or a lie; it will be perfectly an holy city, consisting wholly of holy persons; wherefore *blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection*^h: nor will there be any enemy to annoy the saints in this state; the wicked will be all burnt and destroyed at the general conflagration; the beast and false prophet before this will be cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. Satan will be bound by Christ, and cast into the bottomless pit, where he will remain till the thousand years are fulfilled: for so long will this state continue; so long Satan will be bound; so long the saints will live and reign with Christⁱ; this will be the day of the Lord, which is as a thousand years, and which thousand years will be as one day^k. At the close of these years Satan will be loosed again, and the wicked dead will be raised^l; which, with the whole posse of devils, will make the *Gog* and *Magog*-army, who shall be in the four quarters of the world, and go upon the breadth of the earth; and whose numbers shall be as the sand of the sea, being all the wicked that have been from the beginning of the world; a large army indeed, such an one as never was before, consisting of enraged devils, and of men raised with all that malice and wickedness they died in, with Satan at the head of them; by whom they will be animated to make this last feeble and foolish effort, for their recovery and liberty; in order to which they will compass the camp of the saints about, the beloved city; who will be in no manner of pain and uneasiness at the appearance of this seeming formidable army; being clothed with immortality, secured by the power of God, and Christ being in person with them; when fire shall come down from heaven and devour the wicked; the wrath of God shall seize them, distress and terrify them, divert them from their purpose, and throw them into the utmost consternation and confusion; and when they shall be dragged to the tribunal of Christ, and stand before him, small and great, and be judged according to their

* 2 Peter iii. 13. Rev. xxi. 1.

^f Rev. xxi. 3.

^g Isaiah lx. 21. ^h 2 Peter iii. 13.

Rev. xxi. 27.

ⁱ Rev. xx. 6.

^j Rev. xx. 1—6.

^k 2 Peter iii. 8.

^l As I do not suppose that the earth, at the conflagration, will be annihilated, or be destroyed, as to the substance of it; only purified by fire, refined and cleared of all noxious qualities, and therefore called a *new earth*; so (considering the omnipotence of God) there can be no difficulty about the repositories of the ashes of the wicked, or the place from whence they will be raised, any more than about the place where the dust of *Adam*, and of all from the beginning of the world, is laid up.

their works, and cast into the lake of fire; where they will be in company with the devil, the beast, and false prophet, and be tormented with them for ever and ever^a.

This will issue in the ultimate glory; when the saints shall be for ever with the Lord; shall see him as he is; enjoy uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; have the company of angels, and be in possession of those things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of. But my intention being only to give you an account of the glorious things that shall be in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ; here I stop, here I end, and close all with a word or two.

1. All this shews and proves, that the church and people of God are the objects of his love; that he *loves the gates of Zion* indeed; the church is his *Hepzibab*, in whom he delights, and to whom he is married; and therefore has he said these glorious things of her; and therefore will he make them good: and if the saints have an interest in the love of God, they need not care what the world say or think of them, or what they can do unto them; though they are with them the officouring of all things, they are precious in the sight of God.

2. It is evident from hence, that the church of Christ is lasting and durable, and cannot be destroyed; *its foundation is in the holy mountains*; it is built on a rock the gates of hell cannot prevail against; its walls, in the spiritual reign, are salvation, and its gates praise; and what a description have we of it, of its wall and foundation, of its security and glory in the personal reign, under the name of *the new Jerusalem*? It will continue through every age, and come into every state it is said it should, and will endure to all eternity.

3. Seeing such glorious things are spoken of it, and that by the Lord, we need not doubt, but should believe, there will be a performance of them; and should be looking for them, and at the worst should lift up our heads with joy, since our redemption draws near.

4. Happy are those that belong to this city, who are *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*; whose citizenship is in heaven, and they have a right to enter in through the gates into the holy city, the new *Jerusalem*; but miserable will those be, that will be without, *for without are dogs*: and then *be that is unjust, will be unjust still*; and *be that is filthy, will be filthy still*; and *be that is righteous, will be righteous still*; and *be that is holy, will be holy still*^a.

^a Rev. xx. 7—15.

^a Rev. xxii. 11.

S E R M O N V.

Faith in God and his Word, the Establishment and Prosperity of his People.

Preached at a *Wednesday's Evening Lecture in Great Eastcheap, Dec. 27, 1753.*

2 CHRON. XX. 20.

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

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

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

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* 2 Cor. vii. 5.

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

The Lord presently shewed himself to be a God hearing and answering prayer; for immediately, as the king and all the people stood before the Lord to hear what he would say unto them, the Spirit of the Lord came upon *Jahaziel* a Levite, who stood up and prophesied, and bid the people not be dismayed at the number of their enemies; told them where they were to be met with; assured them of victory, nay, that they had no need to fight, the Lord would fight for them; and that they had nothing to do, but to stand still and see the salvation of God; which message *Jehoshaphat* and the people received with faith, with holy reverence and godly fear, bowing their heads and worshipping: and so fully assured were they of the truth of what was promised them, that they sung the praises of God, before the deliverance was wrought; upon which they marched out to meet the enemy, when *Jehoshaphat* at the head of his army addressed

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^b Matt. vi. 9.^c Jonah ii. 4.

it in the words first read; *believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets so shall ye prosper*: “do not trust in your numbers, nor in your own strength, courage, and skill; but trust in your covenant-God, so shall ye be strengthened, confirmed, and animated to engage your enemies with true fortitude of mind; believe what he has said by his prophets, particularly by *Jabaziel*, who has just now delivered a message from him to you; so shall ye succeed against your enemies, and obtain a compleat victory over them.” This is the sense of the words respecting the present case; but they may be applied to believers in any age or period of time, in whatsoever case or circumstances they may be; the main and principal thing in them is faith or believing: concerning which,

- I. I shall consider the kind and nature of it.
- II. The objects of it, as here expressed, the *Lord God* and his *prophets*.
- III. The advantages arising from it, *establishment* and *prosperity*.

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

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

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

That there is but one God: that there is a God may be known and believed by the light of nature, may be concluded from the things that are made by him; and that this God is but one, is the voice of reason and revelation; the language
both

^d 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

^e Gal. v. 6.

^f Matt. xvii. 20.

^g Matt. vii. 22, 23.

both of the Old and of the New Testament; the faith of Jews and Christians; and it is right to believe it; and which may be done where there is not true special faith: *thou believest that there is one God, thou dost well; the devils also believe and tremble*^b; that is, they believe there is one God, and know there is but one, and tremble through fear of his awful majesty.

With this sort of faith a man may believe all that is said and is true of Jesus Christ; as that he is God over all blessed for ever, the true God and eternal life: that he is the Son of God, and Saviour of the world; that he is God and man in one person; that he became incarnate; that he suffered and died for the sins of men; that he was buried, and rose again from the dead; that he ascended up to heaven, is set down at the right hand of God, and will come a second time to judge the world; all which a man may believe, and yet be destitute of the true grace of God. There are indeed some strong expressions in the epistle of the apostle *John*, where he says, that *every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God*^c; and *whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*^d: whereas now there are whole nations that believe these things, of multitudes of whom it cannot be thought that they are regenerate persons. It will help us over this difficulty a little, by considering times, and times: in the apostles times, these truths were generally denied; the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, opposed them; and then for a man to believe and profess them in the face of all opposition, and under the scandal of the cross, was a great matter; it was reckoned a proof of true grace, and a criterion of a man's regeneration: but now, since christianity is established, and become the religion of nations, to believe all this is no mark or sign of being born again; for such a national faith is no better than the faith of Indians and Mahometans, only it happens to have a better object; for the ground and reason of it is the same; namely, being born and brought up among those who generally believe in the same way. Though it may be, the true sense of the above expressions is this; that every one that embraces, professes, or preaches that Christ is come in the flesh, or is become incarnate, is on the side of God and truth; and that whoever believes that *Jesus of Nazareth* is the true Messiah, is a regenerate person; that is, not barely assents to this truth; but whereas his work, as the Messiah was to make atonement for sin, and procure the pardon of it, and bring in everlasting righteousness, and obtain salvation for men; he deals by faith with him for these things; with his atoning sacrifice for the expiation of sin; with his blood for pardon and cleansing; and with his righteousness for justification; receives him as a Saviour, and depends upon him for life and salvation; otherwise, barely believing him to be the Messiah, is no other than what the devils them-

^b James ii. 19.^c 1 John iv. 2.^d 1 John v. 1.

selves do; who in the days of his flesh knew and owned him to be the Christ, the Son of God¹.

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

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

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

This sort of faith is not of a man's self; it does not owe its original to the creature; it is expressly denied to be of man; *that not of yourselves, it is the gift*

¹ Luke iv. 34, 41.

^m John xii. 36.

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

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

True faith in Christ, comes from another quarter than from the covenant of works, and flows in another channel ; it is a blessing of the covenant of grace, of that covenant which is *ordered in all things, and sure* ; for the glory of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and for the good of the covenant-ones ; it provides all blessings of grace for them, for time and eternity, and among the rest faith in

Christ

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• Ephes. ii. 8.

† 2 Thess. iii. 2.

‡ John vi. 65

§ John vi. 44.

• Gal. iii. 12.

† Rom. x. 17.

‡ Gal. iii. 2.

§ Rom. iii. 20.

• Gal. iii. 12.

† Acts xvi. 31.

‡ Matt. xxiii. 23.

§ 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Christ Jesus. This lays open and exposes a mistaken and false notion of some, who assert, that faith and repentance are *conditions* of the covenant of grace, when they are the *blessings* of it, included in that promise; *a new heart also will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh* ^b; and these are gifts without repentance, which God never revokes or takes back, or suffers to be of no effect. Faith in Christ is the fruit of electing grace, and is as sure as salvation itself; the one is in the decree of the means, the other in the decree of the end; that decree of election which secures the end, *salvation* , secures also the means, *justification of the spirit, and belief of the truth* ^c; or faith in Christ, who is the truth; so it has been in all ages, now is, and ever shall be, that *as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed* ^d. Hence true faith is called the *faith of God's elect* ^e; it being certain, proper and peculiar to them; and this is the true reason why one believes, and another does not; as our Lord says of some, *ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep* ^f; the sheep which the Father gave unto me in election, and in the covenant of grace: let any man rise up and give a better reason if he can, than this that Christ has given, why one believes in him, and another does not. Believing in him is the pure gift of God, of his rich, sovereign and distinguishing grace; he gives it to one, and denies it to another, as he pleases; he *bides* the things of Christ, and of the gospel, *from the wise and prudent* , and does not vouchsafe unto them faith in them; and *reveals* them unto babes; and gives them faith in his Son; and no other reason can be given of it than his sovereign pleasure: *even so, Father, says Christ, for so it seemed good in thy sight* ^g.

Special faith in Christ is of the operation of the Spirit of God; he produces it by his mighty power in the soul; he enlightens the mind, reveals the object, brings near Christ, his righteousness and salvation, and enables the sensible sinner to look unto him, lay hold on him, and receive him as his Saviour and Redeemer: hence he is called *the Spirit of faith* ^h; because he is the author of it, who begins and carries on, and will perform the work of faith with power; the principal use of which grace is to receive all from Christ, and give him the glory. God has put this honour upon it, to constitute and appoint it to be the *receiver-general* of all the blessings of grace. It receives Christ himself as the Father's free-gift; it receives out of the fulness of Christ, even grace for grace, or an abundance of it; it receives the blessing of righteousness from the Lord for justification; it receives the remission of sins through his blood, according to the gospel-declaration; it receives the adoption of children, in consequence of the way being opened for it through the redemption which is in Christ; it receives

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^b Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

^f John x. 26.

^c 2 Thess. ii. 13.

^e Matt xi. 25.

^d Acts xiii. 48.

^h 2 Cor. iv. 13.

^g Titus i. 1.

the inheritance among them that are sanctified, the right unto it, and the claim upon it; and to this post it is advanced, that all the glory might redound to the grace of God; *it is of faith, that it might be by grace*¹: there are other uses of faith, and actings of it, which will be observed under the following head. I now proceed to consider,

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

I. God the Father is the object of faith, who is to be believed in; and to believe in him, is not merely to believe his existence and perfections, for he is a fool indeed that believes there is no God; nor merely to believe in him as the God of nature and providence, and to trust in him for the preservation of life and the continuance of the blessings and mercies of it, and to glorify him for them; though there are some who believe there is a God, yet do not glorify him as such, nor trust in his goodness, nor are thankful for providential favours: but to believe in him with a special faith, is to believe in him as he has proclaimed his name in Christ, *a God gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin*^m; it is to believe in him as our covenant-God and Father, for so he is to his people in Christ; he is to them what he is to him, as he says, *I ascend to my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God*ⁿ: it was a noble act of faith expressed by David, *I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, thou art my God*^o: and such should believe that this God, who is their God, will be their God and guide even unto death; since covenant-relation always subsists, and can never be made void. And whereas the Father of Christ stands in the relation of a Father to his people; it becomes them, having had the testimony of the Spirit of adoption, witnessing to their spirits that they are the children of God, to call him in faith, and with a filial fear and reverence, their father, and not turn away from him: to believe in him, is to believe in his everlasting and unchangeable love; and to believe that it is so, and their interest in it, it being shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit given unto them; this love being declared unto them by the Lord himself, and affirmed in the strongest terms, saying, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*^p; of which he has given full proof, not only by his choice of them in Christ, and by the redemption of them through him,

¹ Rom. iv. 16.^k Deut. vi. 4.^l See my Exposition of 1 John v. 7.^m Exod. xxxiv. 6.ⁿ John xx. 17.^o Psalm xxxi. 14.^p Jer. xxxi. 3.

him, but by drawing them with loving-kindness to himself in effectual vocation ; it should be believed : it is a glorious act of faith of the apostle's, when he says, *I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*¹ ; this is to be rooted and grounded in it. To believe in God the Father, is to believe in him as the God of all grace, the author and giver of it ; that his grace is sufficient for us in all times of need ; that he is able to cause all grace to abound towards us ; and that he will supply all our wants, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus : it is to believe in his promises, which are exceeding great and precious ; that he is faithful who has promised, and will perform ; that he will never suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor any good word which he has spoken ; that all his promises are yea and amen in Christ : it is to believe in his power, that he is able also to perform and make good what he has said ; and likewise that there is in him everlasting strength, and that, according to his promise, as our day is, our strength shall be ; and that we are, and shall be kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation.

2. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is also the object of faith : *ye believe in God, believe also in me*², says Christ himself ; who is God as well as the Father, and to be believed in equally with him : the gospel directs to faith in Christ, and it is the principal thing it encourages to ; the ministers of it point him out to sensible and distressed sinners, saying, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved*³ : the sum of the gospel of the word of faith is, *that if thou shalt confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved ; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*⁴. The Targum, or Chaldee paraphrase of our text, is, *believe in the word of the Lord your God* ; where the Paraphrast, by the memra Jehovah, or word of the Lord, does not mean the written word of the Lord, the scriptures ; nor the oral word of the Lord, what was spoken by the prophets, as it is said he sometimes does ; since it follows in the same paraphrase, *believe in his law, and in his prophets* ; wherefore it is to be understood of the essential Word, the Son of God, who is to be believed in ; and various are the acts of faith which are exercised on him, or believing on him is expressed by various things.

Faith in Christ is signified by *seeing* him, and looking unto him ; an unknown Christ cannot, but an unseen Christ is, and may be, the object of faith : *faith is the evidence of things not seen*⁵, the principal of which is an unseen Christ : the believer by faith beholds the glory of his person, the fulness of his grace, the excellency

¹ Rom. viii. 38, 39.

² John xiv. 1.

³ Acts xvi. 31.

⁴ Rom. x. 9, 10.

⁵ Hebrews xi. 1.

cellency of his righteousness, the preciousness and efficacy of his blood, and the suitability of his salvation; and it looks to him, for peace and pardon, for righteousness, eternal life and happiness; and keeps looking to him as the author and finisher of faith. It is a *motion* of the soul towards Christ; it not only looks at him, and gazes with admiration and pleasure on the glories of his person, and the riches of his grace, but goes out unto him: faith is the soul's coming to Christ, which it is encouraged to do, by his kind invitation; *come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*¹; and by his gracious declarations and resolutions, that he *will in no wise cast out him that cometh to him*²: yea, it is expressed by a swift motion to him; by a *fleeing* to him for refuge under a sense of sin and danger; by *running* to the name of the Lord for safety, which is as a strong tower; and by turning into the strong-hold. Christ, as prisoners of hope: to believe in him, is not only to behold him with an eye of faith, to flee and come unto him in a way of believing, but to *lay hold* upon him, and embrace him; for Christ is *a tree of life to them that lay hold upon him, and happy is every one that retaineth him*³: it is to lay hold upon the skirt of him that is a Jew; to lay hold upon his righteousness; to lay hold upon his strength; to lay hold upon his covenant, the blessings and promises of it; to lay hold on him as the mediator of the covenant; to hold him fast, and not let him go; saying with *Job, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him—he also shall be my salvation*⁴. Faith in Christ is a *leaning* on him, while passing through this wilderness; it is a recumbency, a relying upon him for salvation; a staying a man's self upon the mighty God of *Jacob*; laying the whole stress of his salvation on him; casting all his care, and all his burdens on him, who has promised to sustain him and them; believing he is able to keep him from falling, and to keep what he has committed to him: for to believe in Christ, is to *give up* all into his hands, our souls, and the eternal concerns of them; to expect all grace, and all the supplies of it from him, even all grace here, and glory hereafter: it is, in one word, to deal with his person for acceptance with God; with his blood for pardon and cleansing; with his sacrifice for atonement; with his righteousness for justification; with his fulness for every supply of grace, looking for his mercy unto eternal life.

3. The holy Spirit of God is likewise the object of faith; we read and hear much of faith in God, and of faith in Jesus Christ, but very little of faith in the holy Ghost; and yet as he is the one God with the Father and the Son, he is equally to be believed in as they are: and we are not only to believe his being and perfections, his deity and personality, his offices as a sanctifier and comforter, and the operations of his grace on the souls of men; but there are particular acts of faith, trust, and confidence, to be exercised on him: as he is God,

God,

¹ Matt. xi. 28.

² John vi. 37.

³ Prov. iii. 18,

⁴ Job xiii. 15, 16.

God, he is to be worshipped, and this cannot be done aright without faith; he is particularly to be prayed unto, and there is no praying to him, nor praying in him, without faith; we are to trust in him for his help and assistance in prayer, and indeed in the exercise of every religious duty, and even of every grace. I fear ministers of the word do not trust in him as they should do in the discharge of their work, nor private christians in the performance of theirs: and besides all this, there is an act of special faith to be put forth upon him, as upon the other two persons; for as we are to trust in God the Father to keep us through his power to salvation, and to trust in Christ for the salvation of our souls, and to trust the salvation of them with him; so we are to trust in the holy Spirit for carrying on and finishing the work of grace on our souls, who is equal to it; we are to trust the whole of it with him, and be *confident of this very thing*; as we may be, as of any one thing in the world, *that he, the Spirit of God, which hath begun a good work in us, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*^b.

2dly, The prophets of the Lord are to be believed; first the Lord, and then his prophets, being sent by him, and coming from him, bringing a message from him, and declaring his will; so the children of *Israel* at the red sea believed the Lord and his servant *Moses*^c.

1. By the *prophets* are meant the prophets of the Old Testament, who are to be believed, since they spoke as they were *moved* by the holy Ghost; *the Spirit of the Lord spoke by them, and his Word was in their tongue*^d: he dictated to them what they should say; he led them into all the truths they delivered; he indited the scriptures of truth, and therefore they ought to be credited as such: nay, not only *all scripture is given by inspiration of God*, even all the writings of the prophets; but whatsoever things were *written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope*; the whole of scripture is *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness*^e; which several advantageous uses should the more recommend the writings of the prophets to our faith and love; and especially since they contain many things in them concerning Christ, the more immediate object of special faith; there are many things in the psalms, and in the law, and in the prophets, concerning him; *Moses* wrote of him, and all the prophets bear witness to him. Their writings abundantly testify of him, of his person, offices, and grace, of what he should be, and what he should do and suffer; they testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; and especially we, at this time of day, have great reason to believe the prophets, since the far greater part of what they prophesied of, is exactly come to pass. The prophecies of *Isaiab*, concerning the captivity of the

Jews,

^b Phil. i. 6.

^c Exod. xiv. 31.

^d 2 Peter i. 21. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.

^e Rom. xv. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Jews, and their deliverance from it by *Cyrus*, who is mentioned by name a hundred and fifty years or more before he was born, have been punctually fulfilled. Also *Daniel's* prophecies concerning *Darius* king of *Persia*, and *Alexander* the Great, under the names of the ram and he-goat, and of the kings of *Egypt* and *Syria*, and what should be done in their times; and not only these, but others of greater importance, concerning the Messiah, his birth of a virgin, the place of his birth, his miracles, sufferings, and death; his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, the effusion of the spirit, and the spread and success of the gospel in the Gentile world, as well as the destruction of the Jewish nation, for their rejection of him; on account of all these things, and more, the prophets of the Old Testament claim our faith and credit.

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

The whole of divine revelation is to be believed, which God has made by his prophets, whether of the Old or of the New Testament; and which is all comprehended in these words our Lord began his ministry with, *believe the Gospel*^g: not to believe this, is the damning sin of unbelief, so much spoken of in the New Testament; this was the sin of the Jews, and in which the greater part died, that they believed not that Jesus was the Messiah, and other important

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truths

^d Matt. xxiii 34.^e 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 4, 5, 29, 32, 37.^f 1 John iv. 1.^g Mark i. 15.

truths concerning him, though they came with such full evidence; this is the sin of all, to whom the external revelation of the Gospel comes, and they believe it not; this is the sin of the Deists of the present age, of all deniers, rejecters, and despisers of the Gospel; who either neglect to examine the evidence of it, or notwithstanding the evidence of it, reject and condemn it; what will the end of such persons be, that obey not the gospel of Christ, that do not embrace, but neglect or despise it? They will be punished with everlasting destruction; he that believeth not this revelation shall be damned. *This is the condemnation, the cause, and aggravation of it, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light^b*; the darkness of nature, rather than a divine revelation. This sort of unbelief, and not want of special faith in Christ, is the cause of mens damnation. No man will be lost or damned, because he has not this faith; to say that God will damn any man because he has not this special faith in Christ, is to represent him as *the most cruel of all beings*, as the Arminians say we make him to be; to damn a man for that which is solely in his own power to give; for no man can believe in Christ with this sort of faith, unless it be given him of his Father; and which yet he determines not to give unto him, as unto all the non-elect; and which man never had in his power to have or exercise, no, not in the state of innocence. Can any man believe, that God will ever damn a man on such an account as this? This is just such good sense, as if it should be said, that a malefactor dies at *Tyburn*, for want of receiving the king's pardon, he did not think fit to give him; it is true, if the king had given him his pardon, and he had received it, it would have saved him from dying; but then it is not the want of the king's pardon, or of his receiving it, that is the cause of his condemnation and death, but the crimes he was charged with, and convicted of in open court. So, though if it pleases God to give men special faith in Christ, for the remission of their sins, they will certainly be saved; but then it is not the want of this faith in the blood of Christ, for the pardon of sins, that is the cause of any man's condemnation and death, but the transgressions of the law of God, and the contempt of his gospel they have been guilty of. As is the revelation which is made to men, such is the faith that is required of them. If there is no revelation made unto them, no faith is required of them; and unbelief, or want of faith in Christ, will not be their damning sin, as is the case of the heathens; for *how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* and *how shall they hear without a preacher?*^c No, they will be condemned, not for their want of faith in Christ, or his gospel, which they never heard of, but for their sins committed against the law and light of nature; *as many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law^k*: if a revelation is made, this is either external or internal; if only an external revelation is made,

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^b John iii. 19.^c Rom. x. 14.^k Rom. ii. 12.

the faith required is an assent unto it, and a reception of it; and such who do not attend to the evidence it brings with it, or reject and despise it, shall be damned: but if besides the external revelation, an internal revelation is made by the spirit of wisdom, in the knowledge of Christ; or God by his word calls men effectually by his grace, and reveals his Son in them, as well as to them; this sort of revelation comes with such power and influence upon the mind, as *certainly* to produce a true and living faith in the soul, which *infallibly* issues in eternal life and happiness; and of such persons, and of such only, acts of special faith in Christ are required: and though the sin of unbelief is often found in them, it is such as is consistent with true faith in Christ, and which in the issue is overcome by it: this is the sin of unbelief, that is opposite to special faith, and obstructs it in its acts; but partly because it is pardoned with the other sins of believers, and partly because it is finally subdued and vanquished, it is never the damning sin of any. So I think the truth of things stands. I proceed,

III. To consider the advantages arising from faith in God, and in his word, *establishment* and *prosperity*. Now, though establishment is annexed to faith in the Lord our God, and prosperity to faith in his prophets; yet this is not so to be understood, as if establishment only followed upon faith in God, and not upon faith in his word; and as if prosperity was the consequence of faith in the word only, and not of faith in God; whereas, as on the one hand, the prophets and ministers of the word, are the means of establishing believers; hence the apostle *Paul* was desirous of imparting the spiritual gifts he had received, *to the end* the saints might be established¹, and speaks of God as of power to establish men, according to his gospel^m; so, on the other hand, spiritual peace and prosperity flow from faith in God, who keeps such in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on him, because he trusts in himⁿ; wherefore these things are to be considered, not in a strict separate sense, but promiscuously, as they are the joint effects of both faith in God, and in his word.

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

1. Not of the state of the people of God, which is in itself firm and stable, and cannot be made more so: they are safe in the arms of everlasting love; they are not only engraven by the Lord upon the palms of his hands, and set as a seal upon his arm, but also as a seal upon his heart. Nothing in heaven, earth, or hell, can separate them from his love; it is invariably the same, in whatsoever condition or circumstance they are; when he hides or chides, he still loves; he rests in his love; it is more immoveable than rocks or mountains. They are fixed in the hands of Christ, out of whose hands neither sin, nor Satan, nor

¹ Rom. i. 11.^m Rom. xvi. 25.ⁿ Isa. lxxvi. 3.

the world can pluck them, and out of which they shall never fall. What was said by the queen of *Sheba*, concerning *Solomon*, with respect to *Israel*; because thy God loved *Israel*, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them^o, may be said of Christ, with respect to his people; that because he loved the saints, and in order to establish them for ever and ever, he put them into the hands of Christ, where they are safe from all danger, and from every enemy. They are secured in the covenant of grace, which is sure and immovable; its blessings are the sure mercies of *David*; its promises are yea and amen in Christ; it is established on better promises than any other covenant; and the persons in it can never be removed out of it. They are settled on the rock of ages, on which the church is built, against which the gates of hell can never prevail; they are built on a sure foundation God has laid in *Zion*; so that, though storms and tempests of corruptions, temptations, and afflictions should beat upon them, they stand unmoved against them all, being built on a rock. They are in a state of grace, in which they will ever remain; they are in a state of justification, and shall never enter into condemnation; they are in the family of God, by adopting grace, out of which they will never be turned; for, *if a son, no more a servant, but an heir of God through Christ*^p; they are in a state of regeneration, and can never be unborn again; they have the principle of grace, which springs up unto eternal life: these things are so chained together, that not one link can ever be broken; *whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified*^q. Now this establishment does not arise from faith, nor is it by it; if all the faith that ever was in the world, from *Adam* to this moment, was engrossed and possessed by one man, it would not make his state, God-ward, a whit the surer and firmer than it is. But,

2. The hearts of God's people are very unsettled, and need establishing; they melt like wax, and flow like water, through fear, and want of stronger faith. They are *unstable as water*, as is said of *Reuben*, and do not excel^r; their frames are changeable and various; one while their *mountain stands strong*, and they say they shall *never be moved*; presently God hides his face, and their souls are troubled^s: one that could say, *the Lord is my portion, therefore will I hope in him*, soon comes into such distress as to *put his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope*^t; he whose love is as *strong as death*, exceeding fervent and ardent, *the coals thereof give a most vehement flame, which many waters cannot quench*^v; through the prevalence of corruption, the force of temptation, and the snares of the world, waxes chill and cold. And he that seemed to be steadfast in the faith, falls from some degree of his steadfastness in it; and instead of quitting himself like a man,

^o 2 Chron. ix. 9.

^p Gal. iv. 7.

^q Rom. viii. 30.

^r Gen. xlix. 4.

^s Psal. xxx. 6, 7.

^t Lam. iii. 24, 29.

^v Cant. viii. 6, 7.

is like a child *tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine*, wavers in his profession, slackens in his duty, and is negligent of it. Now faith in God, and in his word, has a tendency to establish the heart, and make it fearless; *he shall not be afraid of evil tidings*, even he whose *heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord; his heart is established, he shall not be afraid*^a: as is a man's faith, so are his other graces; if faith is in lively exercise, hope will be lively too, and be as an anchor sure and stedfast; his love will abound, for faith works by it; he will become established in the truths of the gospel he believes, and has an experience of; he will be more stable and constant in the discharge of duty; he will be *stedfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*^b.

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

^a Psa. cxii. 7, 8.^b 1 Cor. xv. 58.^c 3 John 2.^d Mal. iv. 2.^e 1 Sai. xxxiii. 24.^f Phil. i. 25.^g 1 John v. 5, 6.

faith have subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, &c. and such must be in prosperous and flourishing circumstances.

From the whole we learn, what an excellent and precious grace the grace of faith is; what use it is of, what purposes it serves, and what influence it has upon the stability and prosperity of the believer; it is pity it should be put out of its place; for when it keeps its place, it is very useful and serviceable; but if it is put in the room of Christ, it is good for nothing. Careful we should be, not to ascribe that to the act, which belongs to the object. It may be known, whether a person has this grace or no; for where it is, Christ is precious, *to them that believe he is precious*^f; it works and shews itself by love to him, his word and ordinances, his people, and his ways; and it is attended with good works, the fruits of righteousness; for *faith without works is dead*^g: and if persons are satisfied that they have this grace, they should be thankful for it, and attribute it, not to the power of their own free-will, but to the free grace of God, whose gift it is; for it comes along with the abundant and superabundant grace of God in conversion. And such who have it should pray for an increase of it; since their stability and prosperity have such a connexion with it; and should guard against unbelief; and upon every appearance of it, pray as the poor man did, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief*^h. To conclude, since such are the advantages of believing in God and his word, *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God*ⁱ.

^g Heb. xi. 36.

^f 1 Peter i. 7.

^h James ii. 26.

ⁱ Mark ix. 24.

^d Heb. iii. 12.

S E R M O N VI.

The sure Performance of Prophecy.

Preached at a *Wednesday's Evening Lecture in Great-Eastcheap, Jan. 1, 1755.*

ISAIAH IX. 7. latter part.

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

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

1. The appearance of Christ in the land of *Galilee*, which is predicted *ver. 1.* and which land, as it had been afflicted by the Assyrians, and was to be more so by the Romans, as it has been in the times of *Vespasian* and *Titus*, as the history of *Josephus* shews; and as it was vile ^c and mean, and lightly esteemed of by men, it should be made *glorious* and honourable, as the word used signifies ^d, particularly by the presence, ministry and miracles of Christ in it; and to this purpose it is quoted and applied by the evangelist *Matthew*, chap. iv. 13—23. from whence it appears, that Christ first began to preach in that country; that he called his first disciples near the sea of *Galilee*; and that he went through that whole land, and taught and preached in the *synagogues* in it, and healed all diseases; here he wrought his first miracle of turning water into wine; here he lived the greatest

^a Called the *Glory of the Church in the latter Day*, on *Psal. lxxxvii. 3.*

^b Intituled, *Faith in God and his Word, the Establishment and Prosperity of his People*, on *2 Chron. xx. 20.*

^c קלל כלל הקל vilem esse vel haberi.

^d הבריר gloriificavit, honorificavit.

greatest part of his private life; and here he resided chiefly during his public ministry; here he promised to meet his disciples after his resurrection. and here he did: in short, being educated and brought up in this country in the former part of his life, and conversing here so much in the latter part of it; the Jews concluded he was born here, and confronted his Messiahship with it, *shall Christ come out of Galilee*? And hence he was called by them *Jesus of Galilee*, and his followers *Galileans*: all which confirm the truth of this prophecy, and the performance of it; and it is with respect to this, no doubt, that the ancient Jews expected that the Messiah would first appear in *Galilee*^e.

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

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

4. It is foretold that there should be great joy upon all this; indeed our version renders it, *not increased the joy*; but the *Keri*, or marginal reading of the Hebrew text is, and *increased joy unto it*, unto the nation: or it may be rendered with an interrogation, as it is by some, and may take in both the textual and marginal reading, *hast thou not increased joy unto it?* and in one way or other it must be rendered, or otherwise there is a glaring contradiction in the text; for it follows, *they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice*

^e John vii. 41.

^f אתר --- Zohar in Gen. fol. 74. 3. כלכא משיחא בארעא דגליל
 אתר --- ibid in Exod. fol. 3. 3. Ed. Sultzbach.

rejoice when they divide the spoil; phrases expressive of the greatest joy among men; as there doubtless was among the Galileans when Christ was present with them, and his gospel preached to them; which is a joyful sound, and brings good tidings of good things, peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by the incarnate Redeemer; and so joy along with it, wherever it comes with power, and is received and embraced; as it did in *Samaria*, and among the Gentiles.

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

6. Is prophesied of as the author of all this, and is the child that should be born, and the Son that should be given; for not *Hezekiah* is here meant, as the Jews would have it, who at the time of this prophecy was at least ten or eleven years of age, and to whom the august titles after given can by no means agree. The child here is the same that is prophesied of, chap. vii. 14. that should be born of a virgin, and called *Immanuel*; even Jesus the son of *Mary*, born in the city of *David*, a Saviour, Christ the Lord, whose birth the angel declared to the shepherds; the Word that has been made flesh, and has dwelt among men: he is the Son of God, his only-begotten Son, his Son in such sense as no other is, and is the unspeakable gift of his love to men. He is here represented as a king, on whose shoulders the government should be; not meaning the government of the whole world, which belongs to him as God and creator; *the kingdom is his, and he is the governor among the nations*; but the government of the church, his mediatorial kingdom, which is delegated to him, and devolved upon him as king of *Zion*, king of saints; a kingdom appointed to him, and for which he is and will be accountable to his Father, and will give it up to him complete and perfect, and God shall be all in all: his names and titles follow, and his name shall be called; not that he should be called in common by all the following names, but that he should be or answer to what is signified by them: so he is wonderful in his person as God and man, having two natures united in him; in his offices, in his life and death, in his resurrection from the dead, ascen-

sion to heaven, session at the right hand of God, and second coming to judgment: *counsellor*, or, as the *Septuagint* render it, the angel of the great council, who assisted in the everlasting council held concerning the salvation of men; and who by his Spirit, in his word, and by his ministers, gives the most wholesome counsel and advice to saints and sinners respecting their spiritual and eternal welfare: *the mighty God*, as appears from the perfections of deity in him, from the works done by him, from the worship given to him, and from his names and titles: *the everlasting Father*, who has a spiritual seed and offspring given him, whom he loves with an everlasting love, takes an everlasting care of, and makes everlasting provision for: *the prince of peace*, the author of peace between God and men, between Jew and Gentile, and the giver of spiritual and eternal peace. Now all the above things *the zeal of the Lord of hosts* has performed already.

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

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

II. Shew to what the performance of them is to be ascribed; to *the zeal of the Lord of hosts*.

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

First, The destruction of antichrist; which as I have observed in the Sermon first referred to, is the leading event to the glory of Christ's spiritual kingdom; which cannot greatly increase, nor the peace of it, so long as this enemy stands in the way; and therefore he must be removed, as it is foretold he shall be. All that believe a divine revelation allow that there is, or will be, what is commonly called antichrist; not only Protestants, but even Jews and Papists: though both these latter have very foolish and fabulous notions concerning him; yet a general notion they have, which is founded on prophecy. I shall therefore lay before you the more considerable prophecies concerning him, and observe what are fulfilled, and from thence argue the certain performance of those which relate to his utter and final ruin. I shall not take notice of what is only incidentally and occasionally dropped concerning him; such incidental and occasional hints we have as early as the times of *David*. In his *Psalms* there are frequent hints of him, and of his destruction; as that *the man of the earth* shall no more oppress, when the Lord shall reign for ever, and the Heathen or Gentiles, a name sometimes given to Papists, shall *perish out of his land*; and when the Messiah is said to *wound the head over many countries*; that is, antichrist; who has reigned over the kings and kingdoms of the earth: and respect seems to be had to his followers, when it is wished, that *the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and the wicked be no more*¹; at the end of which verse the word *Hallelujah* is first used, and which is used at the destruction of mystical *Babylon*. But I shall only observe such as purposely and largely predict him and his ruin, and shall begin,

1st, With the famous prophecy of him in the viiith of *Daniel*, in which the prophet is said to have a vision of four beasts rising out of the sea; that is, of the four monarchies rising up in the world, the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman: the fourth and last beast is the Roman empire, said to have ten

¹ Psalm x. 16, 18. and cx. 6. and civ. 35.

horns; now among these rises up a little horn, different from them, and which plucks up three of them; and it is said to have "eyes like the eyes of a man, and a look more stout than its fellows; to have a mouth speaking great things against the most High, and to make war with the saints, and prevail over them, and wear them out; and to think to change times and laws;" and thus it is to continue until a time, and times, and the dividing of time, and then to have his dominion taken away, destroyed and consumed. Now this horn cannot be *Antiochus Epiphanes*, as *Grotius*, *Junius*, and others have thought; for not a single person or king is meant by a horn, but a kingdom or state, and a succession of rulers and governors in it; as by the other ten horns are meant ten kings or kingdoms, ver. 24. And besides, this little horn is a part of the fourth, and not of the third beast, to whom *Antiochus* belonged; and was to rise, not in the third, but in the fourth monarchy, not in the Grecian, but in the Roman empire; and moreover was to continue until the coming of Christ, even until the spiritual coming of Christ in the latter day, and when his spiritual kingdom will take place in the world: and as there is no other that has appeared in the Roman empire but antichrist, or the Pope of *Rome*, to whom the characters agree as to him; it may be safely concluded he is intended, and as will more fully appear by the account of him; who is described,

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

2. By his rise and original from among the other horns or kingdoms, and his connexion with them; he is said to *come up among them*. When the northern barbarous nations broke into the empire, and set up ten kingdoms in it, this little horn sprung up among them; and while they were forming kingdoms for themselves, he was contriving one for himself; they arose at the same time, and reigned together: so the ten horns in the *Revelation*, which are the same with

with these, and are there, as here, interpreted ten kings, are said to *receive power, as kings, one hour with the beast^k*, the same as this little horn. Indeed in ver. 24. this little horn is said to *rise after them*, the other ten; not after the ten kingdoms were at end, but after they were set up, and constituted, and established; as it was proper they should, since they were to give their *strength, power and kingdom to the beast^l*, by which he became a horn, a temporal prince. The *Septuagint* render it *behind them*; which Mr *Mede^m* understands of his growing up unawares, imperceptibly, unnoticed, and unobserved by them, till he overtopped them. He is said to be *divers* or different *from the first* horns; they only had and exercised a secular power, but he, besides his temporal authority, had and exercised an ecclesiastic and spiritual one; he not only had power over the bodies and estates, but over the souls and consciences of men; and even over the other ten horns or kingdoms, which they had not over one another. Hence he is represented by two beasts in the *Revelation*, the one describing him in his secular, the other in his spiritual authority, as we shall see anon; and this made him different from other kings and princes: Moreover, *before him three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots, or, as in ver. 20. before him one tree fell*, and which is interpreted ver. 24. of his *subduing three kings or kingdoms*; which, according to Sir *Isaac Newtonⁿ*, were the exarchate of *Ravenna*, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the senate and dukedom of *Rome*. The bishop of *Clogher^o*, more lately, has expressed them thus, *Campagna of Rome*, the exarchate of *Ravenna*, and the region of *Pentapolis*; these were plucked up by *Pipin and Charlemagne*, kings of *France*, and given to the Pope, and were confirmed to him by their successor *Lewis the pious*; and make up what is called the *patrimony of St Peter*; and in memory of this a piece of Mosaic work was made, and put up in the Pope's palace; in which were represented *St Peter* with three keys in his lap, signifying the three keys of the three parts of his patrimony^p; and to shew his sovereignty over them, the Pope to this day wears a triple crown. How surprisngly does the prophecy open unto us! An event is here predicted above a thousand years, twelve or thirteen hundred years, before it was accomplished.

3. This little horn is further described by its eyes and look; its *eyes were like the eyes of man*; strange for a horn to have eyes, stranger still for the horn of a beast to have eyes as the eyes of man. These are thought by some to denote the pretended sanctity and religion of the pope of *Rome*, or antichrist, who, though a beast, would be thought to be a man, a religious creature; others think they

design.

^k Rev. xvii. 12.

^l Ibid. ver. 13.

^m Works, p. 778.

ⁿ Observations on the Prophecies of *Daniel*, chap. 7. p. 75—78, 80, 84, 85.

^o Impartial Enquiry into the Time of the Coming of the Messiah, p. 23.

^p See Sir Isaac Newton's Observations, &c. p. 86—88.

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

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

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

^a והורה רב מן הברתה.

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

2dly, Another famous prophecy of antichrist, and his destruction, we have in *12 Thess. ii. 3—12.* where he is described,

1. By his names and characters; he is called *the man of sin*; one addicted and given to sin in a grievous manner, notoriously sinful, a spiritual wickedness in high places; a guilty of all manner of sin, as the Popes of Rome have been; lying,

lying, perjury, adultery, incest, sodomy, simony, forcery, and every thing that is bad : hence their seat is called *Sodom* and *Egypt*, and the antichristian whore, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth, all centering here ; and therefore with great propriety is he said to be *the son of perdition*, a name given to *Judas* that betrayed our Lord, *John xvii. 12.* and rightly belongs to antichrist, who is the Apollyon and destroyer of the souls of men, by his false doctrine and worship, and will himself go into perdition : he is also represented as he that *opposeth* ; that opposeth Christ, and is an adversary of his, and therefore called antichrist : he opposes him in his offices ; in his kingly office, by asserting himself to be the head of the church ; in his priestly office, by pretending to offer up Christ again in the sacrifice of the mass, when he by one offering has perfected the whole work of atonement ; and in his prophetic office, by coining new doctrines and articles of faith : moreover, *he exalteth himself above all that is called God* ; above the gods of the heathens, who ascribe the government of the *heavens* to one, of the *earth* to another, of the *sea* to another, and of the *winds* to another ; but this haughty creature assumes *all* power to himself, in heaven, earth, and hell : he exalts himself above angels, who are called *gods*, *Psal. viii. 4.* In his bulls he has commanded angels to take such a soul out of purgatory, and to carry such a one to heaven : and above all civil magistrates, who are called *gods*, *Psal. lxxxii. 5.* assuming a power over them to depose them at pleasure ; making an emperor to hold his stirrup whilst he alighted from his horse, and got upon it, and trampling on his neck, using those words in *Psal. xci. 13.* and throwing a king under his table to lick bones, whilst he was eating : yea, he *sitteth in the temple of God as god, shewing himself that he is god* ; he rose up and appeared in the church of God, at least so by profession, where he took his place, and, becoming apostate, here he continues, and shews himself as if he was God ; admitting his creatures and flatterers to call him God on earth, and our Lord God the Pope ; receiving worship from them, and assuming that which is the peculiar prerogative of God, to *forgive sin*. Moreover, he is called *the mystery of iniquity* ; Mystery is one of the names of the whore of *Babylon*, and was formerly put upon the mitres of the Popes : it may respect both doctrines and practices, which were set afoot in the apostles time, and began to appear and work in *Simon Magus*, and his followers, and which centered in the papacy. Once more, he is called *the wicked one*, *ἀνομία*, a lawless person ; that dispenses with the laws of God and man, setting up himself above all law ; giving out that he is not subject to any human judicature ; that he is the spiritual man that judges all, but is judged of none, being not accountable to any ; yea, though he should lead millions of souls to hell, yet none ought to say, “ O Lord the Pope, what dost thou ? ”

2. He

* See my Exposition of 2 Thes. ii. 4.

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

3. To observe another passage, though not in this prophecy, yet delivered out by the same inspired writer, which predicts some of the notorious doctrines and practices of antichrist; it is in *1 Tim. iv. 1—3.* where the apostle foretels a departure from the faith in after-times, and the appearance of seducing spirits, who should teach *doctrines of devils*. The doctrines of dæmon-worship, like that of the heathens, their dæmons being a middle sort of beings between God and men, and mediated between them; and such are the angels and saints departed, the Papiests direct men to pray unto; and which is called worshipping devils, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, *Rev. ix. 20. forbidding to marry*; matrimony, though God's ordinance, and honourable, is forbidden popish priests, and celibacy is enjoined, under a notion of sanctity and purity; and which is

the source of great debauchery and uncleanness among them: *commanding to abstain from meats*; as on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* in every week, and during the *quadragesima* or *Lent*, the fast of forty days. And now whereas it is most clearly manifest, that all these characters of antichrist, and all these things predicted of him hundreds of years before his appearance, exactly answer to the Pope of *Rome*, and have been punctually performed; there can be no reason to doubt of the certain performance of what the same prophetic spirit has declared concerning his destruction; as that *the Lord shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming*; that is, by the spiritual and powerful preaching of the gospel, attended with the presence of Christ in the beginning of his spiritual reign; when the whole earth will be enlightened with his glory, and antichrist, and all antichristian darkness, doctrine and worship shall disappear; and the rather this is to be credited, since it receives confirmation from a prophecy of *Isaiab*, delivered many hundreds of years before this, in much the same language, and from whom the apostle seems to borrow his words; for speaking of Christ, he says, *he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked*^m; that wicked lawless one, antichrist: *The Lord in his great zeal will perform this.*

3dly, I will just observe, in brief, the account we have of antichrist in the book of the *Revelation*: in chapter the XIIIth he is described, both in his civil and ecclesiastic capacity, by two beasts; the one rising *out of the sea*, that is, out of the commotions made in the empire by the northern nations; when he appeared as a temporal prince, having his seat on the seven-hill-city, signified by seven heads, and power over the ten kingdoms or ten horns; and is compared to a leopard for his swiftness and insidioufness in obtaining power; to a bear for his cruelty, and to a lion for his strength and terror; and became so powerful, notwithstanding the deadly wound, as to be admired and feared by all the world; and is described much in the same manner as the little horn in *Daniel*, having a mouth speaking blasphemies against God, his tabernacle and people; and power to make war with the saints, and overcome them, and permission to continue exactly the same time. The other beast, an emblem of him in his ecclesiastic capacity, is said to rise *out of the earth*; from the dregs of christians, earthly, carnal and corrupt, from an apostate church; and pretending to great humility, calling himself *servus servorum*; having *two horns like a lamb*, as if very meek, humble and harmless; but *spake like a dragon*, when he uttered his bulls and anathemas: he is represented as exercising all the power he had as a temporal prince, to oblige the world to worship him, and as doing lying miracles to deceive

^m *Isai. xi 4* which the *Targum* interprets of the wicked *Armillus*, the name of the antichrist of the Jews, and which is either a corruption of *Romulus*, the first king of the Romans, and they suppose he will come from *Rome*; or of the Greek word *εφουλας*, so *Philip Aquinas* in *Lex. fol. 36. 2.* interprets it, *a waster of the people*; which well agrees with our antichrist, *Rev. xi 18.*

ceive men; enjoining them to worship his image on pain of death, and causing all to have his mark in their right hand or forehead, or else be deprived of the common privilege of mankind in buying and selling; all which has been done by the Romish antichrist; and the account is concluded with the number of his name 666, about which there have been many conjectures; but none bid fairer than the antient one of *Ireneus*, which is *Lateinos*, the letters of which amount to this number; this was the name of a man, a king of *Italy*. Now the church of *Rome* is the Latin church; its service is in the Latin tongue; the Pope is head of it; and his seat is in the Latin empire. In chap. xviith antichrist is represented by a woman sitting on a beast with seven heads and ten horns, which designs him in his twofold capacity as before; and as sitting on many waters, interpreted of people and nations; and is described as a *whore* by her dress and attire, by her fornication, filthiness and murder; all which exactly points at, and has been fulfilled in the church of *Rome*. And now, who that considers these things, and observes the exact accomplishment of them, but will see abundant reason to believe, that what is said of the ruin of this antichrist shall be performed; that the seven vials of God's wrath shall be poured out on the antichristian states; that the whore shall be burnt with fire, and that her seat, *Rome*, mystical *Babylon*, shall meet with the same fate, and the beast go into perdition? *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this*."

Secondly, The increase of the kingdom of Christ in the latter day, foretold in this verse, will be owing to the vast numbers of Gentiles that shall be called, and to the conversion of the Jews. Many and antient are the prophecies concerning the calling of the Gentiles; as, that when *Shiloh*, or the Messiah should come, the *gathering of the people* should be to him; that he should be set up as an *ensign* to them; and they should *seek to him*, and he be a *light* unto them, and the *covenant* of them; and the abundance of them should be converted to him: which had their completion in part in the first times of the gospel, by the ministry of the apostles every where; and especially when the Roman empire, or the whole world became christian; and also at the time of the Reformation; but as yet they have not had their full accomplishment, as they will when the kingdoms of this world shall become Christ's, and all kings and nations shall serve and worship him: and since they have been in part fulfilled, we may be assured of the full performance of them; since we have seen the kingdom of the stone cut out without hands, as Mr *Mede*^p distinguishes, we need not doubt of the kingdom of the mountain, which will fill the whole earth, taking place: the conversion of the Jews, as a body, as a nation of men, is what is predicted, and will make much for the increase and glory of Christ's kingdom.

* Rev. xvi. 1. and xvii. 8, 16. and xviii. 10.
and lx. 4, 5.

^p Works, p. 743.

* Gen. xlix. 10. Isai. xi. 10. and xlii. 6.

That people have been of old the subject of prophecies, which in a variety of instances have been fulfilled. It was foretold to their great ancestor, *Abraham*, that they his posterity should be *strangers*, and serve in a land not theirs in much affliction, *four hundred years*, and then come out with great substance¹, as it is well known they did at that exact time; their going into captivity in *Babylon*, and their return from thence at the end of 70 years, were predicted many years before these events², which were punctually accomplished: the various straits, difficulties, and distresses these people should come into for their sins, at different times; the besieging of their cities, and the dreadful famine they should be reduced to, so as to eat their own flesh, and delicate women their own children, as at the siege of *Samaria*, and at the siege of *Jerusalem*, both by the Chaldeans and Romans; and their dispersion all over the world; and even the very characters of their enemies, are given us, being of a far country, of a fierce look, and of a language they understood not: all these, with many other things, are foretold by *Moses* in *Deut.* xxviii. 20—68. some of them at the distance of two thousand years, and which have had their exact accomplishment³: but what is most surprising of all, is the continuance of this people as a distinct people, notwithstanding all this, as it was said they should, and as the Lord promised he would not cast them away, destroy they utterly, or make a full end of them, as he has of other nations their enemies⁴; who are no more, nor their names to be heard of any where, as the *Edomites*, *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, and others; but these are still in being: yea, what is more wonderful, that several of those nations among whom they are now dispersed, have been even since their scattering among them, so mixed and confounded with other people, that they are not able to distinguish one from another, or trace their original, as particularly in *Spain*, *France* and *England*; yet, these people remain a distinct people, as they do every where, without any king over them, not having their own magistrates, and without the observance of many of their own laws: now what can be the reason of this? no other, than as the tribe of *Judah* was kept a distinct tribe till the Messiah came, that it might appear that he sprung from it, according to prophecy; so the Jews are kept a distinct people unto the time of their conversion, that that may be manifest to all the world. Moreover, even the ignorance and blindness of this people, their unbelief and rejection of the Messiah, and their obstinate persistence in it, are the fulfilling of prophecy; both our Lord, and the apostle *Paul*, when they speak⁵ of these things, refer to antient prophecy, as being no other than what were foretold. Seeing then all these things concerning

¹ Gen. xv. 13, 14.

² Jer. xxv. 11, 12; and xxix. 10.

³ See Dr Newton's Dissertations

on the Prophecies, Dissert. 7. just published; wherein these prophecies are largely and excellently explained, as fulfilled; with many others relating to that people, and their enemies, supported by good authorities.

⁴ Lev. xxvi. 44. Jer. xxx. 11.

⁵ John xii. 37—41. Rom. xi. 8—10.

cerning them have been accomplished, we ought most firmly to believe, that what concerns them in futurity also will; as that they shall seek and find the Lord, and *David* their king; that a spirit of grace and supplication shall be poured on them, and *they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn;* and shall turn to the Lord, and receive him as the Messiah, and embrace his gospel and ordinances; and so all *Israel* shall be saved in a spiritual sense, and shall return to their own land, and resettle there, as is foretold they shall: *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

Tbirdly, By the above means the kingdom of Christ will be set up in the world in greater glory than now it is, of which we have no reason to doubt; especially when we observe the several steps which were to be taken, and have been taken towards the advancement of it; as the opening of the seven seals, and blowing of six of the trumpets. The seven seals are so many several steps, and gradual advances to introduce the gospel, kingdom and church of Christ into the world. The opening of the first seal brought the gospel into the Gentile world, in which Christ is represented riding on a white horse with a bow, and conquering, and to conquer; the second, third and fourth seals opened, brought the sword, famine and pestilence into the Roman empire, as God's judgments for the ill usage and persecution of the preachers and professors of the gospel; and the fifth seal represents the souls under the altar crying for vengeance on their enemies for shedding their blood; and the sixth opened brings utter destruction on the whole Pagan empire, as such, signified by the darkening of the sun, moon and stars, and by other things. And here one might have expected that the kingdom of Christ would have been now set up in all its glory: but though here were peace and prosperity introduced into the church of God, and it was greatly enlarged; yet the worldly wealth and riches brought into it, issued in the corruption and apostacy of it; and brought in the papacy, which arose, and continued, and still does, and stands in the way of Christ's kingdom. The seventh seal opened, brings in seven angels with seven trumpets to blow, six of which are blown already. The first four blown, brought in the northern nations, the Goths, Huns, Vandals, &c. into the western empire, which overrun several countries, entered *Italy*, sacked and burnt *Rome* itself, signified by the burning mountain, and spread darkness and ignorance over all the empire, designed by the smiting of the sun, moon and stars; and which broke it to pieces, and divided it into ten kingdoms, signified by the ten toes in *Nebuchadnezzar's* dream; and the ten horns in *Daniel's* vision. The fifth trumpet brought in *Mahomet* and his Saracens, the locusts; and the sixth trumpet the Turks, the four angels loosed at the river *Euphrates* into the eastern empire, which set up a kingdom there that still continues. And now, since six of these trumpets have been blown, and the

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the effects have followed predicted by them; why should we not most firmly believe, that the seventh trumpet will be blown, when the mystery of God will be finished; when the kingdoms of this world will become our Lord's; when he will take to himself his great power and reign; when he will destroy them that destroy the earth, and give a reward to his servants, and to all that fear his name? *The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this*.

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

II. To consider to what the performance of all this will be owing; to the *zeal of the Lord of hosts*: he is the Lord of hosts or armies, the maker of the hosts of heaven, and the disposer of them, and rules among them, and does whatever he pleases; nothing is impossible with him, or too hard for him; and as *Abraham* believed that God, who promised, was *also able to perform*; so should

we

we believe, that whatever the Lord of hosts has prophesied of, he is able to fulfil, and will fulfil; his truth and faithfulness are engaged, as for the performance of his promise, so of his prophecies; he is the unchangeable Jehovah, God that cannot lie, and who never repents of what he has spoken, but makes all good: his zeal moves and puts him upon it; which may be understood either of his wrath and indignation against his enemies, that jealousy of his that smokes against them; that zeal and vengeance with which he is sometimes clad: this will put him upon performing all that he has said concerning antichrist, against whom his indignation must be raised; who has spoke great things against him, and blasphemed his name, opposed his Son, his kingdom and interest, and persecuted his people: or else it may design his great love and affection. As zeal with men, when right, is no other than fervent charity, burning love, and flaming affection, so it may be considered here; and mean his love for himself, his zeal for his own glory, which is his ultimate end in creation, in providence, in his works of grace, and which will be answered in the destruction of antichrist, and setting up the kingdom of his Son in the world: also his strong love and affection to Christ, both as his own Son, and the mediator between him and his people; and therefore it may be depended on, he will make him his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth: to which may be added, his great love to his church and people; which has been so great as to give his Son for them, to become incarnate, and to suffer and die in their room, and to make him king over them to protect and defend them; and therefore it need not be doubted that the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to them, according to promise and prophecy*; *The zeal of the Lord of hosts*, the zeal of his house, and for it, *will perform this*. I shall close with a word or two.

What has been said will serve greatly to support the credit of divine revelation; the sacred Word will appear from hence to be indeed the Word of God, and not the word of men; we may be assured the scripture is divinely inspired, and is a sure word of prophecy; for what else could have foretold such numbers of events, which have been exactly fulfilled: particularly what relate to Jews and Papists, who are two such living and standing proofs of the truth of the divine revelation, that all the Deists in the world are not able to set aside? Likewise, this may serve to encourage our faith, as to the performance of whatsoever has been spoken by the Lord; for if he performs all things for us in providence, as he does for particular persons, as *Job*, *David*, and others, as he did; then much more may we believe that he will perform all that he has said. he will do for himself, for his Son, and for his church and people in the world. But then, though he has so particularly prophesied of, and so peremptorily promised:

* Dan. vii. 27.

promised these things, yet he will be enquired of by his people to do them. We should therefore pray continually to him, and give him no rest day nor night until they are accomplished; and for the accomplishment of which we should quietly wait; for there is an appointed time, and when that comes there will be no tarrying: *Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days* *. I add no more but this wish, *the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ* *.

* Dan. xii. 12.

* 2 Thes. iii. 5.

S E R M O N VII.

The Glorious State of the Saints in Heaven.

Preached at a *Wednesday's Evening Lecture in Great Eastcheap, Dec. 31, 1755.*

PSALM LXXXIV. II.

— *The Lord will give Grace and Glory.* —

THE only word in this passage I shall insist upon, is *GLORY*; by which I understand the glorious and happy state of the saints after death, the fruit of divine grace, freely given them of the Lord.

I have in some former discourses, on such occasions as this, treated of the latter-day-glory in the several branches of it, and of what shall go before it, and be done in it; and also of the faith which such things require, and of the sure and certain performance of them: and now I shall treat of the ultimate glory of the saints in heaven; which will commence upon their departure out of this world, and be consummated in the morning of the resurrection from the dead; and this I shall endeavour to do in the following method:

- I. I shall attempt to prove the reality and certainty of such a happy state.
- II. Describe it, as I am able, according to the scriptural Account of it.
- III. Point out the Persons that shall enjoy it.

I. Prove

I. Prove that there will be a glorious and happy state enjoyed by good men after death, or in another world.

First, This will admit of some sort of proof, from the light of nature and reason; not that the kind or nature of such happiness is discoverable or demonstrable by it; but future happiness in general, or some general notion of it, may be come at thereby; which may be concluded,

1. From the natural desire after happiness that is in mankind; and this desire of it is universal; there is not one man born into the world, if he lives to years of discretion and understanding, and has the exercise of his reason, but is desirous of happiness, and is eager in his pursuit of it, in some way or another, and yet does not find it in this life. All created beings and excellencies say, It is not in me; as is found by the most diligent enquiry after it: it is not in worldly wealth and riches; it is not in the gratification of sensual lusts and pleasures; it is not in the honours of this world, in popular applause, fame, and credit; it is not in natural wisdom and knowledge; not in all the endowments of the mind, or accomplishments of the body; no, not in any thing in the whole compass of the creation. Now either this desire of happiness is planted in human nature in vain, which is not reasonable to suppose; or else there must be a future state of happiness, in which some, at least, of the individuals of human nature, even good men, will have this desire fully *satisfied*; which will be when, and not before, they *awake in the divine likeness*.

2. It may be argued from the unequal distribution of things in this life, which makes the providences of God very intricate and perplexed; and to appear attended with such difficulties as we are not able to solve, without the supposition of a future state. It is easy to observe, that wicked men oftentimes prosper in this world, and increase in riches; abound in an affluence of good things; are not afflicted as other men, but spend their days in plenty, and go down to the grave in peace; when, on the other hand, many are the afflictions of the righteous; good men are often afflicted in their persons, distressed in their circumstances, or labour under the oppression and tyranny of the wicked. Now there is no accounting for these things in a rational manner, without supposing a future state, in which good men will be happy, and wicked men miserable; or the one be comforted, and the other tormented: it is only this consideration that can make the present state of things sit easy on a rational mind, or on the mind of a good man, and reconcile him to it.

3. It may be observed, that a general notion of happiness after death has obtained among the wiser sort of heathens, who have only been guided by the light of nature; especially among such who have given in to the belief of the immortality of the soul. *Hades*, or the state and place of the dead, with them were

twofold; the one they called *Tartarus*, the same with *hell*; a place of torments, where the wicked, after death, having been judged by the proper judges, and sentence passed upon them, were wafted over the *Stygian* lake in old *Charon's* boat^a, commonly called the ferry-man of hell. The other they call the *Elysian* fields, the island of the blessed, the seat of the immortal ones, the place where the souls of good men go after death; which fields and island they place in a temperate air and climate; where are no blustering storms, nipping frosts, and fleecy snows, but all calm, quiet, warm, and comfortable; where are cooling shades, refreshing bowers fanned with soft and gentle zephyrs; where are grassy plains, flowery meads, and fruitful fields abounding with all the delights of nature, with pure flowing fountains and purling streams; where the blessed inhabitants are regaled with ambrosia and nectar, and where they spend their happy hours in feasting, dancing, mirth, and music^b. These things I observe, not to shew that the heathens had any true notion of the nature of future happiness; far from it; but only that the belief of it in general did obtain among them: and this also serves to shew what poor things the light of nature, and the religion of nature are, which some men would bring us back again unto. But blessed be God for a divine revelation; for a *more sure word of prophecy*; for *the gospel*; which brings *life and immortality to light*^c; sets the state of an immortal life after death in the truest light, as well as shews us the way unto it. Wherefore,

Secondly, The clear and full proof of the saints future state of glory and happiness is to be fetched from the scriptures of truth, and may be strongly concluded,

1. From the promise of God concerning it. The divine promises to godliness and godly men reach not only to *this life*, but to *that which is to come*^d; yea, the promise of eternal life is the principal one; the apostle *John* speaks of it, as if it was the only one, because the chief: *this is the promise he hath promised us, even eternal life*^e; and is that indeed in which all the rest center and terminate. It was made very early, *before the world began*, and by that God which *cannot lye*^f, and therefore may be depended upon as sure and certain: *blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, by various afflictions in this life, he shall after death receive the crown of life, even life eternal, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him*^g.

2. This

^a Vid. Diodor. Sicul. l. 1. p. 82. Ed. Rhod. Platon. Gorgia, p. 357. Homer. Iliad. 8. ver. 13—16. Virgil. Æneid. l. 6. ver. 540, &c.

^b Ἄλλα σ' εἰς Ἡλύσιοι πεδίοις ἢ περὶ τὰ γαίης, &c. Homer. Odyss. 4. ver. 563, &c.

Devenere locos lætos, & amœna vireta, Fortinatorum nemorum, sedesque beatas, &c. Virgil. Æneid. l. 6. ver. 638, 639, &c.

Vid. Servium in Æneid. 5. p. 973. Plato. in Axiocho in fine, & Pindar. Olymp. Od. 2. p. 95, 98. Ed. Schmid.

^c 1 Tim. iv. 8. ^d 2 Peter. i. 19. 2 Tim. i. 10.

^e 1 John. ii. 25. ^f Titus i. 2. ^g James i. 12.

2. This glory is not only promised, but prepared; it consists of things unseen and unheard of by men, and not to be conceived of by them in the present state, and which are *prepared*^b by the Lord for all true lovers of him. And this preparation of happiness was very early made; it is a *kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world*^c; in the counsels and purposes of God, which are unfrustrable, and can never be made void; nor can it, nor will it be given to any other than to those *for whom it is prepared*^k by the Father of Christ, and these shall certainly enjoy it.

3. Not only this glory is promised and prepared, but there are *vessels of mercy afore*, and as early *prepared for this glory*^l in the destination and appointment of God; there are some who are *ordained to eternal life*^m; and these, as they certainly *believe* in Christ in time, so they shall most assuredly enjoy that life in eternity to which they are ordained; the means as well as end being fixed and sure: for God has *chosen them from the beginning*; not from the beginning of the gospel being preached unto them, nor from the beginning of their conversion, but from the beginning of time, even from all eternity; *through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*, as means of salvation and eternal life; *even to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*ⁿ; which he is entered into, is possessed of, and has in his hands to give unto his people, and which will partly consist in beholding his glory: and these things are firm and sure; predestination and glorification are links in the same chain, and cannot be broken and parted; *whom he did predestinate — them he also glorified*^o.

4. The covenant of grace includes and ensures a future state of glory and happiness, as well as all the blessings of grace for the present; otherwise it would not be *ordered in all things* as it is, even in all things convenient for our spiritual and eternal welfare; nor be *all our salvation*, since that comprehends the whole of bliss and happiness, here and hereafter; nor all our *desire*^p, which certainly extends to another world. We call this covenant a covenant of grace, because it springs from the grace of God, is founded on it, and is filled with it: the scriptures call it the *covenant of peace*, because of an article in it respecting peace and reconciliation by Christ; and for the same reason it is called the *covenant of life*^q, as well as peace, because of the article of eternal life which is settled in it: the form in which the *substance* of it runs, is, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*^r; and as this form of speaking in it, proves the immortality of the soul, and the *resurrection* of the body, for which last our Lord produces it, so likewise a *future state* of glory and happiness; for *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*^s.

P 2

5. The

^b 1 Cor. ii. 9.^l Matt. xxv. 94.^k Matt. xx. 23.^l Rom ix. 23.^m Acts xiii. 48.ⁿ 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14.^c Rom viii. 30.^p 2 Sam. xxii. 5.^q Mal. ii. 5.^r Jer. xxxii. 38.^s Matt. xxii. 31, 32.

5. The suretyship-engagements and performances of Christ give us abundant reason to believe a future state of bliss and glory: he became a surety for his people in the covenant of grace, not only to bring them to the participation of the blessings of grace in time, but to bring them to eternal glory; not only to bring them to himself by faith, and into his church and fold here below, but to set them before his Father's face in heaven; as *Judab* became surety for *Benjamin* to bring him and set him before his father *Jacob*, or bear the blame for ever wherefore, in consequence of this engagement, he has looked upon himself under obligation to do every thing in order to bring them into this state: he came into this world in our nature to remove all the remoras, obstructions, and difficulties that lay in the way to it, and to open the way for enjoyment of it; he came *that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly*; a more abundant, and a more excellent life than *Adam* had in innocence, or the angels in heaven; a life of glory with himself: and accordingly he will bring all *the many sons to glory*, as the great captain of *salvation*; and present them to his Father, saying, *Behold I, and the children whom God hath given me*.

6. This we may be further assured of from the actual entrance of Christ into glory after his sufferings and death, which were necessary by the appointment and promise of God; and into which he entered, not as a single person only, or for himself alone, but as a common person, public head and representative of all his people; he entered into heaven as the *fore-runner* of them, and took possession of it in their name, and *appears now in the presence of God* for them, representing them all; insomuch that they are said to be already *made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*; from which it may be most certainly concluded, that they will sit there in their own persons hereafter.

7. The preparations of Christ, and his prayers for the future glory of his people, furnish out an argument not inconsiderable, proving the reality and certainty of it: *in my Father's house*, says Christ, *are many mansions*, of peace, joy, bliss, and happiness; *if it were not so, I would have told you*; which is a strong and invincible proof of the truth we are treating of: *I go to prepare a place for you*; meaning in the other world, in his Father's house; which, though a kingdom prepared from eternity in the will, purpose, and design of God, yet required another and fresh preparation by the personal presence and powerful intercession of Christ; and *if I go and prepare a place for you*, as he certainly would and did; *I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also*; of which no doubt is to be made: and his prayers and intercessions are for the same thing; of which we have an instance and example in his intercessory prayer here on earth; *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast*
given

* Gen. xlii. 9.

† John x. 10.

‡ Heb. ii. 10, 13.

§ Heb. vi. 20. and ix. 24.

¶ Ephes. ii. 6.

** John xiv. 2, 3.

given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory^a; and his prayers always were, and ever will be heard.

8. In effectual vocation, the people of God are called to this glory: hence the apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to lay hold on eternal life^b; to look for it, expect it, and believe that he should enjoy it; adding this as a reason or argument, *whereunto thou art also called*; and so is every one that is effectually called by the grace of God; and therefore are under obligation to walk worthy of him who hath called them to his kingdom and glory^c: and they may be assured, that the God of all grace, who hath called them into his eternal glory by Jesus Christ^d, will bring them to the enjoyment of it; for he is faithful who has called them, who also will do it; whom he called—them he also glorified^e; between effectual vocation, and eternal glory, is an inseparable connection.

9. Not only the grace of the Spirit of God in regeneration and conversion, which is the saints meetness for glory, and evidence of it, proves a future state of bliss and glory, since it is a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life^f; but the Spirit himself is given them as an earnest of it, even he is the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, and by him they are sealed unto the day of redemption^g; and as sure as they have received the earnest, they shall enjoy the inheritance, or be possessed of eternal life.

10. The desires of the saints after the heavenly glory, and their assurance of it, which at least some of them have in this life, and at the hour of death, have no small weight in them for the confirmation of this truth. Often do they desire, with the apostle Paul, to depart out of this world, and be with Christ, which is far better^h; far better for them, and most eligible by them; they choose rather to be absent from the body, that they might be present with the Lordⁱ; and what strong assurance have some of them had of their future happiness? as the patriarchs of old, who died in faith^k, not only of the Messiah's coming, and of the blessings of grace by him, but of their belonging to that city whose builder and maker is God, the apostle there is speaking of: so says David, *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory*^l; and the apostle Paul speaks not only for himself, and in the name of ministers of the word, his brethren, but in the behalf of all the saints; we know, that after death, we have an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens^m: and how many precious saints, martyrs, and confessors of Jesus, with others, when they have been about to leave this world, have cried, *Glory, Glory, Glory*, as having sight of it, and fully assured of their going to it? Now though this, with an infidel world,

may

^a John xvii. 24.

^b 1 Tim. vi. 12.

^c 1 Thes. ii. 12.

^d 1 Peter v. 10.

^e Rom. viii. 30.

^f John iv. 14.

^g 2 Cor. v. 5.

Ephes i. 14. and iv. 30.

^h Phil. i. 23.

ⁱ 2 Cor. v. 6, 8.

^k Heb. xi. 13.

^l Psal. lxxiii. 24.

^m 2 Cor. v. 1.

may be reckoned dream and enthusiasm; yet, along with the evidence before given, will leave no room for a truly gracious soul to doubt of such a state. And agreeable to all this, according to divine revelation, it appears to be matter of fact, that good men as soon as they *depart* from hence are immediately *with Christ*; that those that *die in him* are *from thenceforth blessed*, from the moment of their death, *and rest from their labours, and their works follow them*^o; that angels stand around their dying beds waiting to do their office; and as soon as the soul is separated from the body, escort it through the regions of the air to the heavenly bliss; so *Lazarus*, when he died, was at once carried by angels into *Abraham's bosom*; and the penitent thief that suffered on the cross was *that day* with Christ in paradise^o. But I go on,

II. To describe this glorious state. This I confess is a task-fitter for an angel than a man, or for a glorified saint in heaven than for a poor, frail, mortal, sinful creature on earth. However, I shall make an attempt, though it be but a feeble one, under the direction and guidance, and with the assistance of the sacred scriptures; and which I shall endeavour to do,

First, By observing those images by which the heavenly glory is represented; images which are taken from things the most grand and striking, of the greatest worth, value, and esteem among men.

1. It is represented by an *house*; but such an one as is not to be found any where on earth, *a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*^o; it is not of *this building*, or of man's; it is built by him that built all things; it is an house whose builder and maker is God, and not man: there have been many men that have been famous for their skill in architecture, and many fine buildings have been erected by them, which have perpetuated their memory to many ages; such as the temple built by *Solomon*, rebuilt by *Zorobabel*, and repaired by *Herod*; concerning which the disciples said to Christ, *Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here*^o! But, alas, what were those buildings to this we are speaking of! they were *the holy places made with hands, which were the figures of the true*; this the true holy places themselves, *not made with hands*^o; not with the hands of men, but with the hands of God; not an erection of mens works, but the effect of divine grace, the pure, free-grace-gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord: this house is *in the heavens*, and is opposed to *the earthly house of our tabernacle*; to these houses of *clay* which have their foundation in the dust; and it is called *our house which is from heaven*^o; being entirely of an heavenly kind and nature, and it is *eternal*: some men build their houses here on earth in such manner, that they fancy they will *continue for ever*,

^o Phil. i. 23. Rev. xiv. 13.

^o 2 Cor. v. 1.

^o Mark xiii. 1.

^o Luke xvi. 22. and chap. xxiii. 43.

^o Heb. ix. 23.

^o 2 Cor. v. 2.

ever, to all generations'; but these, either through length of time, fall to decay, or are demolished by an enemy, or consumed by fire, or tumbled down by an earthquake; but this heavenly house always abides, and all the apartments in it are *everlasting habitations*': to which may be added, that this is Christ's *Father's house*, in which are *many mansions*": not only which he has built, but in which he dwells, and where he will have all his children; and it is our Father's house as well as Christ's, which makes it still more endearing: and a roomy one it is; there are *many mansions*, dwelling-places of rest, peace and joy in it; *many*, for the many ordained to eternal life; for the many justified by the obedience of Christ; for the many for whom his blood was shed for the remission of sins; for the many sons he brings to glory; yea, here is room enough for the innumerable company, chosen, redeemed, and called out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation.

2. It is called an *inheritance*. This enlarges the idea; for though, with some an inheritance may be but a single house, a mean cottage, a small pittance; yet with others, it is an assemblage of wealth and riches: it consists of many houses, farms, estates, and possessions, of gold and silver, jewels and precious stones. Heaven is often spoken of as an inheritance, in allusion to the land of *Canaan*, which was distributed by lot for an inheritance to the children of *Israel*: hence, says the apostle, *in whom*, speaking of Christ, *we have obtained an inheritance*, or *a lot*"; an inheritance by lot; not that it is a casual thing, since it follows, *being predestinated according to the good purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*; but because every saint has his lot, part, and portion in it; for it is an *inheritance of the saints in light, and among all them which are sanctified*'. There are many things in which *Canaan*, and the heavenly glory agree, I have not time to attend to now; only would observe, that the *Israelites* were brought into the possession of their inheritance, not by *Moses*, but by *Joshua*; so the saints are brought to heaven, not by the works of the law, or their obedience to that, but by *Jesus*, the great captain of their salvation. Heaven is also called an inheritance, in allusion to inheritances among men, which are not acquired by labour and diligence, nor purchased with money, but bequeathed by relations and friends, and are transmitted from father to son. So the heavenly glory is not obtained by the works of men, though they naturally think they must *do some good thing* to inherit eternal life; nor is it to be purchased; if a man would give all the substance of his house for it, it would utterly be condemned: it is bequeathed to saints by their heavenly *Father*, whose *good pleasure* it is to give them *the kingdom*"; and this he gives by will, by testament, and which comes

to.

' Psa. xlix. 11.

" Luke xvi. 9.

" John xiv. 2.

" εκληρονομησατε, Eph. i. 11.

1 Col. i. 12. Acts xx. 32.

" Luke xii. 32.

to them by, upon, and through the death of the testator Jesus Christ. And it solely belongs to children, *if children, then heirs*^a; not to servants, no not the ministering spirits, who minister for them who shall be, or rather who are heirs of salvation, or shall inherit it^b; much less to the children of the bondwoman, or to strangers; only to those who are predestinated to the adoption of children, or are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. This is an inheritance which is *incorruptible*, whereas all earthly inheritances are corruptible things; but this cannot be corrupted by any thing, by sin, or any thing else, and none but incorruptible persons shall enjoy it; it is *undefiled*, and will ever remain so, and none that defileth, or is defiled, shall ever possess it; it *fadeth not away*, nor the glory of it, as earthly inheritances through length of time do; it is *reserved in the heavens*, safe and secure, for all the heirs of it; and they are kept by the power of God for it^c; it is an *eternal inheritance*^d, out of the possession of which the right heirs will never be ejected.

3. The glory of the saints in heaven is expressed by a *city*, which still more enlarges the idea of it; a *city whose builder and maker is God*, and so infinitely beyond any thing of this kind on earth; a *city which has foundations*^e, more than one, the everlasting love of God, the unalterable covenant of grace, and the rock of ages, Jesus Christ; so that it stands firm and immoveable, and cannot be shaken and thrown down, as some cities of late have been by earthquakes^f: here no city is continuing, but in length of time falls to ruin; but this always abides: the glory of it cannot be expressed and described by men; the description of the city of the new *Jerusalem* seems to be hyperbolic, and to exceed belief; the figures by which it is set forth are bold and strong; as that its wall is of jasper, its foundations precious stones, its gates of pearl, and the streets thereof of pure gold, transparent as glass^g; and yet as bold and strong as these figures are, they fall short of setting forth the true and real grandeur of it.

4. The heavenly state is signified by a *kingdom*; which carries the idea of it higher still, and gives a more exalted notion of it. Saints are kings, not titular and nominal ones; they have a *kingdom* now which *cannot be moved*, and which lies in *righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*^h; and they are heirs of another, a *kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world*; a *kingdom and glory*, or a glorious kingdom, to which they are called and fitted for in effectual vocation; an *everlasting kingdom*, into which they will be introduced when time shall be no more with themⁱ; a kingdom that has all the regalia belonging to it.

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^a Rom. viii. 17.

^b Της μελλούσης κληρονομίας σωτηρίας, Heb. i. 14.

^c 1 Peter i. 4.

^d Heb. ix. 15.

^e Heb. xi. 10.

^f As Lisbon and Mequinez lately, and many others, shaken and damaged in divers places, and in almost all parts of the world. See Matt xxiv. 7.

^g Rev. xxi. 18—21.

^h Heb. xii. 28. Rom. xiv. 17.

ⁱ Matt. xxv. 34. 1 Thes. ii. 12. 2 Peter i. 11.

The glory of this state is sometimes expressed by a *crown*, and is called a *crown of life*, even of eternal life, and will be enjoyed for ever; a *crown of righteousness*, which will be given by the righteous judge in a way of righteousness, and according to the rules of justice; a *crown of glory that fadeth not away*; not like the garlands or crowns given to conquerors in the Olympic games, to which the allusion is, which were made sometimes of flowers and herbs, that soon withered away; they ran, they strove to obtain a *corruptible crown*, we an *incorruptible one*^f: the same is also expressed by a *throne*, another ensign or emblem of the glory of a kingdom; a *throne of glory*, or a glorious throne, to which the saints are raised *from the dunghil*^b to sit upon and *inherit*, even the same *throne* Christ himself sits upon; for, says he, *to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne*^l. How glorious and magnificent must this state be!

5. It is set forth by every thing that is pleasing and grateful to the mind, or striking to the senses, and by such things as exceed all the enjoyments of them in this world. Here the saints will sit down with Christ at his table, and drink new wine with him in his Father's kingdom; here they will pluck and eat of the fruit of the tree of life, which stands in the midst of the paradise of God; that tree of life which bears twelve manner of fruits, yielded every month, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations; here they will drink of the river of divine pleasure, that pure water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb^k; here they will see what *eye hath not seen*, hear what *the ear hath not heard, nor have entered into the heart of man*^l: the eye of man has seen many things on earth very grand and illustrious, and what have been very entertaining to it; but it never saw such objects as will be seen in heaven: the ear of man has heard and been entertained with very pleasing sounds, very delightful music, vocal and instrumental; but it never heard such music as will be heard in heaven: the heart of man can conceive of more than it has either seen or heard; but it never conceived of such things as will be enjoyed in the world above.

Secondly, Our conceptions of the heavenly glory, at least of the greatness of it, may be aided and assisted by considering the epithets given unto it. It is represented as an *unseen* glory, as consisting of *things not seen*^m, which are eternal; which faith and hope for the present have only concern with: *faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*ⁿ; we have not so much as a glimpse of this glory but by faith; and hope is waiting for it, as something yet unseen: *hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth*

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^f Rev. ii. 11. ² Tim. iv. 8. ¹ Peter v. 4. ¹ Cor. ix. 25.^b 1 Sam. ii. 8.^l Rev. iii. 21.^k Luke xxii. 18, 30. Rev. ii. 7. and chap. xxii. 1, 2.¹ 1 Cor. ii. 9.^m 2 Cor. iv. 8.ⁿ Heb. xi. 1.

be yet hope for? but if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it^o. This glory is also future; nothing as yet enjoyed is that; it is something to come, greater than ever has been possessed in this world; it is a glory that shall be revealed; it is grace, or that glory which is the perfection of grace, that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Christ, when the saints shall appear with him in glory; at present it does not appear what they shall be, but when he shall appear, they shall be like him, and see him as he is^o. Moreover, this glory is an incomparable one; there is nothing in this world to be compared to it. All the wealth, riches, and grandeur of it are trifling and empty things in comparison of it. The apostle has a strange expression at first sight upon this subject: *I reckon*, says he, *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us^o*. One would rather have thought he should have said, that all that can be desired and enjoyed in the present state, are not to be compared or made mention of with the glory of the other world; but he instances in the sufferings of the saints, the purest part of their services, if they may be called so; and asserts that these are far from being meritorious of this glory, fall infinitely short of it, there being no proportion between them and that; they are *light* afflictions, this a *weight* of glory; they are *for a moment*, this *eternal*; and this is what supports the saints in their suffering circumstances, and makes them *choose affliction with the people of God*, and to *esteem reproach for Christ's sake greater riches than the treasures in Egypt*, having *respect to the recompence of reward*; which is of grace, and not of works; and causes them to *take joyfully the spoiling of their goods*, for the sake of Christ, knowing that they *have in heaven a better and an enduring substance*^o. Likewise, this glory is always the same; the glory of this world passes away, but the glory of the world to come never will: is it a crown of glory? it is a never-fading one; is it an inheritance? it is an inheritance that fadeth not away. When kingdoms, crowns and scepters are no more, and all that is great and glorious in this world, this will endure; for it is *eternal glory*, the God of all grace calls his people to, and will put them in the possession of. This epithet is joined to all the images by which it is expressed; Is it an house? it is eternal in the heavens; is it an inheritance? it is an eternal one; is it a city? it is what continues for ever; is it a kingdom? it is an everlasting one; it is a being for ever with the Lord, and which raises and aggrandizes the idea of it.

Thirdly, We may obtain some further knowledge of the glory of heaven, by considering what will be the enjoyment of the saints, both in the separate state of the soul before the resurrection, and in its conjunct state with the body after it.

1st, In its separate state before the resurrection. The soul of a faint as soon as separated from the body, as has been observed, will be immediately with Christ,

^o Rom. viii. 24. 25.

^o Rom. viii. 18. Colofs. iii. 4. 1 John iii. 2.

^o Rom. viii. 18.

^o Heb. xi. 25, 26.

^o Heb. x. 34.

^o 1 Peter v. 10.

Christ, and happy; it will enter into, and enjoy the presence of God and Christ. And if the gracious presence of God is so desirable by his people now, that they chuse not to go any where without it, but say with *Moses*, *if thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence*^c; if this gives more joy and gladness than the increase of all worldly enjoyments; what will the glorious presence of the Lord be, in which *presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore*^d, not to be conceived of? If the presence of Christ in his church is such as makes his *tabernacles amiable, and a day in his courts better than a thousand*^e elsewhere; if the enjoyment of him by his disciples at his transfiguration upon the mount, was such as caused them to say, *it is good for us to be here*^f; how glorious and happy must it be, to be for ever with him in a state where there will be no more a separation from him, nor interruption of communion with him? for in this state the separate soul shall enjoy uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. If fellowship with the Father and with the Son causes saints now to exult and glory when they enjoy it; and if the communion of the Holy Ghost is so desirable, and is prayed and wished for now, what will all this be in a state of perfection? If to sit with Christ *at his table*, when our *spikenard sends forth the smell thereof*, and to be brought into Christ's *banqueting house*, where *his banner over us is love*^g, under which we sup with him, and he with us, are so exceeding delightful and entertaining now; what will it be to sit down with him at his table in his kingdom and glory! To which may be added, that there will be in this state not only communion with God, but conformity to him; saints will be like him, as well as see him: if every view of the glory of Christ by faith is assimilating now, and changes *into the same image from glory to glory*^h; what will a full view of him, a clear sight of him, do? Then will the great end of predestination, *to be conformed to the image of the Son of God*ⁱ, be completely answered with respect to the soul; which in all its powers and faculties will bear a resemblance to Christ, and be wholly swallowed up in him; its understanding will have a clear and unobscured discernment of him; the bias of the mind will be wholly towards him; the will will be entirely submitted to him; the affections will be in the strongest manner set upon him, and things above; and the memory will be fully stored with divine and heavenly things; there will be nothing irregular and disagreeable in the soul in its motions, thoughts, and actions. Besides all this, there will be a converse in this separate state with angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. How angels communicate their thoughts to, and converse with each other, we know not; but no doubt they have ways and means by which they do, and in the same way can communicate and converse with the souls of men, spirits like themselves; and these also one with another,

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^c Exod. xxxii. 15.^f Psal. xvi. 11.^g Psal. lxxxiv. 1. 10.^h Matt. xvii. 4.ⁱ Cant. i. 12. and ii. 4.^k 2 Cor. iii. 18.^l Rom. viii. 29.

ther, which will be a considerable branch of the happiness of this separate state : in which also there will be perfect knowledge in the soul ; perfect knowledge of God in his attributes, persons, and works, so far as a creature is capable of ; perfect knowledge of the Son of God in his person, offices, and grace ; perfect knowledge of the blessed Spirit ; perfect knowledge of angels ; perfect knowledge of one another, of which more hereafter ; perfect knowledge of the providences of God, which have been intricate and obscure here, but now will be manifest ; perfect knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, of the mysteries of grace : now *we know* and *prophecy* but *in part*, but then shall *we know as we are known*^m. There will be also perfect holiness ; the soul will be entirely free from the being of sin, as well as from the guilt and pollution of it ; it will be wholly delivered from the body of sin and death, under which it now groans, and be without spot, or blemish, or any such thing ; no sinful thought, no impure desire, nor any evil inclination or bias in it. And so there will be perfect peace of mind : if perfect peace is given to such as believe now, much more hereafter the *end* of such will be *peace* ; when they die they *enter* into it, *even into the joy of their Lord*ⁿ, which will be full, everlasting, and without interruption.

2dly, At the resurrection there will be a glory upon the body, as well as upon the soul ; a glory equal to that of the sun, moon, and stars : the body, which is *sown* in the earth in *corruption* ; a vile body, corrupted by sin, and now by death, and laid in corruption and dust, shall be *raised in incorruption*^o ; no more to be corrupted by sin, or by diseases, or by death ; *this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory* ; an entire conquest being obtained over it : and what is *sown in dishonour*, and has lost all its beauty and glory, and become nauseous and fit only to be the companion of worms, shall be *raised in glory* ; in the utmost perfection, beauty, and comeliness, fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ, and shine like the sun in the firmament of heaven : and what is *sown in weakness*, having lost all its strength, and carried by others to the grave, shall be *raised in power* ; strong and hale, able to subsist without food, and to move itself from place to place, and will attend the service of God and the Lamb without weaknesses and weariness ; there will be no more complaint of this kind, *the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*^p : and what is *sown a natural body*, or an animal one, which while it lived was supported with animal food, and when it died, died as animals do, shall be *raised a spiritual body* ; not turned into a spirit, for then it would not have flesh and bones, as it will have ; but it will subsist as spirits do, without food, and the like, and no more die ; then it will be no incumbrance to the soul, as now, in spiritual services, but aiding and assisting to it in them, and

^m 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12.

ⁿ Psal. xxxvii. 37. Isai. lvii. 2. Matt. xxv. 21.

^o 1 Cor. xv. 41—44, 53, 54.

^p Matt. xxvi. 41.

and be fitted for spiritual employments, and to converse with spiritual objects; and thus will it continue for ever. Wherefore,

3dly, In this conjunct state, when soul and body will be united together, there will be a fresh accession of glory to the whole man, and new enjoyments possessed, or the same in a more large and sensible manner. As,

1. There will be what is commonly called the beatific vision; which though in part enjoyed before, will be now enlarged, and will be both intellectual and corporal, according to the diversity of objects it will be concerned with.

(1.) There will be the vision of God: now we *walk by faith*, then by *sight*; we shall see his *face in righteousness*, yea *face to face*, and even *see him as he is*¹; not his essence and nature, so as to comprehend it; but shall have a clear and unclouded apprehension of his perfections and glory: we shall see God in all his persons; we shall see the Father of Christ and ours, who loved us with an everlasting love; who chose and blessed us with all spiritual blessings in his Son; who made a covenant with him, and us in him, ordered in all things and sure; who laid help on him the mighty One, and sent him in the fulness of time, to be our Redeemer and Saviour: we shall see the Son of God himself, who became our surety, and is the Mediator between God and man; who assumed our nature, suffered and died in our room and stead; who rose again, ascended to heaven, is set down at the right hand of God, and will judge the world in righteousness: we shall see the glory of his divine person, with the eyes of our understanding fully enlightened, and his glory as mediator, of which we have little knowledge now, only believe it, but then we shall have a clear understanding and discernment of it; yea *in our flesh* shall we *see God*, as *Job* says², and with our corporal eyes behold the glory of Christ's human body; we shall see that beautiful face that was once besmeared with sweat and blood, shine like the sun in its full strength; and those blessed temples that were crowned with thorns, crowned with glory and honour; and him whose hands and feet were pierced with nails, and covered with gore blood, holding the scepter of his kingdom, or walking in stately majesty, or sitting on his throne of glory: we shall see the blessed Spirit, who convinced us of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and was our quickener and comforter; who led us into truth, and took of the things of Christ and shewed them to us; who witnessed to our spirits that we were the children of God, and often assisted us in our prayers to him; was the earnest of our inheritance, and by whom we were sealed unto the day of redemption: we shall see him who began, and carried on, and perfected the work of grace in us; and that with the greatest pleasure and thankfulness.

(2.) Saints will see all the holy angels in their shining forms, ranks, and orders; those thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers made by Christ, and sub-
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¹ 2 Cor. v. 7. Psal. xvii. 15. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 John iii. 2. ² Job xix. 26, 27.

ject to him : we shall see those sons of God, those morning-stars that sung together when the foundation of the earth was laid ; those ten thousands of holy ones that made such a considerable figure in the apparatus at mount *Sinai*, when from the Lord's right hand went a fiery law ; that multitude of the heavenly host that descended at Christ's incarnation, and sung "glory to God in the highest, " on earth peace, and good-will to men ;" that numerous company of them that attended our Lord at his ascension, and will be with him when he comes a second time to judge the world in righteousness : we shall see them bowing their heads whilst they adore the divine being, and celebrate the perfections of his nature, and clapping their wings whilst the heavenly arches resound their praises, and those of glorified saints.

(3.) The saints will see and know one another in this perfect state. The question was asked *Luther* a little before his death^a, whether we should know one another in the other world ? to which he answered, by observing the case of *Adam*, who knew *Eve* to be flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, whom he had never seen before. How did he know this, says he ? by the Spirit of God, by revelation ; so added he, shall we know parents, wives, children, in the other world, and that more perfectly. Besides, how did the apostles know *Moses* and *Elias* on the mount with Christ, whom they had never seen before, no not any statue, picture, or representation of them, which were not allowed among the Jews, but by revelation ? so the saints shall know one another in heaven ; how otherwise can those, whom gospel-ministers have been the instruments of their conversion and edification, be their "joy and crown of rejoicing at the "last day ?" And indeed it seems necessary to the felicity of society to know one another ; we are never quite free and easy in company, when a stranger is in it we know not : and it will undoubtedly give a pleasure not to be expressed, to see and know those personages we then shall. There we shall see the first man that was in the world, the head and representative of all mankind, and the figure of him that was to come, with *Eve* the mother of all living ; we shall see this happy pair in a more exalted station than when in a state of innocence in *Eden's* garden : there we shall see the first martyr whose blood was shed in the cause of religion, who by faith in the sacrifice of Christ, at that distance from it, offered a more excellent one than his brother : there we shall see the man that saw two worlds, the old world that then was, and the present world that now is ; who built an ark for the saving of himself and family, when the world of the ungodly was swept away with the deluge : there we shall see *Abraham*, *Ishaac*, and *Jacob*, with the rest of the patriarchs, both before and after the flood ; and sit down with them in the kingdom of heaven : there we shall see *Moses* the meekest of men, by whom the Lord did such wonders in the land of *Ham*, and
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^a Vid. Melchior. Adam. vit. Lutheri, p. 154.

in the fields of *Zoan*, the lawgiver of *Israel*, who led them through the red-sea and wilderness, to the border of *Canaan's* land : there we shall see the man after God's own heart, the sweet Psalmist of *Israel*, striking his harp to a higher note, to a better tune, and to better purpose than when here on earth : there we shall see the evangelic prophet *Isaiab*, with the rest of his brethren the prophets, who prophesied beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow : there we shall see the forerunner and harbinger of Christ, who prepared his way by preaching and baptizing, and who so clearly pointed him out as " the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world : " there we shall see the apostles of Christ, the companions of our dear Redeemer, who heard his doctrines, saw his miracles, and were witnesses of his sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven ; and were the instruments of spreading the Gospel through the several parts of the world, and sealed it with their blood : there we shall see the wondrous man that was caught up into the third heaven, who heard words unspeakable, not lawful for a man to utter ; who preached the gospel from *Jerusalem* round about to *Illyricum*, and was the means of converting so many thousands of souls, and of planting so many churches in the Gentile world : There we shall see all the confessors and martyrs of Jesus, that have been in all ages ; yea, " the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven ; " the bride, the Lamb's wife, with the glory of God upon her ; even the whole innumerable company of the chosen, redeemed, and called ones, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands.

2. As in this state there will be an enjoyment of all that is good, so a freedom from all that is evil. There will be an entire deliverance from sin ; the saints will no more groan, being burdened with it ; the Canaanite will be no more in the land ; or such sins and corruptions in the heart, which are now thorns in the flesh, and pricks in the eyes and sides of good men ; there will be no more a pricking briar, or grieving thorn, through the heavenly land ; or any temptations of Satan to disturb and molest ; the people of God will be out of the reach of his fiery darts : he found ways and means to get into the earthly paradise to seduce our first parents, but he will never be able to get into the heavenly paradise ; he is cast out and fallen from thence, and will never re-assume his place any more there : nor will wicked men any more oppress them, *there the wicked cease from troubling* ; nor will their ears be offended any more with their oaths and blasphemies, or grieved with their filthy conversation ; they will then be shut up in the pit of destruction, and a vast chasm, a great gulph fixed between them, so that there will be no passing from one to the other : nor will there be any afflictions attending the saints in this state ; they will now be come out of great tribulations, and shall hunger and thirst no more, nor be an-

nayed.

noyed and distressed with any outward calamity whatever ; there will be no more pain or sorrow, diseases and death ; nor will there be any inward distresses ; no more *fightings without*, the warfare will be accomplished, nor *fears within**, about their state and condition ; no more doubts nor questioning, nor misgivings of heart, nor unbelief ; no more darknefs and desertion, but "everlasting joy shall be upon them, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away ;" and there will be nothing but perfect rest, ease, and peace.

3. The employment of the saints in this state deserves notice, and will be no small part of their happiness : as their bodies will be raised and united to their souls, they will spend the happy hours and days of eternity in conversing with each other, in sitting, walking, and talking together about divine, spiritual, and heavenly things, and that in an audible manner : what language they will speak is not for us to say ; it is highly probable, since *tongues will cease*†, that the jargon of speech introduced at *Babel* will be no more ; but that one language will be spoken by all, but what that will be, cannot be determined ; perhaps a language more pure, more perfect, more elegant, more refined than ever was spoken by man on earth : the saints will now be employed in serving the Lord continually, not by preaching, or hearing, or reading, or praying, or attending on ordinances as now, which will be no more, but in praising the Lord for all the benefits of his grace and goodness ; they will sing the song of *Moses* and the Lamb ; the songs of electing, redeeming, justifying, adopting, calling, sanctifying, and persevering grace ; and this will be their work throughout an endless eternity. But I hasten,

III. To point out unto you in a few words the persons that shall enjoy this glory.

And these are the objects and subjects of the grace of God, on whom it is bestowed, and in whom it is wrought. God first gives grace, and then gives glory ; and to whomsoever he gives the one, he gives the other. They are the elect of God, such as are ordained unto eternal life, that are interested in predestinating grace ; for whom he did predestinate to the adoption of children, them he glorifies‡. They are the redeemed of the Lamb, the church and people he has purchased with his blood ; nor will he lose his purchase, which he would, should they not be brought to glory ; were it so, his death would be in vain, nor would he see "the travail of his soul, and be satisfied ;" but he will have them all with him on mount *Zion*. These are the harpers that will be continually harping with their harps, singing the new song, which none but the redeemed can sing, they themselves being redeemed from among men§. They are such as are called by the grace of God with an high, holy, and heavenly

* 2 Cor. vii. 5.

† 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

‡ Rom. viii. 30.

§ Rev. xiv. 1—4.

venly calling; and as they are called to a state of glory and happiness, they shall certainly enjoy it. These are regenerated by the Spirit of God, and shall both see and enter into the kingdom of heaven; they are born heirs apparent to the heavenly inheritance; they are openly and manifestatively the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and so "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." They are such who are justified by the righteousness of Christ; no unrighteous ones shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, nor any enter into it that have not a better righteousness than their own; only the righteousness of Christ is the *justification of life*¹, or what entitles to eternal life; and such who are justified by it become heirs of that life, and shall possess it; for *whom be justified, them be also glorified*²: in a word, all that truly and spiritually know Christ, whom to know is life eternal, or that really believe in him, shall partake of this glory; yea, *be that believes on him hath everlasting life*³ already; he has the beginning, earnest, and pledge of it, and shall enjoy the whole; nothing is more true than this, *be that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved*⁴. I close all with a word or two.

Every one that has been hearing this discourse, I doubt not, will be desirous of this glory that has been spoken of, and wish to be admitted after death into this state of happiness; but the first question such should ask their own souls is, whether they are partakers of the grace of God? for no graceless persons shall inherit glory. God gives glory to none but to whom he first gives grace; grace is his first gift, and glory is his last; and none have the latter, but those who share in the former: therefore the first concern should be about the grace of God, whether there is any reason to hope and believe that you are interested in electing and redeeming grace, by being called, regenerated, and sanctified; have you seen your lost state by nature, and been brought to believe in Christ, and trust in him for life and salvation; then you may assure yourselves of this happy state. And let all truly gracious souls be seeking the things above, where Jesus is, and set their affections on them, and not on things on earth; let them be looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of Christ, and be rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. And let them ascribe both their grace and glory to the sovereign good will and pleasure of God; for they are both the gifts of his grace, from whom *every good and perfect gift*⁵ comes. Grace is freely given, and so is glory: *Eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*⁶; and neither of them to be attributed to the works or deserts of men: wherefore we that are partakers of the one, and hope for the other, should look upon ourselves under the highest obligations

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¹ Rom. v. 18.² Rom. viii. 30.³ John vi. 47.⁴ Mark xvi. 16.⁵ James i. 17.⁶ Rom. vi. 23.

to glorify God for such undeserved grace and goodness; should be careful to walk worthy of the grace by which we are called, and of the glory we are called unto; and since we look for such great and glorious things to come, *what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, and to be diligent that we may be found of Christ in peace, without spot and blameless*.*

* 2 Peter iii. 11, 14.

S E R M O N VIII.

The Agreement of the Old and the New Testament.

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture in Great Eastcheap, March 24, 1756.

ACTS XXVI. 22, 23.

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

THIS Lecture, which I am now about to take my leave of, was set up in the year 1729, between six and seven and twenty years ago. I opened it with a discourse or two on the words of the Psalmist, in *Psalm lxxi. 16. I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only*: My view in the choice of those words was, partly to observe that I undertook the service of the Lecture, and engaged in this work, not in my own strength, but in the strength of Christ, hoping for and expecting the aid and assistance of his Spirit and grace; and partly to shew that my intentions and resolutions were to preach that great and glorious doctrine of a sinner's free justification before God, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, with all others that are analogous to it, or in connection with it; which *Luther* rightly called *articulus flantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*, "the article of the church standing or falling,"

“falling, or that by which it stands or falls;” for as that doctrine is received or rejected, the church of Christ in all ages and periods of time flourishes or declines. And through the grace of God I have been enabled to abide by these resolutions throughout my concern in this Lecture; and now I close it with a discourse on the words read, *Having therefore obtained help of God, &c.* which are part of an apology or defence, which the apostle *Paul* made for himself in a very numerous assembly; at the head of which were very great personages, as *Agrippa* king of the Jews, *Bernice* his sister, *Festus* the Roman governor, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city of *Cesarea*, and all in open court; which verified what our Lord had foretold to his disciples, saying, *ye shall be brought before kings and governors for my sake* *. The apostle being permitted to speak for himself, addressed the king in a very polite manner, and gave an account of himself from his youth upwards; “how that he was brought up in the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, a Pharisee; trained up in the belief and hope of the promised Messiah, and of the resurrection of the dead; and possessed with prejudices against Jesus of Nazareth and his followers, against whom he was exceeding mad, and persecuted them to strange cities; and how that in the midst of his career of rage and fury against them, it pleased the Lord to meet with him, and convert him.” And then he relates the manner of his conversion; “how an amazing light surrounded him and struck him, and those that were with him, to the ground; that he heard a voice speaking to him by name, and what answer he returned to it; when he was not only effectually called by grace, but the Lord Jesus Christ personally appeared to him, and made him a minister of the everlasting gospel; promised him protection and deliverance from all people, Jews and Gentiles, to whom he should send him; and pointed out the ends and usefulness of his ministrations; *to open the eyes of men, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ:*” upon which he observes to *Agrippa*, that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but immediately preached the doctrines of faith, repentance and good works at *Damascus*, the place where he then was, and at *Jerusalem*, and through all the land of *Judea*, and then among the Gentiles; and these were the only causes and reasons of the rage of the Jews against him, and which moved them to seek to take away his life time after time: but notwithstanding, the Lord preserved him for much and long usefulness in the ministry of the gospel; which he takes notice of in the words before us, *having therefore obtained help of God, &c.* In which may be observed,

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

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

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

3. This includes all that help and assistance which he received from the Lord in preaching the gospel; for notwithstanding his natural and acquired abilities, and the ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the spirit bestowed on him, yet he was conscious of his own weakness and inability in himself to perform such service; and therefore asks^g, *who is sufficient for these things?* He knew he was not of himself, and that the grace of Christ alone was sufficient for him; that it was his strength which was made perfect in his weakness; that it was through Christ strengthening him he did all those wonderful things he did; that though he laboured more abundantly than any of the apostles, yet it was *not* he,

but

^b Psa. lxxvi. 9. Job x. 12. Acts xvii. 28.

^c 1 Tim. iv. 10.

^d Rev. ii. 1.

^e Acts ix. 24. 25. and xiv. 19. and xxi. 32, 33. and xxiii. 12, 13.

^f Ερηκα, *steti*.

^g 2 Cor. ii. 16.

but the grace of God which was with him^b; by which he was what he was, as a minister, and had what he had, as such, and did what he did under that character; and by which he was enabled to preach the gospel so frequently, so constantly, so fully, and in so many places, from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum.

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

Thirdly, The persons to whom he testified, he says, were *small and great*; having, no doubt, a special regard to the audience he was now addressing, consisting of great personages, as before observed, and of a multitude of the common people; he bore witness to the truths of Christ and his gospel, to all sorts of men, of every age, rank and condition of life, high and low, rich and poor; and of every character, wise and unwise; his commission being the same with the rest of the apostles, reached to all; *go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*³.

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

I. What the apostle chiefly insisted upon in his ministry in general, was the same with what Moses and the prophets had spoken of; *saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, or should be*⁴: as he agreed with them in the following things, which are particularly respected, so every thing they said; there is an entire harmony and consent between the prophets of the Old, and the apostles of the New Testament; and especially in every thing concerning Christ: they agreed in laying him as the foundation of
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^b 1 Cor. xv. 10. ² 2 Cor. xii. 9. Phil. iv. 13.

¹ Acts xx. 24.

² 2 Tim. i. 8.

³ Mark xvi. 15.

⁴ 1 Tim. ii.

the church and people of God, and of their faith, hope and happiness; hence he is called *the foundation of the apostles and prophets*. The Old and New Testaments are like the cherubim over the mercy-seat, which were exactly of the same form and size; their faces were to each other, and both to the mercy-seat, a type of Christ; as the cherubim were of the ministers of the word, the prophets of the Old, and the apostles of the New Testament. These two parts of the sacred scripture are the church's *two breasts*, which are like *two young ones that are twins*^o; that are in every thing, in nature, colour and proportion like to each other. Our Lord and his apostles appealed to the writings of *Moses* and the prophets, for the truth of what they delivered; they fetched quotations from them to support their doctrines by; and these are said by them to be *able to make men wise unto salvation*; and to be *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness*; and to make *the man of God thoroughly furnished unto all good works*^p: there is not a doctrine of the gospel, but what may be established and confirmed by these sacred books. And this will soon and easily appear by a short detail of some of the principal and peculiar doctrines of it. As,

1. The doctrine concerning the divine Being, and the persons in the Godhead. One branch of which is, that there is but one God. This is the voice of reason and revelation, the language of the Bible, of both Testaments, old and new. Our Lord frequently suggests this truth, and so do his apostles; and the apostle *Paul* particularly, in the name of the rest, and indeed of all christians, says, *to us there is but one God*^q; and this is what *Moses* said, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*^r: the prophets say the same, and the Lord by them; *before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me—is there a God besides me? yea there is no God, I know not any*^s; all which is said in opposition to the polytheism of the heathens, but not to the exclusion of any of the divine persons in the Godhead; for another branch of this doctrine is, that there is a plurality of persons in God, and that these are neither more nor fewer than three; for as the apostle *John* says, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost, and these three are one*^t; and which agrees with the doctrine of Christ, as appears by his appointing the ordinance of baptism to be administered, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost*^u; which three divine persons appeared at the baptism of Christ; there was the Son of God in human nature submitting to that ordinance; and there was the voice of the Father from heaven, declaring, that *this* was his *beloved Son, in whom* he

^o Ephes. ii. 20.^p Cant. iv. 5.^q 1 Tim. iii. 15—17.^r Matt. xix. 17. Mark xii. 29, 32. John xvii. 3. 1 Cor. viii. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 5.^s Deut. vi. 4.^t Isai. xliii. 10. and xlv. 8.^u 1 John v. 7.^v Matt. xxviii. 19.

he was *well pleased*; and there was the holy Spirit, which *descended as a dove upon Christ* ^v; hence the ancients used to say, “Go to *Jordan* and learn the doctrine of the Trinity:” and this is no other than what is to be found in the writings of *Moses*, and the prophets. *Moses* plainly intimates a plurality of persons in the Deity, when he represents God as saying, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*:—*Let us go down, and there confound their language*^x; and his account of the creation, plainly suggests there were three, and no more. God, the first person, the Father, *made the heavens and the earth*; and God the Word, the essential Word, the second person, *said, Let there be light, and there was light*; and *the Spirit of God*, or the Spirit of the Messiah, as the Jews call him, the third person, *moved upon the face of the waters*^y, and brought the dark and unformed chaos into a beautiful order. All which is summarily comprehended in the words of the Psalmist; *by the Word*, the essential Word of the Lord, of Jehovah the Father, *were the heavens made*; and *all the host of them, by the breath or spirit of his mouth*^z. And the prophets all agree in, and bear testimony to this truth: not to mention any other than those words in *Isaiab*, and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me^z; here are Jehovah and his Spirit spoken of, as concerned in the mission of Christ into this world. Another branch of this doctrine is, that each of the divine persons is God; not to say any thing of the Father, the first person, about whom there is no question: the second person, the Son of God, is expressly called by the apostle *John*, the last of the apostles, with whom the rest agree, *the true God and eternal life*^b; and this doctrine clearly appears in the writings of the Old Testament, *for to the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*^c; and he that is promised as the child that should be born, and the Son given, is named *the mighty God*^d; he who is prophesied of as the Saviour of lost sinners, is called their God, *your God will come and save you*^e; he that is spoken of that should be incarnate and become man, is said to be not a mere man, but *the man, Jehovah's fellow*^f; his equal, who *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*. And as for the blessed Spirit, who, in the New Testament, is called *the Lord the Spirit*; and lying to him is represented as lying to God^g; so in the Old Testament such things are ascribed to him, as clearly shew him to be a divine person: such as, his concern in the creation of all things; his bringing the earth into proper form and order, by moving on the face of the waters; garnishing the heavens, and bespangling them with stars; making man, and giving him life and understanding^h.

2. The

^v Matt. iii. 16, 17.^x Psa. xxxiii. 6.^y Psa. xlv. 6.^z Zech. xiii. 7.^b Gen. i. 2. Job xxvi. 13, and chap. xxxii. 8. and xxxiii. 4.^x Gen. i. 26 and xi. 7.^y Isai. xlvi. 16.^z Isai. ix. 6.^b 1 John v. 20.^c 2 Cor. iii. 18. Acts v. 3. 4.^v Gen. i. 1, 2, 3.^b 1 John v. 20.^c Isai. xxxv. 4.

2. The doctrine respecting the person and offices of Christ, is the same in both testaments. Is he called in the New Testament the Son of God? is the doctrine of his divine Sonship written as with a sun-beam, in the books of it? is he owned to be the Son of God, by angels and men, good and bad, as well as declared to be so by his Father himself? is this an article of the apostles creed, in which they all unite, saying¹, *We believe and are sure that thou art Christ the Son of the living God?* not by office, but by nature; for this is not a term of office, but of relation. The writings of the Old Testament agree herein, in which the second person is often called the Son of God. *Daniel* knew him as such, and had instilled such a sentiment of him into the mind of *Nebuchadnezzar*, an heathen monarch; or otherwise, how could he have said², that *the form of the fourth person, in the fiery furnace, is like the Son of God?* *Solomon*, long before him, under the name of *Agur*, says³ of God, and his divine Word, *What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?* And *David* his father, before him, introduces the second person, as declaring what his divine Father had said unto him; *The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:* hence *David* exhorts the kings and judges of the earth to *kiss this Son of God;* that is, to serve, worship, and obey him; who appears to be a divine person, by his being a proper object of trust and confidence; *blessed are all they that put their trust in him*⁴.

Do the writings of the New Testament speak of Christ as God and man in one person, this being *the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh*⁵? The writings of the Old Testament speak of him also in both natures as meeting in him: when they represent him as a child to be born, they declare him to be *the mighty God and everlasting Father*; and when they intimate he should be a branch of *David's* family, they give him the name of *Jehovah our righteousness*; and when they speak of him as a man, they call him *Jehovah's fellow*⁶. Is he in the New Testament said⁷ "to be *the mediator between God and men?*" the writers of the Old Testament speak of him as drawing near to God, engaging his heart to approach unto him; as becoming the surety of his people; as being the daysman that lays his hands on both; as signified by *Jacob's* ladder, which reached from earth to heaven, and united both; as the mercy-seat, from off of which the Lord communes with his saints; and as *the Angel of God's presence*, who appears for his people in it, and introduces them into it⁸. Do the apostles of Christ make mention of him as invested with the offices of *prophet, priest, and king*? This is no other than what *Moses* and the prophets said should be. *Moses* foretels that God would *raise up a prophet like unto him out of the children of Israel,*

¹ John vi. 69.² 1 Tim. iii. 16.³ 1 Tim. ii. 5.⁴ Dan. iii. 25.⁵ 1 Cor. ii. 9.⁶ 1 Cor. ii. 9.⁷ Jer. xxx. 21. Job ix. 32. Gen. xxviii. 12. Exod. xxv. 22. 1 Sai. lxxiii. 9.⁸ Prov. xxx. 4.⁹ Psa. ii. 7, 12.

Israel, whom they should *bearken* to; and *David* says of the Messiah, that he was by the constitution and oath of God, *a priest after the order of Melchizedek*; and other prophets signify that he should *make his soul an offering for sin*, and *make intercession for transgressors*; which are the two parts of his priestly office: and there is no need to say, that he is often promised and prophesied of as a king that should come, it is so notorious; *Rejoice, O daughter of Zion,—thy king cometh unto thee*.

3. The several peculiar doctrines of special and distinguishing grace are to be observed in the writings of the Old Testament, as well as of the New. As for instance, the doctrine of eternal, personal election: is it a truth of the New Testament, that some men are chosen in Christ their head before the foundation of the world, to be holy and happy? It is suggested in the Old, that Christ is God's first and chief *elect*, *in whom his soul delighteth*, and is *chosen* by him *out of the people*; and has a people chosen by the Lord for his peculiar treasure and inheritance; for himself, or his glory, to enjoy everlasting communion with him. *Know that the Lord hath set apart*, in a most wonderful and gracious manner, *him that is godly*; him to whom God is good and gracious, and who is the object of his free-grace and favour, as the word signifies; *for himself*, his service and honour. The same writings declare, that God has made with Christ, with *David*, his chosen, an everlasting covenant; that Christ is set up from everlasting as mediator of it; that *his goings forth* in it were *of old, from everlasting*; that he is *the messenger of it*, yea *the covenant itself*; that all the blessings and promises of it belong to him, and are therefore called *the sure mercies of David*; which are all absolute and unconditional, and are all confirmed and established by the blood of Christ, said to be *the blood of the covenant*, in one Testament, as in the other. The doctrine of particular redemption is held forth in both, and appears alike, the person of the redeemer is the same, that should come to, and out of *Zion*; the redeemed are the spiritual and mystical *Jacob and Israel*; the things they are redeemed from, are all their sins, Satan that is stronger than they, and death and hell they deserve. The doctrine of justification, our apostle so much insisted upon in his ministry and writings, is clearly expressed by the prophets; from whence it appears that it is God that justifies Christ the head, and all his people in him; that it is *in*, and *by* him, that *all the seed of Israel are justified and glorified*; and it is in him they have their

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justifying

Deut. xviii. 15.

Psal. cx. 4.

Isai. liii. 10, 12.

Zech. ix. 9.

Isai. xlii. 1. Psal. lxxxix. 19. and cxxxv. 4.

קָדִים est is, quem Deus gratia ac misericordia sua in Christo complectitur, &c. Joh. Henr. Michael. not. in Psal. iv. 3.

Psal. lxxxix. 3. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Prov. viii. 22. Micah v. 2. Mal. iii. 1. Isai. xlii. 6. and lv. 3.

Zech. ix. 11. See Heb. xiii. 20. Isai. lix. 20. and xliii. 1. Psal. cxxx. 7. Jer. xxxi. 11.

justifying righteousness, which is called an everlasting one; and hence he is called *the Lord their righteousness*^b. The doctrine of pardon of sin, which is an evangelical one, and of pure revelation, is spoken of by *Moses* and the prophets, as by *Christ*; for *to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*^c; and by them it appears that *there is forgiveness with God*; and that it is of *all sins*, and is an act of God's free grace and mercy, and peculiarly his; and who, before the face of *Moses*, proclaimed his name, a *God gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin*^d. And the agreement of other doctrines of the New Testament with the Old, may easily be observed, as being no other than what is there asserted; as that conversion is not by might or power of man, but *by the Spirit of the Lord*^e; and that they that have the true grace of God shall persevere to the end; shall *go from strength to strength, grow stronger and stronger, and bold on their way*; and that *the fear of God being put into their hearts, they shall never depart from him*^f; and that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a future judgment; that those that *sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt*^g; and that *God will judge the righteous and the wicked, and bring every work into judgment, good or evil, open or secret*^h.

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

1st, That *Christ* should suffer; a suffering *Christ* is the principal subject of the gospel-ministry. The apostles preached *Christ crucified*, as having suffered the death of the cross in the room and stead of, and for the sake of men; and the apostle *Paul* determined to know, that is, to make known *none but Christ, and him crucified*, as the only Saviour of men. This was the first and principal thing of all which he delivered wherever he came, *that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures*ⁱ. The person said to suffer, is *Christ*; not the Father, as some, called *Patri-passians* from thence, are said to hold; they, as the Sabellians, asserting there is but one person in the Godhead; but of the Father our Lord says, *ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape*^k. He never assumed a nature capable of suffering; nor the holy Spirit neither; he formed, prepared, and adorned the human nature of *Christ*, and *Christ* through the eternal

^b Isai. l. 8. and xlv. 24, 25. Dan. ix. 24. Jer. xxiii. 6.

^c Acts x. 43.

^d Psal. cxxx. 4. and ciii. 3. Isai. xliii. 25. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

^e Zech. iv. 6.

^f Psal. lxxxiv. 7. Job xvii. 9. Jer. xxxii. 40.

^g Dan. xii. 2.

^h Eccl. iii. 17. and xii. 14.

ⁱ 1 Cor. i. 23. and ii. 2. and xv. 3.

^k John. v. 37.

mal Spirit offered himself to God¹; but the Spirit suffered not; it was the Son of God that became incarnate, and appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh; and whom God spared not, but delivered up into the hands of justice and death for us all^m: it was not indeed in his divine nature, as the Son of God, he suffered, for that is impassible; but in the human nature he assumed, which he took on purpose, that he might have something to offer; as it was necessary he should, that he might be put to death in the flesh, and be crucified through weaknessⁿ: and yet his sufferings are ascribed to his whole person, and even as that is denominated from his divine nature; just as what belongs to his divine nature is predicated of his person, as denominated from his human nature; for instance, his omnipresence, which is an attribute of Deity, is ascribed to Christ, denominated the Son of man; and no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven^o: and so, on the other hand, the sufferings of Christ, which are peculiar to his human nature, are spoken of his person, as described from his divine nature; as when it is said, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, and God purchased the church with his own blood^p: this is owing to that strict, close, hypostatical, or personal union there is of the two natures in the Son of God; and hence is the efficacy of the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ: his blood cleanseth from all sin^q, because it is the blood of him who is the Son of God; and his righteousness justifies from all sin, because it is the righteousness of God, of him who is God as well as man; and his sacrifice expiates all sin, and is a sufficient atonement for it, because it is the sacrifice of himself. Should it be asked, what it was that Christ suffered? The answer is, That he suffered in his name, credit, and reputation, which he willingly submitted to, and therefore is said to have made himself of no reputation^r: he was content to be reckoned a worm, and no man^s; he was traduced as a sinful man, as a seditious person, as having a devil, and doing his miracles by his help and assistance. He suffered in his body, being beat and bruised, buffeted and scourged, pierced in his hands and feet with nails, in his side with a spear, and in his head with thorns; he suffered the painful, shameful and accursed death of the cross: he suffered in his soul, partly by the temptations of Satan, for he suffered being tempted^t; and partly by enduring the wrath of God in the room and stead of his people; in the garden, when his soul became exceeding sorrowful even unto death^u; and upon the cross, when his God and Father forsook him, and he cried out in the agony of his spirit, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me^v? His soul, as well as his body, was offered, and became a sacrifice for sin. And all this he endured, not on his own account; he was

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¹ Heb. ix. 14.^m Rom. viii. 3, 32.ⁿ 1 Peter iii. 18. ^o 2 Cor. xiii. 4.^p John iii. 13.^q 1 Cor. ii. 8. ^r Act. xx. 28.^s 1 John i. 7.^t Phil. ii. 8.^u Psal. xxii. 6.^v Heb. ii. 18.^w Matt. xxvii. 38.^x Matt. xxvii. 46.

cut off in a judicial way, by the hand of divine justice, but *not for himself*^a, not for any sin of his; he knew none, nor did any; but, *he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*; it was for *the transgression of his people* that he was stricken^y, smitten and afflicted of God; not for angels, and any sins of theirs, whose nature he did not assume, nor are they spared and saved; but for men, sinful men, the worst of men, the chief of sinners; *he suffered, the just for the unjust*^z; not for all the individuals of mankind; for his redeemed ones are redeemed from among men, and out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation^a; they are a peculiar people Christ suffered for, his sheep he laid down his life for, the church he gave himself an offering and a sacrifice for unto God, of a sweet-smelling savour^b: and his ends in all his sufferings were to make peace with God for them, which is done by the blood of his cross; to procure the pardon of all their sins, which is obtained the same way; and to redeem them from all iniquity; which redemption is also through his blood; and to deliver them out of the hands of all their enemies, and particularly from him who had the power of death, the devil; and to bring many sons to glory, for which it was necessary the captain of their salvation should be made perfect through sufferings. For there was an absolute necessity of them; *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things*^c? He must; partly on the account of God, his counsels and decrees, his promises and prophecies. God resolved on saving sinners by Christ; he appointed him to be his salvation; he determined he should suffer and die; and he was given up to men, by the determinate counsel of God, who did to him “none other things than what his hand and counsel determined before should be done;” and to fulfil the decrees of God, it was necessary Christ should suffer for his counsel shall stand^d; as well as to make good the many promises and prophecies concerning this matter, delivered out by the mouth of his holy prophets; and had he not suffered, how then could the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be^e? And partly on account of Christ himself, his covenant-engagements, to do this part of his Father’s will, and the several predictions he himself gave out, that he should suffer many things of the scribes and Pharisees, and die and rise again. As also on the account of the Lord’s people, who otherwise could not be saved; for here was a law broken, which must be fulfilled; not only its precepts obeyed, but its penalty, which was death, must be endured; injured and affronted justice to be satisfied, which could only be done by the sinner, or surety for him, suffering the demerit of sin: there was no other way of saving sinners but by the sufferings of Christ; consistent with the purposes of God, his counsel and covenant; with the engagements of Christ, and the happiness of the Lord’s people, these

^a Dan. ix. 26.^y Isai. liiii. 6, 8.^z 1 Peter iii. 18.^a Rev. xiv. 4. and v. 9.^b Titus ii. 14.

John x. 15. Eph. v. 2, 25.

^c Luke xxiv. 26.^d Isai. xlvi. 10.^e Matt xxvi. 54.

these sufferings could not be avoided: it was not possible the cup should pass from him; could any other way have been found out, or these sufferings excused, that prayer of our Lord would have^f procured it.

Now all these sufferings of Christ were no other than what were foretold by *Moses* and the prophets. The first promise or hint of a Messiah, suggests, that he would be a suffering one, *Thou shalt bruise his heel*^g; and all the prophets speak of him as subject to reproach and trouble, to pains and sorrows, to distress of every kind, and death itself. Read over the xxii^h Psalm, and the liii^h chapter of *Isaiab*, and it will be abundantly evident from thence, and other passages, how the prophets testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow^h: these shew that he would be a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; that he would be wounded, bruised, give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; that he would be brought to the dust of death, and his soul be poured out unto death; and that he should be buried, and make his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death. Yea, the several circumstances of his sufferings and death are most minutely and exactly foretold in the writings of the prophets; as that he should be betrayed by one of his disciples, one that eat bread with him should lift up his heel against him; that he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a servant; the goodly price he was prized at by them; that he should be deserted by all the disciples, when he should be seized and smitten; that he should be crucified between two thieves, or numbered among the transgressors; that the soldiers should part his garments, and cast lots on his vesture; that they should give him gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink, and that his side should be pierced with a spearⁱ.

2dly, Another particular in which the apostle agreed with *Moses* and the prophets, is, that Christ should be the first of the resurrection of the dead^k, or should rise first from thence: that he is risen is certain, not only from the testimony of the women who first came to his sepulchre, and to whom he first appeared; but from the testimony of his disciples and others: of these, he was first seen of *Cephas* or *Peter*, then of the twelve, after that of above five hundred brethren at once; next of *James*, then of all the apostles; and even after his ascension he was seen by *Stephen* standing on the right hand of God; and last of all by our apostle, as here declared in the context, as one born out of due time^l. Now the apostles of our Lord were chosen witnesses of God for this purpose^m, and were men of unquestionable characters; they were thoroughly acquainted with Christ, and could not be imposed upon; nor were they over-credulous; nay they were incredulous to a fault, and in this very case; they believed not the first report

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^f Matt. xxvi. 39.^g Gen. iii. 15.^h 1 Peter i. 11.ⁱ Psal. xli. 9. Zech. xi. 12, 13, and xlii. 7. Isai. liii. 12. Psal. xxii. 18. and lxix. 21.^k Zech. xii. 10.^l Πρωτος ἰς ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν.^m 1 Cor. xv. 6—8. Acts vii. 55.ⁿ Acts x. 41.

of it from the women, and the two disciples that travelled with Jesus to *Emmaus*; and therefore Christ at his first appearance to them upbraided them with their unbelief, *because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen*^o: and they had all the opportunities and advantages of satisfying themselves in this matter they could wish for; he *shewed himself alive* to them by *infallible proofs*^o; he was seen of them for the space of forty days, during which time they frequently eat, and drank, and conversed with him; and they were men of probity and honesty, and had no sinister ends, nor worldly views to answer by making such a report; but were sure to meet with reproach and disgrace, with rage and persecution, and with death itself in every shape wherever they came with it: nay, the resurrection of Christ is further confirmed by the testimonies of angels, who declared at the grave, that *he was not there*, but was *risen*^o; and not they, and men only, were witnesses of this, but the holy Ghost also, by signs and wonders of his attending the declaration of it^q. Moreover, not only Christ was to rise from the dead, but he was to rise *first*, as he did; for though there were others that rose before him, as to time, as the son of the widow of *Sarepta*, who was raised by *Elijab*, and the *Skunamite's* son by *Elisba*, and the daughter of *Jairus*, and the son of the widow of *Naim*, and *Lazarus*, by our Lord; yet these were raised, not by their *own* power, but by the power of another; whereas Christ was raised by his own power, and so declared to be the Son of God: they rose to die again, but he rose to an immortal life, never to die more; he was the first to whom God, in this sense, *shewed the path of life*^r; for though he was *dead* he is *alive*, and *lives for evermore*, and *has the keys of hell and death*^r: likewise, he was the first in dignity that rose from the dead; he who is the *first-born among many brethren*, is the *first-begotten from the dead*; he rose not as a private person, but as *the head of the body, the church*, as the representative of all his people, and they were *raised up together* with him^s: also he is the first in causality; he is the first cause of the resurrection; as *by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead*. It is by virtue of his power, and in consequence of union with him, the saints will rise; he is *the first-fruits of them that slept*^t, the earnest and pledge of their resurrection; as sure as his *dead body* is raised, so sure shall theirs; his *glorious body* raised, is the exemplar and pattern, according to which the bodies of the saints will be *fashioned* in the resurrection-morn; and it will be owing to his *voice*, and to the exertion of his almighty power, that the graves will be opened, and the dead will come forth and appear before him^u.

Now this is a very principal doctrine of the gospel, and of great moment and importance; on this the proof of Jesus's being the true Messiah, greatly depends; this

^o Mark xvi. 11, 13, 14.

^q Acts i. 3.

^r Luke xxiv. 6.

^s Acts v. 31, 32.

^t Psal. xvi. 11.

^u Rev. i. 18.

^v Col. i. 18.

^w Ephes. ii. 6.

^x 1 Cor. xv. 20, 21, 23.

^y Isai. xxvi. 9. Phil. iiii. 21. John v. 28, 29.

this is the sign he chose to give to the adulterous and unbelieving generation of the Jews, when they required one of him, saying ^a, *there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas*; his lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, a type of Christ's resurrection from the dead on the third day. This doctrine is of so much consequence, that were it not true, the whole of christianity, the doctrine and preaching of it, the faith and hope of christians would be affected with it, yea, be all *vain* and worthless. The resurrection of Christ has a very great concern in the justification of men; for *he was raised again for our justification* ^b; and it has an influence on their regeneration, to which it is sometimes ascribed; and both may be designed by *the power of his resurrection* ^c, as well as the resurrection of his people at the last day, which depends upon it. And the whole of this doctrine is no other than what *Moses* and the prophets said should be; it is perfectly agreeable to the writings of the Old Testament; it was hinted at in the types, of *Isaac* being received from the dead as in a figure by his father, after he had given him up for dead for three days; and of *Jonas* being delivered from the belly of the whale, after he had lain in it three days and three nights; it was foretold by *David*, *Isaiab*, and *Hosea* particularly; who declare he should not see corruption in the grave, that his dead body should arise, and he, and his people with him, should be quickened after two days ^d.

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

1. To the Jews. Christ was first sent to them, even to *the lost sheep of the house of Israel* ^e, and to them only; he was *the minister of the circumcision* ^f, or of the circumcised Jews, to fulfil to them what God had promised and foretold; and though they received him not, but rejected him, he sent his apostles to them first, and charged them not to go into the way of the Gentiles, or into any of the cities of the Samaritans; and when their commission was enlarged after his resurrection, they were ordered to begin their ministry at *Jerusalem* ^g. Now these people, notwithstanding they had the law and statutes of God, his word and ordinances, and the divine oracles committed to them, yet were in great darkness, and had no true understanding of them; in those times there was a veil over their minds in reading the books of the Old Testament concerning Christ, and the things of the gospel; they were blinded, and so were their leaders the scribes and Pharisees. Christ came a light unto them, and the

light

^a Matt. xii. 39. and xvi. 4.

^b 1 Cor. xv. 14.

^c Rom. iv. 25.

^d 1 Peter i. 3. Phil. iii. 10.

^e Psal. xvi. 10. Isai. xxvi. 19. Hosea vi. 2.

^f Matt. xv. 24.

^g Rom. xv. 8.

^h Matt. x. 6, 7. Luke xxiv. 47.

light of grace and truth came by him; and some through his ministry, and that of his apostles, were spiritually and savingly enlightened.

2. To the Gentiles. These were in great darkness before the coming of Christ; they were without a divine revelation, without any knowledge of God and Christ; they were suffered to walk in their own ways of darkness, superstition, and idolatry; their times before this were times of ignorance and blindness: but when Christ came, he sent his apostles to them with the gospel to enlighten them; and they carried it throughout the world; and by means of it, many were called and turned from gross darkness to marvelous light. And now all this was agreeable to the writings of the Old Testament, which represent Christ as the *sun of righteousness*; as that *great light* which should arise and shine on the Galilean Jews, that sat *in darkness, and in the shadow of death*, and should *also be a light of the Gentiles*^f; and so good old Simeon understood the prophecies concerning him, that he should be *a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel*^g.

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

And now, my friends, I call you to bear witness that these truths, and what have been briefly suggested in this discourse, have been what I have chiefly insisted upon in the course of this Lecture; namely, the doctrines of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead; of the person and office of Christ; of the person and operations of the Blessed Spirit; of special and distinguishing grace, as it appears in election, redemption, justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, and the final perseverance of the saints; with other doctrines which are in consequence of them, and in connection with them. And now I am about to take my

^f Mal. iv. 2. Isai. ix. 2. and xlii. 6.

^h John v. 39. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

^g Luke ii. 32.

my leave of you, and this Lecture, and do: not through any dislike of the work I have been so long engaged in; not through any disgust at any thing I have met with; not through any discouragement for want of attendance or subscription; I have nothing to complain of; the Lecture was never in better circumstance than it now is. But I find my natural strength will not admit me to preach so frequently, and with so much constancy, as I have done for many years past; being now on the decline of life, in the *fortieth* year of my ministry; so that it is time for me to have done with extra-service, I mean, service out of the church of which I am pastor. But a more principal reason is, that I may have a little more time and leisure to attend to, and finish an arduous work upon my hands,

An Exposition of the Whole OLD TESTAMENT;

Part of which work, I shall immediately propose for publication; and if I meet with encouragement, the publishing of this will be an additional weight upon me; and I have no other way of easing myself, but by dropping the Lecture; and these, and these only, are my reasons for so doing. And now as I would be, and am, thankful to the God of my life, who has given me so much health and strength, to carry on this Lecture for such a course of years, with very little interruption for want of health; so I would, and do return thanks to you, my friends, who have so long encouraged and supported me with your presence and purse; and I heartily wish and pray, that you may be preserved from the prevailing errors of the times, and may be kept steadfast in the faith of the gospel, and abide by the truths and ordinances of it; and that the means of grace you attend upon, in season, and out of season, here, or elsewhere, may be blessed unto you for your comfort and edification; and *that you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*

OCCASIONAL SERMONS.

S E R M O N IX.

Levi's Urim and Thummim found with Christ.

DEUT. XXXIII. 8.

And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massab, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah.

THESE words are part of the blessing wherewith *Moses* blessed the tribe of *Levi*, when he blessed that and the other tribes a little before his death. He was a man eminently raised up by God for much good to the people of *Israel*; he was a glorious instrument, in God's hand, to deliver them out of Egyptian bondage; and was a guide, a governor, a legislator, nay, a father to them in the wilderness; but having *unadvisedly spoke with his lips* concerning them, *it went ill with him for their sakes*; so that he was not allowed to enter into the land of *Canaan*; but, as in the latter part of the preceding chapter, he is bid to go up to mount *Nebo*, and take a prospect of the promised land, and die.

Moses, thus having notice of the time of his departure being at hand, and having a real affection and concern for this people, by a prophetic spirit, blesses the several tribes, *ver. 1. This is the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death.* And prefaces this benediction with observing the wonderful love of God to that people, in giving them a law by his hands, which was delivered in so august and magnificent a manner, *ver. 2—5. And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand*

band went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy band: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. Moses commanded us a law: even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together. And then he proceeds particularly to bless the tribes, beginning with Reuben, ver. 6. who was Jacob's first-born; but had forfeited his birth-right by his sin. Judah, in ver. 7. is blessed next, who, though the fourth son, is blessed in the second place, because to his tribe belonged the kingdom, and from thence was the Messiah to arise, one of whose characters is, the lion of the tribe of Judah; and, perhaps, all that is said in this blessing may very well be applied to him. In the next place comes Levi, in the words I have read, Simeon his brother in iniquity, being wholly omitted; And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah. Which words I intend, by divine assistance, to open and explain. But I must intreat your patience a little, whilst I remove the difficulties of the text; which I shall endeavour to do,

First, By giving some account of the Urim and Thummim.

Secondly, By shewing who the person is whom Moses intends, and points at, in these words, to whom the Urim and Thummim belong.

First, I shall endeavour to give some account of the Urim and Thummim. The first mention that is made of them, is in Exodus xxviii. 30. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord; and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually. The words Urim and Thummim are by the Septuagint rendered ^a manifestation and truth; though they may be much better translated lights and perfections; as they are by Aquila ^b, in Lev. viii. 8. and are frequently applied, by divines, to that light of knowledge and integrity of life, which are requisite characters in every minister of Christ; but what these Urim and Thummim were, is not so easy a thing to determine: Some of the Jewish Rabbies ^c have ingenuously confessed, that they knew not what they were, and some of our Christian interpreters ^d have thought it safest to leave them as things unknown, and not conclude any thing certainly about them; though the scripture seems to speak of them as things well known; and an inquiry into them is no where forbidden; therefore we shall attempt it at this time.

T 2

There

^a Τῆ δόξασι καὶ τῆ ἀληθείαι.

^b Φωτισμὸς καὶ τελειώσις, agreeable to the Hebrew, אורִים,

Rad. אור, lucidum esse, illuminari lucere. תמים, a Rad. אמם, absolvi, completi, perfici.

^c R. David Kimchi, in lib. Shorash. R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor. R. Aben Ezra.

in Exod. xxviii. 5. & Micol Yophi in ver. 30.

^d Jun. Diodat. &c.

There has been a variety of opinions concerning them, which particularly to enumerate, and enter into the consideration of, would be both tedious, and to little purpose, one thinks^c that these two words, *Urim* and *Thummim*, were engraven on a stone, or a plate of gold, and put into the breast-plate, even as those words, *Holinefs to the Lord*, were engraven on a plate of gold, and fastened, by a blue lace, to the forefront of *Aaron's* mitre. Another is of opinion^f, that they were two famous and remarkable characters in the breast-plate, which suited with those names: Others have supposed, that this was the writing of *Schemhamphorasch*, that is, the name *Jehovah* (which the Jews say is unlawful to be pronounced but by the high priest when he entered into the holy of holies) which name, either by itself, or with other divine names, explanative of it, were put into, or engraven on the breastplate; and this way go most of the^e Jewish doctors. Others have imagined^h, that they were little images, which the high priest carried about with him in the folds of the breastplate, and as often as he inquired concerning any thing, God, or an angel in the name of God, did, by these, answer very clearly and distinctly, what was to be done, or not to be done; and that, because of the perspicuity and certain completion of the answers, the one was called *Urim*, and the other *Thummim*; and that, whilst the priest was inquiring, these images glistened and appeared very bright, to fix the people's attention, and raise their admiration: they also imagine, that these images are the same with the *Teraphim* made mention of in many places of scripture with the *Ephod*, but never in a good sense; for they were idols which the Jews, who were a people prone to idolatry, had learned to worship of the nations; and they seem to be household gods, such as the *Lares* or *Penates* among the Romans; wherefore it cannot be supposed that these were the *Urim* and *Thummim* which were put into the breastplate, because it would have been directly contrary to the second commandment. Others have been of opinionⁱ, that these were a work purely divine, not made by *Bezaleel*, or any other artificer, but by God himself, as the two tables of stone were, on which the law was engraven: and that God gave these to *Moses*, and he put them into the breastplate; though of what form and matter they were, they will no more pretend to tell, than they would of what stone the two tables were made.

But the opinion, which at present I am most inclined to come into, is, that the *Urim* and *Thummim* were no other than the twelve stones in the breastplate, on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of *Israel*, and that these were called *Urim*, because they were *clear*, *lucid*, and *transparent*; and *Thummim*,

^c Cornel. à Lapide in Rivet, in Exod. xxviii. 30.

^f Calvin, in Exod. xxviii. 4.

^e Targum. Jon. Zoar, Baal. Hatturim, R. Sol. Jarchi, in Exod. xxviii. 30. David. de Pomis, Lexic. Heb. fol. 227. 1.

^h Christoph. de Castro, in Rivet, in Exod. xxviii. 30. Spencer de *Urim & Thummim*.

ⁱ R. Menachem in Ainsworth, on Exod. xxviii. 30. Arias Montanus, Willet, &c.

mim, because they were *perfect* and *complete*, had no blemish or defect in them: what induces me to embrace and prefer this opinion to all others, is, because in *Exod. xxxix.* where there is a particular account given of all the priest's vestments, and more especially of the breastplate, and the things appertaining thereunto, there is mention made of the twelve stones, but no notice taken of the Urim and Thummim; now, if the Urim and Thummim had been any thing different from the stones, *Moses* would not have omitted the mention of them, seeing he takes notice of things more minute than these: and as also, in *Lev. viii. 8.* where is given the like account, mention is made of the Urim and Thummin, and no notice taken of the stones, which is a further confirmation of this opinion. Likewise, I find some of the most learned of the ^k Jewish writers are of the same opinion, particularly *Josephus*^l, whose testimony must go a great way in this matter, seeing he lived while the second temple stood, was by sect a Pharisee, by profession a priest, and of the blood royal; and therefore, no doubt, had all the opportunities and advantages of informing himself in these affairs.

Having thus considered what they were, let us now observe what was the use of them, which I apprehend to be twofold.

I. The names of the twelve tribes of *Israel* being engraven on them, they were borne on *Aaron's* heart, when he went into the holy place on the day of atonement, for a memorial before the Lord, so that what *Aaron* then did, more especially, he did, not in his own name, but in the name of the whole congregation of *Israel*; he acted as their representative, when he slew the sacrifice, and carried the blood within the vail, for it was not only for himself, but for all the people.

II. By these, the high priest consulted God for the people, in matters of moment; thus we read in *Numbers*^m, *And he* (that is, *Joshua*) *shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord; at his word shall they go out, and at his word shall they come in, both he and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.* Consultationⁿ by Urim and Thummim was made by the priest only, but not without having on the Ephod, and generally before the ark of the covenant; not for private persons and for private affairs, or for things trivial, but for public persons, and in matters of moment. And so we read in the *Mishnah*^o, *They inquire by Urim and Thummim, but they do not inquire by these for a private person, but for a king, and for the house of judgment, and for him whom the congregation hath need of.*

This

^k R. Moses bar Majmon. R. Aarias in Meor. Enayim, c. 50. R. Menasseh Beo Israel Conciliat. in Gen. qu. 41. ^l Antiq. l. 3. c. 8. ^m Chap. xxvii. 21.

ⁿ The manner of asking counsel of God by Urim and Thummim, according to Maimonides, may be seen in Ainsworth, on *Exod. xxviii. 30.* & in Cungus de Rep. Heb. l. 2. c. 2.

^o Massech. Yoma, 7. 5.

This was certainly a very great favour, which God indulged this people with, that they could thus have recourse unto him on emergent occasions; and it was an evidence of God's displeasure to *Saul*, when he would not answer him *either by dreams, or by Urim, or by Prophets*: How long those things continued in use, is not so well known. The Talmudists say^p, That king *Josiah* hid the Urim and Thummim under ground in a cave, before prepared by *Solomon*, together with the anointing oil, the ark of the covenant, *Aaron's* rod, and the pot of Manna, and that these things could not be found when they returned from *Babylon*; therefore they tell us^q that these five things were wanting in the second Temple, namely, 1. The ark with the mercy-seat, and cherubims. 2. The fire from heaven which burnt up the sacrifice. 3. The Shechinah, or the divine presence. 4. The holy Ghost, or Spirit of prophecy. 5. The Urim and Thummim. And in the *Mishnah*^r they say, "After the death of the former prophets the Urim and Thummim ceased." *Maimonides* indeed says, that the Urim and Thummim were made in the second temple, though not used; his words are these^s, "They made in the second temple Urim and Thummim, to the end, they might make up all the eight ornaments, although they did not inquire by them: and wherefore did they not inquire by them? because the holy Ghost was not there." *Josephus*^t says, that the shining of these stones had ceased two hundred years before he wrote his *Antiquities*; and it is manifest from scripture, that the Jews were without them when they returned from *Babylon*, as appears from *Ezra*^u, *And the Tirshatha, that is, Nebemiah, said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim.* This shows the deficiency and imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and what need there was of another priest to arise with the true Urim and Thummim, not after *Aaron's* order, but after the order of *Melchizedek*.

But now let us consider a little, in what way and manner God was pleased to return answers by Urim and Thummim.

The Jews generally say, it was by the extraordinary *brightness and protuberance* of some of the letters upon the stones, which swelling, and appearing higher and brighter than others, either all together, or one after another, the priest could read the answer which should be returned: but there not being a complete alphabet in the names of the twelve tribes, they added the names of the patriarchs *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; and this not being sufficient, they added these words, *Col Elle Skibte Israel*, "All these are the tribes of Israel." Here being now a complete

^p Vid. Cuneus de Rep. Heb. l. 1. c. 14. ^q Talmud Yoma, c. 1. And out of that R. Sol. Jarchi, R. David Kimchi & Miclol Yophi in Hag. i. 8. ^r Mafsech. Sotah. g. 12.

^s In Ainsworth on Exod. xlviii. 30.

^t Antiq. l. 3. c. 9.

^u Chap. ii. 63.

^v Zohar in Exod. (Edit. Sultzbac) fol. 92. 9. & 93. 1.

complete alphabet, they suppose an answer might be returned this way upon any affair that was consulted about.

Others, that the priests knew the mind and will of God, by the *brightness* or *dulness* of the stones; that if the stones were bright, the answer was in the affirmative; if dull, in the negative; and so they returned the answer to the people.

Others* have been of opinion, that the priest, when he went and asked counsel of God, having on the breastplate, and the Urim and Thummim in it, God was pleased to enlighten his understanding, and fix in his mind a firm persuasion of the truth of the answer intended, and accordingly he returned it.

But I am most inclined to think, that God gave the answer by a distinct and articulate voice; my reasons for it are, because in *Numbers*, when the priest asked counsel of God, it is said, *at his word*, or at his mouth, that is, of the Lord, *Shall they go out, and at his word*, or mouth, *Shall they come in?* and in all the instances we have of inquiry being made by Urim and Thummim, the answers, as they appear to me, were given this way: Thus, after *Joshua's* death, when the people of *Israel* inquired of the Lord, saying, *Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites? The Lord said, Judab shall go up.* And when *David* ordered *Abiathar* the priest to bring the Ephod to him, and he inquired of the Lord, saying, *Will Saul come down? And the Lord said, He will come down: Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up.*

Thus I have endeavoured to give you some account of the Urim and Thummim, which I suppose to be the twelve stones in the breastplate, on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of *Israel*; one principal use whereof, was, by them to ask counsel of God in matters of moment; and the answer was given to the priest, by a distinct and articulate voice, he having on the breastplate at that time, with these stones in it.

Secondly, I shall now proceed to show, who the person is, whom *Moses* intends, and points at, in these words, to whom the Urim and Thummim belong. And here are two things spoken of him, which may be a direction to us in finding out the person intended. 1st, He was God's *holy One*. 2^{dly}, He was *proved at Massab, and strove with at the waters of Meribab*.

1st, Both these are true of *Aaron*; he was a holy man, had the principles of grace and holiness wrought in his soul, and lived an holy life and conversation, and therefore he is called *the saint of the Lord*; *They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord*. He was also proved at *Massab*, and strove with at the waters of *Meribab*; which may be referred either to God, or to the *Israelites* proving him: God proved him at *Massab*, or tempted him in, or with a temptation,

* Rivet in Exod. xxviii. 30.

† Chap. xxvii. 21.

‡ Judges i. 1.

§ 1 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12.

¶ Psalm. cvi. 15.

tion, as the words may be read^c. Even as he is said to tempt *Abraham*, so he may be here said to tempt *Aaron*: But how? Why, by suffering the people of *Israel* to gather together against him and *Moses*, and to murmur against them for want of water. But how did it go with *Aaron* in this temptation, or trial of his faith and patience? All the three *Targums*^d, on the place, give it in his praise, that he stood in the temptation, was perfect, and was found faithful: But this doth not seem so well to agree to the account in *Numbers*, where it is said, *And the Lord spake to Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. This is the water of Meribab, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord: And he was sanctified in them*^e.

It seems from hence, that he did not stand in the temptation; and therefore God strove and contended with him; that is, blamed him, and shewed manifest tokens of his displeasure at his carriage and behaviour: or else the words may be referred to the tribe of *Levi*, who, with the rest of the *Israelites*, tempted and strove with *Moses* and *Aaron* at these places; though some of the Jewish writers exempt the tribe of *Levi*, and say, that they murmured not with the other murmurers.

2dly, These two characters in the text may very well be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ: The character of an *holy One* well suits with him; he is so both as God and man; he is *the man thy holy One*, as the words may be rendered^f; he was so in his conception and birth, and therefore called *that holy thing*; holy he was in his nature, and in all the actions of his life, and therefore a proper person for the *Urim* and *Thummim* to be with, and a suitable high priest for us; for *such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens*^g; of him also it may be truly said, that he was proved at *Massab*, and strove with at the waters of *Meribab*; for the *Israelites* not only tempted and strove with *Moses* and *Aaron*, but they tempted and strove with the Lord *Jehovah*: Thus in *Exodus* we read, that *Moses* said unto them, *Why chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord*^h? And in ver. 7. *he called the name of the place Massab and Meribab, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord; saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?* And in *Numbers*, *This is the water of Meribab, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them*^k. Now, who was this Lord, this *Jehovah*, whom they tempted and strove with after this manner? He was no other than the Angel who was sent to conduct them through the wilderness, the Angel of God's presence, the Lord Jesus Christ,

^c כִּסְיָתוֹ בְּסֶפֶד.
Ben Uzziel.

^b Heb. vii. 26.

^d Onkelos, the Jerusalem, and that which bears the name of Jonathan
Chap. xx. 12, 13.

^e Chap. xvii. 7.

^f R. Sol. Jarchi in loc.

^g Chap. xx. 13.

^h אִישׁ חֲסִידָךְ.

Christ, as appears from 1 Cor. x. 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.* So that Christ is the *holy One* who is more especially intended here, who was tempted and strove with at *Massah* and *Meribah*; therefore to him the true *Urim* and *Thummim* belong. And the words may be thus paraphrased, *And of Levi, that is, of the tribe of Levi, be said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim (or thy lights and thy perfections, O God) be with thy holy One*¹, Christ Jesus, *whom thou, O Levi, with the rest of the tribes of Israel, didst tempt at Massah, and strive with at the waters of Meribah.* Thus having opened the words, and endeavoured to remove the difficulties of the text, I shall, in the following observation, give you what I conceive is intended therein, namely,

That the true Urim and Thummim are with God's holy One, Christ Jesus; or, What was meant and typified by the Urim and Thummim, is to be found fully and completely in Christ.

And in speaking hereunto I shall,

- I. Endeavour to shew, how the *Urim* and *Thummim* are with Christ, according to the significancy of the words.
- II. How they may be applied unto him, with regard to the use of them.

I. I will endeavour to shew, how the *Urim* and the *Thummim* may be said to be with Christ, according to the significancy of the words. The words, as I have already observed, signify *lights and perfections*; now, all light and perfection are in Christ; *it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell*^m. Fulness and perfection of all that is great and glorious, valuable and precious, are to be found in him; *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*ⁿ.

1st, The *Urim* is with Christ; all *light* is in Christ, and from him. As all that light which was created on the first day, and disseminated throughout the whole creation until the fourth day, is in that great luminary the sun; so all that light which is dispersed among the creatures, is, in its full perfection, in Christ, who is the Sun of righteousness; and as all bodies, celestial and terrestrial, have their light from the sun, so all creatures have their light from Christ, who is *the light of the world*. There is a threefold light that is in, and is communicated to us from Christ; the light of nature, grace, and glory.

(1.) The light of nature is from Christ. The light of nature, in fallen man, must needs fall short of what it was in man in a state of innocence, yet is it not wholly lost, but there are some remains of it in him; which, though not sufficient to save him, yet are enough to leave him without excuse; for, by this

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¹ Vid. Ainsworth in loc.

^m Coloss. i. 19.

ⁿ Ibid. ii. 3.

light of nature, he may arrive to the knowledge of a divine Being; seeing *the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead, so that they are without excuse*^o. He may hereby know, that this divine Being is possessed of great and glorious perfections, that he is to be worshipped and adored by him: he may hereby in some measure know the difference between good and evil, as the apostle observes in his epistle to the Romans; *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law to themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another*^p. Also, he may in some measure know, how to conduct himself as a rational creature in this world. Now all this light is from Christ; for, as we are told by the evangelist *John, he is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*^q; but every man that comes into the world, is not lighted with the light of grace, or the light of glory; and therefore it is the light of nature which is there intended; for *John* is not speaking of Christ, as the author of the new, but as the author of the old creation; for he tells us, *that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men*^r. So that as we have our natural being, and our natural life, from Christ, as a creator, from him also we have our natural light, as such.

(2.) The light of grace is from Christ. The light of grace is that whereby a poor sinner, who was darkness itself, being born, and brought up in darkness, and having lived and walked in darkness, is now *made light in the Lord*; so that he sees his depraved, miserable, and lost state by nature; as also, the necessity, as well as fulness, glory, and suitability, of salvation by Christ; and can say, as the poor man did, *One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see*^s. The work of grace, upon the heart of a sinner, consists much in his being called out of darkness into marvelous light, marvelous and surprizing light, indeed! The characters they bear, who are thus called by divine grace, are *children of the light and of the day*; for they are no more *children of the night, or of darkness*; for *the darkness is past, and the true light now shines*. Now all this light is from Christ: If any souls have this light, it is he that gives it to them; *Christ shall give thee light*. If any are called to this marvelous light, it is by him; if any are made light, it is *in or by the Lord Christ*; for he is given by God the Father to be a light to *lighten the Gentiles*, as well as to be the glory of his people Israel. For this light of grace includes in it the light of the knowledge of the divine perfections, the light of the knowledge of Christ, and the light of the knowledge of gospel truths; and all these are in and from Christ.

1. The

^o Rom. i. 20.^p Chap. ii. 14, 15.^q John i. 9.^r Ver. 3, 4:^s John ix. 25.

1. The light of the knowledge of the divine perfections, is in and from Christ, *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God*, that is, of the glorious perfections of God, is given to us *in the face*, or person, of *Christ Jesus*. It is true, God has discovered his perfections in the works of creation and providence; for, *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work*¹. There is a glorious shine of his power, wisdom, goodness, &c. upon them, but there is a far more glorious display of the divine perfections in him, who is *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person*. For in the contrivance of salvation by him, the depths of wisdom and knowledge are discovered; in the mission of him, the exceeding riches of his love, grace and mercy, are laid open; in his accomplishment of the work, the arm of almighty power is made bare; and in the sufferings which he underwent, in our room and stead, the glories of divine faithfulness, justice and holiness, are surprisingly displayed; here *mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other*². Here is no clashing among the divine perfections, but a sweet and an entire harmony among each other, all shining forth with equal glory and lustre in man's salvation. Now, *this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*³; that is, to know God in Christ. The Heathens may know him in the *creatures*, but they cannot know him in *Christ* without a divine revelation; and that revelation must be attended with a supernatural light; which light must come from Christ himself.

2. The light of the knowledge of Christ is from himself, for it is *in his light we see light*. As we see the sun in its own light, and it is impossible for us to see it in any other light than its own; so we see Christ, the Sun of righteousness, in his own light; and it is impossible for us to see him in any other; it is in his own light we see him as the eternal Son of God, as *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person*: It is in his own light we see him as the mediator between God and man, as the Saviour of sinners; that salvation is in him, and in no other; that it is in vain to expect it *from hills and mountains; for truly, and alone, in our God is the salvation of Israel*. It is in his own light we see the glory and efficacy of his atoning sacrifice, whereby he *has put away sin, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified*. It is in his own light we see the efficacy of his precious blood, whereby the remission of our sins is obtained, and our souls are washed and cleansed from all sin, and *our consciences purged from dead works to serve the living God*. It is in his own light we see the completeness of his justifying righteousness, which is revealed in the gospel *from faith to faith*, and by which we are *justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses*. It is in his own light we see those immense treasures of grace and glory which lie hid in his person; *we beheld his glory, the*
glory

¹ Psalm xix. 1.² Psalm lxxv. 10.³ John xvii. 3.

glory as of the only begotten; and one main branch of that glory consists in his being full of grace and truth^a.

3. The light of the knowledge of gospel-truths is from Christ; it is he that opens our understandings, that we may understand the scriptures. It is he that gives us to know the mysteries of the kingdom. It is he that sends his spirit as the spirit of truth, to lead us into all truth; otherwise the Bible would be a sealed book to us, a book full of riddles: the truths and doctrines contained therein would be as parables, and dark sayings. David knew this full well, and therefore prays after this manner, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of thy law*^b.

(3.) As the light of nature and grace is from Christ, so likewise is the light of glory. Heaven is represented to us a lightfom place; it is called, *the inheritance of the saints in light*^c; and all that light that fills it, is from Christ. *That city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*^d. When you are safely arrived there, all darkness of infidelity, doubts and fears, will then be dispelled, and your souls will be irradiated with those beams and rays of light from Christ, which will for ever strike you with wonder and pleasure: then shall you behold his glory, and see him as he is: then shall the sun be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light to thee, but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory; thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended^e. Thus the Urim is with Christ; all light of nature, grace and glory, is in him, and from him.

2dly, The Thummim is with Christ; all *perfections* are in him, he includes and comprehends all.

1. All divine perfections are in him; *in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. Whatever perfection is in the Deity, is to be found in Christ; whatever is a divine perfection, he is possessed of. Is eternity a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he is *the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end; which is, and which was, and which is to come*^f. Is omnipotence a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he is *the Almighty*. Is omniscience a divine perfection? It is in Christ; *he needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man*^g; and therefore Peter appealed to him, as the heart-searching, and rein-trying God; and said, *Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee*^h. Is omnipresence a divine perfection? It is in Christ; therefore he says, *where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*ⁱ. Is immutability a divine perfection? It is in Christ;

^a John i. 14.

^b Isai. lx. 19, 20.

^c Matt. xviii. 20.

^d Psalm cxix. 18.

^e Rev. i. 8.

^f Coloss. i. 12.

^g John ii. 25.

^h Rev. xxi. 23.

ⁱ Chap. xxi. 17.

Christ; he is *Jesus, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*^s. In short, is there any other divine perfection? It is in him; he is possessed of all, and therefore *is the true God, and eternal life*.

2. A perfection of the gifts of the Spirit is in him. God has not given *the Spirit by measure to him; with this oil of gladness he is anointed above his fellows*; which, like *the precious ointment on Aaron's head, that ran down to the skirts of his garments*, descends from him to all the members of his body, in their measure. All those gifts of the Spirit, which are to be found in men, come from Jesus Christ. There was a very large measure of the gifts of the Spirit bestowed upon the apostles at the day of pentecost, but from whom did they receive it? From an ascended Lord and King; as is manifest from what the apostle *Peter* says in the *Acts*; *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, that is, Christ being exalted by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear*^b. This he did both as a fruit and evidence of his being ascended on high, and of his having received gifts for men.

3. A perfection of all grace is in Christ; he is said to be *full of grace*, of all sorts of grace, needful for the believer; and therefore we should *be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*; which is in him to its full perfection, and which the believer will always find sufficient for him. Particularly there is a perfection of justifying and sanctifying grace in Christ.

(1.) There is a perfection of justifying grace in Christ; there is a perfect righteousness in him; he is not only righteous as he is God, and as he is God's servant, but he is also *Jehovah our righteousness*; which righteousness was wrought out by him, and is imputed by the Father, and applied by the Spirit to us; it is every way compleat and perfect; it is sufficient for all the elect; it is a *garment down to the foot*, covering the meanest members in Christ's mystical body; and by it *are they justified from all things*; be those all things what they will; they are acquitted and discharged from all sin and condemnation by it, and stand in it compleat and irrefragable in the sight of God.

(2.) There is a perfection of sanctifying grace in Christ; perfect holiness is in him; from him must we have our holiness, as well as our righteousness, we stand in need of an holy nature, as well as of a justifying righteousness; and as without the one, so neither without the other can we enter into the kingdom of heaven; *for without holiness no man shall see the Lord*¹; no, not without a perfect one. From whence now must we have perfect holiness? from ourselves we cannot expect it, but from Christ, who has purchased and procured it for us, and has now all the holiness of his people in his hands, and is giving it forth unto them, that they may be perfectly meet for the eternal enjoyment of himself, *whereof God is made unto them sanctification*, as well as *righteousness*.

^s Heb. xiii. 8.

^b Acts ii. 33.

¹ Heb. xii. 14.

4^c The.

4. The perfection of all covenant-blessings and promises is in him: *The blessings of the everlasting covenant are upon the head, and in the hands of our Joseph, who was separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; therefore whatever blessing we are blessed with, whether it be with the pardon of sin, or with a justifying righteousness, or with any other, we have them from Christ; hence we have reason to say with the apostle, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus^k. And as all blessings; so all promises are in Christ; they are all in him, yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us^l; there is a perfection of them in him; so that the believer cannot come under any case or circumstance of life, but there is a promise in Christ, suitable for him, had he but faith to view it, and lay hold upon it.*

5. Perfection of all light and life, strength and wisdom, joy and comfort, is in Christ. That the *perfection of all light* is in Christ, I have shown already; and as all *light*, so all *life* is in him; for with him *is the fountain of life*, from whence all the streams of life flow. If you ask, How came it to be in Christ? I answer, He did, in the everlasting counsels of peace; ask it of his Father for all his seed, and he granted him his request; as it is said, *he asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever^m*: Thus he came to have life in himself, as mediator for the elect, and to have a right to dispose of it to *as many as the Father gave to him*: and for this purpose did he come into the world, to remove obstacles out of the way, that the streams of life might run freely; that so we might have it, and *have it more abundantly than ever Adam had in innocence, or the angels now have in heaven*. Also perfection of strength is in Christ; we are poor, weak creatures, in ourselves, yet there is strength as well as righteousness for us in him; he is *the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong, not only for himself, but for us*; so that though we are incapable of doing any thing of ourselves, yet *we can do all things through Christ strengthening us*. There is likewise a perfection of wisdom in him, not only for himself, to qualify him for the discharge of every branch of the mediatorial office, but also for us, to direct and guide us in all our ways through this wilderness. He is the *wisdom of God*, and the wisdom of God for us; for *he, of God, is made unto us wisdom*, as well as *sanctification and righteousness*. There is moreover, a perfection of joy and comfort in Christ; there is always matter of rejoicing in him, his person, blood, and righteousness, are a sufficient ground for the fame: There is always an abounding of consolation in him; for as our sufferings, our trials, our reproaches, and calumnies, which are cast upon us, for the sake of Christ, abound; *so our consolation abounds by him*; and whatever comfort comes
any

^k Eph. i. 3.^l 2 Cor. i. 20.^m Psalm xxi. 4.

any other way, there is just reason to suspect it is ill-grounded. Thus the Thummim is with Christ, as well as the Urim, all *perfection* is in him. So much for the first thing.

II. I shall now inquire how the Urim and Thummim may be applied to Christ, in respect to the use of them. I have already observed a twofold use thereof; the first was, that upon these stones, that is, the Urim and Thummim, were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of *Israel*, which the high priest bore upon his heart, when he went into the holy place, *for a memorial before the Lord*; from whence we may observe these two things,

First, That the elect of God lie near the heart of Christ, the great High priest; for as the names of the twelve tribes were engraven on these stones, and born upon *Aaron's* heart: so are all God's elect engraven on the heart of Christ; not only upon the palms of his hands, but upon his heart, as the church in *Solomon's* song desired; saying, *Set me as a seal upon thine heart*; they lay near his heart, and were the objects of his love from eternity; he was not only rejoicing in and with, and before his Father, but also in the habitable parts of the earth, in the views of that part of the earth which he knew would be so, and where his elect should dwell; and his delights were with the sons of men, even before the earth was made, or the highest part of the dust of the world was formed: They lay near his heart when he died for them, and there they still lie, and ever will do so.

Secondly, That what Christ did, who is our high priest, with Urim and Thummim, he did it as our representative, in our name, and in our room and stead; even as *Aaron*, when he slew the sacrifice on the day of atonement, and carried the blood within the vail, did it in the name of the whole congregation: so when Christ offered up himself a sacrifice, he did it in our name, and for our sins: *Christ our passover is sacrificed for us*; and this was received by the Father, as an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour, on our account; and now he is entered into the holy place by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us. It is, with the names of all the elect, engraven upon his heart; he is entered into heaven as a forerunner for them; he is gone before to take possession of glory in their name, as well as to prepare it for them; and therefore they are said now to sit together in heavenly places in him; what he receives there, he receives in their name; what he does, he does in their name; and on their account, he appears in the presence of God for them. So much for the first use of the Urim and Thummim.

The second was, that with these the priest asked counsel of God for the people in matters of moment. This may represent unto us Christ's acting for us as an Intercessor, Advocate, or Counsellor, one of whose titles in *Isaiah* is *The Counsellor*;

* Cant. viii. 6.

* 1 Cor. v. 7.

* Ephes. ii. 6.

*sellor*⁹; or, as the *Septuagint* translates it, *The Angel of the great council*¹; he acted as such, in the great council that was held between the eternal Three, concerning man's salvation; and has acted as such ever since: He now pleads our cause, removes all charges, answers all accusations, consults our interest, and acts the whole part of an advocate for us; *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*². But let us consider a little more particularly, how these things may be applied to Christ.

1. None but the high priest might ask counsel of God by Urim and Thummim; *Jesus* must stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord³; so none but the Lord Jesus Christ is the believer's counsellor, advocate, intercessor and mediator; no angels nor saints departed; *for there is but one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*⁴. As there is but one mediator of redemption, so there is but one mediator of intercession; so that when we want counsel and advice, we must employ him: when we want any favour at God's hand, we must make use of his interest: when we have a cause to plead, he is the only person we must, and the most proper person we can, apply unto.

2. The high priest, when he did this, put on the Ephod, and none but he might do so. The Ephod may represent unto us the garment of the human nature, with which Christ, our great high priest, is clothed; which, though all the three persons had an hand in making, yet it was thought proper that the second person alone should wear it; which garment, as the Ephod was girt about the priest with a curious girdle, is girt about Christ with the girdle of love, and no other girdle but that could have fastened it to him. *Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood*⁵, the children whom he loved, and because he loved them, *therefore he himself also took part of the same*. And as the Ephod was a glorious garment, being adorned with sparkling gems and precious stones, so is the human nature of Christ, now in heaven, full of glory; *For we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour*⁶: and in this nature, as well as in the divine, does he act the part of a counsellor, advocate, and intercessor for us.

3. Counsel was asked by Urim and Thummim only for public persons; as for a king, or the house of judgment; the *senate* or *sanbedrim*; or the whole congregation of *Israel*⁷; and that only in matters of moment, as I have already observed. Now our great high priest, with Urim and Thummim, is acting the part of a counsellor and intercessor, not for the men of the world, but for the whole congregation of the elect: *I pray for them*, says he; *I pray*
not

⁹ Chap. ix. 6.

¹ Numb. xxvii. 22.

² Μιγάλης βελῆ; ἀγγελος.

³ 1 Tim. ii. 5.

⁴ 1 John ii. 1.

⁵ Heb. ii. 14.

⁶ Chap. ii. 10.

not for the world⁷. Those that he concerns himself for, are persons of note, they are princes, the sons of a King, nay, Kings themselves; such whom he has loved and washed from their sins in his own blood, and made them kings and priests to God and his Father⁸. And the things that he is concerned about for them, are not trivial matters, but things of the greatest importance; such as the conversion of elect sinners, and the consolation of called saints, that they may have the Spirit as a comforter to abide with them; and the manifestations of pardoning grace to their souls; that their faith may not fail in an hour of temptation, but that they may persevere to the end, and be with him, where he is, to behold his glory.

4. The person for whom counsel was asked, was to stand before the priest: which shews us, that we must make our application to Christ, our high priest; we must ask in his name, and put our petitions into his hands, and stand before him waiting for an answer; for he has said, *whatsoever ye ask in my name that will I do.*

5, and lastly, As those responses which God returned by Urim and Thummim were certainly true, without any falsity or equivocation in them, such as the diabolical oracles of the Gentiles had; so as true are all those things which he says unto us by Christ: *God did at sundry times, and in divers manners, speak in time past to the fathers by the prophets⁹*; sometimes by dreams and visions, and sometimes by Urim and Thummim; *but he hath now in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* And as all he said by dreams and visions, or by Urim and Thummim, was true; so is all that he has said to us by his Son, who is truth itself, *the faithful witness*, who hath fully declared the whole counsel of God unto us.

Thus I have considered how the Urim and Thummim may be applied to Christ, or said to be with him, both as to the significancy of the words, and the use of the things. I shall now make some improvement of these things, and conclude.

1. Are the true Urim and Thummim with Christ? Are all lights and perfections in him? Let us then go to him for both. Under all our darkness let us go to him for light; the treasures of light, as well as the words of eternal life, are with him, therefore, *whither shall we go but unto him? Let us then follow him, who is the light of the world, and we shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* Likewise, under a sense of all our imperfections, let us seek perfection in Christ, in whom is the perfection of all grace, righteousness and holiness: It is a vain thing to imagine, or expect it, in ourselves; *For if we say we have no*

⁷ John xvii. 9.⁸ Rev. i. 5, 6.⁹ Heb. i. 1.

sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us^b. There is perfection in Christ, but none in us; and if we are in any sense perfect, it is as we are in him.

2. Are all the elect engraven on Christ's heart? You then may learn from hence, how near and dear they are to him; what an affection he has for them, and what love he bears to them; they have not only a place in his arms, but a place in his heart; they are *a people near unto the Lord* indeed; and as they can never be plucked out of his hands, so they can never be removed from the affections of his heart; *For who shall separate us from the love of Christ*^c?

3. Is Christ, as a counsellor and advocate, represented by the priests asking counsel of God by Urim and Thummim for the people? Let us then make use of him as such; he knows how to manage our affairs, and has interest enough to obtain what we desire; and what is more, will do all faithfully and freely, and take it kindly at our hands that we make use of him.

4, and *lastly*, Is the true Urim and Thummim alone with Christ? You learn hence, the superiority of Christ's priesthood, to that of *Aaron's*; the Levitical law was but *a shadow of good things to come*, which good things are brought to us by Christ, who is the substance of those shadows. And we may also learn the glory of the gospel dispensation, in which the day is broke, and the shadows are fled and gone; and *we all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*^d.

^b 1 John i. 8.

^c Rom. viii. 36.

^d 2 Cor. iii. 18.

S E R M O N X.

Christ a Priest after the Order of Melchizedek.*

P S A L M CX. 4.

*The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever,
after the order of Melchizedek.*

I HAVE in a late discourse shown you that *Levi's* Urim and Thummim are to be found with Christ, and I shall now endeavour to make it appear, that notwithstanding that, he is not a priest of *Levi's* order, but of the order of *Melchizedek*; there was a weakness and an imperfection in *Levi's* priesthood, therefore it was necessary that another priest should arise, not after his order, but after the order of another, who is here mentioned in these words. This Psalm was not wrote by *Melchizedek*, as ^a some of the Jewish Rabbies have imagined; for he was a greater person than *Abraham*, he blessed him, and received tithes from him, and therefore could not call him Lord: nor by *Eleazar*, as others ^b of them have thought: for though it is true he might call him his Lord, but then he could not assign unto him session at the right hand of God; nor say of him, that he had an everlasting priesthood after the order of *Melchizedek*: nor is it a composition ^c of *David's* concerning *Abraham*, and that victory which he obtained over the kings, for the same reasons as before: nor was it wrote by *David*, or by any of the ^d singers in his time concerning himself, for *David* had nothing to do with the priesthood. It is true *David* was the penman of it, as is manifest from the inscription, A psalm of *David*; but then he did not write it concerning himself, but concerning one that was greater than he, even one whom he acknowledges to be his Lord; for if God never said to an angel, *Sit thou at my right hand*, &c. certainly he would never say so to a meer man.

The person who is the subject of this psalm is the Messiah, as is acknowledged by many of the ancient Jewish ^e Rabbies; though many of the modern ones, observing how manifestly some places in this psalm are applied to the Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament, have endeavoured, as much as in them

x 2

lies,

^a R. Abraham in Rivet. in Psal. cx. ^b Ibid. ^c R. Abendana is not in Miclol Jophi in Psal. cx.

^d R. David Kimchi, R. Aben Ezra, & Miclol Jophi in Psal. cx.

^e Bereshith Rabba in Gen. xviii. 1. Midrath Tillim in Psal. xviii. 35. & ii. 7. & cx. 1. R. Saadias Gaon on Dan. vii. 13. R. Obadiah in Psal. cx.

* This Sermon was preached in the year 1725, and never before published.

lies, to wrest it to any other person; but we have a more sure word of prophecy, and a better rule to go by, than their glosses and interpretations: for the first verse is evidently referred to the Messiah by Christ himself, in *Matthew* xxii. 42, 43. where he puts this question to the scribes and Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord? saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, &c.* now as they were not able to answer this question, so neither do they charge him with a misapplication of the text; which, no doubt, they would have done, had they not been convicted in 'their own consciences that it was right. It is also applied unto him by the apostle *Peter*, in *Acts* ii. 39. and there the words of my text, in all those ^f places where they are cited in the epistle to the *Hebrews*, are manifestly referred unto Christ. The three first verses of this Psalm speak of the glory of Christ's kingdom, in his being placed at the Father's right hand, in the subjection of his enemies to him, and in the mighty conquests of his grace over his own people; and in this fourth verse there is an easy transition from his kingly to his priestly office; both which offices were eminently conjoined in him, of whose order he is here said to be.

Three things are here said of Christ's priesthood;

First, That it is after the order of *Melchizedek*.

Secondly, That it is an everlasting one.

Thirdly, That its stability and firmness is in the immutable and unrepealable oath of God. Each of which I shall consider in their order.

First, Christ is a priest after the order of *Melchizedek*: And in speaking to this, it will be necessary, *1st*, To give you some account, who and what *Melchizedek* was; *2dly*, How Christ may be said to be a priest after the order of *Melchizedek*: In treating of the former, I suppose that I shall gratify the curiosity of some; and in considering the latter, I hope to bring out something, for the edification of others; but, in the

1st place, Let us consider who and what *Melchizedek* was. The first mention that is made of him, is in *Gen.* xiv. 18. *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.* His name, by interpretation, is, *King of righteousness*; and it is very probable that he was called so; because that he was a king who reigned in righteousness, and executed justice in his realm; as he does, of whom he was a glorious type. In *Josua's* time, we find that there was a king in *Jerusalem*, which is supposed to be the same with *Salem*, whose name was *Adonizedek*; which is, by interpretation, *Lord of righteousness*; a name of much the same signification with this, and perhaps it was a common ^g name of the kings of this place; even as *Abimelech* was a common

^f Heb. v. 6, 10. & vi. 20. and vii. 17, 21.

^g Vid. R. Abendana in not. in *Miclol.* Jophi in *Gen.* xiv. 18.

common name of the kings of *Gerar*, and *Pbaraob* of the kings of *Egypt*. Now this inquiry of ours consists of two parts, *1st*, Who he was. *2dly*, What he was.

1st, Let us consider who he was; there has been a variety of opinions concerning him, which may be reduced to these two heads: *1st*, Such who have thought him to be more than a man; *2dly* Such who have thought him to be but a mere man: of those who have thought him to be more than a man,

Some have imagined that he was an angel, which appeared in a human form to *Abram*: this was the opinion of *Origen*; which, though not approved of by a learned ^h author, yet is preferred by him to that which *Jerom*, and many others, both of the antient and modern writers, have embraced; of which hereafter. That angels have appeared in a human form, is undeniable; those who appeared to *Abram* in the plains of *Mamre*, Gen. xviii. and are there called *men*; are in the *xix*th called *angels*; but then we never read of angels being priests, or of this office being ascribed to them; for every high priest is taken from among men, and not from among angels.

Others have thought him to be a divine power, superior to Christ: this ^l was the heresy of those who were called *Melchisedecians*: the first author of this was one *Theodorus*, a silversmith, a disciple and follower of one *Theodorus*, a tanner, who lived under *Zepherinus*, Pope of *Rome*, and *Severus*, Emperor, about the year of Christ 174. This heresy consisted of two parts, *1st*, That Christ was a mere man. *2dly*, That *Melchizedek* was not a man, but the power of God; more powerful, august, and happy, than the Son of God; after whose image Christ was made by God. This heresy arose from a mistaken sense of Christ's being said to be *after the order of Melchizedek*; but rather the contrary follows from hence; for if *Melchizedek* was a type of Christ, and Christ the truth of that type, then Christ must be greater than *Melchizedek*, because the truth is greater than the type.

Others have fancied, that he was the holy Ghost; this was the notion of the *Hieraclites*, as appears from *Epiphanius* ^k; though *Augustine*, in treating concerning those hereticks, makes no mention of this tenet of theirs: yet *Danæus* ^l, in his commentary upon him, does; by whom we are informed, that they were so called from one *Hierax*, or *Hieracla*, an Egyptian monk, who lived under *Dionysius*, Pope of *Rome*, and *Gallienus*, Emperor, about the year of Christ 234. That the holy Ghost appeared once in the form of a dove, and descended on Christ at his baptism, is well known; but that he ever appeared in the form of a man, the scripture does not furnish us with one single instance of, nor is he ever called a priest, or that office assigned unto him, in all the word of God.

Others

^h Cuneus de Rep. Heb. l. 3. c. 3. p. 426.

^k Epiphanius. Hæres. 55. August. de Hæres. c. 34. & Danæus in idem.

^l Hæz. 67.

^l In August. de Hæres. c. 47.

Others have supposed that he was the son of God himself: which opinion is defended by a learned author^m, who supposes that Christ appeared to *Abraham* when he returned from the slaughter of the Kings, in the shape and form of that body which he afterwards dwelt in here on earth; and hence he is said to be ἀπομοιβίσθη τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ, “made like unto the Son of God;” and that because *Abraham* saw him in the likeness of that body which when incarnate he really assumed, therefore it is said by Christ, that *Abraham* rejoiced to see his day, and he saw it, and was gladⁿ: he argues, that if *Melchizedek*, and the Son of God, is not one and the same person, then it follows, that there are two priests, whose priesthood is everlasting; for the apostle says of *Melchizedek*, that he abides a priest continually^o: he lays some stress upon his blessing so great a patriarch as *Abraham*; which the apostle observes as an undeniable evidence of his being “greater and more excellent than he:” but his chief argument is founded on *Heb.* vii. 8. where the apostle, comparing *Melchizedek* with the Levites, says, and here men that die, receive tithes: but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth; where two things may be observed of the Levites, which are opposed in *Melchizedek*’s character; one is, that they were men, the other is that they died; but this priest to whom *Abraham* gave tithes, was not a man, nor mortal; for there is a witness of him that he liveth; these priests were made after the law of a carnal commandment; but *Melchizedek*, or the Son of God, after the power of an endless life; he cannot see how *Melchizedek*’s priesthood was more perfect than that of the Levites, if he was a mortal man, and a king and priest among the *Salemites*; those people having not as yet embraced the true Religion; for *Abraham* was but just come amongst them: and if so be they had, yet, says he, every one knows that religious worship, even in the families of the patriarchs, was but rude and without form, until God instituted the Levitical order; he asks what reason we have, why we should not believe this King of righteousness and peace, to be the same Son of God, who appeared to *Abraham* in the plains of *Mamre*? *Gen.* xviii. accompanied by two angels, who, with him, are called men: he thinks there is a greater evidence of divinity in this King of righteousness, who on a sudden came from above, as out of a machine, and met *Abraham* on the road, and blessed him, and refreshed him with bread and wine; than there is in that person who appeared to *Abraham* in the plains of *Mamre*, and was hospitably received by him: only, as he observes, there is this difference, that he in *Gen.* xviii. is expressly said to be THE LORD, but this is not said of *Melchizedek* in *Genesis*: but he supposes, that *Moses* left this mystery to be explained by *David* and *Paul*; who he thinks have left us no room to doubt of it. He thinks that *Abraham* gave him these names, *Melchizedek* and *Malecfalem*; which he thinks

are

^m Cuneus de Rep. Heb. l. 3. c. 3.ⁿ John viii. 56.^o Heb. vii. 3.

are not proper, but appellative names; that *salem* is no more the name of a place than *zedek*, but both expressive of the characters of this great person, the one, as the apostle observeth, signifying *King of righteousness*, the other, *King of peace*: and that the reason of his being called a *priest of the most High*, is, because that he appeared in the habit of a priest when he met *Abraham*. This opinion, I must confess, is more eligible, and carries a greater appearance of truth in it, than those before mentioned; yet there are some things which oblige me not to come into it; that the Son of God did appear to *Abraham*, and to the other patriarchs, in a human form, I do not at all doubt, but that he appeared so to *Abraham* in the habit of a priest, when he returned from the slaughter of the kings, I see no reason to believe: when *Melchizedek* is said to be like to the Son of God, it rather proves him a distinct person from him, than the same; and when an endless life and an eternal priesthood are ascribed to him, it is to be understood of him, not really and properly, but mystically and typically; he having no predecessor nor successor in his priesthood; and when Christ, the Son of God, is said to be of his order; it is evident to me, that he must be distinguished from him. But let us proceed now to consider the opinions of the latter sort, who have thought him to be but a mere man, and of these,

Some have thought that he was *Shem*, the Son of *Noah*; and this was the constant opinion of the Hebrew Doctors^p; which opinion might arise partly from that esteem he was in for his piety and knowledge. Hence the Targumists^q call him *Shem the Great*; and frequently make mention of the school of *Shem the Great*. And *Ben Sira* says^r, that *Shem* and *Seth* obtained glory among men: and partly from an unwillingness in the Jews to believe that a stranger should be greater than *Abraham*; that one of another nation should be preferable to him who was the author of theirs. This opinion has also been embraced by^s persons of a considerable figure in the christian world; what has induced them to it, are these considerations, namely, that he was then living, and that he had lived an hundred years before the flood, and there was none born before that time then living; so that his parentage might well be unknown: that God is called *the Lord God of Shem*, and so he may fitly be called *the priest of the most high God*; that he was a righteous person, and so justly called *Melchizedek*: that he was the most honourable in the earth, and so greater than *Abraham*; that he was the root of the church, and from whence *Abraham* and his posterity sprang; as also the Messiah according to the flesh; to him the promise was made, *Gen. ix. 26.*

and

^p Targ. Jon. & Jerus. in *Gen. xiv. 18.* Midrash Agadah in *R. Sol.* in idem & *R. Abendana* in not. in *Miclos Jophi* in idem. *Baal Haturim* in loc. ^q Targ. Jon. in *Gen. xxii. 15.* Targ. Jerus.

in *Gen. xxiv. 62.* Targ. Jon. & Jerus. in *Gen. xxv. 22.*

^r *Eccles. xlix. 16.*

^s *Asidicus, Danaus, &c.*

and upon all accounts the most proper person then living to bless *Abraham*. This opinion was opposed by *Epiphanius*, on the account of his being then dead, as he imagined: but that was a mistake of his, as is manifest from chronology; for he was then living, and lived some years afterwards: nevertheless, there are some things which may dissuade us from embracing this opinion; for it cannot be said of *Sben*, that he was *without father, and without mother, and without descent*; no, not in the common sense that is given of the words; for *Sben's* genealogy is well known, and a full account of it we have in scripture: besides, if *Melchizedek* was *Sben*, then *Levi* must be in his loins, as well as in the loins of *Abraham*; and so the apostle's argument would be of no force to prove the super-excellency of *Melchizedek's* priesthood to *Levi's*: nay the apostle tells us, that *Melchizedek's* descent is not counted of them, that is, the Levites, their descent is different; nay more, it does not seem credible that *Sben* should come into the land of *Canaan*, and reign in a country that belonged to his brother *Ham* and his posterity: nor does it appear probable that *Abraham* should be a stranger there, if it were so, and be obliged to buy a piece of ground to bury his dead, when he had one so near akin to him a king there: nor is it reasonable to suppose, that *Abraham* should give to him, but rather he to *Abraham*.

Others have thought him to be of the posterity of *Canaan*, the son of *Ham*: that he was a king in *Saleni*, in the land of *Canaan*: that he was a man of great piety and knowledge, whom the Lord had remarkably raised up in that corrupt generation, and endued with the knowledge of him and his true worship: his name seems to make it manifest that he was a Canaanite, it being usual with those people to interpose God in compounded names, as in *Adonizedek*, *Abimelek*, &c. as also the place of his kingdom, *Salem*, which was a city in the land of *Canaan*: and likewise he is said to have a descent different from the Levites and their ancestors: and this seems well to agree with the design of the author of the epistle to the *Hebrews*, to cut off all boasting from the Jewish nation concerning the law of *Moses*, and priesthood of *Levi*; as also to magnify the grace of Christ among the Gentiles. Many, both [†] antient and [‡] later divines, have been of this opinion.

Others who think him to be a meer man, of whose genealogy the scripture is silent, on purpose that he might be as fit a type of Christ as the state of a meer man would allow of, not only think it in vain, but sinful to inquire who he was; and I must confess, we ought not to be too nice in our disquisitions, nor too positive in our determinations in this affair; but I cannot see that the last opinion which I have mentioned breaks in upon this; which, at present, I am most inclined to embrace.

Thus

[†] Hypolytus, Irenæus, Eusebius, Epiphanius, &c. [‡] Rivet, Patæus, Junius, &c. This is also the opinion of Josephus, as appears from his book *De Bello Jud.* l. 7. c. 18.

Thus much in answer to the first part of the question, Who he is? Let us now consider,

2dly, What he was: first we are told in *Gen. xiv. 18.* that *he was king of Salem*; which, according to some, is the same place which afterwards was called *Jerusalem*: so all the three *Targums* upon the place carry it: and we find that *Jerusalem* is called by this name in *David's* time, *Psal. lxxxvi. 2.* *in Salem also is his tabernacle*; though others think that it was *Sbalem*, a city of the *Shechemites*, in the Land of *Canaan*, mentioned in *Gen. xxxiii. 18.* which by another name was called *Shechem*, and afterwards *Salim*; near to which *John* was baptizing, *John iii. 23.* and here *Jerom* says, in his time, was shewn the palace of *Melchizedek*; the magnificence of which was manifest by its ruins: but this could not be true, for this city was beat down and sowed with salt by *Abimelek*, *Judges ix. 45.* and I am most inclined to think that it was *Jerusalem* of which *Melchizedek* was king; who herein was a glorious type of *Christ*, who was constituted king over *Zion*; and in this very city, as our great high priest, offered up himself a sacrifice of a sweet smelling favour to God.

2dly, He is also said to be a priest of the most high God, one that was called by God to that office, was employed in the service of God; and by this title distinguished from the priests of idols: what his sacrifices were, we are not told; but no doubt they were such, which other priests offered who were so by divine appointment: and certain it is, that the bread and wine which he brought out to *Abraham*; were not his sacrifice; for he did not do that as a priest, but as a king, out of his royal and princely bounty, to refresh *Abraham* and his weary soldiers; as will be hereafter shown. So that *Melchizedek* was both a King and a Priest; instances of which indeed we have among the heathens², and perhaps they borrowed or rather stole the practice from this instance: yet we find this was not allowed among the Jews; the priesthood belonged to one tribe, and the kingdom to another: neither *David*, nor any of his posterity, were allowed the exercise of both offices, till the *Messiah* came, who was prefigured herein by *Melchizedek*.

Thus have I considered both who and what he was: and I conclude that he was neither an angel, nor a divine power, nor the holy Ghost, nor the Son of God himself, but that he was a mere man; yet not *Shem* the Son of *Noah*, but a *Canaanitish* prince, who was remarkably raised up and endued by God with piety and knowledge, and was both king of *Salem*, that is, *Jerusalem*, and priest of the most high God, and herein a glorious type of *Christ Jesus*. I shall now consider,

Secondly, How *Christ* may be said to be of the order of *Melchizedek*. *Aben Ezra* renders it³, according to the custom, or manner of *Melchizedek*: and the apostle

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according

² Rex Anius, Rex idem Hominum, plæbique Sacerdos, Virg. *Æneid. 3.*

³ כננתהב.

according to the *similitude*^a; and in all those places where these words are mentioned in the epistle to the *Hebrews*, they are also rendered by the Syriac^a, in the *similitude*, or likeness of *Melchizedek*; so that the sense of the words is, that just in the same way and manner that *Melchizedek* was a priest, Christ is, or that there is a similitude and likeness between Christ and *Melchizedek*: which we shall consider in a few particulars.

1st, There is a likeness or similitude between them in their names and titles; *Melchizedek's* name by interpretation, is, *King of righteousness*; and well agrees with Christ, who *loves righteousness and hates iniquity*: who is a king that reigns in righteousness, who *sits upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice. The scepter of his kingdom is a scepter of righteousness, and his throne is established thereby: he is king of saints, and all his ways are just and true*; all his regal administrations are according to justice and truth; for *righteousness is the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*. As also he may well be called *King of righteousness*, because he is the author of one, he has wrought out and brought in an everlasting one, which is commensurate to the requirements of the law; and therefore sufficient for all those, for whom he effected it; this is called the *righteousness of God*; not that it is the essential righteousness of God, but it is a righteousness, which Christ, who is God as well as man, has wrought out for all his people: for *he who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*; to this righteousness of his should we submit, on this should we depend, and in it desire to be found living and dying, and then we shall not be found naked. Again;

Melchizedek's title is *King of Salem*, which by interpretation is, *King of peace*; which may well be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose title in *Isaiab*^b is *The prince of peace*; his kingdom is a kingdom of peace, his government and his peace are of equal duration; as there will be no end of the one, so neither will there be of the other: *in his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth*: which was fulfilled in *Solomon*, who herein was an eminent type of Christ, and to whom those words are principally to be referred, as the Jews^c themselves acknowledge. Also he may be so called, because that he is both the author and giver of peace; he has made peace between God and sinners, a lasting and an inviolable one: he has been at great pain and charges to obtain it, it has cost him his precious blood; he hath made peace by the blood of his cross; the tidings of which are brought unto us in the gospel; and therefore that is called the gospel of peace; he is also the giver of all the inward, spiritual, conscience-peace, which saints enjoy: as he himself said^d,

Peace

^a מלך דין המושלם.

^a כרמות.

^b *Isai. ix. 6.*

^c *Miclol. Jophi in Psal. lxxii. 3. & R. Abendana in not. in idem.*

^d *John xiv. 27.*

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you; thus is Christ not only king of righteousness, but king of peace; as he is the author of the one, so he is of the other; and from him alone must we expect them both.

Secondly, There is a likeness or similitude between Christ and *Melchizedek*, in the account that is given of him in *Hcb. vii. 3. without father, without mother, without descent; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life;* not but that *Melchizedek* had both a father and mother, and likewise descent and beginning of days, and end of life; but the scripture gives us no account who were his father and mother, nor of what stock he descended; neither when he was born, nor when he died: and these things are on purpose concealed from us, that he might be a proper type of Christ. The Syriac renders it thus, “neither whose father nor mother are written in the genealogies; neither the beginning of his days, nor the end of his life;” and another learned^f interpreter thus, “of an unknown father, and of an unknown mother, the original of whose stock cannot be declared;” now this may be referred both to the person and priesthood of Christ.

1st, To the person of Christ; the several branches of this account given of *Melchizedek*, may very fitly be applied to Christ.

First, He is said to be *without father*; this is true of Christ, as man; for as God he has a Father; God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: and frequent intimations did he give of this to the Jews; for which, more than once, they took up stones to stone him: as such he made his application to God in his agonies in the garden, and as such he commended his Spirit to him, when ready to expire on the cross; and also ascended to him as *his God and our God, as his Father and our Father*: but as man he had no father; for *Joseph* was only his *supposed*, and not his *real* father; and herein lies the wonderful and astonishing mystery of the incarnation, which was so long prophesied of by *Isaiah*, *Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel*^g: and therefore when the tidings hereof were brought to the virgin, it is no wonder that she made the reply she did, *how shall this be, seeing I know not a man?* But the answer which the angel returned unto her, was entirely satisfactory, *The holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* In Christ's incarnation, as there was a surprizing display of God's grace, so there

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^e Cujus nec pater nec mater scripti sunt in genealogiis, neque principium dierum ejus neque finis vite ejus. Tremell. interp.

^f Ignori patris, ignoræ matris, cujus generis origo non possit reddi. Erafm.

^g Isai. vii. 14.

was an astonishing instance of his power; it was not after the ordinary way of generation; he was without father.

Secondly, He is said to be *without mother*; this is true of Christ as God; as man, he had a mother, but no father; as God, he has a father, but no mother: he was from all eternity begotten by the father, in a way ineffable and unspeakable to us; the modus of his generation who can tell? We are not to entertain any carnal conceptions of Christ's generation, nor compare it with that of ours, nor any other creature's; for he is without mother; it is true, the virgin *Mary* is sometimes called by the antients the *mother of God*^b; but this is said by reason of the hypostatical union of the two natures in one person, upon the account of which sometimes what is proper to one nature is ascribed to the other.

Thirdly, He is said to be *without descent*; that is, there is no account of his pedigree, kindred, and ancestors, in any authentic genealogy: this is true of Christ as God; for his genealogy as man is given us both by *Matthew* and *Luke*; but as God, without genealogy; and hereby is distinguished from the gods of the heathens, of whom are given^c long, tedious, and unaccountable genealogies: but he is the first and the last; before him was no God formed, neither shall there be after him.

1st, He is said to have *neither beginning of days, nor end of life*; this is true of Christ as he is God; for *he is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, from everlasting to everlasting: and he is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*; he who was born in *Bethlehem*, *his goings forth were of old, even from everlasting*: there never was a time when he began to be, and there never will be one when he will cease to be: and also, though as he is man he had a beginning of days, and an end of life, in this world, yet being risen from the dead, he lives, and will live for evermore; *death shall no more have dominion over him*.

2^{dly}, These things may be referred to the priesthood both of *Melchizedek* and Christ: *Melchizedek* may be said to be *without father and without mother*, &c. because his father was not a priest, nor did his mother descend from those that were priests; his descent either on father or mother's side was not counted from them, nor had he any predecessor or successor in the priesthood; now this was, or at least ought to have been, carefully observed during the Levitical dispensation, that none be admitted to service as a priest, but who appeared from their registers and genealogies to be of the right line: and therefore we find in *Ezra's* time, when there was a reformation in the Jewish church state, that those who were not found in the registers and genealogies, were looked on as polluted, and put from the priesthood: and herein *Melchizedek* was different from the Levites, and was a proper type of Christ; who did not descend from parents of the

^b OIGTOXΘ.

^c Vid. Hesiod. OIGTOXΘ.

the priestly line, for neither his supposed father *Joseph*, nor his real mother *Mary*, were of *Levi's* tribe, but of the tribe of *Judah*; of which tribe no man gave attendance at the altar; as also of which *Moses* spake nothing concerning priesthood; and out of this tribe, it is evident, our Lord sprang, who never had one that went before him, nor never will have any come after him in the priesthood.

Tbirdly, There is a likeness or similitude between Christ and *Melchizedek*, in the conjunction of the kingly and priestly offices in him: *Melchizedek* was both king of *Salem*, and priest of the most high God; and there are some particular actions which are recorded of him, which concern him in both characters; in which he prefigured Christ.

1st, As a king, there is one single action of his in which he typified Christ, and that is, his bringing out *bread* and *wine* to refresh *Abraham* and his wearied soldiers: he did not do this as a priest, but as a prince; here is no sacrifice to God, but an instance of his regard to one of his saints: this royal and generous act of his, is expressive of the great regard which Christ has for his people, who are engaged in a warfare, are fighting the Lord's battles, and are enduring hardness as good soldiers of Christ; What royal entertainments? What large and rich provisions of grace has he made for them? He feedeth them with himself, the bread of life; whose *flesh is meat indeed*, and *whose blood is drink indeed*; and sheds abroad his love in their souls, which is better than wine; he has made a gospel-feast, and it is *a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things, full of marrow; of wines on the lees, well refined*; and to this feast does he invite his people, and brings it forth unto them, and bids them heartily welcome; and says, *Eat, O friends; yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved*: and then, when the good fight of faith is fought, when the battle is ended, and the victory is obtained, then will he lead them into his banqueting-house above, and bring forth his best wine, which is reserved till last, and cause them to sit down at his table, where they shall feed for ever on those inexpressible joys and everlasting pleasures which are at his right hand.

2dly, There are several actions of his as a priest wherein he was typical of Christ.

1st, He blessed *Abraham*, and said, *Blessed be Abraham of the most high God*: this he did as a priest, it being the priest's work to bless the people: it is probable this might be a ratification or confirmation of the blessing of the promised seed to *Abraham*; for the apostle says, *he blessed him which had the promises**; which is introduced by him as an argument of his being greater than he: now Christ in this is represented by *Melchizedek*, who blesseth his with all spiritual blessings, such as a justifying righteousness, the pardon of sin, adoption, and eternal life: and these blessings are lasting and durable; for those who are blessed

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* Heb. vii. 6, 7.

by Christ, are blessed for ever; he never removes them himself, nor is it in the power of men or devils to reverse them: these then are blessings indeed; and happy are those who are possessed of them.

2dly, He gave thanks to God for the victory obtained by *Abraham* over his enemies: for thus we read he said, *and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand*¹: this may very well be referred to Christ's praising his Father in the great congregation, and his paying vows there before them that fear him; he has obtained a complete victory over all his and our enemies, and has made us more than conquerors; and now he is set down at the right hand of God, and is there blessing his father, and giving thanks unto him for strengthening, assisting, and enabling him to do this work, as man and mediator. He asked of his father, and he gave him *the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost part of the earth for his possession*; and now is praising him for it; he has delivered all our enemies into his hands, and us out of the hands of them all, and now is blessing God for both.

3dly, Another act recorded of him as a priest, is his receiving tithes from *Abraham*. Christ is our great high priest, by whom we should offer up all our sacrifices to God; and in whom alone they are acceptable to him; and also to him should we prefer our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving for those many blessings wherewith we are blessed by him; he should have not only a tenth of what we have, but even all we have; we should give him our hearts, and present our bodies a living, holy and acceptable sacrifice to him.

Thus we have considered those actions of *Melchizedek*, which concerns him both as king and priest, wherein he was a peculiar type of Christ the royal priest. *Samuel* was a prophet and a priest, but not a king. *David* was a king and prophet, but not a priest; nor any of his posterity. *Uzziab* once attempted the priestly office, but was severely rebuked by God, and struck with a leprosy, which continued with him to his death, *Melchizedek* alone was king and priest; these two met together alone in him, and therefore more especially on this account, Christ is said to be a priest of his order; that is, he is just such a priest as *Melchizedek* was, who was both king and priest; but Christ exceeds all his types, for he is prophet, priest and king; he is said to be *the faithful witnesses*^m, which is expressive of his prophetic office; and *the first begotten of the dead*, which denotes his priestly office; and *the prince of the kings of the earth*, which directs us to his kingly office; and all those three, which meet in one person, are clustered here in one verse; and perhaps the conjunction of the regal and priestly offices is intended in *Zech. vi. 12. and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both*; he that sits upon the throne is a priest, and there

¹ Gen. xiv. 20.

^m Rev. i. 5.

there is nothing interferences to hinder the discharge of either office, but an entire harmony between them.

Fourthly, As *Melchizedek* was a greater priest than *Levi*, or any of his sons, so is Christ: *Melchizedek* appears to be greater than *Levi*, by the account that is given both of his person and priesthood; by his blessing *Abraham*, from whom *Levi* sprang, and by his receiving tithes, not only from *Abraham*, but also from *Levi*, who was then in *Abraham's* loins. Christ now is greater than *Melchizedek*, and therefore must be greater than *Levi*, or any of his sons,

1st, Christ is greater than any of the Levitical priests in his person; for he is truly and properly God; these were but men; hence Christ is fully qualified for this work, which was too weighty for a mere creature: and all he did was effectual; his blood sufficient to cleanse, his sacrifice to atone, and his righteousness to justify from all sin; he is also the Son of God: *Melchizedek* was made like to the Son of God; but Christ is really the Son of God; in that sense in which none of *Levi's* tribe were; and as he was the ablest, so the fittest for this work. He is God's first and only begotten; who has interest in his Father, and who would, no doubt, be as faithful to him as merciful to us: and his assuming human nature added yet to his fitness, for hereby he was made like unto us, as it behoved him, and had something to offer: and what he offered was in our nature, that so the benefit of it might redound to us: he was truly and properly man; and yet herein excelled the Levites; for though he was a man, yet not a mere man; he was united to the Word, the second person in the Trinity, so were not they: he was perfectly holy, so were not they, but had need to offer for their own sins as well as for the peoples.

2dly, In his sacrifice he is greater than they: his was perfect; by it a full atonement was made; sin was entirely put away, and his people perfected: but their sacrifices could not take away sin, nor make either them that did the service, or those that came thereunto, perfect: and therefore there was a repetition of them: the priests stood daily ministering, and offering the same sacrifices; but Christ was but once offered, and will never be offered more: there remains no more, neither is there any need of any more or any other sacrifice for sin.

Fifthly and *lastly*, There is a likeness between them in the perpetuity of their priesthood: *Melchizedek* is said to abide a priest continually^a; because we have no account of the end of his priesthood, or that he ever had any successor therein; moreover, his priesthood, as the Syriac renders it, does abide for ever in Christ, who is of his order, and the truth of this type; for what is said mystically and figuratively of *Melchizedek*, is really and properly true of Christ: but this leads me to consider,

Secondly,

^a Heb. vii. 3.

Secondly, The everlastingness of Christ's priesthood: *Thou art a priest for ever*, &c. There will never be a change of Christ's priesthood, it will never be antiquated. Offering of sacrifices, which is one main branch of the priestly office, began very early; *Adam*, no doubt, quickly after his fall, was taught by God to offer sacrifice for sin; and he taught his children to do the same: and now every man was his own priest: *Abel* offered sacrifice as well as *Cain*: which practice, perhaps, continued until the Levitical order was instituted. Though the Jews say, that before this was set up, the priesthood belonged to the first-born: but however, be it how it will, here is a change of the priesthood now, it is appropriated to a particular tribe; and none of another tribe might exercise this office: and this continued till Christ came in the flesh: and now, he being come *an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle*; this priesthood is changed, as also the law thereof, which is disannulled, and abolished, because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: though sacrifices were of God's own appointing, yet now *sacrifice and offering, and burnt-offering, and offering for sin, he will not*; neither does he take any pleasure in those things that are offered by the law; but now the priesthood is in Christ's hands, and there will never more be another change. There were frequent changes in the Levitical priesthood, by reason of age and death; *they truly, as the apostle observes, were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue*^o. Some by reason of age; for they were not allowed to be in service after fifty years of age: and others not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this man, because he continueth ever, *hath an unchangeable priesthood*; or, as it may be rendered, *an intransible priesthood*^p. A priesthood that does not pass from one to another. Christ will never have any successors in his priesthood, it will never pass from him to another: there is now no real priesthood among men; ministers of the gospel are no more priests, than the people to whom they minister: for, in a metaphorical sense, all the saints are made Kings and Priests to God; there is none a real and proper priest but himself, nor never will be; for he is *a priest for ever*.

But you will say, Has not Christ performed his priestly office? Does he continue to act as a priest? Has he not finished his work as such? I answer; it is true Christ our pass-over is sacrificed for us; and he will never be sacrificed more: he was once offered to bear the sins of many, and he will be offered no more: he has offered one sacrifice for sin, and he will offer no more: for he is set down for ever, having done his work: but then the virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice will abide for ever; by it he has put away sin for ever; by it he has brought in everlasting righteousness; a righteousness which will last for ever; by it he

has

^o Hebrews vii. 23, 24.

^p ἀπαράβατος.

has perfected for ever them that are sanctified : as the virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice reached the saints from the foundation of the world : and therefore is said to be the Lamb slain from thence ; so it will reach the saints in all ages of the world, to the end of time, and throughout the endless ages of eternity. Nay further, though he has done sacrificing, yet he has not done interceding for us : now we have an advocate with the father ; now he is pleading the virtue of his sacrifice for us ; and this is one branch of his priestly office.

But you will say, when all the elect are called by grace and brought to glory, and all the blessings purchased by his blood bestowed on them, will he then continue to intercede ? I answer ; The apostle tells us, that *he ever liveth to make intercession for us* ; and one way by which Christ intercedes, is by *appearing in the presence of God for us* ; and this he will do for ever : and as our being brought to glory, will be owing to his intercession, so our continuance will be owing to the same ; and though he may not continue to intercede formally for us, yet the virtue of his intercession will continue for ever. Moreover also, the glory of his priestly office will be continually given him, both by his father, who after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, set him down at his own right hand, which is a branch of his mediatorial glory, in which he will be continued for ever : and then also this glory will be given to him for ever by all the saints in heaven ; who will be continually saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing* : all the blessings of grace and glory they enjoy, they will for ever ascribe to his sacrifice and intercession. But now let us proceed to consider,

Thirdly, That the stability and firmness of Christ's priesthood lies in the immutable and irrepeatable oath of God ; *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest, &c.* The priesthood is not only assigned to Christ by the word of God, but by the oath of God ; which is no other than an unalterable decree of his, which was revealed to *David* by inspiration : of which oath or decree he will never repent. God sometimes indeed changes his work, his way of acting ; but he never changes his will : for *he is not a man, that he should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent* ; and whenever repentance is ascribed to God, it is to be understood in the former, and not in the latter sense : thus when it repented him that he had made man upon earth, he did not change his will, but he changed his way of acting ; he changed the dispensation ; and therefore brought a flood and destroyed man from off the earth : and even this was according to an unalterable counsel of his own will. So when he repented that he had made *Saul* king, he did not change his will, but his way of acting, and therefore he cut him off ; and gave his kingdom to another : and yet all accord-

ing to his unchangeable will. Now he has conferred the priesthood on Christ; and as he will never change his will, so he will never change the dispensation, his way of acting in regard hereunto; he will never transfer the priesthood from him to another. This may show us,

1st, The validity of Christ's call to the priestly office: he was not called to and invested in the priestly office by men; but God called him to, and fixed him in it by his unalterable decree: neither did he take this honour to himself; he did not thrust himself into this office; *Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he that said unto him; Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee*: and therefore as God has called him to it and confirmed him in it by his oath, he will never be removed from it.

2^{dly}, The singularity thereof: it might seem somewhat strange and incredible that God's own Son, his only begotten Son, should be made an high priest, to offer sacrifice for sin and to make intercession for transgressors: and therefore he confirms it by his oath, that he shall be a priest: as also, Christ was of another tribe, of which *Moses* said nothing concerning priesthood: and therefore this was a singular instance; and, to put an end to all hesitation about it, he swears to it.

3^{dly}, It shews also the dignity of Christ's priesthood; the apostle observes this, and mentions it as an undeniable evidence of the preferableness of Christ's priesthood to the Levitical priesthood; that those priests were made without an oath, but he with an oath, by him that said unto him, *The Lord swears, and will not repent*, &c. and he also adds, *by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better Testament*: they were made priests by a law which is changed and abrogated, but he by two immutable things, God's word and oath.

4^{thly}, It evidently makes it appear, that Christ's priesthood is a matter of moment; an oath is not to be taken by men in matters that are trivial and of no moment; and we may be sure that when God swears it is not in a trivial affair, but in a matter of great importance, such as the priesthood of Christ is; for on his sacrifice and intercession, the whole hinge of our salvation turns: because that *he hath an unchangeable priesthood, and ever liveth to make intercession for us*; that *he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him*; therefore we should set an high value on Christ's sacrifice and intercession, and be careful that we do not let these things slip, or suffer them to be wrung out of our hands.

5^{thly}, This lets us see the durability of Christ's priesthood; God has called him unto it and bestowed it on him; and his gifts and callings are without repentance: and therefore *he shall continue a priest for ever*. The law indeed made men high priests which had infirmity, and therefore they did not continue long;

but

* Heb. v. 5.

† Heb. vii. 20—22.

but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore^a.

Firstly and lastly, God gives his oath in this affair, not so much on his Son's account, who would never have doubted of his call unto, and investiture in the priestly office; but upon ours; therefore God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, concerning this matter, confirms it by an oath; that all doubts and hesitations might be removed, and that we might have strong consolation who have fled unto, and laid hold upon Christ our high priest^a. Thus have I considered the several parts of the text, and shall close with some brief improvement.

First, From hence we learn the excellency and greatness of Christ's person. The Jews vainly asked him this question, *Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? and the prophets are dead; Whom makest thou thyself?* Yes, he was greater than Abraham; for he was greater than Melchizedek, who was greater than Abraham; to whom Abraham paid tithes, and by whom he was blessed. Christ is great both in his person and office; he is God over all, blessed for evermore; therefore should we entertain high thoughts of him, and have a great value and esteem for him.

Secondly, Since we learn the preferableness of Christ's priesthood to all others; they are changed and abolished, but Christ's is an everlasting and unchangeable one; and therefore seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession, and come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Thirdly, Hence we learn how suitable Christ is for us; all offices meet in him; he is a king, to rule and govern us, and to subdue all our enemies, both inward and outward; he is a priest, to atone for our sins, and make intercession to the Father for us; and he is a prophet, to teach and instruct us: whither should we go, but unto him? Such an high priest becomes us, who is after the order of Melchizedek, both king and priest.

Fourthly and lastly, Hence we learn, that all our blessings and privileges are secured, and will be continued to us for ever: Christ is a priest for ever; and the virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice and intercession continues for ever: and therefore all the blessings which depend thereon, will be continued to us for ever: we shall for ever be reaping the fruits and benefits of Christ's priestly office: it affords abundant matter of consolation now, and will be the subject of our wonder to all eternity.

^a Heb. vii. 28.

^a Heb. vi. 17, 18.

^r John viii. 53.

S E R M O N XI.

The Fulness of the Mediator.

Preached June 15, 1736, to the SOCIETY that support the
LORD'S-DAY Evening Lecture, near *Devonshire-Square*.

COLOSS. I. 19.

For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.

THE apostle, after his usual salutation to the church at *Coleffe*, with a great deal of pleasure, takes notice of their faith in Christ, and love to all the saints, puts up several petitions on their account, for an increase of spiritual knowledge, holiness, fruitfulness, patience and strength; gives thanks for some special blessings of grace he and they were partakers of; such as meetness for heaven, deliverance from the power of darkness, a translation into the kingdom of Christ, redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sins; and then takes an occasion to set forth the glories and excellencies of the person of Christ; *who*, he says, ver. 15. *is the image of the invisible God*, the natural, essential, eternal, uncreated, perfect and express image of his Father's person, whom no man hath seen at any time; and *the first-born of every creature*: Not that he was the first creature God made, which will not agree with the apostle's reasoning in the next verse, *for by him were all things created*; and will be liable to this manifest contradiction, that he was the creator of himself; but the meaning is, either that he is the only begotten of the Father from all eternity, being the natural and eternal Son of God, who, as such, existed before any creature was brought into being; or that he is *the first parent*, or bringer forth of every creature; as the word will bear to be rendered, if, instead of *αὐτογενής*, we read *αὐτογενέτης*, which is no more than changing the place of the accent; and may be very easily ventured upon, seeing the accents were all added since the apostle's days, and especially, seeing it makes his reasoning in the following verses appear with much more beauty, strength and force; he is the first parent of every creature, *for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, whether they*

they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. Next the apostle proceeds to consider Christ in his office-relation, and mediatorial capacity; *and he is the head of the body the church*, even of the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; all the elect of God, over whom he is an head of dominion and power, and to whom he is an head of influence and supply; he adds, *who is the beginning*, both of the old and new creation, *the first-born from the dead*, who first rose from the dead by his own power to an immortal life, is set down at the right hand of God, has all judgment committed to him, *that in all things he might have the pre-eminence*; for which he is abundantly qualified, *since it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* The method I shall take in considering this passage of scripture will be this:

- I. To inquire what *fulness* of Christ is here intended.
- II. To give some account of the nature and properties of it.
- III. To shew in what sense it may be said to *dwell* in Christ.
- IV. To make it appear, that its dwelling in Christ is owing to the good-will and pleasure of the Father.

I. I shall inquire what *fulness* of Christ is here intended; since the scriptures speak of more than one: And,

First, There is the personal *fulness* of Christ, or the *fulness* of the deity, which is said by our apostle ^a, in this same epistle, to *dwell* in him; *for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.* There is no perfection essential to deity, but is in him; nor is there any the Father has, but he has likewise. Eternity is peculiar to the God-head: Christ was not only before *Abraham*, but before *Adam*; yea, before any creature existed; he is *the alpha and omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending; which is, and which was, and which is to come*^b; he is *from everlasting to everlasting*. Omnipotence, or a power of doing all things, can only be predicated of God. The works of creation, providence, redemption, the resurrection of the dead, with other things, in which Christ has been concerned, loudly proclaim him to be *the Almighty*. Omniscience, another perfection of deity; may easily be observed in Jesus Christ; *he needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man*^c; he is that *living word of God*, who is a *discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*; *neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*, or to whom we must give an account^d; who in a short time will make *all the churches*, yea, all the world know, that he it is *which searcheth the reins*

^a Col. ii. 9.^b Rev. i. 8.^c John ii. 25.^d Heb. iv. 12, 13. Rev. ii. 23.

reins and hearts. Omnipresence and immensity are proper to God, and are to be found in Christ Jesus, who was in heaven at the same time he was here on earth; which he could not be, if he was not the omnipresent God; any more than he could make good the promises he has made, that he will be with his people when they meet in his name, and with his ministers unto the end of the world; nor could he be present with his churches in all places, as he certainly is; nor fill all things, as he certainly does. Immurability only belongs to God: Christ is *the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*^c. In short, independence and necessary existence, which are essential to Deity, are to be ascribed to him; for he is God of himself: Though as man and mediator, he has a life communicated to him from the Father; yet as God, he owes his being to none; it is not derived from another, he is *over all, God blessed for ever*; and must, therefore, be *the true God and eternal life*. If any perfection of Deity was wanting in him, *the fulness*, all the fulness of it could not be said to dwell in him, nor he be said, as he is, to be *equal with God*. Now some think that this is the fulness designed in our text, and read it, *the fulness of the Godhead*^e, which seems to be transcribed from another passage in this epistle already mentioned; and suppose that this suits well with the apostle's design in proving the primacy and preeminence of Christ over all things: But it should be observed, that the fulness of the Deity possessed by the Son of God, does not depend on the Father's will and pleasure; but is what, as such, he naturally and necessarily enjoys by a participation of the same undivided nature and essence with the Father and Spirit, and therefore cannot be the fulness here intended.

Secondly, There is a relative fulness which belongs to Christ, and is no other than his body the church, of which he is head, who is called *the fulness of him that filleth all in all*; and for this reason, because she is *filled* by him. When all the elect are gathered, the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, and all *Israel* saved; when these are filled with all the gifts and grace of God designed for them, and are grown up to their just proportion in the body, and have attained to *the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*; then will they strictly be, and may be truly called so. Some interpreters^b are of opinion, that this is the fulness here meant: But, though the church dwells in Christ, and he in her, and that through the good will and pleasure of the Father; and though she is complete in Christ, and is said to be his fulness; yet, properly speaking, is not so yet, at least in such sense as she will be: Nor is she ever said to be *all fulness*, as in the text, and therefore cannot be here intended.

Thirdly, There is a fulness of fitness and abilities in Christ to discharge his work and office as mediator, which greatly lies in his being both God and man,

or

^a Heb. xiii. 8.

^c Vid. Beza and Gomarus in loc.

^e Ephes. i. 23.

^b Vid. Beza and Gomarus in loc.

or in the union of the two natures, divine and human, in one person. Hereby he becomes abundantly qualified to be *the day's-man betwixt us*, able to lay his band upon us both; or in other words, to be *the mediator between God and man*; to be both a *merciful and faithful high-priest*, in things pertaining to God, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people¹: For being man, he had somewhat to offer in sacrifice to God, and was thereby capable of making satisfaction in that nature which sinned, which the law and justice of God seem to have required, and also of conveying the blessings of grace procured by him to elect men; for which reason, he took not on him *the nature of angels*, but *the seed of Abraham*. The holiness of Christ's human nature greatly fitted him to be an high-priest, advocate, and intercessor, and very often an emphasis is put upon this in the sacred writings; as when he is said *to take away sin, and in him is no sin, to offer up himself without spot to God*, and we are said to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, *as of a lamb without spot and blemish*: And, indeed, such a redeemer is proper for us, such an advocate suits us, who is *Jesus Christ the righteous*; such an high priest became us, is every way fit for us, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*. Being God as well as man, there is a sufficient virtue in all his actions and sufferings to answer what they were designed for; in his blood to cleanse from all sin, in his righteousness to justify from it, and in his sacrifice to expiate and atone for it. Being the mighty God, he could travel in the greatness of his strength, draw nigh to God for us, offer up himself to God, bear our sins, and all the punishment due unto them, without failing or being discouraged; his own arm alone was capable of bringing salvation to himself and us; there is nothing wanting in him, to make him a complete Saviour of the body, and head of the church. Now, this may be taken into the sense of our text, yet is not the whole of it: For,

Fourthly, There is dispensatory, communicative fulness, which is of the Father's good will and pleasure, put into the hands of Christ, to be distributed unto others: And this is principally designed here, and is,

1. A fulness of nature. Christ is the head of every man, and *the head over all things to the church*; God has appointed him *heir of all things*, even in nature: The light of nature is in him and from him; and he is *the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*¹: The things of nature are all with him, and at his disposal; *the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*²; and he gives it to his chosen and special people in a peculiar manner: The blessings of nature are wisdom's left hand blessings, as those of grace are her right hand ones: *The world, and they that dwell therein*, are his, even the men of the world; the wicked part of the world are, in some sense, given unto him,

to

¹ Job ix. 33. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Heb. ii. 17.

² John iii. 5. Heb. ix. 14. 1 Pet. i. 12.

³ John i. 9.

⁴ Psalm xxiv. 1.

to be subservient to the ends of his mediatorial kingdom and glory. *Ask of me,* says the Father to him^a, *and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*; which cannot be understood of the chosen vessels of salvation; since it follows, *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel*.

2. A fulness of grace. Christ is said to be *full of grace and truth*^b; and it is of this fulness that the believer receives, *and grace for grace*; a sort of a fulness out of it, all kind of grace, every measure, and every supply of it.

(1.) There is a fulness of the Spirit of grace, and of the gifts of the Spirit in Christ: For he is *the Lamb in the midst of the throne, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God*^c; not seven distinct personal subsistencies; but the phrase designates the one blessed Spirit of God, and the perfection of his gifts and grace, signified by the number seven, which, in the most enlarged sense, dwell in Christ; *the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord*^d rest upon him; he is *anointed with the oil of gladness, the holy Ghost, above his fellows*, any of the sons of men, who are made partakers of his grace and glory; *for God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him*^e. All those extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghost, with which the apostles were filled on the day of Pentecost, were given from Christ, as the head of the church; who, when he ascended to heaven to fill all things, *received gifts for men*, and gave them to them, to qualify them for extraordinary work and service: And he has been in all ages since, more or less, bestowing gifts on men, to fit them for *the work of the ministry*, and for *the edifying of his body the church, and the residue of the spirit* is with him.

(2.) There is a fulness of the blessings of grace in Christ. The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, as well as sure, it is full of all spiritual blessings. Now this covenant is made with Christ, it is in his hands, yea, he is the covenant itself; all the blessings of it are *upon the head*, and in the hands of our antitypical Joseph, *even on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brethren*; and therefore, if any are blessed with these blessings, they are blessed with them *in heavenly places in Christ*: And, indeed, in a very strange and surprising manner do they come from him to us, even through his being made a curse for us; for he was *made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through him*: particularly, there is in Christ a fulness of justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace.

There is a fulness of justifying grace in him. One part of his work and office, as mediator, was *to bring in everlasting righteousness*; a righteousness answerable to all the demands of law and justice, which should answer for his people in a time

^a Psalm ii. 8, 9.

^c Isaiah xi. 2.

^b John i. 14, 16.

^d Psalm xlv. 7. John iii. 34.

^e Rev. v. 6.

time to come, and last for ever; such a righteousness he has wrought out and brought in, by which justice is satisfied, the law is magnified and made honourable, and with which God is well pleased: whence he is truly called, *The Lord our righteousness*, and *the Sun of righteousness*, from whom alone we have our justifying righteousness. Now this righteousness wrought out by the Son of God, is in him, and with him, as the author and subject of it; and to him are sensible souls directed, to him they look, and to him they apply for it; and every one for themselves say, as their faith grows up, *surely, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*: From him they receive this *gift of righteousness*, and with it an *abundance of grace*, a flow, an overflow of it. As it was freely wrought out for them, it is freely imputed to them, and bestowed upon them, without any consideration of their works; and is so full and large, that it is sufficient for the justification of all the elect, and that from *all things*, from which they could not be justified in any other way.

There is also a fulness of pardoning grace in Christ. The covenant of grace has largely and fully provided for the forgiveness of the sins of all the Lord's people. One considerable branch of it is, *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more*. In consequence of this covenant, and the engagements of Christ in it, his blood has been *shed for many, for the remission of sins*. The issue of which is, that *in him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*; which, as it is entirely free, the riches, the glory of grace and mercy are eminently displayed in it, so it is large and abundant, full and complete; for God, pursuant to the covenant of his grace, and looking upon the precious blood of his Son, forgives all the trespasses of his people, past, present, and to come: Through the man Christ Jesus is preached unto us, and bestowed upon us, the free and full forgiveness of our transgressions. This is the declaration of the gospel; and what makes it good news and glad tidings to sensible sinners, that *whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*.

There is likewise a fulness of adopting grace in Christ. The blessing of the adoption of children springs originally from the love of the Father: *Behold*, says the apostle *John*, *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God*. Predestination to it is by, or through Jesus Christ: The enjoyment of it is greatly owing to the redemption which is in him; for he came to *redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*. The right, the privilege, the liberty of becoming the sons of God, is actually given forth from Christ, to them that receive him and believe in him; so

Vol. I.

A a

that

* Jer. xxiii. 6. Mal. iv. 2.

† Heb. viii. 12.

‡ Matt. xxvi. 28. Ephes. i. 7.

* 1 John iii. 1.

x Gal. iv. 5.

that those who are the children of God, are openly and declaratively so *by faith in Christ Jesus*.

Add to this, that there is a fulness of sanctifying grace in Christ. The whole stock and fund of the saints holiness is in Christ's hands; he is their *sanctification*, as well as their *righteousness*; it is of his fulness they receive one sort of grace, as well as another: All the holiness is derived to them from Christ, which they are made partakers of in life, and which is made perfect in the hour of death; for *without holiness, even perfect holiness, no man shall see the Lord*¹. In the first work of conversion, a large measure of sanctifying grace is given forth from Christ; when *the grace of our Lord is exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*: As he is *the author and finisher of faith*, he is the author and finisher of every other grace; every measure of it is owing to him, every supply of it is from him: There is a fulness of all grace in Christ, to supply all our wants, support our persons, and to carry us safely and comfortably through this wilderness: There is a fulness of light and life, of wisdom and knowledge, strength and ability, joy, peace, and comfort in him: all spiritual light is in him, and from him. As all that light which was scattered throughout the whole creation, was on the fourth day collected together, and put into that great luminary the sun, so all fulness of spiritual light dwells in Christ, *the Sun of righteousness*, from whom we receive all we have; which by degrees grows, increases, and shines more and more unto the perfect day: All spiritual life is in him, *with him is the fountain of it*; from him we have the living principle of grace, and by him it is maintained in us unto eternal life. *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, and from him they are communicated to us. As in him is righteousness to justify us, so in him is strength to enable us to oppose every corruption, withstand every enemy, exercise every grace, and discharge every duty. Though we cannot do any thing of ourselves, and without him can do nothing; yet through him strengthening us we can do all things. In a word, there is a full fountain, and a solid foundation of all spiritual peace, joy and comfort in Christ: *If there is any consolation to be had any where, it is in Christ*; it arises from and is founded upon his person, blood, righteousness and sacrifice; in a view of which a believer is sometimes *filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*: For as *the sufferings of Christ*, those which we suffer for Christ, *abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ*². There is a grace in Christ sufficient for us to bear us up under, and bear us through all the trials, exercises and afflictions of life; to make us fruitful in every good work; and to cause us to hold on and out unto the end. There is a fulness of fructifying and persevering grace in Christ.

(3.) There

¹ Heb. xii. 14.

² 1 Tim. i. 14.

³ 2 Cor. i. 5.

(3.) There is a fulness of the promises of grace in Jesus. There are many *exceeding great and precious promises*, suited to the various cases and circumstances of the children of God. There never has been a case a believer has been in since the creation of the world, and I may venture to say, there never will be one to the end of it, but there is a promise given forth suitable to it. The covenant of grace is full of these promises; from thence they are transcribed into the gospel, and are spread all over the Bible; and what is best of all, *all the promises of God are in Christ yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us*^b; they are all put into his hands for our use, and are all safe and secure in him, who will see to it, that they are all actually and fully accomplished; not only the grand *promise of life*, even of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, *is in Christ Jesus*, but all other promises are in him likewise: So that whosoever are partakers of them, are partakers of them *in him, by the gospel*.

3. Besides the fulness of nature, and of grace, which is in Christ, there is also the fulness of glory, and of eternal life and happiness. God has not only put the grace of his people, but their glory also into the hands of Christ. Their portion, their inheritance, is reserved for them with him; where it is safe and secure. They are *heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*; so that their estate is sure unto them. As their life of grace, so their life of glory is *bid with Christ in God*; and *when Christ who is their life shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory*^c; which will greatly consist in being like to Christ, and seeing him as he is. The saints will be like to Christ, both in body and soul. Their bodies, which are redeemed by his blood, and are members of him, will be *fashioned like unto his glorious body*, in spirituality, immortality, incorruption, power and glory; and *will shine forth as the sun, with brightness and lustre, in the Kingdom of their Father*. Their souls will be made like to Christ in knowledge and holiness, so far as creatures are capable of. They will then *see him as he is*; behold his mediatorial glory, view him *for themselves, and not another*; will be inexpressibly delighted with the excellencies of him, and always continue with him, and be in his presence; *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore*. Now all this is secured in Christ for the saints; all which they may expect; on this they may depend; for *this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*^d. Thus all fulness of nature, grace and glory, is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I proceed,

II. To give some account of the nature and properties of this fulness; particularly the fulness of grace. And,

1. It is a very antient one. We are not to suppose that this fulness was first put into Christ's hands upon his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand

^b 2 Cor. i. 20.^c Coloss. iii. 3, 4.^d 1 John v. 11.

of God; for though he is then said to have received gifts for men, and to have given them to them, because there was then an extraordinary distribution of the gifts and grace of the Spirit to the apostles, yet God had given the Spirit to Christ without measure long before. The disciples in the days of his flesh, in his state of humiliation, when *the word being made flesh dwelt among them, beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*^c. And long before them *Isaiab* saw this branch of his glory, *his train filling the temple*. All the Old-Testament saints looked to him, believed in him, and depended on him, as their living Redeemer; one and all said, *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*^d. They were supplied with both out of this fulness: they *drew water with joy, out of the wells of salvation* in Christ; and were saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, even as we are. Yea, this matter is to be carried still higher, not only to Old-Testament times, or to the foundation of the world, but even into eternity itself. For as early as the elect were given to Christ, so early was grace given to them in him; which was before the world began; as early as the choice of them in him, which was before the foundation of the world, so early were they blessed with all spiritual blessings in him; as early as Christ was the mediator of the covenant, and that was as early as the covenant itself, which was from everlasting; so early was this fulness of grace deposited with him. *The Lord possessed me, says Wisdom, or Christ, that is, with this all fulness of grace, in the beginning of his ways of grace; he began with this, before his works of old, of creation and providence: I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*^e, as the mediator of the covenant, entrusted with all the blessings and promises of it. Now this serves greatly to set forth the eternity of Christ's person, the antiquity of his office, and the early regard Jehovah had to his chosen people; which strongly expresses his wondrous love, and distinguishing grace towards them.

2. This fulness is a very rich, and an enriching one. It is a fulness of truth, as well as of grace; for Christ is *full of grace and truth*, which the gospel largely opens to us; every truth of which is a pearl of great price, and all together make up an inestimable treasure, more valuable than all the riches of the *Indies*. Now in Christ *are laid up and hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*^h. What a rich, and enriching stock, fund, and fulness of truth, is there in Jesus Christ! The promises of grace are *precious* ones to all those who have seen the grace that is in them, to whom they have been opened by the holy Spirit of promise, and have been by him suitably and seasonably applied; so such they are exceeding precious indeed, they are like *apples of gold in pictures of silver*, rejoiced at more than at a great spoil, and preferred to all the riches of the world; and these, as has been observed, are all in *Christ*. There are not only riches of

grace,

^a John i. 14.

^b *Isai.* xlv. 24.

^c *Prov.* viii. 22, 23.

^d *Coloss.* ii. 3.

grace, but riches of glory in Christ, even *unsearchable riches*, which can never be traced out or told over; which are solid and substantial, satisfying, lasting and durable. Through the poverty of Christ we are enriched with those riches here and hereafter; and this serves much to enhance the glory, excellency, freeness and fulness of his grace: *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich*¹.

3. This fulness is entirely free, with respect to the spring and source of it, the distribution of it, the persons concerned in it, and the manner in which they receive from it. The source and spring of it is the sovereign good-will and pleasure, grace, and love of God. *It pleased the Father to lay it up in Christ*: He was not induced to it by any thing in his people, or done by them; for it was laid up in Christ antecedent to their having done good or evil. He could not be influenced by their faith and holiness to do it; since these are received out of it: *For of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace*²; one grace as well as another, every sort of grace, and faith, and holiness among the rest: nor could he be moved to it by their good works; seeing these are fruits of that grace which is derived from it. It is indeed said to be for them that *fear him*, and *trust in him*; but these phrases are only descriptive of the persons who have received from it, and are made so by it; not that their fear and faith were the causes or conditions of it: for then the goodness of God would not be so largely displayed in it, as the *Psalmist*³ suggests; when he says, *O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought, or appointed, or made for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men!* And as it was freely laid up, it is as freely distributed; our Lord gives it out *liberally, and upbraids not*; he gives this *living water* to all that ask it of him, yea, to them that ask it not; he gives more grace, large measures, fresh supplies of it, to his humble saints, readily and cheerfully, as they stand in need of them; he withholds no good thing from them that walk uprightly. The persons to whom it is given are very unworthy, and yet heartily welcome. Whoever is *thirsty*, and has a will to come, may *come and take the water of life freely*; such *who have no money*, nor any thing that is of a valuable consideration, who have neither worth, nor worthiness of their own, may *come and buy wine and milk, without money, and without price*. And whereas this fulness of Christ, this *well of grace is deep*, and we have *nothing to draw with*, faith, the bucket of faith is freely given: that grace, by which we receive of it, is *not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*; and with this we *draw water with joy out of the full wells of salvation*, which are in Christ Jesus.

4. This

¹ 2 Cor. viii. 9.

² John i. 14.

³ Psalm xxxi. 19.

4. This fulness is inexhaustible. As *the whole family in heaven and in earth is named of Christ*, so it is maintained by him. If by the family in heaven we understand the angels, as it was usual with the Jews^m to call them a family, and *the family above*; what large measures of confirming grace have the elect angels received from Christ! For he is the head of grace to them, as well as to us; *we are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power*ⁿ. Or, if by the family in heaven, is meant the saints who are gone to glory; what a vast deal of grace has been expended out of this fulness to bring them thither! The grace of our Lord has been abundant, superabundant; it has flowed, and overflowed; there has been a pleonasm, a redundancy of it in the case of a single believer. O what must the aboundings of it have been to all the saints in all ages, times and places, since the foundation of the world! And still there is enough for *the family on earth* yet behind. Christ is still *the fountain of all his gardens*, the churches, *a well of living water*, which supplies them all, and *streams from Lebanon*, which sweetly refresh and delight them. His grace is still *sufficient for them*; it is like the author of it, who has treasured it up in Christ, *it changes not*, and, like the subject in whom it dwells, *it is the same to day, yesterday, and for ever*. I go on,

III. To shew in what sense this fulness may be said *to dwell* in Christ, and what that phrase imports. And,

1. It expresses the *being* of it in him. It is not barely in intention, in design and purpose, but it is really and actually in him; it is given to him, put into his hands, and laid up in him: And hence it comes to be communicated to the saints; because it is in him, *they receive of it, and grace for grace*. He is the head in whom it dwells, they are members of him, and so derive it from him. He is theirs, and they are his, and so all that he has belongs unto them. His person is theirs, in whom they are accepted with God; his blood is theirs, to cleanse them from all sin; his righteousness theirs, to justify them from it; his sacrifice theirs, to atone for it; and his fulness theirs, to supply all their wants; and out of this they are so filled, as to be said to be *full of the holy Ghost, full of faith, and full of goodness*^o: not that they are so in such sense as Christ is; for this fulness is in him *without* measure, in them *in* measure; It is in him as an overflowing fountain, but in them as streams from it. This fulness is in Christ, and in no other. The wells of salvation are only in him, there is salvation in no other; it is in vain to expect it from any other quarter; no degree of spiritual light and life, grace and holiness, peace, joy and comfort, is to be had elsewhere. Such therefore who neglect, overlook, or forsake this *fountain of living waters, hew out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water*^p. Wherefore
it

^m Targum in Cant. i. 15. Zohar in Exod. fol. 105. col. 4. Ed. Sultzbac. Talmud Beracot, fol. 17. 1. & passim. ⁿ Coloss. ii. 10. ^o Acts vi. 3, 8. Rom. xv. 14.

^p Jer. ii. 13.

it becomes all who have any knowledge of themselves, any sense of their wants, and views of the fulness of Christ, to apply to him; for *whither should any go, but to him who has the words of eternal life?*

2. It imports the continuance of it with him. It is an abiding fulness, and yields a continual, daily supply; believers may go every day to it, and receive out of it; the grace that is in it will be always sufficient for them, even to the end of their days. And to this abiding nature of it, the perpetual dwelling of it in Christ, is owing the saints final perseverance; for, because he lives as full of grace and truth, they do and shall live also. Great reason have believers to be *strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus*⁹. This fulness will abide in Christ unto the end of time, until all the elect are gathered in, and they are filled with grace, and made meet for glory. There will be as much grace, and as large a sufficiency of it for the last believer that is born into the world, as for the first. Besides, there is a fulness of glory in Christ, which will abide in him to all eternity; out of which the saints will be continually receiving glory for glory, as here grace for grace; they will have all their glory from and through Christ then, as they now have all their grace from him and through him.

3. It denotes the safety and security of it. Every thing that is in Christ is safe and secure. The persons of God's elect being in him, are in the utmost safety, none can pluck them out of his hands. Their grace being there, it can never be lost; their glory being there, they can never be deprived of it. Their *life*, both of grace and glory, *is hid with Christ in God*, and so out of the reach of men and devils. Christ is the storehouse and magazine of all grace and glory, and a well fortified one; he is a rock, a strong tower, a place of defence, such an one as the gates of hell cannot prevail against. I hasten,

IV. To make it appear, that the being and dwelling of this fulness in Christ is owing to the good-will and pleasure of the Father.

The phrase, *The Father*, is not indeed in the original text, but is rightly supplied by our translators; since he is expressly mentioned in the context, and is spoken of as he who makes the saints meet to be partakers of the heavenly glory, who delivers from the power and dominion of sin and Satan, and translates into the kingdom of his dear Son, *ver. 12, 13.* and as he who by Christ, reconciles all things to himself, whether in heaven or in earth, even such who were alienated and enemies in their minds unto him, *ver. 20, 21.* Now,

1. It is owing to the good-will of the Father to his Son, that this fulness dwells in him. Christ was ever as mediator, *as one brought up with him, daily his delight, rejoicing always before him*¹; and so he always continued to be; and as an evidence and demonstration of it, he treasured up all fulness in him.

This

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 1.

⁹ Prov. viii. 30.

This seems to be the import of our Lord's words, when he says, *the Father loveth the Son, and hath put all things into his hands*¹; that is, he hath shewed his love to him, and given a full proof of it, by committing all things to him, to be at his will and disposal. This sense of the words well agrees with the context, which represents Christ in his mediatorial capacity, as exalted by the Father, with this view, *that in all things he might have the preeminence*.

2. It is owing to the good-will of the Father to the elect, that this fulness dwells in Christ; for it is for their sakes, and upon their account, that it is put into the hands of Christ. God has loved them with an everlasting love; and therefore takes everlasting care of them, and makes everlasting provision for them. They were the objects of his love and delight from everlasting; and therefore he set up Christ as mediator from everlasting, and possessed him with this fulness for them. There was good-will in God's heart towards these sons of men; and therefore it pleased him to take such a step as this, and lay up a sufficient supply for them, both for time and for eternity.

3. It pleased the Father that this fulness should *dwell* in Christ; because he considered him as the most proper person to trust with it. It is well for us, that it is not put into our own hands at once, but by degrees, as we stand in need of it; it would not have been safe in our own keeping. It is well for us, it was not put into the hands of *Adam*, our first parent, our natural and federal head, where it might have been lost. It is well for us, it was not put into the hands of angels, who, as they are creatures, and so unfit for such a trust, were also in their creation-state mutable creatures, as the apostacy of many of them abundantly declare. The Father saw that none was fit for this trust but his Son, and therefore it pleased him to commit it to him.

4. It is the will and pleasure of God that all grace should come to us through Christ. If God will commune with us, it must be from off the mercy-seat, Christ Jesus. If we have any fellowship with the Father, it must be with him through the Mediator. If we have any grace from him, who is the God of all grace, it must come to us in this way; for Christ alone is *the way, the truth, and the life*²; not only the way of access to God, and acceptance with him, but of the conveyance of all grace, of all the blessings of grace unto us. Now inasmuch as it is the pleasure of the Father that all fulness of nature, grace, and glory, should dwell in Christ the Mediator, this,

(1.) Sets forth the glory of Christ. One considerable branch of Christ's glory, as Mediator, lies in his being *full of grace and truth*; which souls, sensible of their own wants, behold with pleasure. It is this which makes him *fairer than the children of men*, because *grace*, the fulness of it, *is poured into his lips*. It is this which makes him appear to be *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand*;

¹ John iii 35.

² John xiv. 6.

sand; and look so lovely, even *altogether lovely*, in the view of all that know him. It is this which makes him so exceeding *precious* to, and so highly valued and esteemed by, all them that *believe*.

(2.) This instructs us where to go for a supply. The *Egyptians*, in the seven years of famine, when they cried to *Pbaraob* for bread, he having set *Joseph* over his store-houses, bids them go to him, saying, *Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do*.* Christ is by his Father made *head over all things to the church*. He is our antitypical *Joseph*, who has our whole stock of grace in his hand: All the treasures of it are hid in him; he has the entire disposal of it, and therefore to him should we go for whatsoever we stand in need of. And this we may be sure of, that there is nothing we want but what is in him; and nothing in him suitable for us, but he will readily and freely communicate to us.

(3.) This directs us to give all the glory of what we have to God, through Christ: For since he is the way of the conveyance of all grace unto us, *by him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips; giving thanks unto his name*†. It is by the grace of God in Christ, through him and from him, we are what we are; it is that which has made us to *differ from another*. We have nothing but what we have in a way of receiving, nothing but what we have received out of the fulness of Christ; and therefore we should not *glory*, as though we had not received it: But if any of us glory, let us glory in this; that *Christ is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*‡.

* Gen. xli. 55.

† Hebrews xiii. 15.

‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

S E R M O N XII.

Christ the Saviour from the Tempest.

In Commemoration of the GREAT STORM, in the Year MDCCIII:
 Preached in *Little Wild-street*, near *Lincoln's-Inn Fields*, Nov. 27, 1736.

MATT. VIII. 25.

—Lord, save us: We perish.

THESE words are a very importunate petition of the disciples of Christ unto him, when in great danger by a storm at sea. The case of such persons, their great distress, and earnest cries for deliverance, and the manner of it, are very elegantly and beautifully described by the Psalmist; when he says, *They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; for he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof: They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble: they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end: Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses: He maketh the storm a calm; so that the waves thereof are still: Then are they glad, because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven*.^a A late valuable writer^b is of opinion, that this passage of the Psalmist is not to be considered as an account of what had happened, and so might happen again to navigators in common, but as a prediction or prophecy of what should befall the disciples of Christ, when on shipboard with him; and had its exact accomplishment in the case before us. He supposes, that the disciples of Christ are the persons here described, that *go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters*; their occupation and employment, which they used both before and after they were called by Christ to be his apostles, being that of fishermen. These being in a ship with Christ, the Lord *commanded, and raised the stormy wind*; a great tempest arose in the sea, *which lifted up the waves thereof*, so that they seemed to *mount up to the heaven*; and beating into the ship, covered and filled

^a Psalm cvii. 23—30.

^b Mr Joseph Huxley, in his *Warning from the Winds*, p. 21, &c.

filled it, infomuch, that they were just ready to go down to the depths; then their soul was melted because of trouble: And being at their wits end, not knowing what to do, apply to their Lord and Master; and as they go to him at the stern of the ship, through the shaking of the vessel, reeled to and fro, and staggered like drunken men; and cry unto him in their trouble, saying, Master, Carest thou not that we perish? Then he brought them out of their distresses, by making the storm a calm; so that the waves thereof were still, when he rebuked the wind, and raging of the sea. And now did they see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; and said one to another, What manner of person is this whom the winds and sea obey? Then were they glad, because the wind and sea were quiet; so he brought them to their desired haven, when they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over-against Galilee. I cannot say I am entirely of this writer's mind; but rather think, that this account refers to a case which had been, and might be again, and may be accommodated to any case of the like kind, and particularly to this of the disciples; for certain it is, that they were in such distress and danger, did cry unto the Lord for help, and had a wonderful deliverance wrought for them. In the words now read may be observed,

I. The danger and distress the disciples were in, and their sense of the same; *We perish.*

II. The application they made to Christ, in which they were certainly right; *Lord, save us.*

I. The disciples were at this time in great danger and distress; which appear not only from this expression of theirs, *We perish*, but also from the narrative of their case in the context: For,

1. It is said, *behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea*^a; a great tempest, *μῆλας σασμῶ*, a great concussion, or shaking. The same word is frequently used both in scripture^d, and in other writers^e, for the *Terra motus*, or earthquake. Here it is ascribed to the sea; such a shaking we read of in the prophecy of *Haggai*^f, which had now, at least in part, its literal accomplishment; that when the Messiah, the desire of all nations, should come, *Jebovab would shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land*. The stormy wind agitated and moved the sea, and the waves thereof; and both wind and sea shook the ship, and the men that were in it; which threw them into great surprize and fear. One of the other evangelists^g calls this tempest, *a storm of wind*; and another^h, *a great storm of wind*: and both of them use the word *λαίλαξ*, *lalaix*, which is

b b 2

particular

^a Matt. viii. 24.

^d Ibid. xxiv. 7. and xxviii. 2.

^e Aristotel. Meteorolog. l. ii. c. 7

and 8. vol. I. p. 348, 349. Ed. Lugdun. Hesodet. l. 4. c. 28. p. 231. Ed. Gronov. Pausan.

l. 7. p. 446. Edit. Hanov.

^f Hagg. ii. 6.

^g Luke viii. 23.

^h Mark iv. 37.

particular kind of wind, or is rather a conflict of many winds¹. The Philosopher says², that *lælaps*, as also *strobilus*, is a wind that is suddenly whirled, and rolled about, downwards and upwards. It is defined by a learned Grecian³, to be "a storm, or tempest of wind, with rain." It seems to be a whirlwind, and hurricane, in which the disciples were. All the views of it, shew them to be in imminent danger.

It is also said, that this tempest *arose*. Could we give into a vulgar notion, that winds may be, and sometimes are, raised by Satan, we should be tempted to think, that this storm was raised by him, with a malicious intent to destroy Christ and his disciples at once; since he was always seeking an opportunity to take away the life of Christ, and put different persons upon different methods of doing it, and at last accomplished his end. But we shall have occasion to observe hereafter, in this discourse, that Satan has no power to raise, continue, restrain, or lay a wind. Nor did this tempest arise by chance; it was no fortuitous event, but was ordered to be, at this very juncture, by the all-wise, and all-governing providence of that God, who *commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind*, for the trial of the faith of the disciples of Christ; and that he might have an opportunity of giving proof of his Deity on the sea, as he had lately done in several instances on the dry land. The evangelist *Luke* says⁴, that this storm of wind *came down*: He seems to refer to the course and motion of the winds, which are exhalations from the earth, raised up into the middle region of the air; from whence they are repelled, by a superior force, to the lower region; and from thence move, in an oblique, slanting manner, downwards. So we read of *a dry wind of the high places, even a full wind from those places, not to fan, nor to cleanse*⁵. This violent wind came down with great force into the sea, and lifted up its waves, which beat into the ship, and pressed it much, so that it was in great danger of being sunk by them.

The place where this tempest arose, or into which this storm of wind came down, is here said to be *the sea*. The evangelist *Luke*⁶, calls it a *lake*; and is the same with the lake of *Genesareth*, he elsewhere makes mention of⁷. But both the evangelists, *Matthew* and *Mark*, call it the sea; and is what is somerimes in scripture called the sea of *Tiberias*⁸, and the sea of *Galilee*; agreeable to the language of the Jewish writers⁹, when they have occasion to speak of it; and

was,

¹ Vid. Leigh's *Critica Sacra* in voce, λαλαψ.

² Λαλαψ δὲ ἐστὶ στροβίλος, πνευμα

αὐθιγῶν καὶ ὄσσεσιν αὐαῖ, Aristotel. de Mundo, c. 4. vol. E. p. 373.

³ Ἀπὸν συρροῦν μίλα υἱῶν.

Hesychius. ⁴ Luke viii. 23.

⁵ Jer. iv. 11, 12.

⁶ Luke viii 23. And so

it is called by Pausan. l. 5. p. 298. Ptolom. l. 5. c. 16. Plin. l. 5. c. 15. Solin. c. 48. and

Egeffip. l. 3. c. 26.

⁷ Chap. v. 1.

⁸ John vi. 1. and xxi. 1.

⁹ Talmud. Babyl. Mœd. Katon fol. 18. 2. and Bava Kama fol. 81. 2. Beresh. Rabba, fol. 86. 2.

was, as *Pliny* says¹, about sixteen miles long, and six broad. Now, to be in a storm on land is terrible, but to be in one at sea is much more so.

To all this, the word *behold* is prefixed; which is sometimes used, when something extraordinary and preternatural is spoken of. This storm seems to have been more than an ordinary one, at least, it was sudden, and unexpected. When the disciples entered the ship, the air was serene, the sea still and quiet, there was no appearance or likelihood of a tempest; but quickly after they had set sail, at once, on a sudden, at unawares, this storm came down upon them; which must needs throw them into great consternation and distress.

2. *The ship was covered with the waves, which so beat into it*, as another Evangelist expresses it², that *it was now full of water*; yea, it is said³, that *they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy*, or in great danger; which, perhaps, respects the *other little ships*⁴, that were in company with this, and were so ordered by divine providence, to be witnesses of this wondrous event. In one of the copies⁵, of one of the evangelists, the word $\betaυθιζεδω$ is used; which signifies, that not only the ship was covered and filled with water, but that it was immerged, or just sinking into the deep; so that the disciples were brought to the utmost extremity.

3. What greatly added to, and increased their distress, it is observed, that *Christ was asleep*; all the evangelists agree in this, though they do not use the same word. The evangelist *Mark* mentions the place where he was asleep, *in the binder part of the ship*, $\epsilon\pi\ \tau\eta\ \pi\epsilon\sigma\upsilon\mu\eta$, *in the stern*, where he, as Lord and Master, should be; but, to the great concern of the disciples, he was there asleep, and that in a dead, deep, sound sleep, as the word, which the evangelist *Luke* makes use of, signifies⁶; and is confirmed by the loud cries, and repeated calls of the disciples to him, saying, *Master, Master, We perish*. This sleep, doubtless, arose from natural causes, and was more easily brought upon him, through his very great fatigue in preaching his sermon upon the mount, from whence he was just come down; and through the great resort of people to him, to heal the sick, and cast out devils. He seems to signify, that he was in great uneasiness, and weariness of body, to a certain man, just before he entered into the ship, who said to him, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; who is thus answered by him, *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*⁷; intimating, as though he wanted an opportunity to lie down, and take some rest: And accordingly, when he

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¹ L. 5. c. 15.² See *Isai.* vii. 14.³ *Mark* iv. 37.⁴ *Luke* viii. 23.⁵ *Mark* iv. 36.⁶ In uno codice scribitur $\betaυθιζεδω$. id est, in profundum iret. sine mergeretur. *Beza* in *Mark* iv. 37.⁷ Testantur enim Grammatici το στανος, ampliusquoddam significare quam το στανος, & profundissimum fuisse hunc soporem declarat geminata illa inelamatio discipulorum, in ipso excitando. *Beza* in *Luke* viii. 23.⁸ *Matt.* viii. 19, 20.

was come into the ship, placing himself at the stern, finds a pillow, lays down his head upon it, and falls fast asleep. But, though this sleep of his was natural, yet it was so ordered by the providence of God, that it should in this manner come upon him, at this time, for the further trial of the faith of his disciples.

4. The great distress they were in is expressed in these words, *We perish*, *καταμεθε*^b, *we are lost*; a way of speaking still in use among seafaring men, and, indeed, in common use with others. Nothing is more frequent than for us to say, such a vessel, or such a ship's crew, or such a person were lost, at such a time, and in such a place. It is also to be observed, that they do not say, we are in danger of being lost, or we are ready to be lost, or we shall be lost, but we *are* lost; which shews what apprehensions they had of their condition, and that their case was like that of the apostle *Paul*, and the mariners with him, when *all hope, that they should be saved, was taken away*^c. So the disciples saw no probability of escaping by any natural, rational methods; they looked upon themselves as lost. Christ was their last shift, and he was asleep; however, they resolve to betake themselves to him: Which brings me,

II. To the application they make to him, *Lord, save us*: which shews,

1. That they believed he was able to save them: And they had a great deal of reason to believe it, since such considerable miracles were so lately wrought in their presence; an account of which is given in this chapter. A leper comes to him, declaring his faith in him, that if he was willing, he was sure he was able to cleanse him of his leprosy; upon which, Christ put forth his hand, and with a single touch, saying to him, *I will, Be thou clean*, immediately removed it. A centurion addresses him on the account of his servant, who lay sick of a palsy, signifying, that he verily believed, that if he would *speak the word only*, his servant would be instantly healed; his reply is, *So be it done unto thee*; and his servant was healed the very same hour. Next he enters *Peter's* house, where his wife's mother lay sick of a fever; he does but touch her hand, and the fever leaves her. These instances, together with the multitude of the sick he healed, and of them that were possessed with devils he cast out with his word, were sufficient to persuade the disciples, that he was able to deliver them in their greatest extremity. Our Lord, indeed, blames them for their incredulity, and want of faith. The question he put to them, as related by one of the evangelists, is, *Where is your faith*^d? You professed to have, and you had, some faith in me a little while ago; but what is become of it now? Yea, as it stands in another evangelist, it is put thus, *Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith*^e? that is, in exercise: Some faith they had, though it was but small; for the question, as it appears in our evangelist, is put thus, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith*^f? They had no faith in him, as sleeping, but had some little faith

^b So the word is rendered. in Luke xix. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 3.

^c Acts xxvii. 20.

^d Luke vii. 25.

^e Mark iv. 40.

^f Matt. viii. 26.

^g Mark iv. 39.

faith in him, that he was able to help them, provided he was awakened out of sleep; for this Christ blames them. For though, as the Son of man, he was asleep; yet he, as the Son of God, and *Israel's* keeper, and theirs, *neither slumbers, nor sleeps*; and was equally able to save them sleeping, as waking.

2. It is not only certain, that he was *able* to save them; but it is matter of fact, that he *did* save them. Being awaked by his disciples, he raises his head from his pillow, stands up, and with a majestic voice, in an authoritative manner, shewing some kind of resentment at the wind and seas, as if they had exceeded their commission, and the one had blown, and the other raged, too much and too long, he *rebukes* them in such language as this, *Peace, be still*², *ἄνεμος, ἤσυχου*, “be silent, hold thy peace, stop thy mouth, put a bridle upon it, as “the last word signifies; and go on no longer, to threaten with shipwreck, and “loss of lives.” Upon this, the wind ceased, the sea became a calm, the ship moved quietly on, and they all arrived safe at the country of the Gadarenes.

3. This had a very considerable effect, both upon the mariners, and the disciples, who rightly concluded from hence, that their Deliverer was more than a man. There was such a shine of majesty, such a lustre of divine power, appeared in this affair, as filled them with astonishment and fear; they marvelled greatly, and feared exceedingly. It had this effect, both upon the men, and the disciples; for though our evangelist seems to relate this³, as though the mariners were the persons only who were thus affected with the providence, and the manner of deliverance; who said one to another, *What manner of person is this? Ποῦτος ἐστὶν οὗτος*, “of what qualities, powers and perfections, is this “person possessed?” But the other evangelists represent it⁴, as the question of the disciples to one another; saying, *τις ἐστὶν οὗτος*, “Who is this person?” Surely, he must be more than a mere man; he can be no other than the mighty God, whom the winds and the sea obey. It is to be observed, that the word *man*, which is put into our translation, is not in the question as expressed in any of the evangelists. The disciples were abundantly convinced by this instance, which so nearly concerned themselves, that Christ must be *God over all blessed for ever*.

What I shall do further, will be to improve this wonderful instance of the power of Christ, in favour of his divinity; and to shew, that the disciples were right, in their application to him, in this their distress; as are also all poor, perishing sinners, sensible of their lost condition, when they have recourse to him alone for eternal life and salvation. In order to this,

First, I shall endeavour to prove, that the power and government of the wind and sea, are only with God, and not with any mere creature. Men have no power, either to raise, or lay the wind: There is no such thing, as a conjuring

² Mark iv. 39.

³ Matt. viii. 27.

⁴ Mark iv. 41. Luke viii. 25.

ing wind : There is no such sett of men, who, by magic art, or by all the assistance the devil can give them, are able to perform any thing of this nature. We are told, that some have been so ignorant, or wicked, as to pretend to sell winds; and others, no less stupid and impious, who have bought them : but this is all a dream and delusion. These are deceivers, and deceived ; for *who*, what man, *has gathered the wind in his fist*, and can hold it there, and let it loose at his pleasure? *What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell*? Name the man, or his son? say when he was born, in what age he lived, of what country he was; who was his immediate son, or what of his posterity now remain : not any of these circumstances, or any thing like them, wilt thou ever be able to produce. As the Lord said to Job¹, *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?* So it may be said to any of the sons of men, *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the winds, and send them forth when and where thou pleasest, command and controul them, at thy pleasure? say to one, Go thither, and it goes; and to another, Come, and it cometh?* No, this is not within the compass of the power of a creature. The devil himself has no such power : He may as soon create a world, as create the wind, raise a storm, or lay a tempest. The treasures of the wind are under lock and key : Satan has not the keeping of them; they are locked up from him, they are out of his reach, he cannot bring them forth when he pleases : He is indeed called^m, *The prince of the power of the air*; not because he has a power to disturb, or still it, to cover it with clouds and blackness, or raise storms and tempests in it; but, because he has the government of those principalities and powers, that posse of apostate spirits; who, being banished from the realms above, have their abode in the air; where, as vagabonds, they rove about, and wander up and down in it. Now Satan, the angel of the bottomless pit, is prince, or king, over them, whose name in the Hebrew tongue, is *Abaddon*, and in the Greek tongue, *Apollyon*; which both signify *a destroyer*ⁿ. The only scriptural instance of the power of Satan over the wind, that is produced, is the wind that blew down the house where Job's children were, and destroyed them : but this wind is not said to come from Satan, but *from the wilderness*^o; from a certain point in the heavens under the government and direction of *Jehovah*. All the hand the devil can be supposed to have in it, under divine permission, was to take the advantage of the sweep of it, just as it came by the house, to add force unto it; and, by his posse of devils with him, to whirl it about the house, and push it upon it with the greater violence^p: Nor is the wind in the power, and under the government of

^k Prov. xxx. 4.^l Job xxxviii. 34, 35.^m Ephes. ii. 2.ⁿ Rev. ix. 11.^o Job i. 19.^p See Mr Huffey's Warning from the Winds, p. 118, 119.

of the good angels. *Jehovab* has, indeed, made *bis* angels spirits, רוחות, winds^s, as some translate the ' word: But then they are so called, not because they are winds, or have the management and direction of them, but because they are like unto them; swift to do the will and work of God, who *walketh*, and *flies upon the wings of the wind*'. In the book of the *Revelation*^s, *four* angels are represented, as *standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree*: but this is not to be understood of the angels in a literal^s, but in a mystical sense, as holding, or restraining the evil angels, or false teachers, from hurting the saints, or the ministers of the gospel, from their ministrations of it, as a judgment upon those that despise it: God has the sole power and government of the winds in his own hands. The Heathens themselves were convinced of this; and therefore set up an idol God, whom they called *Æolus*, to preside over the winds; and who, they supposed^s, had a power of loosing and restraining them at his pleasure: Yea, they thought the wind to be a deity itself, and sometimes built temples, erected altars, and paid homage to it. So *Augustus* made and performed a vow to *Circius*, a wind which greatly infested *France*, and sometimes came with such force, as to untile their houses; and so did the *Calabrians* to *Japyx*; the *Apulians* to the wind *Arabulus*; the *Atthenians* to *Sciron*; and the *Pampbilians* to *Gagneus*; which are the names of several winds peculiar to these people; to whom they paid their devoirs, that they might not either infect them with diseases, or destroy their fields: Particularly, the *Thurians*, having received a considerable favour from *Boreas*, the Northwind, fulfilled their vows to it, as to a god; because, by a vehement gust, it utterly destroyed the navy, which *Dionysus* had prepared for their destruction: So when *Xerxes* brought his numerous forces into *Greece*, the *Grecians* applied to the *Delpbick* oracle; from whence they received this answer, "that they must pray the assistance of the " winds:" upon which, they built an altar, and found them favourable to them, for their enemies whole navy was destroyed and sunk^s. These were the sentiments and practices of men, who were without the knowledge of the true God. The wind is no Deity, but a creature, made by the power of God, and governed by him; and is not under the presidence, influence, and direction of *Æolus*, *Pallas*, *Anemotis*^s, or any other of the *rabble deities* of the Heathens; but is wholly, and

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only

- Psalm civ. 4. ^s Junius & Tremellius, Pifcator, &c.
- Psalm civ. 3. and xviii. 10. ¹ Chap. vii 6. ^u Vid. Poli. Synopf. in loc.
- —Hic vasto rex Æolus antro,
Luctanteis ventos, tempestatelque sonoras,
Imperio premit, ac vinculis, & carcere frænât. Virgil. Æneid. l. 1.
- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 22. p. 164. Herodot. l. 7. c. 177, 188, 189.
- Apud Methonem, Palladi Anemotidi, templum dicatum, est, ne violentiores perflantes loca devastarent. Alex. ab Alex. ibid.

only, in the hands, and under the command of him, who is *the Lord, the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King: At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.—He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom; and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion: When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures* 7.

The account the scripture gives of the divine power, and influence over the wind, is very express and particular. God is represented as the creator of it; whatever are the second causes of it, or the matter of which it consists, or that which gives it its form, force and motion; the Lord is certainly the first, and efficient cause of it: Hence he stands described, as he *who formeth the mountains, and createth the wind* 8. As he has his treasures of the snow, and of the hail, so likewise of the wind, which he brings forth when he pleases; he has them ready and prepared, or can, and does quickly prepare them, when he has occasion for them. It is said 9, *that God prepared a vehement east wind, חרישית* 10, “a plowing one;” which plowed up the sand, and blew it in the face of *Jonah*, so that he was almost suffocated with it; which, with the sun beating upon him, must be very afflictive to him. The Lord is also said, *to send out a great wind into the sea* 11, to fetch back *Jonah*; who, being sent on an errand, was disobedient, and fled from the presence of God: The wind, as boisterous and as blustering as it sometimes is, was more obedient to the command of God than the prophet. He says to one wind, Go, and it goes; and to another, Come, and it cometh. He makes use of them to various ends and purposes: Sometimes in a way of mercy; as when he *made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters of the flood were assuaged* 12; when *there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp* 13 of the Israelites for their food and refreshment; when the wind brought up a great rain, after the land of *Israel* had been without one drop three years and a half 14; when *the Lord caused the sea to go back, by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea a dry land, and the waters were divided* 15, so that the Israelites could pass through, as on dry land. And sometimes he uses them in a way of judgment; as when he did *blow with his wind, the sea covered them, the Egyptians; they sunk as lead in the mighty waters* 16: So he broke *the ships of Tarshish with an east wind* 17: But, whether

7 Jer. x. 10, 12, 13.

8 Amos iv. 13.

9 Jon. i. 8.

10 Such a plowing East-

wind, R. Abraham Perizsol makes mention of in his *Kinera Mundi*, p. 146. which in the sandy deserts, יִדְרֵשׁ חֵיבֶשֶׁת, plows up the continent, causes the sand to arise, and covers men and camels, and buries them in it. Vid. *Mish.* Not. in *ibid.*

11 Jon. i. 4.

12 Gen. viii. 1.

13 Numb. xi. 31.

14 1 Kings xviii. 45.

15 Exod. xiv. 21.

16 Chap. xv. 10.

17 Psalm xlvi. 7.

whether it be in one way or another he makes use of them, *stormy-wind* is fulfilling *his word*^a, either of promise, or command; for it is always at his beck. *He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind*^b; which is a considerable display of his almighty power: *He caused an east wind to blow in the heavens; and, by his power, be brought in the south wind*^m. He is also said, *to make the weight for the winds*ⁿ; when he poizes them, fitly disposes them, and inclines them to this, or the other point; to this, or the other coast; or, when he increases their force, makes them more ponderous; and when in the air, which is light of itself, he raises storms and tempests^o: And, perhaps, the rain may, in some sense, be a weight for the winds; which, when it falls heavy, lessens the force, depresses the power, and stops the progress of them; wets their wings, bears them down, and causes them to subside: However, certain it is, God has the sole power of raising and laying the wind. The sea also, and the roaring waves thereof, are at his command: As he has made the sea, and all that are in it, so he governs it, lifts up its waves, and restrains them by the word of his power. This is very fully and beautifully expressed by himself, in the following manner; *Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the clouds the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it; and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors; and said, Hiiberto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?*^p I go on,

Secondly, To observe, That Jesus Christ has such a power over the wind and seas. Hence it must unavoidably follow, that he is truly and properly God. This is sufficiently evident from the instance before us. It is said, that *he rebuked the wind and the sea*, a phrase, that is used only of the divine Being, and cannot be said of any other than the most high God, who *rebuked the red sea, and it was dried up*^q; and who stands distinguished from all created beings by this, that *he stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people*^r. The Messiah makes use of this as an argument to prove, that he is able to redeem, because he can rebuke the sea, and dry it up, and cover the heavens with clouds and tempests. *Is my hand shortened at all, says he, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?* Will any one say this of me? *Behold, as my rebuke, I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness;—I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering*^s. That this is the Messiah, who here speaks, the following words abundantly declare: *The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, &c. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair*^t, &c. Now, upon our Lord's rebuking

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^a Psa'm cxlviii. 8.^b Ibid. cvii. 25.^m Ibid. lxxviii. 26.ⁿ Job xxviii. 25.^o Vid. Bolduc. in loc.^p Job xxxviii. 8—11.^q Psa'm cvl. 9.^r Ibid. lxx. 7.^s Gen. i. 2, 3.^t Ver. 4, 5, 6.

the wind and sea, the one ceased, and the other became a calm: This was done by speaking a word only, just in the same manner as he had, a little before, healed the centurion's servant: And it was done in an authoritative manner; he *commanded the winds and water*, as the Lord and Master of them, *and they obeyed him*: Never was any such thing heard of, as performed by a mere creature. It is reported of one of our kings of the Danish race, *Canute*, that "one day, " as he was walking by the sea side, his attendants extolled him to the skies, " and even proceeded to compare him to God himself. Offended at these extravagant praises, and willing to convince them of their folly and impiety, " he ordered a chair to be brought; and seating himself in a place, where the " tide was about to flow, turned to the sea, and said: *O sea, thou art under my dominion, and the land I sit on is mine: I charge thee not to presume to approach any further, nor to dare to wet the feet of thy sovereign*. Having said this, he " sat still for some time, as expecting the sea should obey his command; but, " the tide advancing as usual, he took occasion from thence, to let his base " flatterers know, that the titles of *Lord* and *Master*, belong only to Him, " whom the land (the wind) and the sea, obey." There is one thing more observable in this instance of our Lord's power over the wind and sea, that when he rebuked them, not only the wind ceased, but the sea immediately became a calm; which was very unusual, uncommon, and extraordinary: For, after the wind has ceased, and the storm is over, the waters of the sea, being agitated thereby, keep raging, and in a violent motion, for a considerable time. Whereas here, as soon as ever the word was spoke, that very moment, immediately, at once, the wind ceased, and the sea was calmed. That man must be an infidel to Revelation, that can read this account, and deny the Deity of Christ; he must be drove to one or other of these two, either to deny the truth of the fact, and the circumstances of it, or believe, that Jesus Christ is truly and properly God. Hence,

Thirdly, The disciples were certainly right, in their application to him for deliverance, when they were in so great danger and distress: Since he appears to be no other than the mighty God, who made the heavens, the earth and sea, and all that are in them; who upholds all things by the word of his power, by whom all things were created, and in whom all things consist; and therefore has a power of ruling, ordering, and disposing all things, according to his will and pleasure: And even as mediator, he has all power in heaven, and in earth, given unto him; which he makes use of in the behalf of his own people, both for their temporal and spiritual good: The disciples, applying to him, found him to be, even in a literal sense, *an bidding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest*". And,

Fourthly,

* Rapin's History of England, vol. I. p. 126, 127. edit. fol.

† Isai. xxxii. z.

Fourthly, Such equally are in the right, who, being sensible of their lost perishing condition, have recourse to him alone, for eternal life and salvation. All men are in such a condition, as the descendents of *Adam*, and as considered in him, in whom *all died*. The sentence of *death passed upon all men* in him; for *that* ¹ *is*, "in whom" *all have sinned*². All men are transgressors of the law of God, stand charged with the breaches of it; *every mouth is stopped* by it, and *all the world become guilty before God*³. Every man and woman are liable to the curses of it, and to the wrath of God, for the violation of it. God's elect themselves are, *by nature, children of wrath, even as others*⁴; equally deserving of it, as being in their nature-head, and in their nature-state. But all men are not sensible of this, some are *whole*, strong, healthful and robust, in their own apprehensions, and *need not a physician*⁵; they are *rich* in their own account, and *increased with goods, and have need of nothing*⁶; they are *dead in sins*, and have no spiritual sense and feeling of their wretched condition. They are like a man, *that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast*; who says, *they have stricken me, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not*⁷: and so remain indolent, and unconcerned about a future state, or the danger of a present one: *No man repents him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done; every one turns to his course, as the horse russeth into the battle*⁸. And this is, and will be the case, until the Spirit of God convinces of *sin, righteousness, and judgment*. And then they see themselves *ready to perish*, cry out in the bitterness of their souls, *What must we do to be saved?* Look upon themselves as *lost and undone*, and can find *no soundness* in their *flesh, because of the anger of the Lord*; nor any *rest* in their *bones, because of their sin*. They feel a tempest rising in their own breasts; *the law works wrath* in them, and there is nothing else, but a certain *fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation*⁹. When they look upwards, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, and ungodliness of men; in their apprehensions, the storm of wrath is gathering thick and black, hangs over their heads, just ready to break and fall upon them. They are like to the people of *Israel*, at the foot of mount *Sinai*¹⁰, who were come to *blackness, darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which they that heard, intreated, that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake*. And what adds to their distress is, that they find they are not able to help themselves, and know not which way to escape. They wish for *wings like a dove, to fly away, and be at rest, to wander far off, and remain in the wilderness, and so hasten their escape from the*

windy

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 22. Rom. v. 12.

⁷ Rom. iii. 19.

⁵ Ephes. ii. 3.

⁸ Matt. ix. 12.

² Rev. iii. 17.

⁶ Prov. xxiii. 34, 35.

⁴ Jer. viii. 6.

⁹ Heb. x. 27.

³ Chap. xii. 18—21.

windy storm and tempest^b; but, alas! they know not where to go from the Spirit, or flee from the presence of God. They are sensible, that rocks and mountains cannot hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lord God almighty. Their own righteousness appears no other than rags, which cannot cover and screen them from the avenging justice of God; for they are as much convinced of the insufficiency of their righteousness to justify them before God, as of the exceeding sinfulness of sin; and therefore tremble at the thoughts of an awful future judgment.

Now, where should such poor, perishing creatures apply but to Christ, as the disciples, in their distress; and say to him, as they did, *Lord, save us; we perish?* Should they not go in an humble manner, as *Benhadad's* servants did to the king of *Israel*, and prostrate themselves at his feet; and say, as the *Publican* did, *God be merciful to us sinners?* Should they not go to him with the resolution of *Esther* saying, *If we perish, we will perish* at the feet of Jesus? Such souls have a great deal of reason to believe they shall find this man, this god-man, and mediator the Lord Jesus Christ, *an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest.* Whither should they go, whither can they go, but unto him, who has the words of eternal life? God has appointed him to be his salvation unto the ends of the earth; he sent him, and he came to be the Saviour of the world. It is a faithful saying, deserves credit, and is worthy of all acceptation, that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners*: He is become the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him: His name is called *Jesus*, because he saves his people from all their sins, and from all the dreadful effects of them: He saves them from the law, from curse, and condemnation by it; from Satan and the world, from hell, the second death and wrath to come: He is mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him: And he is as willing as he is able; for he has said^a, *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.* And, besides all this, there is salvation in no other person, nor by any other name; in vain is it hoped for from any other quarter, or by any other hand; and there is a full, compleat, and suitable salvation in him: His atoning sacrifice fully expiates sin; his righteousness justifies from all things; his blood, sprinkled upon the conscience, lays the tempest there, saying, *Peace, be still*; and being carried within the veil, and sprinkled upon the mercy-seat, before the throne, secures from the storm of divine wrath to come; and his name is a strong tower, whither the righteous run, and are safe. But to hasten to a conclusion:

The occasion of this discourse is the great storm, commonly called *the big wind*; which arose the twenty-sixth, and continued to the twenty-seventh of

November,

^a Psalm lv. 6—8.

^b Isai. xlv. 22.

November, one thousand seven hundred and three, thirty-three years ago: On the account of which, a day of humiliation was appointed by public authority, *January* the nineteenth following. It is not easy to say, what disasters and calamities it brought with it here, and in other parts of *Europe*; how many edifices, of a larger and lesser size, were thrown down, in cities, towns and villages; what devastations were made, in parks, gardens and inclosures; how much shipping, of greater and smaller bulk, were destroyed; and, what is of all most awful, what multitudes of souls, at once, launched into an endless eternity. To give a detail of the several particulars of these things would be long and tedious, and in a great measure needless, after so many narratives have been printed, and so many discourses published; among the most valuable of which number, must be allowed to stand a discourse, preached in this place, and on this occasion, since made public by my predecessor, Mr *Benjamin Stinton*¹.

It is remarkable, that on this very day, *seven years ago*, a considerable storm of wind arose; which blew much about the same time this did, in its greatest fury, we now commemorate. I have reason to believe, that there is one^k here present, who was cast away in it, and remarkably delivered, after having been exposed to the most imminent danger. I doubt not, but such an one retains a sense of the mercy, and thankfully acknowledges the goodness of God, and the kind interposure of divine providence, in his favour. I shall close all with a word of exhortation.

Let us adore the perfections, and observe the operations of Father, Son, and Spirit, in the government and management of the winds and seas. The concern, that the Father of Christ has herein, is not contested; nor need there be any hesitation about the Son, when the instance, now attended to, is carefully considered; nor should there be any about the holy Ghost, when it is observed, that the heavens were, at first, garnished by him, and he moved upon the face of the waters, and brought the present earth into the form and order, in which it has since appeared: Besides, his extraordinary gifts bestowed upon the apostles, on the day of pentecost, came down upon them with a *rushing, mighty wind*^l: And the common, or ordinary operations of his grace, in the souls of men, are compared to the wind: *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit*^m. Let us also take notice of the providences

¹ Preached November 27, 1713.

^k Mr Robert Inger, a member of the church of Christ, at *Harfjodown*, under my care, who was cast away on the *Goodwin Sands*, November 27, 1729, in the *Endeavour*, homeward bound from *Virginia*; who, with the whole ship's crew, in all seventeen, together with one passenger, and a pilot, were saved in a small pinnace, after they had been some hours exposed to the wind and sea, being taken up by a *Deal* vessel.

^l Acts ii. 2.

^m John iii. 8.

vidences of God, and not let them lie neglected by us, or buried in oblivion; we should make every proper use of them ourselves, and transmit them to posterity: *Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord*°. Doubtless, with such a view, Mr Taylor, who, whilst he lived, was a member of the church which meets in this place, laid a foundation for the annual observation of this day. Again, in a view of the awful dispensations of providence, let us humble ourselves before God, since these shew the mighty hand of the Lord; let us stand in awe of his righteous judgments. How soon, and how easy, can he make this large and populous city, and the whole kingdom, an heap of rubbish? Sanctify the Lord of Hosts, make him your fear, and your dread. To conclude, in a view of all our sins and transgressions, and of all that wrath and ruin they expose us to, let us take sanctuary in Christ; *who is a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones, sin, law, and justice, is as a storm against the wall*°.

° Psalm cvii. 43.

° Isai. xxv. 4.

S E R M O N XIII.

The Law established by the Gospel.

Preached March 22, 1739, at a Monthly Exercise of Prayer, at the Reverend Mr WILSON'S Meeting-House in Goodman's-Fields.

ROMANS III. 31.

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

THAT vice and immorality, disobedience to the laws of God and men, prevail among us; and that practical religion and powerful godliness greatly decline, will be acknowledged by every serious, thoughtful, and considering christian; but what are the springs and sources of this sad scene of things,

or to what all this is to be ascribed, is not so generally agreed; in this men differ.

The opposers of the doctrines of grace attribute it, at least, in part, to that scheme of truths which we justly esteem the gospel of Christ; nor can they think there is any reason to expect, that moral virtue and practical religion will rise and gain ground among us, so long as this is the subject of our ministrations. "They spare not to charge the whole with a tendency to licentiousness, to open the door to libertinism, and give men a loose to live at pleasure, in all manner of impiety. Particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, imputed by God the Father, and received by faith, is branded with this infamous character. It is suggested, that if this doctrine is true, the law is made void, obedience to it becomes unnecessary, and good works are insignificant things; and that it can be of no other use than to discourage good men in the performance of duty, and to encourage bad men in a course of wickedness." To remove this charge and imputation is my view in reading these words unto you.

The design of the apostle, in this epistle, is to set in a full and clear light, the doctrine of justification; in which he first proves that all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, are sinners, are *under sin*^a, the pollution, guilt and power of it; and so are arraigned, accused and convicted by the law, as transgressors; which law pronounces the whole world guilty before God, stops the mouth of every man, and puts all to silence; so that they have nothing to say in vindication of themselves, or why judgment should not be given against them, and be executed on them: whence it must most clearly follow, That no man can be justified in the sight of God by the law, by the deeds of it, or by any obedience of sinful man unto it. The apostle goes on to shew, that the matter of justification, or that by which a sinner is justified, is *the righteousness of God*^b; a righteousness in which Jehovah, Father, Son and Spirit, are concerned. God the Father sent his Son to work it out, and bring it in; he has approved and accepted of it, and graciously imputes it to all the elect. The Son of God is the author of it; who is our *Immanuel*, God with us, God in our nature, God and man in one Person, *God over all, blessed for ever*. Hence it has that fulness, sufficiency, and virtue to justify all to whose account it is placed; which the righteousness of a mere creature could never do. The holy Spirit of God discovers this righteousness to a poor, sensible sinner, brings it near to him; sets it before him; works faith in him to lay hold upon it, and receive it, and pronounces him justified by it in the court of conscience. This righteousness, the apostle says^c, is *manifested without the law*, that is, in the gospel; in which it is *revealed from faith to faith*; though it is *witnessed*, a testimony

^a Ver. 9.^b Ibid. 21, 22.^c Ibid. 21.

is bore to it, both *by the law and the prophets*; and that it is *unto all*, applied unto all, and *upon all*, put upon all as a robe of righteousness, even upon *all that believe*; for *there is no difference*^d; that is among men, among Jews or Gentiles; no distinction made between righteous men and sinners, or between some, being greater, others lesser sinners; for *all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*^e; are through sin depraved, and are destitute of the glorious image of God, that rectitude and uprightness of nature, in which man was created; and therefore stand in need of the justifying righteousness of Christ, by which they must be justified, if at all. The same inspired writer proceeds to observe, that the impulsive and moving cause of justification, is the free grace of God, *being justified freely by his grace*^f. Grace moved Jehovah, the Father, to resolve upon the justification of his elect. Grace set his thoughts at work; employed his infinite wisdom to find out a way whereby these, though they should fall into sin, might be just with God. Grace put him upon ordaining, calling, engaging, and sending his Son to fulfil all righteousness in their room and stead; and it was grace in him to accept of it, for and on the behalf of them; and to impute it to them, who, in themselves, were sinners and ungodly. The grace and love of the Son greatly appear in his voluntary engagement to be the surety and substitute of his people, in his readiness to do the will of God, in his cheerful coming down from heaven about this work, and in the gracious manner in which he wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness. The grace of the Spirit is abundantly manifest in the revelation and application of the justifying righteousness of Christ to a poor, sinful, unworthy creature, and in bestowing faith as a free gift upon him, to apprehend and embrace it as his own. The meritorious or procuring cause of justification, is placed in *the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God*, in his infinite wisdom, and of his free rich grace, *hath set forth* or fore-ordained, *to be a propitiation*, to satisfy divine justice, by being an expiatory sacrifice for sin, *through faith in his blood*, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, *through the forbearance of God*; to declare, *I say*, adds the apostle, *at this time his righteousness*, that he might be just; that is, appear to be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus^g. So that by this wise and happy scheme, both the grace and justice of God wonderfully agree in the justification of a poor sinner, and are thereby greatly glorified. From the whole, the apostle deduces several inferences and conclusions; as that upon this scheme, there is no room nor reason for boasting in the creature; and asks^h, *Where is boasting then? it is excluded; by what law? of works? nay, but by the law of faith*; that is, the doctrine of faith, and particularly the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness; as also

^d Rom. iii. 22.^e Ibid. ver. 23.^f Ibid. ver. 24.^g Ver. 25, 26.^h Ver. 27.

also that a man is justified, or whoever is justified, is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law; that God is the God both of Jews and Gentiles; and that there is but one way and method he makes use of in justifying of either, and that is, *by faith and through faith*; phrases which are synonymous, and expressive of one and the same thing; and then, in the words of our text, removes an objection which he easily saw would be raised against the doctrine he had advanced, *Do we then make void the law through faith?*

There were some who thought they did make void the law by the doctrine of faith: This was an objection common in the mouths of the Jews, and had been often leveled against the ministry of Christ and his apostles; and therefore the apostle *Paul* could be no stranger to it. Our Lord himself was traduced by the ignorant and ill-natured men of that generation in which he lived, as an Antinomian, both in doctrine and practice; as one in doctrine, which is evident, from those words of his in his own defence; *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil*¹. Whence it is clear, that some had entertained such thoughts of him, that he came to destroy the law, and imagined that he did make it *null* and *void* by his doctrine and ministry: and that they charged him with being one in practice, is certain from the account he gives of their calumny and detraction, when he says, *The Son of man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; but wisdom is justified of her children*. Now if they called the Master of the household so, it is no wonder that they of his household, his disciples and followers, should be treated in the same opprobrious manner. Accordingly, when *Stephen*, being filled with the holy Ghost, disputed with the Jews concerning the Messiah and the gospel-state, and they were *not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake*; they suborned, and set up false witnesses, who said and swore, that he ceased not to speak *blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law*¹. When the apostle *Paul* returned unto *Jerusalem*, after he had travelled over a large part of the Gentile world, preaching the gospel of the grace of God with great success; *James*, a fellow-apostle, observed to him how many thousands of the Jews there were which believed in Jesus, and yet were all zealous of the law, and strenuous advocates for it; who had been informed that he had said many things among the Gentiles, contrary to *Moses* and his law, which were highly displeasing to them; and therefore he put him upon a method to conciliate himself to their affections; which method did not succeed according to desire and expectation: for the Jews having observed one *Trophimus*, an Ephesian, with him, whom they supposed

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¹ Matt. v. 17.² Matt. xi. 19.¹ Acts vi. 13.

he brought into the temple; they cried out, *Men of Israel, help, this is the man that teacheth all men every where, against the people, and the law, and this place*^m. From all which it is most manifest, that the apostle must be fully acquainted with, and be aware of this popular objection to his doctrine; and which he here makes answer to; partly by way of detestation and abhorrence, *God forbid*; a way of speaking he often makes use of, when vile objections were made to his doctrine, or such wicked consequences drawn from it, as were abominable to him; as when he observes, *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid: How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein*ⁿ? Again; *What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid: Nay, I had not known sin but by the law*^o. Once more; *If while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, Is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid*^p: and partly he replies to this objection, by asserting the contrary, *yea, we establish the law*; in like manner as Christ had done before, in a passage already referred to, *I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil*; and indeed, he is not destroying, but the fulfilling end of the law for righteousnes to every one that believes^q.

By *faith* here we are to understand either the grace or the doctrine of faith, or both. Faith may be considered as a grace; which, by an inspired writer is defined to be *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*^r. It is a grace peculiar to the chosen of God, and precious; it is a fruit and effect of electing love, and so an evidence of it; and is therefore stiled *The faith of God's elect*^s. It is a *gift of God*^t, an instance of his grace; and a special blessing of the everlasting covenant; it is not obtained by the industry, power and will of man; it is implanted in the heart by the Spirit of God, and the power of his grace; whence it is said to be *the faith of the operation of God*^u. This grace has a considerable place and concern in the justification of a poor sinner before God, in the court of conscience. This is the eye of the soul, by which it sees and looks unto the righteousness of Christ for justification; for that in the gospel is *revealed from faith to faith*^v; it is the hand of the soul, by which it *receives the blessing from the Lord, even righteousness from the God of its salvation*^w; or in other words, by which it receives *abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness*^x. Hence such as are possessed of it, are said to be *justified* by it; not by it as an habit implanted in them by the Spirit of God; for, as such, it is a branch of sanctification; nor as an act performed by them; for as such, it is their act and deed, under the influence of the Spirit of God; but relatively, organically, or objectively

^m Acts xxi. 28.ⁿ Rom. x. 4.^o Colofs. ii. 12.^p Rom. vi. 1, 2.^q Heb. xi. 1.^r Rom. i. 17.^s Rom. vii. 7.^t Tit. i. 1.^u Psalm xxiv. 5.^v Gal. ii. 17.^w Ephes. ii. 8.^x Rom. v. 17.

cively considered; that is, as it relates to, and is concerned with, or has for its object Christ's righteousness; or as it is a means of apprehending and receiving that as its justifying one; for faith itself doth not make us righteous; it is not our righteousness, nor does it give us one; no, nor an interest in Christ's; but it is that grace by which we claim our interest in Christ's righteousness; by which we have the knowledge and perception of it, and possess that spiritual peace, joy and pleasure which arise from it: it is that grace by which we live on Christ as the Lord our righteousness; who was *delivered* into the hands of justice and death *for our offences; and was raised again for our justification*. Now faith, considered as having such an hand in this affair, is no way contrary to the law of God; that is not made void by it; nor is obedience to it, on the account of faith, rendered unnecessary and insignificant, as will be shewn hereafter.

Again; By faith may be meant the doctrine of faith; and that either as it may intend in general the whole gospel, or in particular, the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness. The whole gospel sometimes goes by the name of *faith*, and is called, *The faith once delivered to the saints; our most holy faith*; and *the faith of the gospel*^a; because it contains things to be believed at once, upon the credit of the revealer, and not to be disputed by carnal reason: it proposes, and points out the great object of faith, Jesus Christ; its language is, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*^b: it is the means, in the Spirit's hands, of begetting and implanting the grace of faith in the hearts of God's elect: *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*^c. *Yea, the word preached is unprofitable, unless it be mixed with faith by them that bear it*^d. Now there is an entire harmony and consistency between this doctrine of faith and the law of God. The law is so far from being made void by it, that whatsoever is against that, is also *contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, committed to the trust of his servants*^e. Moreover, since the apostle is manifestly insiting, in the context, upon the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God, it is reasonable to suppose, that this is what he principally designs by faith; and it is not to be wondered at, that this should be so called; since the grace of faith is of so much use in it, to the apprehension, knowledge and comfort of it; and since it is so fundamental an article of faith, that he that goes off from it, is said to be *removed unto another gospel; Christ is become of no effect unto him: and whosoever seeks to be justified by the law, is fallen from grace*^f; that is, from the doctrine of it. Now by this particular doctrine also, the law is not made null and void; nor are good works, done in obedience to it, useless and unprofitable.

By

^a Rom. iv. 25.^b Jude 3. Phil. i. 27.^c Act: xvi. 31. ^d Rom. x. 17.^e Heb. iv. 2.^f 1 Tim. i. 9—11.^g Gal. i. 6. and v. 4.

By the law, I apprehend, we are to understand not the ceremonial law, that law which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them, the Jews, until the time of reformation^a; that is, the gospel-dispensation, or times of the Messiah; which law only had a shadow of good things to come, but not the very image of the things; and could never, by its daily or yearly sacrifices, make the comers thereunto perfect^b; and therefore there was a disannulling of the commandment, for the weakness and unprofitableness of it^c. This law is indeed made void and useless; Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition which stood between, separated and distinguished between Jew and Gentile; he has abolished in his flesh the enmity, that which was the cause of so much enmity between the people of Israel and the nations of the world, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances^d; wherefore no man should now judge or condemn christians in respect of meat or drink, or of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ^e; he is the sum and substance of all these ceremonies: nor was this law abolished and made void until it was fulfilled in and by Christ; for every type and figure, every shadow and sacrifice, every office and ordinance pertaining to that dispensation, had their entire accomplishment in him. But by the law in this our text, I judge, the moral law is intended; that law which was written in Adam's heart in innocence; some remains of which are to be observed in fallen man, and even among the Gentiles, destitute of a divine revelation; and because of the depravity of human nature, and the treachery of human memory, and because this law was so much obliterated, and almost erased out of the hearts of men; a new edition of it was delivered to Moses in writing, calculated particularly for the people of the Jews; and which is opposed unto, and contradistinguished from the gospel of Christ; the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ^f. The sum of this law is love to God and to our neighbour; and is established by sanctions of rewards and punishments, promising life in case of obedience, and threatening with death in case of disobedience.

Now to make void the law, according to the import of the word here used, is to destroy and abolish it, to render it idle, inactive, weak, useless, and insignificant^g; and to establish it, according to the notation of the word in the text, is to make it stand, to place it upon a sure basis and firm foundation, or to make it effectual to answer the ends and purposes for which it is designed^h.

Upon

^a Heb. ix. 10.

^b Heb. x. 1.

^c Heb. vii. 18.

^d Ephes. ii. 14, 15.

^e Coloss. ii. 16, 17.

^f John i. 17.

^g Καταργηται, inutilem reddimus, sive otiosam & ignavam, omnibusque viribus destitutam. Hec enim αετι vocant Γωκει quasi αετιον cui opponitur ηετιον. Beza in loc.

^h Γωκειν stabilimus, id est, firmam & efficacem reddimus ut ορροικει εν καταργηται. Ib.

Upon the whole, the observation on the text, or the doctrine of it, is this; that the moral law is not made null and void, but is established both by the grace and doctrine of faith. The proposition consists of two parts, a negative and an affirmative. I shall first consider the one, and then the other.

First, The negative part of the proposition is, That the law of God is not made void either by the grace or doctrine of faith.

1. Not by the grace of faith. It is certain, indeed, that believing and working, or faith and works, are continually opposed to, and contradicting, and distinguished from each other in the business of justification; every one that has read his Bible, with any care, will be able to observe this. How often does the apostle say, that *a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law*^p; and that *a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ*? Even we, says he, *have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified*^q. And again; *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*^r. But then it should be known, that faith is not opposed to the doing of good works, in obedience to the law of God, from right principles, and with right views; but to trusting to, and depending upon them, and glorying in them, as the matter of justification before God, and acceptance with him; for that there is an entire agreement and consistency between faith in Christ, and works done in obedience to the law upon gospel principles, will clearly appear from the following hints. Let it be observed, then,

That that faith only is right, which looks to and lays hold upon Christ's righteousness for justification, that is attended with good works, as fruits of righteousness; for as the apostle James says, *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone*^s: and such a faith can never be true and genuine, nor of any use and advantage; though good works do not, and cannot justify a man's person before God; yet they justify a man's faith, or evidence the truth of it before men; they are fruits of faith, and so testimonies of the reality of it. *A man may say*, adds the same apostle, *thou hast faith and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works*^t. Yea, he further observes, that *by works faith is made perfect*; and that, *as the body without the spirit is dead; so faith without works is dead also*^u. Not that the essence, perfection, and life of faith lie in, or flow from works; but because,

^p Rom. iii. 28.^q Gal. ii. 16.^r Rom. iv. 5.^s James ii. 14, 17.^t James ii. 18.^u James ii. 23, 26.

bécause, as one rightly judges ^v, works are second acts, necessarily flowing from the life of faith; and faith is said to be perfected by them, not with an essential perfection, as the effect is perfected by the cause; but with a complemental one, as the cause is made perfect, or rendered actually complete in the production of the effect. Faith is not an idle, inactive, inoperative grace; but a very industrious, active, and working one; it *works by love* to God and Christ, to fellow-christians and fellow-creatures; and love, by which faith works, takes a large compass of operation; it is very extensive, both as to its objects and its acts. Hence that which is perfect, as it is in Christ, is the fulfilling of the law; and though love is imperfect in the saints, yet so far as it acts aright, it acts in agreement with the law; and therefore the law can never be made void by that faith which operates by it. *Owe no man any thing*, saith the apostle, *but to love one another; for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false Witness; Thou shalt not Covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying; namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law* ^z.

Again; *As faith without works is dead*; so, on the other hand, works without faith, are dead works also; yea, *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin* ^y; and *without faith it is impossible to please God* ^z, or to perform any duty acceptable unto him. Hence the law, and obedience to it, can never be made void by this grace, and the exercise of it, or its concern in justification; since *the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned* ^a.

Besides, believers, or such as have true faith in Christ and his righteousness, are the only persons that are capable of yielding spiritual obedience to the law, or of performing good works in a spiritual manner. Men may as soon expect to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, as to imagine that good works, such as are in all their circumstances so, can be performed by an evil man. Men must become *the workmanship of God*, and be *created in Christ Jesus*, in order to perform good works; *which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them* ^b; they must be made *new creatures*, and *put on the new man*; *which after God is created in us, unto righteousness and true holiness* ^c; and such as are born again,

who

^v Fides illa quæ sine charitatis operibus existit dicitur *mortua*, Jac. ii. 26. Non quia fidei vita ab operibus fluit, sed quia opera sunt actus secundi ex fidei vita necessario fluentes. Fides ex operibus dicitur perfecta, Jac. ii. 22. Non essentiali perfectione, sicut effectum perficitur a causa; sed complementa i, sicut causa perficitur, aut actu completa redditur, in productione effecti.

Ameſ. Medulla Theolog. l. 2. c. 7. § 35. 36. p. 242. 243.

^y Rom. xiii. 8—10

^z Rom. xiv. 23.

^a Heb. xi. 6.

^b 1 Tim. i. 5.

^b Ephes. ii. 10.

^c Ephes. iv. 24.

who have the Spirit of Christ within them, the grace of Christ bestowed on them, and particularly, have the grace of faith, and that in exercise, are best qualified for doing works of real righteousness, and acts of true holiness: of all men in the world, such as have believed in Christ, as the Lord their righteousness and strength, *ought to be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses*; and these, indeed, are zealous of them, and are heartily desirous of performing more than they do, to testify their love to Christ, and to adorn his doctrine; which doctrine of grace teaches them, *that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*^a.

Add to these things, that that faith which is concerned in a sinner's justification, looks to Christ as *the end*, the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness; it lays hold upon a righteousness which is every way commensurate to the law of God; which answers all its demands, and gives it all it requires; a righteousness with which God is well pleased, justice is satisfied, and by which *the law is magnified and made honourable*^c; a righteousness that is complete and perfect, pure and spotless; by which *all the seed of Israel shall be justified*, and in which they *shall glory*: wherefore that faith which spies this in Christ, looks to him for it, and says, *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*^d; can never be contrary to the law of God, or do any thing by which that is made void and useless.

2. Nor is the law made void by the doctrine of faith, particularly by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ. Indeed, according to this doctrine, the law does not justify, nor can any man be justified by the deeds of it; the law neither has, nor can it have, any such use, since the fall of man; this makes the righteousness of another necessary, and justification to proceed on another foot: *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*^e. Man, through sin is dead; and he must be made alive before he is capable of working righteousness, or of yielding obedience to the law; there must be life before there can be righteousness. Now *if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law*^b: but inasmuch as there never was any such law which could give life to a dead sinner, there can be no justification by it. The argument used by the apostle, is sufficient to give satisfaction to any one that has any regard to Christ or true christianity; *if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain*^f: but though this use of the law is set aside by the doctrine of faith, yet all its real and proper uses continue untouched by it, and remain in full force; *we know that the law is good if*

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^a Titus. iii. 8. and ii. 11, 12.^c Isai. xlii. 21.^f Isai. xlv. 24, 25.^e Rom. viii. 34.^b Gal. iii. 21.^d Gal. ii. 21.

a man use it lawfully^k. There is a lawful and there is an unlawful use of the law; the unlawful use of the law is to seek for life, righteousness and salvation by it; the lawful uses of it, and which are not made void by the doctrine of faith, are such as these:

One use of the law is, to inform us of the mind and will of God; it is a transcript of his holy nature and unchangeable will; and therefore is itself *holy, just and good*^l; as it must needs be, since it comes from him; it teaches us *what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God*; it points out to us our duty both to God and man; what should be done or not done by us; it directs us to *love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and strength; and to love our neighbour as ourselves*; which, in a few words, contain the sum and substance of it.

Another use of the law is, to convince of sin; *for by the law is the knowledge of sin*^m; of sin original and actual, of the sin of our hearts and nature, as well as of the sin of our lips, lives and actions: *I had not known sin*, says the apostle, *but by the law: for I had not known lust*, that is, known it to be a sin, and sinful, *except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet*ⁿ. Not that the law can or does of itself, really and thoroughly, spiritually and savingly, convince of sin; for this is the work of the Spirit of God: but then the Spirit of God makes use of the law to work in men thorough convictions of their sinful, lost, and miserable condition by nature.

Again; Another use of the law, not made void by the doctrine of faith, is, to be as a glass to believers themselves; to behold therein by the light of the divine Spirit, the deformity of their souls by sin, and the imperfection of their obedience; whereby they grow out of love with themselves, and quit all dependence on their own righteousness for justification. So the apostle *Paul*, comparing himself, his heart and services, with the pure and holy law of God, thus expresses himself; *We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin*^o. In this view of things the psalmist *David* was able to make such an observation as this; *I have seen an end of all perfection; thy commandment is exceeding broad*^p; that is, "I see that the law of God is so large and broad, and my obedience to it so short of it, and so imperfect, that I despair of ever attaining perfection by the deeds of it." It was, no doubt, by the light of the Spirit, and as beholding herself in the glass of the law, that the church saw, and so said, that her *righteousness was as filthy rags*, and herself *as an unclean thing*^q. Hence,

There is a farther use of the law to believers, and that is, to make the righteousness of Christ more dear and valuable to them: for when they see how imperfect their own righteousness is, and how far short of the demands of the righteous law of God their obedience comes; and when they behold what an ever-

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^k 1 Tim. i. 8.

^o Rom. vii. 14.

^l Rom. vii. 12.

^p Psalm cxix 96.

^m Rom. iii 20.

^q Isai. lxiv. 6.

ⁿ Chap. vii. 7.

lasting righteousness Christ has brought in; how perfect it is in itself, and how agreeable to the law; inasmuch that it is not only fulfilled by it, but magnified and made honourable; they are at once delighted with it, fix upon it, and desire to be found in Christ; not having their own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ; the righteousness which is of God by faith¹.

Once more; Another use and office of the law is, that it is a rule of life, that is, of action, walk and conversation to the saints; who are *not without law to God, but under the law to Christ*: and as it is in the hands of Christ, and held forth by him, as King of saints, and lawgiver in his church, it is to be observed and attended to by them; and as persons born again, being under the influences of the blessed Spirit, and having his gracious assistance, they *delight in the law of God, after the inward man*; and though *with the flesh*, they sometimes, to their great regret and sorrow, *serve the law of sin*; yet, at other times they are enabled cheerfully, and *with the mind, to serve the law of God*².

To say no more; though God's justified ones are, as such, delivered from the wrath and condemnation of the law; Christ having redeemed them from thence by being *made a curse for them*³; and having the sentence of condemnation executed upon him, which their sins deserved; so that *there is now no condemnation to them that are in him*⁴; they are passed from death to life, and shall never enter into condemnation: yet the law remains a cursing and damning law to others; it lies against Christless sinners; it pronounces them guilty, and accurses them; it says to them that are of the works of it, and are under it, *Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*⁵; yea, it is the killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death unto them. Thus the law, as to these uses of it, both to saints and sinners, is not made void by the doctrine of faith.

Perhaps it will be asked, Is not the law, in some sense, destroyed and abolished? Does not the apostle say to believers, *Ye are not under the law, but under grace*? Yea, he affirms that they *are become dead to the law by the body of Christ*; and that they are *delivered from the law; that being dead wherein they were held*⁶. And elsewhere⁷, he argues from the former glory of the law, to the more excelling glory of the gospel, thus; *If that which is done away, that is, the law, was glorious, much more that which remaineth, that is, the everlasting gospel, is glorious.*

To which I answer,

That the law, as a *covenant of works*, is abolished, and done away; in this sense, it is made void to believers. Adam was a covenant head and representative of all his posterity, in which he was a figure of him that was to come;

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¹ Phil. iii. 9.

² 1 Cor. ix. 21.

³ Rom. vii. 22, 25.

⁴ Gal. iii. 13.

⁵ Rom. viii. 1.

⁶ Gal. iii. 10.

⁷ Rom. vi. 14.

⁸ Chap. vii. 4, 6.

⁹ 2 Cor. iii. 11.

the law was given to him and to all mankind in him, promising life on condition of obedience, and threatening with death in case of transgression. *Adam* soon broke this covenant, whereby *sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men! for in him all have sinned*^b, God's elect themselves not excepted. These were considered in *Adam*, their natural and federal head; they sinned in him, and fell with him; the sentence of death passed on them as on others; the reason why it was not, and never will be executed upon them, is, because *Christ*, in the everlasting covenant, became their surety and substitute; engaged to bear the punishment of their sins, and make satisfaction to the law and justice of God for them; which he has done by his sufferings and death, and so has delivered them from the law, as a covenant of works; and from all that misery, destruction and death, it entailed upon them: wherefore they are *not under the law*, as a covenant of works, but *under grace*, the covenant of grace.

Again; The law is abolished and done away, as to the form of administration of it by *Moses*. The whole frame of the *Mosaic* oeconomy is broke to pieces; which was signified by the two tables of stone being cast out of his hands and broken, when he came down from the mount; which were afterwards renewed, and put into the ark, a type of *Christ*; in whose hands, and not in the hands of *Moses*, is the law to be considered. The Jews said to the poor blind man, that was cured by *Christ*, *Thou art his*, that is, *Christ's disciple; but we are Moses's disciples*^c. They valued themselves upon the latter; we christians upon the former. *Moses*, indeed, *was a faithful servant*; but he was only a servant: *Christ is a Son over his own house*; and it is he that we are to hearken to. When *Moses* and *Elias* were with *Christ* on the mount, at the time of his transfiguration, a voice was heard, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: bear ye him*^d; not *Moses* and *Elias*, but hear the well-beloved Son.

Moreover, the law is destroyed as a yoke of bondage. As it was a covenant of works, and as administered under the former dispensation, it *tended to bondage*, and induced a servile spirit on those that were under it. It was not only a rigid schoolmaster, but a severe task-master; not only setting hard lessons, but requiring strict and perfect obedience, without giving any strength to perform, or directing where it is to be had; but now, in *Christ's* hands, it is a *perfect law of liberty*^e; and such as are called by grace, are made a *willing people in the day of Christ's power* upon them; not only to be saved alone by him, but to yield a cheerful obedience to the law, as given forth by him. In this view of it, its commandments are not grievous; *this yoke is easy*, and *this burden is light*; the saints serve it with pleasure, *not in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit*^f.

Likewise,

^b Rom. v. 12, 14.

^c John ix. 28.

^d Matt. xvii 5.

^e James i 25.

^f Rom vii 6.

Likewise, As has been already observed, the people of God are freed from the malediction of it, and condemnation by it, and so from the terror of it; it is a terrifying law, as it is a cursing and damning one; wherefore, to such, who desire to be under it, it may be said, what the apostle did, *Do ye not hear the law*? it speaks wrath and vengeance, cursing and bitterness; it is a *voice of words*, of terrible words; *which they that heard at mount Sinai, intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded.* But now the case is different with us under the gospel-dispensation; the scene is altered; the face of things is changed; we hear a different voice; love, grace and mercy, instead of wrath and vengeance; blessing and salvation, in the room of cursing and condemnation: we are *not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest; but we 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, which are written in heaven; and so God the Judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel*^b.

Once more; The law is abrogated and made void, with respect to justification. We are not to seek for, and expect life and righteousness by obedience to it; and should we, our seeking would be in vain, and our expectation would be disappointed. *Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith but as it were by the works of the law*^c. The same success attends all those who pursue the same scheme, and take the same methods; by which they discover their ignorance, vanity and pride; their ignorance of the strictness of the justice of God; their vain opinion and conceit of their own righteousness; and their haughty and contemptuous rejection of the righteousness of Christ; all which is expressed in these few words; *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish a righteousness of their own, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God*^d. This is to act contrary to God's declared way and method of justifying sinners. There can be no justification by the deeds of the law; this use of the law is entirely abolished; we are not to obey it with any such view, or for such a purpose; no, we are to yield obedience to it, as in the hands of Christ, from a principle of love to him; and to express our gratitude for the numerous mercies we receive from him, and through him; and to testify our professed subjection, and our sense of obligation to him.

But now, though the law is made void as a covenant of works, it still continues a rule of action, walk and conversation; though it is done away as to the form

^c Gal. iv. 21.^b Heb. xii. 18—20, 22—24.^d Rom. ix. 31, 32.^e Rom. x. 3.

form of the administration of it by *Moses*, the matter, the sum and substance of it remains firm, unalterable, and unchangeable in the hands of Christ; though it is destroyed as a *yoke of bondage*, it is in being as a perfect *law of liberty*; and though believers are delivered from the curse and condemnation of it, they are not exempted from obedience to it; and though they are not to seek for justification by it, they are under the greatest obligations, by the strongest ties of love, to have a regard to all its commands. So much for the *negative* part of the proposition. I proceed,

Secondly, To consider the *affirmative*, and to shew that the law is established by the grace and doctrine of faith.

The *perpetuity* of the law is maintained hereby. The grace of faith always views the law in the hands of Christ, looks to him as the fulfilling end of it, and is attended with works done in obedience to it. According to the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, all the precepts of the law are fulfilled, its penalty endured, and that itself continued as a rule of righteousness. The law, upon the gospel-scheme, is as unchangeable, and more so than the laws of the Medes and Persians; not *one jot or tittle of it has passed away*, nor shall ever pass away; for *all is fulfilled*, and will be preserved.

The *spirituality* of the law is asserted and secured upon the foot of faith, and the doctrine of it. The Pharisees of old, as much as in them lay, made void the law, as to the spirituality of it, at the same time they pretended to be advocates for it; by insinuating as though the law only regarded the external actions of life, and was not concerned about the secret motions, inward thoughts and lusts of the heart: whereas, such as have believed in Christ, and understand his gospel, have other notions of the law; and know, *that it is spiritual*¹. A true believer, in the exercise of the grace of faith, beholds the inward corruption of his heart and nature; and mourns over it, as contrary to the pure and holy law of God; and at the same time, according to the doctrine of faith, with pleasure views, that he is *justified by the blood of Christ*, even by that *blood which cleanseth from all sin*^m, of heart, lip, and life.

The *perfect righteousness of the law* is established by faith, and the doctrine of it. Whatever the law requires, according to this doctrine, is given it. Does it require pure and spotless holiness of nature? There is in Christ an entire conformity to it in this respect; who is *holy, barmless and undefiled*; and as such, *is an high priest that becomes us*, is suitable to us, as being our sanctification and our righteousness. Does the law require sinless and perfect obedience to all its commands? Christ has always done the things that pleased his Father, and has done all the things that are pleasing to him; he has perfectly obeyed the whole preceptive part of the law. Does the law require of, and threaten transgressors

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¹ Rom. vii. 14.

^m Chap. v. 9. 1 John i. 7.

with the penalty of death? Christ being made sin, was made a curse for his people, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. So that the law, in all respects, is magnified, and made honourable by him, according to the doctrine of faith. We bring to the law in Christ our head, or rather he in our room and stead, a righteousness which answers all the demands of it, and casts a lustre and glory upon it: and indeed, all the obedience of angels and men put together, does not, and cannot give the law such glory and honour as the obedience and righteousness of Christ does. Whence it is clear, that the law is so far from being made void, that it is thoroughly established by it.

Obedience to the law by believers, is enforced upon them by the best of motives, and yielded to it by them, under the best of influences; it is enforced on gospel motives and principles. Read over the epistles of the apostle *Paul*, particularly those to the *Ephesians* and *Colossians*, and you will easily see how the saints are exhorted to all the duties of life, incumbent on them in their families, the churches, and the world; and are encouraged to a performance of them upon the principles of grace, and by the doctrines of it; and according to the covenant of grace, they have the best assistance promised, provided and afforded to them. *I will put my law in their inward parts*, says the Lord ⁿ, *and I will write it in their hearts*. And again; *I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them* ^o.

Once more; By the doctrine of faith we establish the law, or make it stand; because we place it in the best of hands, and upon the surest foundation. The law was put into the hands of *Adam*; but it did not long continue there; it was quickly transgressed and broken. The two tables of stone, with the law written on them, were put into *Moses's* hands; but he, as he came down from the mount, cast them out of his hands, and broke them to pieces beneath it: but now the law, according to the doctrine of faith, is put into the hands of Christ; and there it stands, and will stand firm and sure to all generations; yea, it will stand unchangeable and unalterable to all eternity. We say, *The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, and he will save us* ^p.

In this view of the law, how amiable and lovely must it look in the eyes of saints! they cannot but delight in it, as satisfied by Christ, and take pleasure in obeying it, as it is in his hands: the language of their souls is that of *David's*, *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day* ^q. And as there is a pleasure attends an observance of it, there is peace in it; though it doth not arise from it, nor is founded on it: *Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them* ^r. Such as are believers in Christ, ought not only to be careful to maintain, but even to excel, to go before others in good works. Let us, there-

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ⁿ Jer. xxxi. 33.

^o Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

^p Isai. xxxviii. 22.

^q Psalm cxix. 97.

^r Psalm cxix. 165.

fore, by divine assistance, shew, by our lives and conversations, the truth of this doctrine, that "the law is not made void, but established by the gospel." Let us, as it is the will of God we should, *with well-doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*; and shame them *who falsely accuse our good conversation in Christ*. Let us make it appear, throughout the whole of our conduct, under the gracious influences of the Spirit of God, that we have a proper regard to the unchangeable law of God, as to the everlasting gospel of Christ Jesus.

S E R M O N XIV.

Neglect of Feruent Prayer complained of.

Preached November 21, 1754, at a Monthly Exercise of Prayer, in the Reverend Mr STEVENS'S Meeting-House near *Devonshire-Square*.

ISAIAH LXIV. 7.

And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take bold of thee.

THESE words are an address of the church and people of God, unto the Lord, in a prayer, which begins in the latter part of the preceding chapter; in which they first expostulate with him, about his love, grace, and mercy, and the founding of his bowels towards them, which they feared were restrained; plead the relation he stood in to them, as a father, of which they were assured, however others might be ignorant of it; and put him in mind of being their redeemer, whose name, as such, was from everlasting: they desire to be returned to God and his worship; complain of the violation of the sanctuary by their adversaries, and observe the difference between them and themselves, with respect to their relation to God; which is mentioned as an argument to engage his regard unto them: and in the beginning of this chapter, they most earnestly intreat that God would *rend the heavens, and come down*, and give some manifest tokens of his presence; they urge, that he had been used to do so in times past, when he did *terrible things*, and unexpected; they take notice of unseen and unheard-of things, that God had *prepared* for those that *wait* for him, which

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the apostle *Paul*^a applies to the doctrines of the gospel; and suggest that it had been his wonted manner to *meet* in a way of love, grace, and mercy, and indulge with communion with himself, at the throne of grace, and in his house and ordinances, such that *rejoice, and work righteousness*; that rejoice not in a carnal, sinful, and hypocritical way, or in their own boatings, all such rejoicing being evil; but in the Lord, in the person of Christ, in his righteousness and salvation, in his grace, and in the hope of glory: and that work righteousness; not a justifying one, no man can work such a righteousness, nor ought any man to work righteousness with such a view; the best way of working righteousness is to lay hold by faith on the righteousness of Christ, and to do works of righteousness in faith, without which it is impossible to please God: or perhaps such persons are designed and described, who rejoice to work righteousness, who do it in a cheerful and joyful manner, from right principles, and with right views; and such the Lord usually takes notice of, and manifests himself unto; even such that remember him in his ways; in his ways of providence, in his ways of love, grace, and mercy, and in his institutions, ordinances, and appointments; or in the ways of his word and worship: but as for them, the people of God now praying, they own indeed they had sinned, and were deserving of the divine displeasure; *behold, thou art wroth, for we have sinned*; and yet they despaired not of salvation; for they add, *in these is continuance, and we shall be saved*: either in these sins there is continuance, which are so displeasing to God; for the words may be rendered, *in these we have been of old*^b, or *always*; we have been old sinners, sinners in *Adam*, sinners from our first birth; and, more or less, have continued so ever since; and yet we hope for salvation from sin, through the promised Messiah: or in these works of righteousness there is continuance, and in a cheerful performance of them, under the influence of divine grace, saints persevere in faith and holiness, and so are saved: or rather, the meaning is, in these ways of the love, grace, and mercy of God, in which his people remember him, is continuance; God continues in his love; in that is permanency, perpetuity, and eternity, as the word used signifies; the love of God is from everlasting to everlasting, immutable and invariable, and *therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed*, but saved with an everlasting salvation: for that the church did not expect salvation from her own works of righteousness, but only from the free grace and love of God, is clear from what follows; *but we are all as an unclean thing* or person; like the leper, that was legally polluted, as well as covered with a lothesom disease, and therefore separated from the society of men: by this the church and people of God confess the impurity of their nature; and, it may be, have respect to a general corruption in doc-

^a 1 Cor. ii. 9.^b בהם עולם.

trine and manners, which prevailed in those times among the professors of religion: *and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*; which is to be understood, not of the righteousness of hypocrites, which lay in external rites and ceremonies; or of legal and self-righteous persons, consisting of the outward observances of the law; but of works of righteousness done by the best of men, and in the best manner: these are *rags*, imperfect, and so insufficient to cover their persons, and hide their sins from the sight of God; they are *filthy*, being attended with sin and imperfection, and need washing in the blood of Christ, and so cannot render men acceptable before God: *and we all do fade as a leaf*, or fall like leaves in autumn; which might be true of the generality of the professors of that age; but not of such who have the root of the matter in them, who are rooted in the love of God, and engrafted into Christ; therefore *their leaf shall not wither, but be ever green*; or at least shall not finally and totally fade and fall, though they may have their decays; but this is true only of such who are carnal professors, destitute of the grace of God, who fade away and drop their profession, especially in a time of tribulation, just as trees drop their leaves in the fall of the year: hence it follows, *and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away*; as a fading falling leaf is carried away by the wind, so formal professors are carried away by their sins into a total defection and apostacy; and this general declension the church goes on to acknowledge and lament in the words first read; *and there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee*; intimating, that there were but very few that prayed to the Lord, or were concerned about his continuance with them, or return unto them. In the words are acknowledged these two things:

- I. That there were none, or but few praying souls among them.
- II. That there were as few that observed this, and aroused and bestirred themselves to lay hold on and retain a departing God, or to solicit his return unto them.

I. That there were none, or but few praying souls among God's professing people, in the times referred to: not that there were none at all, not one individual praying person; for this complaint itself is made in prayer to God; so that there were some praying persons, though their number were but few, the instances scarce and rare; as when *David* says, *Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men*^c; his meaning is, not that there was not a godly or faithful man living, but that there were but few of this character: likewise, when the apostle *Paul* observes, that *all seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's*^d; his sense is, not that there were none

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^c Psalm xii. 1.

^d Phil. ii. 21.

that fought the things of Christ, for he himself was one that did, and *Timothy* was another, of whom he is speaking, and whom he is commending; but that they were but very few that fought the things of Christ, in comparison of others that fought their own things; and in like manner are we to understand the expressions here, not simply and absolutely, but comparatively: and when we consider what an incumbent duty on professors calling on the name of the Lord is; or rather, what a privilege it is to be allowed to do it, the neglect of it here complained of must be a very aggravated sin, as will appear by opening the nature of this duty or privilege; in order to which, it may be proper to consider the object to be called upon, the name of the Lord; what he is to be called upon for, and when; the manner of calling upon him; and the arguments in brief exciting and encouraging thereunto.

1st, The object of invocation or prayer, *the name of the Lord*; which includes the nature, being, and perfections of God, as well as his titles and characters; also the divine persons in the Godhead; and particularly points at the special name in which God is to be called upon.

1. It takes in the nature, being, and perfections of God; the name of the Lord is the Lord himself; as when it is said, *the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe*^c; that is, the Lord himself is a strong tower of safety to the righteous, that betake themselves to him; and again^d, *the name of the God of Jacob defend thee*; that is, the God of *Jacob* himself, or he who is so named, protect and defend thee from all evils and enemies. Once more^e; *O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!* that is, what a glorious display is there of thy divine perfections, in the works of creation and providence, throughout the whole world, and especially in those of grace and redemption! and there is something in the name of God, in his nature, and in all his attributes and perfections, which is engaging and encouraging to saints to call upon him: he, whose name is to be called upon, has proclaimed his name, *The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth*^f; which is very inviting and engaging to souls to make their application to him for grace and mercy. *Benbadad's* servants having heard that the kings of *Israel* were merciful kings, proposed to make their addresses in an humble manner to the king of *Israel*, in favour of the life of their prince; and a very similar argument *Joel* makes use of, to encourage the Jews in his time to humble themselves before the Lord, and turn to him, since *he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness*; for *who knows*, says he, *if he will return, and repent, and leave a blessing behind him*^g. The Lord, whose name is to be called upon, is the Lord God omnipotent; he is able to fulfil all the requests

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requests

^c Prov. xviii. 10.^d Psalm xx. 1.^e Psalm viii. 1.^f Exod. xxxiv. 6.^g Joel ii. 13, 14.

requests, answer all the expectations, and supply all the wants of his people: the heathens pray to a God that cannot save^k; but we pray to one whose hand is not shortened, that it cannot save^l; and who indeed is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think^m. The Lord, on whose name we should call, is the Lord God omniscient; he with whom we have to do in prayer, to whom our speech is directedⁿ, and our addresses made, has all things naked and open to his eyes; he knows our persons, our cases, our wants, and all the desires and breathings of our souls; he knows the meaning of our sighs and groans, even those that are unutterable; whether we pray in public or private, in the house of God, or in our own houses, or in our closets, *our Father seeth in secret*, and will reward us openly^o. The God we are called upon to pray unto, is the Lord God omnipresent, who is every where, and fills heaven and earth with his presence; he is at hand to hear the petitions of his people, to assist, protect, and defend them; he is a present help in all their times of trouble; this is their great privilege, and in which they excel all other people, that they have *God so nigh unto them, as the Lord their God is, in all things that they call upon him for*^p. He is also *El-shaddai*, God all-sufficient, the God of all grace, the author and giver of it; who is able to cause all grace to abound, and whose grace is sufficient at all times, and in all cases. And to these perfections and attributes of God may be added, that the name and title he takes to himself for the encouragement of his people in prayer, is, that he is a God that hears prayer^q, and answers it too; he never said, no not at any time, *to the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain*^r: every praying soul can set his seal to the truth of this testimony, that it is always good to draw near to God^s; for his eyes are always upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry^t. To say no more, the Lord that is to be called upon, stands in the relation of a father to his people; and they are taught and instructed to address him in prayer under this character and relation, *our Father which art in heaven*^u; and the Lord loves to have his children come about him, and call him their Father, and not turn away from him; it is with pleasure he hears them cry *Abba*, Father, in the strength of faith, and under the testimony of the spirit of adoption: and such may assure themselves, that he will graciously hear and answer their requests; for if earthly fathers know how to give good things to their children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him^v, and all other good things they stand in need of. And since then there is such great encouragement from the name, nature, and perfections of God; from the titles, characters, and relations he bears, how heinous must the sin be, to neglect calling upon his name!

2. The

^k Ifai. xlv. 20.^l Ifai. lix. 1.^m Ephes. iii. 21.ⁿ Προς εν ημων ο λογος, Heb. iv. 13.^o Matt. vi. 6.^p Deut. iv. 7.^q Psalm lxxv. 2.^r Ifai. xlv. 19.^s Psalm lxxi. i. 26.^t Psalm xxxiv. 15.^u Matt. vi. 9.^v Luke xi. 13.

2. The *Name of the Lord* takes in all the divine persons who are to be invoked: as baptism is to be administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; so the name of Father, Son, and Spirit, is to be called upon in prayer, either separately or together. The name of the Father is to be invoked, and for the most part is called upon; *if ye call upon the Father, or seeing ye call upon the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth*²; the apostle *Paul* says, *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*⁷: The scriptural instances of prayer are generally in this way; the address is commonly made to the first Person, and we usually and for the most part, direct our petitions to him; and there is good reason why they should be directed to him; since the other two Persons sustain an office which he does not, an office with respect to prayer: The Son is the Mediator, by whom we draw nigh to God; and the Spirit, is the Spirit of grace and supplication, who helps and assists in approaches to him; though this is not to be done to the exclusion of either the Son or Spirit, who, in conjunction with the Father or apart, may be called upon or addressed in prayer: the same blessings of *grace and peace*² are frequently wished from our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as from the Father. *Ananias* exhorted *Saul*, when converted, to *arise and be baptized, calling on the name of the Lord*⁴, that is, calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the apostle *Paul* directs one of his epistles to the Corinthians, and to *all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*⁵: special petitions are sometimes put up to him; particularly *Stephen*, in his last moments, called upon him, and said, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*⁶: The holy Ghost is also prayed unto: sometimes along with the other two persons, as in *Rev. i. 4, 5.* and sometimes he is singly invoked, as when the apostle thus prays, *the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ*⁴; where the Lord, the Spirit, seems to be designed as distinct from God and Christ.

3. This phrase of calling on, or *in the name of the Lord*, as it may be rendered, seems particularly to point at the invocation of God, in the name of Christ; and which perhaps is the true meaning of it here, and in that remarkable passage, *then began men to call upon, or in the name of the Lord*⁵; not that men did not pray unto God, or call upon him before; but now another seed being raised in the room of *Abel*, whom *Cain* slew, and this increasing and multiplying, men either began to meet together in bodies, in communities, to carry on social worship, particularly to perform social prayer; or having now clearer discoveries, and better notions of the promised seed, the Messiah, they began to call

² 1 Peter i. 17.

⁷ Ephes. iii. 14.

² Rom. i. 7.

⁶ Acts xxii. 16.

⁵ 1 Cor. i. 2.

⁴ Acts vii. 59.

⁴ 2 Thes. iii. 5.

⁵ הוֹחֵל לְקַרְא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה.

Gen. iv. 26.

call upon God in his name: and this was practised, more or less, by the saints in all succeeding ages; though it seems greatly to have got into disuse in the times of Christ, who exhorted his disciples to pray to the Father in his name; assuring them, that whatsoever they asked in this way, both he and his Father would do it for them; and complains of their neglect of it; *hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive*^f: Christ is the only mediator between God and men; the days-man that lays his hands on both, the only way to the Father, the new and living way by which we have access to God with boldness and confidence; his name is to be used in prayer; our supplications are not to be presented to God for our righteousness-sake, but for his name-sake; we are to make mention of his righteousness, and of his only, and plead his precious blood and sacrifice, and desire the Lord would look upon the face of his anointed, and regard us for his sake; acceptance of our persons and services is only through him: our righteousness is as filthy rags, and cannot render us acceptable unto God; our acceptance is only in the beloved; our sacrifices of prayer and praise become only acceptable unto God, as they are offered up through Christ, and on him, that altar which sanctifies every gift: and all favours and blessings of grace are conveyed through him to his people; the first grace in conversion is shed in the hearts of men abundantly through Christ their Saviour, and all after-supplies of grace are out of his fulness; and therefore, seeing we have such a mediator, advocate, and interceding high priest, to introduce our persons, to present our petitions, and to obtain all grace for us, we have great encouragement to call upon the Lord in his name, and to neglect this, must be an aggravated evil. I proceed,

2dly, To consider for what, and when we are to call upon the name of the Lord, or in his name; and this we are to do for all things; for he is *nigh to us in all things we call upon him for*^g: we should pray unto him for all temporal mercies, for he is the father of them; we are directed to pray to him for our *daily bread*^h, which takes in all the necessaries of life; and such who have the true grace of God, and the power of godliness in them, may expect to be heard and answered; for *godliness has the promise of this life*ⁱ, as well as of *that which is to come*: and we are to call upon him for spiritual mercies, for all spiritual blessings in Christ; for though these things are in his heart, and in his hands, and which he has laid up in his Son, and in the covenant of his grace, for his people, yet he *will be inquired of by them, to do them for them*^k; even for the fresh discoveries and application of pardoning grace, for the light of his countenance, and communion with him, and for all supplies of grace and mercy, to help in time of need. And this is to be done at all times; our Lord spake a

parable

^f John xiv. 13, 14. and xvi. 23, 24.

^g Deut. iv. 7.

^h Matt. vi. 11.

ⁱ 1 Tim. iv. 8.

^k Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

parable to encourage men to *pray always. and not faint*¹; and the apostle Paul exhorts the faints to *pray always, with all prayer and supplication. and to pray without ceasing*², constantly, continually, and incessantly, and especially in times of trouble; *Call upon me*, says the Lord, *in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me*³: all times and seasons are proper for prayer, but especially afflictive ones; a time of affliction is a peculiar time for prayer; *Is any afflicted? let him pray*⁴; yea sometimes, when the people of God are negligent of the work and business of prayer, he sends an affliction to them, to bring them to his throne of grace; *in their affliction they will seek me early*⁵: and particularly, in times of public calamity and distress, it is right and highly necessary to call upon God; and happy it is for a nation, when there are, at such seasons, many praying souls in it; it was well for Israel they had a Moses to stand in the breach, and deprecate the wrath and vengeance of God, that he might not destroy them; and that they had an Aaron, who put on incense, and made atonement, and then stood between the living and the dead, and so the plague was stayed; but sad is the case of a people, when there is not one to stand in the gap, and intercede for them, that they perish not. This is what is here complained of.

3dly, The manner in which this duty of calling upon God should be performed; that is, in faith, with fervency, in sincerity of heart, and with great importunity. It cannot be done aright without faith; *for how shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed*⁶? Whoever comes to God, or draws near to him, in any part or branch of worship, and particularly in prayer, *must believe that he is*⁷; not only that he exists, and is possessed of all divine perfections, but that he is the God of all grace, that keeps covenant, and is faithful to his promises; he must not only believe in the object of prayer, but with respect to the things prayed for; these must be asked *in faith*, for it is the *prayer of faith* that is prevalent with God⁸; this is the holy confidence that should be cherished, that whatever we ask according to the revealed will of God, that will make for his glory, and our good, shall be given us: and then our petitions should not be put up in a cold, lukewarm, and indifferent manner, but it becomes us to be *servent in spirit, serving the Lord*⁹ in every part of worship, and particularly in this of prayer; for it is *the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man that availeth much*¹⁰: and we should also *draw nigh* to God, in this duty, *with true hearts*; as well as with full assurance of faith, in the sincerity and uprightness of our souls; for if men *draw near* to God *with their mouths*, and *honour him with their lips* only, but *remove their hearts far from him*, and *their fear towards him is taught by the precept of man*¹¹, they cannot expect to be regarded by him; but he is *nigh to all*

¹ Luke xviii. 1.² Ephes. v. 18. ³ 1 Thes. v. 17.⁴ Psalm l. 15.⁵ James. v. 13.⁶ Hof. v. 15.⁷ Rom. x. 14.⁸ Heb. xi. 6.⁹ James i. 6. and v. 15.¹⁰ Rom. xii. 11.¹¹ James v. 16.¹² Isai. xxix. 13.

all them that call upon him in truth^a; who are hearty and sincere in their requests unto him; and such may, and should, use an holy importunity with him. Our Lord has given us two instances of importunity^y, on purpose to encourage the same in prayer; the one is of a man that had a friend come to his house late at night, and he without provisions, upon which he calls up his neighbour at midnight, to lend him some bread, but he excuses rising on account of his door being shut, and his children in bed with him; nevertheless, continuing to solicit him, he rises, and gives him what he would have, not on the score of friendship, but because of his importunity: the other instance is that of the unjust judge, who neither feared God, nor regarded man, yet being pressed by a poor widow, time after time, to take her case in hand, and do her justice; he at length did undertake it, not for the sake of doing justice, but lest he should be wearied by her continual coming; which our Lord applies thus, *and shall not God avenge his own elect, that cry day and night unto him?* such as, *Jacob-like*, lay hold on the Lord, and will not let him go without the blessing, always succeed; God cannot deny them any thing that ask in faith, fervently, sincerely, and importunately; and therefore a man that neglects this duty and privilege, must be greatly wanting to his own interest.

4tly, Many are the scripture-arguments, exciting and encouraging the saints to call upon the Lord; I shall do little more than name the passages in which they are: the Lord himself, whose name is to be called upon, bids, invites, and encourages men to call upon him; *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee; ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find*^z; what more can be desired, than to ask and have? *The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him in truth*^a; he draws near to them in a way of grace and mercy, that draw nigh to him in a way of duty: he is *rich unto all that call upon him*^b; that is, he liberally bestows on such the riches of his providential goodness, the riches of his grace here, and the riches of glory hereafter: he is *plenteous in mercy to all that call upon him*^c; he largely and plentifully bestows his grace and mercy on such; he *abundantly pardons* their sins, which, as it is an encouraging argument with sensible sinners, to turn unto the Lord, so it is a no less powerful one, to engage saints to pray unto him for fresh discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy. To add no more; it is said, that *whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved*^d; saved from all afflictions and distresses; saved out of the hands of enemies; saved with a temporal, and with an everlasting salvation.

And now how great must the sin and folly be of such professors, that neglect to call upon the name of the Lord! not to call upon the name of the Lord is heathenish; and of heathens nothing else is to be expected; for *how shou'd they call*

^a Psalm cxlv. 18.^y Luke xi 5—9. and xviii. 1—8.^z Psalm l. 15. Matt. vii. 7.^a Psalm cxlv. 18.^b Rom. x. 12.^c Psalm lxxxvi. 5.^d Rom. x. 13.

call on him, in whom they have not believed^a? they know not God, and have no faith in him, and therefore it is no wonder they do not call upon him; and yet the wrath and fury of God are imprecated on the *beathen, that know him not*, and on the families that call not on his name^c; and even these, in time of distress, will call upon those they take to be God, as did *Jonab's* mariners. Not to call upon God, is to do as hypocrites do; who, though they may pray openly and publicly before men sometimes, that they may be seen of them, and seem outwardly to take delight in approaching to God; yet as *Job* says^e, *will be*, the hypocrite, *delight himself in the Almighty? will be always call upon God?* No, he will not; he may for a time, but not always; nor does he ever take any real delight and pleasure in it. Now, for a professing people not to call upon God, is to do as heathens and hypocrites do: and such must be under great decays and declensions, if truly gracious persons, that *restrain prayer before God*^g; so to do is highly repented by the Lord; it is a charge he once brought against his church of old, *she drew not near to her God*^b: such act very unbecoming the names of *Jacob* and *Israel*, by which they are called. *Jacob* had the name of *Israel* given him, because, *wrestling with God, he had power as a prince, and prevailed*; but how unsuitable is this name to such who call not on the Lord? or how disagreeable to their name and character do they act? the Lord complains of it, *Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel*^f: and this is the first branch of the complaint here in our text. I proceed to consider the other part of it.

II. That there were none, or few, that bestirred and aroused themselves to lay hold of the Lord. Here I shall briefly shew what it is to lay hold on the Lord; and then, what it is for a man to stir up himself to do this; the neglect of which is complained of.

1. It is to exercise faith upon him, as to lay hold on Christ is to believe in him; Wisdom, or Christ is a tree of life, the Author and Giver of spiritual and eternal life to them that lay hold upon him^h, that is, that exercise faith on him; by faith men look to Christ, go to him, and lay hold upon him; the believer lays hold on Christ as his Saviour; and says, *be also shall be my salvation*, and none else; and, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*ⁱ; this is laying hold on Christ to a purpose: believers come to Christ as the mediator of the covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, and deal with it for pardon, peace, and cleansing; they lay hold on his righteousness, the skirt of him that is a Jew, as their justifying-righteousness; they lay hold on him as the strength of the Lord, and say, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*^m; this

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^d Rom. x. 14.^c Jer. x. 25.^e Job xxvii. 10.^g Job xv. 4.^b Zeph. iii. 2.^f Isai. xliii. 22.^h Prov. iii. 18.ⁱ Job xiii. 15, 16.^m Isai. xlv. 24.

is laying hold on him for themselves, and exercising faith upon him: and so to lay hold on God, is to exercise faith on him, as a covenant-God and father; it is to avouch him to be our God. It was a noble act of faith in *David*, when he said, *I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God*^a: *Job* wished to find him, that he *might come even to his seat*^b; and what would he have done there and then? why, lay hold on him as his own God. And such believers as these will lay hold on the covenant itself; for this is one of the characters of a good man, that he *chuses the things that please God, and takes bold of his covenant*^c; claims his interest in it; and which is his support in life and in death; as it was to *David* in his last moments, who could say, *Although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure*; this was taking fast hold of the covenant for himself: and such will claim all the blessings of it as theirs, even all spiritual blessings, which are in Christ; he being theirs; and also all the promises of it, of which they are heirs, and so have a right unto them; and who, when they find them, take them to themselves, and rejoice at them, and plead them with God; for there is not a promise in the covenant, but the meanest believer has a right unto: promises as well as blessings are common to all; as may be observed from that peculiar promise made to *Joshua*, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*; which every believer may take hold on for himself, and take the comfort of, as appears from *Heb. xiii. 5, 6*.

2. To lay hold on God, is to exercise faith on him, particularly in prayer: prayer is a wrestling with God; and in wrestling, persons lay hold on one another; faith lays hold of God in prayer, as *Jacob* did on the angel he wrestled with, and will not let him go, without having the blessing he is earnest for: and when this is the case, *whatever men ask in prayer, believing; they shall receive*^d. The Lord sometimes seems to be departing from his church and people: as the glory of the Lord in *Ezekiel's* vision^e went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and then departed from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim, threatening a removal from the temple; so the Lord sometimes seems to be taking his leave of his people; which, when observed by truly gracious souls, they lay hold upon him, and most earnestly solicit his continuance with them; as the two disciples that traveled with Christ to *Emmaus*, when he seemed as if he would go further, they *constrained him*^f; they most earnestly intreated him to stay with them; they held him from going further; and thus faith in prayer lays hold on a departing God to retain him. Sometimes the Lord does really depart from his people; their sins and iniquities separate between God and them, and cause him to hide his face from them; when they seek after him, and seeking find him, and having found him, they hold

^a Psalm xxxi. 14.

^b Job xxiii. 3.

^c Isai. lvi. 4.

^d 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

^e Matt. xxi. 22.

^f Ezek. x. 4, 18.

^g Luke xxiv. 28, 29.

hold him fast, and will not let him go, until he returns to his church again; their importunate request to him is, *Return, we beseech thee, and behold and visit this vine, and the vineyard thy right hand hath planted*. Sometimes the Lord, being offended with his dear children, lifts up his hand to correct and chastize; when faith in prayer steps in between, and lays hold on his hands, when he is just going to strike the blow; even as when a father, displeas'd with his child, lifts up his hand to strike him; and a friend that is by him, lays hold on his hand, and will not suffer him to give the blow: this might be exemplified in the case of the Israelites, when they had made the golden calf, and worshipp'd it; the Lord was greatly provok'd by them, and thought to destroy them, or signified his desire to do so; and therefore says to *Moses*, who he knew would intercede for them, *Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation*. But *Moses* would not let him alone, nor suffer him to do what he seem'd desirous of doing; but interceded for the people, and, as it were, held the hands of the Lord from destroying them*. What amazing condescension is this, that the infinite and tremendous Being, should suffer himself to be held by a creature from doing what he shew'd an inclination to! See here the force of prayer, and the strength of faith! and what encouragement saints have to stir up themselves to lay hold on him: and what that is, I shall next consider.

2dly, To stir up a man's self to lay hold on God, is to be diligent in the use of means in seeking after him; as *Job* was, when being at a loss for him, he went backwards and forwards, on the right hand, and on the left, in order to find him; and as the church, who sought her beloved in the streets of the city and broad-ways, and inquired here and there, of one, and of another, till she got tidings and sight of him, and then laid hold upon him: it is to seek the Lord, where and when, and while he is to be found; and to call earnestly and importunately on him, where and when, and while he is near; and even when afar off, not to quit the pursuit of him, and inquiry about him, until he is pleas'd to appear and shew himself. This stirring up a man's self, is no other than a frequent use of the gift of prayer: gifts, like some metals, if not us'd grow rusty, but the more they are us'd, the brighter they are; yea, gifts may be lost, though grace cannot; the gift of preaching, through disuse, may come to nothing, and therefore should be stirr'd up; that is, not neglect'd, but diligently cultivated, and frequently exercis'd: hence that advice of the apostle to *Timothy*, *Stir up the gift of God which is in thee; just as one would stir up coals under ashes, and*

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embers

* Psalm lxxx 14.

* Exod. xxxii. 10.

* Sic tenebat Moses Deum; ille enim

voces, demitte me, ut irascatur furor meus, &c. quid aliud sonant, nisi quod a Mose fortitur teneretur? ut ad hanc retentionem putem postea factum allusionem quoties propheta hoc verbo utuntur, & de Deo & nobis est sermo. Forerius in loc.

† Job xxiii. 3, 8, 9. Cant. iii. 1-4.

* Isai. lv. 6.

embers which seem to be dead^a, and would go out if not stirred; and is the same with *neglect not the gift that is in thee*^b: so to stir up the gift is *not to neglect* it, but frequently to use it; and in like manner the gift of prayer should *not* be neglected, but be often used; and so to do, is to stir it up: and this is not only to be stirred up, but a man should stir up himself to it; which he may be said to do, when he exerts himself, when he calls upon his soul and all within him; as to bless and praise the Lord for favours bestowed on him, so to pray unto him in faith, for what he stands in need of; as the church resolved to do; *With my spirit within me will I seek thee early*^c; that is, with my whole heart and soul; in the most earnest and pressing manner, will I pray unto thee, and seek thy face and favour. Stirring up a man's self is opposed to slothfulness in business, and is expressive of that diligence which becomes the people of God; who should be diligent in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; and as they should be diligent to add one virtue to another, as to the exercise thereof, and to make their calling and election sure and manifest to others, and to be found of Christ in peace; so they should diligently seek the Lord, who is a rewarder of all such: the frame of spirit here complained of, is a backwardness to prayer; a remissness in the performance of that duty; a doing this part of the work of God negligently, or in a cold, lukewarm, sleepy, drowsy manner; being like the disciples of our Lord, who were *sleeping* whilst he was *praying*; whom he thus rebukes, *Could ye not watch with me one hour*^d? It becomes christians to bestir, awake, and *arouse* themselves, as the word here used^e signifies, from their spiritual stupor and lethargy, at least, to implore the spirit and grace of God to enable them so to do.

The church of Christ and its members are sometimes as it were asleep; the wife as well as the foolish virgins all slumbered and slept; and this is the case with them, when grace lies dormant, or there is a non-exercise of it; an indifference to the duties of religion, or at most a contentedness in the outward performance of them; an unconcernedness about sins of omission and commission; and little or no regard to the glory of God, and the interest of religion. Such a spirit arises from the prevalence of the flesh, or corrupt nature; from the heart being overcharged and surfeited with worldly cares; from a weariness in spiritual exercises, and a cessation from religious ones; from keeping carnal company; and from its being a night-season: great and many are the dangers such are exposed unto, and the church of God by their means; which is liable to be filled with hypocrites, and over-run with errors and heresies; for *while men sleep, the enemy*

^a Verbum *αταξωμενοι*—significat autem ignem cineribus teclum excitare, sopitam favillam in flammam proferre. Aretius in 2 Tim. i. 6. ^b 2 Tim. i. 6. 1 Tim. iv. 14.

^c Isai. xxvi. 9. ^d Matt. xxvi. 40. ^e עָרַר אֶבְרָתָא, *evigilare*, opponitur *januus* & decubitus, vel fessio. Cocceii Lexic. col. 600. See Isai. li. 17.

enemy sows his tares^f; such are personally exposed to every sin, and snare, and temptation; liable to have spiritual poverty and leanness brought upon them; to lose their spiritual peace, joy, and comfort; and to be surprized with the midnight-cry: wherefore it is *big time* for them to bestir themselves, and *awake out of sleep*^g; Christ calls upon them to this purpose, and says, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead*; shake off thy lethargy; throw off thy dead companions, and converse no more with them who have been the means of bringing on this sleepy, drowsy frame, and *Christ shall give thee light*^h; pray, as well as thou canst, that the Lord would *quicken thee*, that thou mayest *call upon his name*ⁱ.

To come to a close; we may see our own picture in the people here described, that called not on the name of the Lord, and stirred not up themselves to lay hold on him: this is exactly our case; there are none, or however very few, heartily engaged in such spiritual exercises, and which should be matter of lamentation and humiliation: what has been said, should serve to stir up our minds by way of remembrance of the state wherein we are, and from whence we are fallen; and to quicken us to every duty of religion, and particularly to this of prayer, and to the exercise of faith in it; and as we should stir up ourselves, so one another, to this, and every other good work; and which is a principal end of our meeting together at such times as these; and the Lord grant this end may be answered by this discourse, and God be glorified.

^f Matt. xii. 25.^g Rom. xiii. 11.^h Ephes. v. 14.ⁱ Psal'm lxxx. 18.

S E R M O N XV.

Attendance in Places of religious Worship, where the Divine Name is recorded, encouraged.

Preached October 9, 1757, at the Opening of a New Place for Worship, in Carter-lane, St Olave's-street, Southwark.

EXODUS XX. 24.

—*In all places, where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*

THIS chapter begins with an account of the giving of the law of the decalogue, or ten commands, on mount *Sinai*, to the children of *Israel*. A very compendious system of morality this, and was peculiarly calculated for that people; as the preface to it shows, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; Thou shalt have no other God, &c.* and was admirably adapted to their tempers, dispositions, and circumstances; and exceedingly well suited to correct their minds and manners; and to guide and direct them in matters of religion, and in their duty to God and man: not but that all of it, that is of a moral nature, is binding upon the Gentiles, and especially ought to be regarded by us Christians, who profess ourselves to be the followers of *Jesus*; since most of the precepts of it have been recited and urged by him^a, and the whole by him reduced to these two heads, love to God, and love to our neighbour; saying, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment: and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*^b. And the apostle *Paul*, a disciple of his, and one that had the mind of *Christ*, having mentioned the several laws of the second table, observes; that *if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour*

as

^a Matt. xix. 17—19.

^b Matt. xxii. 37—40.

as thyself.—Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law^c: and elsewhere he says, all the law is fulfilled in one word^d; even this, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. And the rather this law should be attended to by us, since our blessed Redeemer and Saviour came not to destroy it, but so fulfil it^e, by his subjection to it, both to the precept and penalty of it; whereby, though he has delivered us from the curse and condemnation of it, yet has he not exempted us from obedience to it; so that we are *not without law to God*, though freed from obligation to punishment for the transgression of it, through the satisfaction of our surety; but are *under the law to Christ*^f, as he is head, king, and lawgiver in his church. And it is with pleasure we can behold the law fulfilled for us by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and held forth in his hand, as king of saints, as a rule of walk and conversation unto us: in which view of it, every believer may say of it, as the apostle did, *I delight in the law of God, after the inward man*^g. The delivery of this law, indeed, was attended with very terrifying circumstances; such as a dark, thick, tempestuous cloud, fire, and smoke; thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes; which not only made the children of *Israel* to tremble, and to stand at a distance; but *Moses* himself said, *I exceedingly fear and quake*^h. These were emblems of the dreadful things uttered by the law, against the transgressors of it; and of the terrible consequences of their transgressions; and of the terrors raised by it in the consciences of awakened sinners; wherefore the apostle says, *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law*ⁱ; that is, as a covenant of works, *do ye not bear the law?* the voice and language of it, its menaces and curses, what it saith to them who are under it, *that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*^k. It accuses of breaches and violations of it; it effectually supports its charges; it convicts of guilt, and confounds the sinner; and says enough, to the silencing of all objections; so that nothing can be said, why judgment should not proceed, and the sentence be pronounced and executed. To them who *are of the works of the law*; who seek for justification, salvation, and eternal life, by obedience to it; it says, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them*^l. In short, it is a cutting and killing letter, and the ministrator of condemnation and death. Hence a Mediator was found necessary, and desired by the people of *Israel*, at this time the law was given; *They said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will bear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die*, ver. 19. This office *Moses* undertook, at their request, and *drew near unto the thick darkness*, where God was, ver. 21. and became a Mediator between God and them; and has the

name

^a Rom. xii. 9—10.^d Gal. v. 14.^e Matt. v. 17.^f 1 Cor. ix. 21.^g Rom. vii. 22.^h Heb. xii. 21.ⁱ Gal. iv. 21.^k Rom. iii. 19.^l Gal. iii. 10.

name of one given him. Hence the law is said to be *ordained by angels, in the band of a Mediator*^m; that is, *Moses*, who was a type of Christ, the Mediator between God and man; by whom we have access to him, with boldness and confidence, through his being the fulfilling end of the law for righteousnessⁿ, by obeying the precept, and bearing the penalty of it.

Now, though this law, as to the manner of its delivery, was so terrible; yet, as to the matter of it, it was *holy, just, and good*; a transcript of the divine nature, and a revelation of the will of God; and it was an high favour; and a peculiar privilege to be indulged with it: hence, says *Moses*, *What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law that I set before you this day*^o? And the psalmist *David* also takes notice of this, as an instance of the distinguishing goodness of God to the people of *Israel*; *He sheweth his word unto Jacob; his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them; praise ye the Lord*^p. And the apostle *Paul* reckons, among the many special privileges of the Jewish nation, that *to them pertained the covenant, the giving of the law, and the service of God*^q. Wherefore, since *Jehovah* condescended to speak with them from heaven, and favoured them with a divine revelation; they were laid under obligation to serve and worship him, in the manner he should direct them, as well as in places where they should do it. *You have seen*, says he, ver. 22, 23. *that I have talked with you from heaven: ye shall not make with me gods of silver; neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold*; and then directs them to make an altar, to offer on it sacrifice unto him, ver. 24 *an altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen*; which altar was a type of Christ, who is that altar we christians, or believers in Christ, have; have a right unto, to use it, and partake of it; *wherof they have no right to eat, that serve the tabernacle*^r, or keep up the Jewish forms of worship, now abolished: that altar, that sanctifies every spiritual gift, presented on it by faith, and which renders every spiritual sacrifice of prayer or praise acceptable to God^s. Also the sacrifices offered up on the altar of earth, were typical of better; even of the sacrifice of Christ, which is of a sweet-smelling favour to God; thereby sin being made an end of, and reconciliation and atonement made for it. Now, the Lord, to encourage the people of *Israel* to worship him in his own way, and where he would have them, promises his presence with them, and his blessing on them, in the words I have read to you; *In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*. As yet no particular places were appointed for worship; and, therefore, he says, *where I record, or am about to record, or shall record*. The tabernacle was not now erected

^m Gal. iii. 19.^q Rom. ix. 4.ⁿ Rom. x. 4.^r Heb. xiii. 10.^o Deut. iv. 8.^p Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20.^s Matt. xxiii. 19. Isai. lvi. 7.

erected, nor orders given for it, which afterwards were, *Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them*. Nor as yet was the ark of the testimony made; over which was the mercy-seat; on which were the cherubim; between which Jehovah took up his residence; nor were any place, or places, pointed at as yet, where the tabernacle, or the things in it, when made, should be set up: and, though after this, the Lord did signify there was a place he should choose to put his name in, and cause it to dwell there; and where, and where only, they should come and offer their sacrifices, and keep their pass-over, and other feasts; yet he did not presently express this by name; eventually, and in the issue, it appeared to be the city of *Jerusalem*; though before that, the tabernacle and the ark in it, were at other places, as *Gilgal*, *Sheich*, &c. but this was a fixed and stable place for it: here *Solomon*, by divine direction, built a magnificent temple, where the worship of God was continued some hundreds of years: this was destroyed by the Chaldeans, which occasioned an intermission of service for some time; and then it was rebuilt by *Zorobabel*, which continued till the coming of Christ, and was a little time after demolished by the Romans; and ever since, the worship of God is not limited and restrained to any certain place; neither at *Jerusalem*, nor any other particular place, are men obliged to worship the Father; but they may worship him any where, so be it they worship him in spirit and in truth. Under the gospel-dispensation, men may lift up holy hands every where, without wrath and doubting; they may pray and preach, and administer the ordinances of Christ, wherever they can find a place proper and convenient: the only description of places, and the only direction to us, where we should meet and worship, is, *where God records his name*: And, in this light and view of things, I shall consider the above words, by observing,

I. What those places are which God has a regard unto; and where his people have encouragement to serve and worship him; and these are, *where he records his name*.

II. The regard he has to such places, and the encouragement he gives to persons that worship him: he promises his presence and his blessing; *I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*.

L The place, or places where the people of God are directed to worship him, and he shews a regard unto, are where his name is recorded. Under this head I shall shew, what is meant by *the name of the Lord*; what by *recording his name*; and point at the places where this may be done.

First, What may be intended by the *name of the Lord*; which admits of various significations. 1. By it is sometimes meant the Lord himself; as, when it is said, *The name of the God of Jacob defend thee*^a; that is, God himself, who is *Jacob's God*; for who else is the defence of his people? He is a wall of fire round about them; he is their place of defence; which is the munition of rocks; and being so, they may sing unto God their strength, and say unto him, as *David* did, *God is my defence, and the God of my mercy*^b. Again, when it is said, *The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it, and is safe*^c. The meaning is, the Lord himself is a strong tower; and such the Psalmist often calls him, saying, he is *my salvation and my high tower, a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy*^d: Hither do the saints betake themselves, in times of distress and danger; and here they remain safe until the calamities be overpast. So the name of Christ signifies Christ himself; *In his name shall the Gentiles trust*^e; that is, in himself; in his person for acceptance; in his righteousness for justification; in his blood for pardon; and in his fulness for all supply. Nor is any other the proper object of trust and confidence; not any creature or creature-act: *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is*^f.

2. The name of the Lord sometimes intends his perfections; as, when it is said of Christ, the angel of God's presence; the angel that went before the Israelites, and guided and guarded them through the wilderness, to the land of *Canaan*, *Beware of him, and obey his voice*;—*for my name is in him*^g; the nature and perfections of God; the whole fulness of the Godhead dwells in him; every perfection of Deity; all that the Father hath, he has; he is *the express image of his person*; and so like him, having the whole divine nature in him, that he who sees the one sees the other. And, as these are in him, as God, as a divine person; so they are displayed in him as mediator; in whom God has *proclaimed his name*; that is, his perfections of mercy, grace, goodness, justice, and holiness particularly; since it follows, *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty*^h; for these divine perfections are more especially glorified in our redemption and salvation by Christ; where *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other*ⁱ. Once more, where it is said, *O Lord, our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth*^j! The sense is; "What a glorious display of thy perfections is made in the earth, through the preaching of the gospel! whereby, in the first times of it, to which this passage belongs, was given the

light

^a Psalm xx. 1.

^b Psalm lix. 17.

^c Prov xviii. 10.

^d Psalm xviii. 1, and lxi. 3.

^e Matt. xii. 17.

^f Jer. xvii. 7.

^g Exod. xxiii. 21.

^h Exod. xxxiii. 19. and xxiv. 5, 6, 7.

ⁱ Psalm lxxxv. 10.

^j Psalm viii. 1.

light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face, or person, of Jesus Christ^h ?" that is, of the glorious perfections of God, as they are set forth in the person of Christ, and in the work of redemption: and so in the latter day, by the same means, will the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the seaⁱ.

3. By the name of the Lord may be meant, any, or every name of the Lord, by which he is revealed, manifested, and made known to the sons of men. The first name of his we meet with, is that of *Elohim*; In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth^k; which name has the signification of worship and adoration in it; being derived from a root^l which signifies to worship; God being the sole object of religious worship; and to which the apostle may be thought to have some respect, when he explains Deity, by that which is worshipped; for, speaking of antichrist, he says, *who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped^m*. And the word *Elohim* being of the plural number, may with propriety enough be rendered, *the adorable ones*; and very well be thought to denote a plurality; which, according to divine revelation, is a Trinity of persons, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; which three are one; and who manifestly appear in the creation of all things: The Father, who created all things by Jesus Christ; and the Word, *who spake, and it was done; who commanded, and it stood fast*; who said, Let such and such a thing be, and it was: and the Spirit of God, who garnished the heavens, and moved upon the face of the waters; and brought the confused and indigested chaos into the beautiful order the earth since was: So true is that of the Psalmist, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath, or spirit, of his mouthⁿ*. The next name by which God made himself known, is that of *God Almighty*; of which he himself says; *I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty^o*; referring, no doubt, in the first place, and particularly to his appearance to *Abraham*, when ninety years of age; to whom he said, *I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect^p*. A name that well agrees with him; as is clear by his making all things out of nothing; by upholding, and maintaining in Being the things he

H h 2

has

^h 2 Cor. iv. 6.ⁱ Hab. ii. 13.^k Gen. i. 1.

^l אֱלֹהִים Celuit, adoravit, idem quod עָבַד, unde אֱלֹהִים Deus, quasi numen venerandum, Hottinger. Smegna oriental. l. 1. c. vii. p. 123. אֱלֹהִים Coluit, veneratus est, adoravit, apud Arabes; inde est אֱלֹהִים Deus, sic dictus, quod veneratione, cultu, & adoratione prosequendum sit — Generationis & venerationis notat εὐσεβείας, h. e. numen venerabile seu adorandum. Stockii Clavis Liturg. S. p. 61. Jure meritissimo contenditur, Hebræos olim possedisse geminam radicem, alteram אֱלֹהִים suravit, pro אֱלֹהִים vel אֱלֹהִים ult. vaw aut je; alteram אֱלֹהִים. He mobili & radicali, Celuit, unde אֱלֹהִים numen colendum Schultens. Comment. in Job i. 1. tom. I. p. 4. Sic ami, ut Deo Animadv. in Exod. vii. 1. Paschii D. serm. de Selah in Theaur. Philol. Theolog. vol. I. p. 671.

^m 2 Thess. ii. 4.ⁿ Psalm xxxiii. 6.^o Exod. vi. 3.^p Gen. xvii. 1.

has made; by the redemption and preservation of his people; and by fulfilling his purposes, prophecies, and promises⁹. And there is no name or title by which he makes himself known, that is more suited to encourage the faith and hope of his children, in times of difficulty and danger; since his *hand is not shortened, that it cannot save*¹⁰. Another name following this, by which the divine Being has thought fit to manifest himself, is that of *Jehovah*; which it was not his pleasure to make himself known by to the above Patriarchs; for, he says, *But by my name Jehovah was I not known to them*¹¹. This is expressive of his existence; of him as the Being of beings; of his immutability and eternity¹²; and is referred to, when *Moses*, having asked of God, what he should say to the children of *Israel*, should they inquire of him who sent him to them, saying, *What is his name?* He is bid to say, *I am that I am, hath sent me to you*¹³; or, "I am that I am; and I am that I shall be;" or, as *John* well deciphers it, *which is, and which was, and which is to come*¹⁴; taking in all time and tenses, past, present, and future¹⁵. And this being a name peculiar to the most high God, and yet given to Christ, *Jehovah our righteousness*, is no inconsiderable proof of his proper and supreme Deity. Another name of God is, *The Lord of hosts*; and by which he is frequently called; *The portion of Jacob is not like unto them, the idols of the Gentiles, the Lord of hosts is his name*¹⁶; *the Lord of Sabaoth*¹⁷; and *James* retains the *Hebrew* word untranslated¹⁸, and our version

of

⁹ Though some renner it *all-sufficient*, deriving the word יְהוָה from יָבֹשׁ, and יָכֹחַ sufficient; so *Drusus*. God being sufficient, in, and of, and for himself, and stands in no need of any thing from his creatures; and having all sufficiency in him, for the supply of their wants, both temporal and spiritual. Though others derive it from יָבֹשׁ a pap, or breast; he having the blessings of the breast, or breasts of consolation for his people; see *Gen. xlix. 25. Isai. lxvi. 11.* So *Isis, Ceres, and Diana*, are represented by the Heathens, as full of breasts, and called from thence *Mammosa*. Thus *Pascchius* in *Dissertat. ut supra*, gives the derivation of it; יָבֹשׁ (quod a rad. יָבֹשׁ mamma, uber, pinguedo,) dicit deum nutricium & cibatoreum omnium: not to take notice of other etymologies of the word; of which see *Buxtorfii Dissert. de Nominibus Dei Hebr. S. 43.*

¹⁰ *Isai. lxx. 1.*

¹¹ *Exod. vi. 3.*

¹² Derivator enim a radice יְהוָה vel יְהוָה (nam utraque in lingua Hebraea est uctata) esse, existere — unde יְהוָה est ens exiens à seipso ab aeterno, & in aeternum, omnibusque aliis extra se essentiam & existentiam communicans. *Buxtorf. ut supra, S. 7.* יְהוָה (quod a radice Ebr. יְהוָה aut Chald. יְהוָה existit, fuit, &c. derivatum) significat ens a, in, & per se essentialissimum. *Pascchius ut supra.*

¹³ *Exod. iii. 13, 14.*

¹⁴ *Rev. i. 4.*

¹⁵ Qui ab initio & demonstravit, & nunc demonstrat, & in posterum se demonstrabit fidelem creatorem, docet fiat & sit in omnibus omnia, *Cocceii Lexicon, col. 177.*

¹⁶ *Jer. x. 16.*

¹⁷ *James v. 4.*

¹⁸ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת dominus exercituum, recte autem vocatur Deus, non Deus exercitus in singulari numero, sed Deus exercituum, quia varios habet exercitus, qui ipsi parent, ministrant & militant. — visibiles & invisibiles, quibus bono piorum & malo impiorum utitur. — & quoniam hoc solius Dei omnipotentis opus est, hinc etiam nulli creaturarum, hoc epitheton in sacris literis tribuitur. — Unde *Hieronymus* monuisse videtur non esse in aliam linguam transferendum, cum otium apostolus illud non mutat. *Buxtorf. ib. S. 59, 60.*

of him; which is not to be pronounced and understood, as it often wrongly is, of the Lord of Sabbath; but of the Lord of hosts, or armies, both above and below; and not only of the sun, moon, and stars, sometimes called the host of heaven; but of the angels; the heavenly militia; that multitude of the heavenly host; part of which attended at our Lord's incarnation; these are at his beck, will, and command, as well as all the hosts and armies of men on earth; for, *he doth according to his will, in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* The name of the Lord God of Israel, is frequently given him in the prophetic writings, especially of Jeremiab, who often prefaces his prophecies with it; and is very properly given him; since he chose the people of Israel, above all people, to be his special people; and distinguished them from others, by many peculiar favours; he avouched them to be *his people*; and they avouched him to be *their God*; this was his Old Testament name and title; and was almost out of date, as one observes; when Zechariab, the father of John Baptist, used it, who is the last that did; saying, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people*; for, quickly after, another name of his took place; which is, his New-Testament name and title; *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*; used by the apostles Paul and Peter. God is the God of Christ, as Christ is man; the human nature of Christ, is a creature of God, *the true tabernacle, which God pitched, and not man*; and which he anointed, filled, and adorned with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, *without measure*; and Christ, as such, loved him, as his God, and obeyed his commands, from a law of love in his heart; him he hoped in from his mother's womb; and in him he believed, and had the strongest confidence in him, that he was near him, would help him, stand by him, and justify him; to him he prayed most fervently and frequently; sometimes a whole night together; and gave him thanks and praise for divers things, particularly for hiding the mysteries of grace from the *wise and prudent*, and revealing them to *babes*; and was in all things obedient to his God, throughout the whole course of his life, even unto death. God is the Father of Christ, as Christ is a divine person; and in such sense his Father, as he is to no other; and Christ is in such sense his Son, and in such a class of filiation and sonship, as none others are, angels, or men; angels are the sons of God by creation, saints by adoption: but *to which of them, one or another, said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* Christ is his own proper, natural Son; of the same nature with him; the Son of himself; *the Son of the Father, in truth and love*; and not in an improper, figurative, and metaphorical sense; as magistrates, by office, are called the sons of God.

4. Christ.

* Dan. iv. 35.

† Dr Goodwin, on Ephes. i. 3. p. 27.

‡ Luke i. 68.

* 2 Cor. i. 3. Ephes. i. 3, 19. and iii. 14. † Peter i. 3.

‡ Heb. i. 5.

† 2 John, ver. 7.

Christ himself may be signified by the name of *the Lord*; in and by whom he is so clearly made known and revealed to men; and in whom his name, his nature, and perfections are, as before observed; and to whom belong all the same glorious names; as *the true God, God Almighty, Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, and the holy One of Israel*; and who, besides these, has various precious and excellent names, worthy to be recorded. The first of these we meet with is *Sibilob*, in the famous prophecy of *Jacob, The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Sibilob come*^a; who is the true Messiah; which name, whether it has the signification of *prosperous* or *peaceable*^b, it agrees with Christ; in whose hands the pleasure and will of God, respecting the salvation of men, *prospered*; and who succeeded in all his conflicts with sin, Satan, and the world, and got the victory over them: and he is the prince of *peace*; the *man*, the *peace*; with whom the covenant of peace was made; on whom the chastisement of our peace was laid, and who has made peace by the blood of his cross. His name *Immanuel*, given him before his birth, when prophesied of, to be born of a virgin, is a very precious one; which is, by interpretation, *God with us*^c; "God in our nature, God manifest in the flesh;" and through which, being made, he dwelt among men; which is a most wonderful instance of condescending grace. Another name with which it is said he should be called is, *the Lord our righteousness*^d, because, as a surety, he undertook to bring in everlasting righteousness; and, therefore, it became him to fulfil all righteousness: and for this purpose, *he came in the likeness of sinful flesh*, to obey the law in our nature, and *condemn sin in the flesh*, by the sacrifice of himself, that the righteousness of the law might be completely fulfilled in us; and he is become *the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believes*; and to whom he is also made *righteousness*, and they made the righteousness of God in him: and, not to forget that delightful name of *Jesus*, given to him because he *saves* his people from their sins; nor *Messiah*, which signifies *Christ*, or *Anointed*; he being anointed as prophet, priest, and king, with *the oil of gladness*, the holy-Ghost, and his grace, *above his fellows*; and from whom the saints receive the unction, that anointing, which teaches all things, and are denominated *christians*. To this name of Christ the church seems to allude, when she says, *Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee*^e.

5. The

^a Gen. xlix. 10.

^b Silob; quia princeps pacis, Isai. ix. 6. præstans etiam pacem, ab accusatione & jugo legis, quam scilicet legislatores imponere poterant. Cocceii Lexic. col. 898. שלום significat quietus, tranquillitas fuit; item, Salvus, felix, fortunatus fuit, prospere & feliciter egit; hinc alii שלום aiunt notare, pacificum, quietum — alii felicem, eumque maxime talem quod nomine Herois felicitas indicare videntur. Valand. Dissert. ad Gen. xlix. 10. apud Theaur. Theolog. Philol. vol. I. p. 273.

^c Matt. i. 23.^d Jer. xxiii. 6.^e Cant. i. 3.

5. The name of the Lord sometimes designs the gospel; as, when Christ says to his divine Father, *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world*^a; that is, his mind and will, which he revealed unto his disciples, having lain in his bosom, and being fully acquainted with it; the mysteries of his love and grace, which lay hid in his heart; the several doctrines of grace and truth, which relate to the great design of God in man's salvation, and came from God by him; for, this he afterwards explains, by saying, *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me*^b; namely, the words of eternal life, or the doctrines respecting the everlasting welfare and salvation of men: so the Lord said to *Ananias*, concerning the apostle *Paul*, *He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the children of Israel*^c; which was no other, than to carry the gospel, and spread it, not only in *Judea*, but in the Gentile world; and abide by it, and continue preaching it; and bear a testimony to it, in the face of all opposition, from men of every rank, and of every nation. Now, from all this we may learn, in some measure, what we are to understand by the name of the Lord; which may be taken in the most comprehensive sense; as to include himself, his nature, and perfections, and every appellation by which he is manifested and known; his son, his person, offices, and grace, and all things relating to him; the gospel, and the various doctrines of it: all which, as they serve to celebrate the praise and glory of God, they are to be recorded and remembered in every place, where the worship of God is set up; which leads me to observe,

Secondly, What is meant by the Lord's recording his name, or causing it to be remembered; for so the words may be rendered, *Where I make mention of my name*, or *where I cause to remember my name*; or, *you to remember it*^d; that is, cause it to be remembered, or refresh the memories of men with it: which is done by appointing and setting up memorials of it.

1st, Under the legal dispensation, this was done by ordering the ark, mercy-seat, and cherubim, to be made, and to be placed first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple. These were symbols of the divine presence; here the Shekinah, or the divine Majesty, took up its abode; from hence God communed with men, and gave them intimations of his mind and will; by which they were put in mind of him, and directed where to apply to him, in every time of need; and so possessed were the Israelites of this notion, that God was where these were, that they would sometimes take the ark with them when they went to battle; promising themselves thereby protection, safety, and victory.

And

^a John xvii. 6.

^b John xvii. 8.

^c Acts ix. 15.

^d *אני אומר את שמי* quo memorare faciam nomen meum. Pagninus, Montanus. Quocunque in loco monumentum constituerò nominis mei. Heb. in omni loco ubi recordari faciam nomen meum, seu, ubi faciam ut recordemini nominis mei. Piscator. Vel, faciam vos recordari nomen meum. Cartwright. So Ainsworth.

And these were, each of them, the ark and the mercy-seat, memorials of Christ, and served to put such as had knowledge of the Messiah, true faith in him, and expectation of his coming, in mind of him.

The *ark* was a type of Christ, in the matter, form, and use of it; it was made of Shittim wood, and overlaid with pure gold, denoting the incorruption, purity, glory, excellency, and duration of Christ; its principal use was, to contain in it the testimony of the will of God, the two tables of stone, with the law of the ten commandments on them; which were renewed by the Lord, after they were broken by falling out of the hands of *Moses*, as he came down from the mount, when the people had sinned, and transgressed this law. The putting of that into the ark, signified the law being not only in the hands, but in the heart of Christ; his voluntary subjection to it; his perfect fulfilment of it, whereby it was magnified; and made honourable; all its demands being answered by him, its precepts obeyed, and its sanction yielded to; and in whom it is preserved and continued, in all its perfection and lustre, and remains in full force, to answer the purposes for which it was given.

The *mercy-seat* is also a type of Christ, and a memorial of him; bringing him to remembrance, and refreshing the minds of true believers in him; leading them to some delightful views of the grace and mercy of God, as displayed in him. The same word which the Greek interpreters render the Hebrew word by, for the mercy-seat, is used by the apostle *Paul* concerning Christ, when he says of him, *whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation*, *ἰλαστήριον*, "a mercy-seat." This was over the ark, in which the law was, a cover to it; and of the same length and breadth with it; shewing that Christ's obedience and propitiatory sacrifice, are commensurate to the law, and its requirements, and a covering of all the sins of God's people, for whom this sacrifice is offered, which are transgressions of the law, and through which God is gracious and merciful to sinners; for, though he has proclaimed his name, a God gracious and merciful, it is only in Christ; the special mercy of God is only communicated through Christ; there is no mercy to be expected but by him; the poor publican was in the right, when he prayed, *God be merciful*, *ἰλασθῆναι* or *be propitious*, or shew mercy through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, *to me a sinner*. The stores of mercy are laid up in Christ; it is *for him*, for his sake, and with him, that he keeps his mercy, his covenant-grace and mercy, *for evermore*: he is *the throne of grace*, or the mercy-seat, to which the saints should have recourse in all their times of need; and where, and where only, they may expect to find grace, and obtain mercy; yea, it is to this mercy-seat, to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and

* Rom. iii. 25.

* Luke xviii. 13.

* Psalm lxxxix. 28.

* Heb. iv. 16.

and for it, and to the mercy of God, displayed in him, they are to look for, and unto eternal life *.

Moreover, the altar, and the sacrifices offered on it, were typical of Christ, and memorials of him, and the means of recording the name of the Lord, and causing it to be remembered †; the altar was a type of Christ, as before observed; both the altar of burnt-offering, and the altar of incense; the one served to put believers in mind of the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ for sin; and the dolorous sufferings he underwent on that account, under a sense of the wrath of God, and to deliver his people from it, by bearing it in their room and stead, when he became a whole burnt-offering for them; and the other was of use, to observe unto them the intercession of Christ, founded on his propitiatory sacrifice; through whose much incense, or all prevailing mediation, the prayers of the saints become acceptable unto God, and the blessings of grace are brought down upon them, and applied to them. The various sacrifices offered at the Jewish altar, were typical of the sacrifice of Christ; and were designed to put the sacrificers in mind of it, and to lead their faith to it, without which theirs were unacceptable to God. The lambs of the daily sacrifice, in the morning and evening, were remembrancers of Christ the Lamb of God, who *taketh*, continually takes away the sins of men, committed by them. So the slaying of the passover-lamb, the burning of the red heifer, with all other sacrifices, whether offered every day, every month, or every year; they all pointed at Christ, and his sacrifice, whereby he has *put away sin, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified*: and now, by appointing and continuing these, Jehovah caused his name to be remembered; whose perfections were displayed and glorified in the sacrifice of his Son; to which the faith of his people were by these directed.

2dly, Under the gospel-dispensation, God records his name by the ministry of the word, and by the administration of ordinances.

1. By the word, and by the ministers of it; whose descriptive character is, *that make mention of the Lord* †; or cause him to be remembered, or are his remembrancers; which is much the same phrase that is here used: a principal part of their business is, to *admonish*; to be the monitors of men; to put them in mind, as the word used signifies †; to put them in mind of their privileges and duties; to put them in mind of the grace of God, and the blessings of it; of Christ, his person, offices, and grace, and of the several doctrines of the everlasting gospel, for their comfort and edification. So the apostle Peter determined, whilst he was in *this tabernacle*, in the body, in the present state of things, so long as he remained in the world, to *stir up* the saints, by putting them in remembrance of these things, though they knew them, and were established

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I i

in

* Jude, ver. 21.

† See Mede's works, B. II. p. 341.

† Isai. lxii. 6.

* 1 Thes. v. 12. *ἵνα διαμνησκῆτε*.

in them^a; and then may the ministers of the gospel be said to record the name of the Lord, and the Lord to record it, by them; or cause it to be remembered, when,

(1.) They put those in mind, to whom they minister, of the love, grace, and mercy of God, displayed in salvation by Jesus Christ; when, as God has proclaimed his name, “a God gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin;” they also publish and proclaim the same grace and mercy of his, as it is shewn forth in the several parts and branches of salvation; or, in other words, when they ascribe salvation, both in whole and in part, to the free grace and sovereign mercy of God in Christ. For instance, when they declare, that God’s choice of men to holiness here, and happiness hereafter, is wholly owing to his everlasting love, and sovereign will and pleasure; when they assert there is such an act in God; and that this is eternal; that it passed before men had done either good or evil, and had no respect to either; that the moving cause of it, are not the faith, or holiness, or obedience, and good works of men; nor the foresight of any, or either of them; that it does not stand upon the works of man, but upon the will of God; and therefore truly called the *election of grace*; and which the apostle most clearly evinces, by arguing in such a strong and nervous manner about it; *if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work*^b. Likewise, when they attribute the mission of Christ into this world, in order to obtain salvation for men, purely to the good-will, grace, and mercy of God, as the scriptures do; which assure us, that it is owing to *the tender mercy of our God*, his bowels of compassion to sinful, miserable creatures, that *the day-spring from on high*, the Messiah, the Sun of righteousness, whose rising, and coming here, made the glorious gospel-day, *has visited us*^c; by the beamings-forth of his love and grace, in the assumption of our nature; by sending forth the light of truth abroad in the world; and dispelling the darkness of error, ignorance, and infidelity; the design of whose appearance was not merely to deliver a system of doctrines, and to recommend them by his own example, but to suffer and die for us; and, by so doing, redeem us from sin and death, and everlasting ruin: and, his coming on such an errand, is entirely the fruit and effect of divine love; *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, and sent him into the world, to be the propitiation, Saviour, and Redeemer; and *in this the love of God is manifested to us; herein is love*^d; this is a full proof and demonstration of it; and it appears the more illustrious and free, when it is observed, the persons that God gave his Son for, into the hands of justice, and death, and Christ died for, are represented, not only as without strength, but as ungodly, sinners, and enemies

^a 2 Peter i. 12, 13.

^b Rom. xi. 5, 6.

^c Luke i. 78.

^d John iii. 16.

1 John iv. 9, 10.

enemies in their minds, by wicked works. Now, when the love, grace, and mercy of God, in this instance, are published, then is the name of the Lord proclaimed and recorded, as a God gracious and merciful. Also, when the blessings of justification, and pardon of sin, are referred to the same source and origin, spring and fountain, even the unmerited grace of God in Christ; for, though upon the account of the righteousness of Christ, and the imputation of it, God is just, whilst he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; and as justification proceeds upon, and through the redemption that is in Christ; yet this hindereth not but that is freely by the grace of God^e; for it is grace that provided this righteousness, accepts of it, and imputes it; and it is the free gift of God to man; and so is faith itself, which receives it; ungodly men are justified by it; and this is imputed, without works, unto them: and then is the grace of God, in this article, exalted and magnified, when it is roundly declared, for which there is the greatest authority, that *by the deeds of the law, no man is, or can be justified*; but that justification is *by faith in Christ's righteousness, without the works of it*. And so pardon of sin, though through the blood of Christ, which was shed for it, it is an act of justice in God to forgive it: and he is just and faithful in doing it, on that account; yet it is according to the riches of his grace, and the multitude of his tender mercies^f, that he forgives sin, even for Christ's sake: and then is the name of the Lord recorded, when forgiveness of sin is preached in the name of Christ; and the name of God is published and proclaimed, *a God forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, freely and fully, on his account*. In short, this is done, when salvation is asserted to be not according to mens works, but according to the purpose and grace of God; when it is affirmed, that it is *not by works of righteousness the best men have done*, and in the best manner, they are saved; but by the abundant mercy of God, through Christ; that it is by grace alone that salvation is, and not by works, lest any should boast; and that it is *through faith*; and that *not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God*. In a word; the name of God is recorded, when not the merits of men, but the mercy of God, is magnified; when not free-will, but free grace, is preached; when salvation is said to be, *not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that sheweth mercy*; when regeneration is ascribed, not to the might and power of man, but to the Spirit of the Lord of hosts; when men are taught to attribute all they have, and are, and do, to the grace of God; and to say with the apostle, *by the grace of God I am what I am*^g; and when it is the drift of the ministry, and the concern of those in it, to display the riches of divine grace, and the glory of it; which is the ultimate end of God in the predestination, redemption, and salvation of men.

I I 2

2. Then

^e Rom. iii. 24—26.^f 1 John i. 9. Ephes. i. 7. Psalm li. 1.^g 1 Cor. xv. 10.

2. Then do ministers of the word record, make mention of, and cause to be remembered, the name of the Lord; and God does it by them, when they preach Christ, and him crucified, as God's alone way of salvation. This was the course the first ministers of the gospel steered; they preached not themselves; as they did not seek themselves, so neither did they exalt themselves and others; they did not preach up the purity of human nature, the power of man's free-will, the sufficiency of good works to justify before God, and to render acceptable in his sight; *but Christ Jesus the Lord^b*, as the only redeemer and saviour of lost sinners. Particularly, this was the resolution and determination of the great apostle of the Gentiles: for so he says, writing to the *Corinthians*, *I determined to know*; that is, to make known, *nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified^c*; meaning, in the great affair and business of salvation; and this determination he abode by, notwithstanding all the opposition made unto him, and contempt that was cast on him for it: *We preach*, says he, *Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness^d*. Thus did he, and other preachers of the gospel, record the name of the Lord to good purpose wherever they came; and so do all such who make mention in their ministry of the glorious person of Christ, as *God over all blessed for ever; as the true God, and eternal life; as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; whose glory is the glory of the only-begotten of the Father*; being in the glorious form, and having all the glorious perfections of deity in him. When they describe him as the God-man, as *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands, and altogether lovely* in his person and offices; when they speak of him, and direct unto him as *the only mediator between God and man; in whom the saints are blessed with all spiritual blessings*; through whom they have a participation of all grace here, and have both a right unto, and meetness for, eternal glory hereafter; who is now the way of access to the father, and of acceptance with him; and by whom all the sacrifices of prayer and praise are to be offered to God, and become acceptable to him; as well as he will be the medium of all that glory that shall be enjoyed hereafter: then also do they record *the name of the Lord*, and he by them, when they declare *there is no other name given among men whereby they must be saved, than the name of Christ*; that there is salvation in none but him; that it is in vain to hope for it in the multitude of hills and mountains, or from mens works, be they ever so many; even though they were piled up as mountains aiming at heaven, and seeking to reach it: and when this is the subject of their ministry, the *faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom*, says the apostle, *I am chief^e*. When also they make mention of the righteousness of Christ, and him only, as the matter of a sinner's justification before God; when they preach, that *through Christ*

^b 2 Cor. iv. 5.^c 1 Cor. ii. 2.^d 1 Cor. i. 23.^e 1 Tim. i. 15.

Christ and his righteousness believers are justified from all things they could not be by the law of Moses, and obedience to it: and then may they be said to turn many to righteousness ^f; or to *justify many*, that is, by guiding and directing them alone to Christ for righteousness: likewise when they speak well of the precious blood of Christ, and direct souls to deal with it, for the remission of their sins; and shew that both justification and sanctification are through it; that peace and reconciliation are made by it; and a way is opened by means of it, into the holy of holies: moreover, when they exalt the sacrifice of Christ, and observe that all others, let them be of what nature they will among men, yet are insufficient to atone for sin; even *thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil*; yea, though *the first-born should be given for transgression, and the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul*; and that *Christ's sacrifice alone has taken away sin; made an end of it, and made reconciliation for it*; and that Christ, the Lamb of God, is only to be looked unto as the sin-bearing, and sin-atoning Saviour: To which may be added, that this is the case, when the advocacy of Christ is preached up; or he is represented as *the advocate with the Father; who appears in the presence of God, and ever lives to make intercession for his people*; introduces their persons into the presence of his Father; presents their petitions, and pleads for the blessings of grace to be applied to them they want; and the supplies of grace to be granted them they stand in need of. To say no more, then do faithful dispensers of the word *record the name of the Lord*, and he by them, when they preach the pure gospel of Christ free, unmixed, and unadulterated; when they do not corrupt the word, but sincerely preach it, as in the sight of God and Christ; when their ministry is not yea and nay, but all of a piece; consistent with itself, and with the word of God; when the trumpet does not give an uncertain sound; when only the joyful sound is heard; peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation, are clearly, openly, without reserve or disguise, published and proclaimed.

2. Under the gospel-dispensation God records his name, by appointing ordinances, and by the administration of them, as memorials of his love and grace; and particularly the ordinance of the Lord's-supper; and where that is truly administered, and carefully attended to, and the design of it answered, there the name of the Lord is caused to be remembered; and the memories of men are sweetly and comfortably refreshed with it. This ordinance is a commemorative ordinance, causing to remember, or bringing to remembrance. The design of it is to put in mind of the love of God and Christ; of the love of God in the gift of his Son, and of the love of Christ in the gift of himself; and it is hard to say which is the greatest instance of love, for God to give his Son, his

only

^f Dan. xii. 3.

only begotten Son, or for Christ to give himself, his soul and body, and both in union with his divine person; to lay down his life, to shed his blood, to offer himself *a sacrifice unto God for us*. The ordinance of the supper brings to our remembrance the love of the Father in providing his Son a lamb for a burnt-offering; in sending him into this world to be a Saviour of his people; in not sparing him, but delivering him up into the hands of justice and death for us all; and all this, when and while we were sinners. It refreshes our memories with the love of Christ, in giving himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God, of a sweet-smelling savour. It is not a reiteration of the sacrifice, an offering up again the body and blood of Christ; but a commemoration of it, and of the love of Christ in it: Hereby we perceive his love to us. It is very plain and evident that he laid down his life for us; it leads us to observe it as such an instance of love that is not to be found among men. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends**. But Christ has shewn greater love than this, by laying down his life for his enemies. Now, the elements or symbols in the Lord's-supper, the bread and wine, are memorials of what Christ has done and suffered for his people; of his body being bruised and broken for them; of his blood being shed, and his soul poured out unto death on their account; and of his being *stricken and smitten for their transgressions, and wounded for their sins*; and of his bearing them and the punishment due unto them; and when the bread is eaten and the wine drank; they are both to be done by our Lord's direction, in remembrance of him, and of the above things, and of his love in all: and then is his name recorded, when his *love is remembered more than wine*^h; when saints call upon their souls, and all within them, to bless his holy name, and *not forget his benefits*ⁱ; especially the redemption of their lives from destruction by him. Now,

Thirdly, The places which God has a regard to, and where his people should meet and worship him, are where his name is recorded: This appears from what has been said. They are such where his free grace is set forth, magnified and exalted in the salvation of men; where Christ crucified is preached, and the ordinances are truly and faithfully administered: and when this is the case, it matters not what or where they are. Under the former dispensation there were particular places for worship, namely, wherever the tabernacle and ark were, and especially the city of *Jerusalem*, where the temple was built. But now we are not obliged to go to *Sbilob*, or *Gilgal*, or *Jerusalem*. The only descriptive character which points out a place to us, and directs us where to go and worship, is *where the Lord records his name*; or his ministers record it, by faithfully preaching his gospel, and administering his ordinances: and these are not limited

* John xv. 13.

^h Cant. i. 3.ⁱ Psalm ciii. 1—4.

limited and restrained to any place. It matters not whether the edifice we worship in, is greater or smaller, built in a less or more pompous manner; nor what names it is called by; whether a meeting-house, church, or chapel; a conventicle, or a cathedral: the only point is, is the name of the Lord recorded there? For we find under the gospel-dispensation, the word has been used to be preached indifferently any where. Thus we may observe at one time, that our Lord *sat* upon a *mountain*, and delivered those excellent discourses contained in the *fifth*, *sixth*, and *seventh* chapters of *Matthew*. At another time he *sat* in a *ship*, and taught the multitude as they *stood* on the shore. And elsewhere we read of him preaching in a private house; as well as he sometimes *went* into the *temple*, the then public place of worship; and *sat* and *taught* there^k. And so his apostles and disciples not only preached in the synagogues of the Jews as they had opportunity, but in other places not used before for religious worship. The apostle *Paul* disputed and discoursed in the school of *Tyrannus*, and continued this practice for the space of two years there; so that all *Asia* had the opportunity of hearing the word of the Lord: And he also was two other whole years in his own hired house at *Rome*, *preaching the kingdom of God, and the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ*^l. I should now have entered on the *second* general head, but the consideration of that must be left to the afternoon.

^k Matt. v. 1. and xiii. 2. Mark ii. 1, 2. John viii. 2.

^l Acts xix. 9. and xxviii. 30, 31.

S E R M O N X V I .

Attendance in Places of religious Worship, where the Divine Name is recorded, encouraged.

Preached October 9, 1757, at the Opening of a New Place for Worship, in Carter-lane, St Olave's-street, Southwark.

EXODUS XX. 24.

—*In all places, where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*

TWO things have been observed in these words, and proposed to be treated of :

- I. The place, or places, God has a regard unto; and where his people should meet and worship him; and that is, where he *records his name*.
- II. The regard he has to such place, or places; and the encouragement he gives his people to meet and worship him there; expressed by his presence with them, and blessing on them, *I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee*.

The first of these heads has been discoursed on this morning; under which has been shewn, what is meant by *the Name of the Lord*; which takes in his Being, his Nature, his Perfections, and Attributes, and every title and appellation, by which he is made known unto men. And also his Son, in whom his name is; and all his characters; and likewise his gospel; which is a most glorious revelation of himself, and of his mind and will; so that it includes every thing relating to his essence and glory; to his Son in whom, and to his gospel, and the doctrines of it, by which, he is declared and manifested; especially in his grace and mercy to the children of men. Moreover, it has been inquired into, what is intended by *recording* his name, or causing it to be mentioned, or remembered. And it has been observed, that this was done by the
Lord,

Lord, under the Old-Testament-dispensation, by appointing *memorials* of it; such as the Ark, and Mercy-seat, the Altar, and the Sacrifices offered on it: and under the New-Testament-dispensation, by the ministry of the word, and the ministers of it; whose business it is, to *make mention of the name of the Lord*, and put men in mind of him; to publish and proclaim his free grace, goodwill, and favour, in the election, redemption, justification, and salvation of men; and to preach Christ and him crucified; to make mention of his person, as God-man; of his offices, as Mediator and Saviour; and of his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and intercession; and purely, faithfully, constantly, and consistently, to dispense the doctrines and mysteries of grace, they are stewards of: likewise, they *record the name of the Lord*, and he by them, through a faithful administration of his ordinances, especially the ordinance of the Lord's supper; which is designed to commemorate the grace of God, and the love of Christ until his second coming. And now, where the riches of the grace of God are displayed; Christ, in his person and offices, is exalted; his word is faithfully preached; and his ordinances truly and rightly administered; these are the places where the Lord may be said to record his name, and where his people should meet together to worship him.

And, as we have now opened a new place of worship, we enter upon it in this way, by *recording the name of the Lord*, in the manner before described; namely, by preaching the doctrines of the grace of God, and of free and full salvation alone, by Jesus Christ; and by the administration of gospel-ordinances, as they have been delivered to us. To do these from time to time, is our present view, and what, by divine assistance, we shall endeavour to pursue, in the course of our worship and ministrations here. What doctrines may be taught in this place, after I am gone, is not for me to know; but, as for my own part, I am at a point; I am determined, and have been long ago, what to make the subject of my ministry. It is now upwards of forty years since I entered into the work of the ministry; and the first sermon I ever preached, was from those words of the apostle, *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified**; and, through the grace of God, I have been enabled, in some good measure, to abide by the same resolution hitherto, as many of you here are my witnesses; and I hope, through divine assistance, I ever shall, as long as I am in this tabernacle, and engaged in such work. I am not afraid of the reproaches of men; I have been inured to these, from my youth upwards; *none of these things move me*. But I hope you will pardon this digression; I return to my subject, and proceed to consider,

- II. The regard which God has to such place, or places, where *his name is recorded*; and the encouragement he gives his people, to meet and worship him there; namely, the promise of his presence and blessing; *I will come unto thee, and bless thee.*

First, The Lord here promises his presence with his people, assembled together in his name, and where his name is recorded, and they meet to worship him, to celebrate his name, to make mention of it, and put one another in remembrance of it; *I will come unto thee*; that is, in such place, or places, where this is done. Under this head I shall endeavour to shew, in what sense the Lord may be said to *come* unto his people, when gathered together for religious worship; under what considerations he comes unto them; and when it may be known that he is come unto them, and is in the midst of them; as well as the wonderfulness of this grace and favour; which will appear, by observing the contrast between the *I*, the person who says he will come; and the *thee*, or persons to whom he comes.

1. What is meant by his *coming* to his people. And this is to be understood not locally, of any change of place; or of his removing from place to place, which he is incapable of, being omnipresent. The Jews call God *Makom*, "place^b;" because he is every where, and fills up all places; *the heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool*; and neither of them can contain him; he fills both with his presence, and is not circumscribed by either: so that he cannot, with propriety, be said to come or go from one place to another: when he is said to descend, or come down from heaven to earth, it is not by local motion, but by some display and effects of his power, or of his grace and goodness. Thus, when he said, *Let us go down*; and it is said, *he came down, to see the city and tower the children of men were building*^c, this was done in a way of wrath and judgment; by shewing his power, and by confounding their language, and scattering them abroad upon the face of the whole earth: and when
the

^b Apud Rabbinos מקום, inter nomina Dei est, & quidem cum articulo המקום, per antiphrasin, quasi *illocalis, infinitus*, qui nullo loco capitur, sed omnibus rebus locum dat. Buxtorf. in rad. מקום, p. 673. Vid. Pirke Aboth. c. 5. f. 4. & 6. 1. The reasons of this name given by the Jewish writers, are these; says Aben Ezra *, our antients, of blessed memory, call him (God) *the place*; because every place is full of his glory; and R. Hona. in the name of R. Ame, says †, why do they sur-name the holy blessed God, and call him מקום, *place*? because he is the place of the world; and there is no world his place, but what is written, *behold, there is a place by me*, Exod. xxxiii. 21. And elsewhere ‡ it is asked likewise, why is his name called *place*? because in every place where the righteous are, there is he found with them; as it is said, *in every place where I record my name*, &c. Exod. xx. 24.

^c Gen. xi. 5, 7.

* P.æfat. in Comment. in Esther.

† Bereshit Rabba. S. 68. fol. 60. 4.

‡ Pirke Eliczer, c. 35. fol. 38. 2.

the Lord is said^d to descend, and stand at the door of the tabernacle, to meet his people there, it is to be understood of displays of his grace, discoveries of his love, and intimations of his favour; and of his mind and will; and which is greatly the sense of the expression here: for, it is not to be taken either in a corporal sense, as if any bodily shape was assumed by the Lord, and he appeared in it. Indeed, this is the sense of all those passages, which speak of, and foretel the coming of Christ, and contain the promise of it; such as, *your God will come, even God with a recompence; he will come, and save you*; and again, *Bebold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand*^e; but these only belong to the second person in the Trinity, the Son of God, and his incarnation; to his coming into the world, by the assumption of human nature; to the *Word being made flesh, and so dwelling among men*; but cannot be said of *Jebovah*, the Father, who is the person speaking in our text, and who never appeared in any corporal form; for Christ expressly says, *Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape*^f. Nor is this coming of the Lord to his people, to be understood now of any visible token of his presence, as in former times; as in a *cloud*, or by *fire*, or any other way. Thus he came to *Moses* in a thick cloud; and descended on mount *Sinai* in fire^g. These were indications of his being come, and of his being present. So he went before the children of *Israel*, as they travelled through the wilderness, *in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night*^h. When these were seen, it was known the Lord was there; when the tabernacle was set up, *a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle*ⁱ. The cloud was a visible symbol of the presence of the Lord in it: and the same may be observed of the temple of *Solomon* at the dedication of it by him: *the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord*^k: and it was the cloud, as is plain, that was the visible token of that glory, or of the glorious presence of the Lord there. Sometimes God gave intimations of his presence with his people, and of his approbation of them, and their sacrifices, by sending down *fire* upon them; and which is thought by some^l, to be the way and manner, in which he expressed his acceptance of *Abel's* sacrifice. However, in this way he did signify his acceptance of others: it is said, *And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people; and there came fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offerings, and the fat; which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces*^m in reverence of the divine Being, who was present by this symbol; and they shouted for joy, and in thankfulness, for his declaring his approbation and acceptance of their sacrifices. And in like man-

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^d Exod. xxix. 42. and xxxiii. 9.^e Isai. xxxv. 4. and xl. 10.^f John v. 37.^g Exod. xix. 9. 18.^h Exod. xiii. 21.ⁱ Exod. xl. 34.^k 1 Kings viii. 10, 11.^l See Ainsworth on Gen. iv. 4.^m Lev. ix. 23, 24.

ner, the Lord shewed himself to be present, and to be the only Lord God, by causing fire to fall down and consume the sacrifice, the wood, stones, and dust, and lick up the water in the trench, when *Baal* could do nothing to make it manifest that he heard his prophets, or was present with them^a. But nothing of this kind is now to be expected, under the gospel-dispensation; the Lord's coming to his people, is only in a spiritual manner; by his Spirit and grace, and the communications of it; by his Spirit teaching, and instructing, enlightening, comforting, quickening them, and applying his word with power; and blessing that and his ordinances to them; in like manner as Christ promised his presence to his disciples; *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you*^b; meaning, that though they should be deprived of his bodily presence, yet they should have his spiritual presence with them, especially when ministering his word, and administering his ordinances; and in this sense it is to be understood in a following verse; where he promises his presence to all that love him, and keep his commandments, and his father's also; saying, *We will come unto him, and make our abode with him*^c; which cannot design the return of his bodily presence to his disciples, at his resurrection; but the gracious and spiritual presence of him, and his divine Father, with his people, in all ages; particularly, while they are employed in his worship, and are observing his commands and ordinances: and it is in this sense we may understand the expression in this passage; especially as it may be applied to gospel-times.

2. It may be inquired, under what considerations God may be said to come unto his people, in this gracious and spiritual manner, whilst worshipping him. He comes unto them, as into his own house and habitation; and that as the master, owner, and proprietor of it; his church and people are *built up, an habitation* for him, *through the spirit*; believers are the *living stones*, of which the spiritual house consists; and these being laid on the foundation, Christ, *grew up unto an holy temple in the Lord*^d; and for his use; and whither he comes; and of which he says, *This is my rest; here will I dwell, for I have desired it*^e; and from this time forward, that God takes up his abode and residence here, the name of such a place, city, and church, is, *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there^f: he comes unto them, as unto his family; as the father of it, who cares and provides for it. He is their father by adopting grace; and has taken them into this relation in the everlasting covenant, to which he predestinated them, according to the good pleasure of his will; in which he says of them, and to them, *I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*^g; and which grace he makes known unto them by the Spirit of adoption, sent unto them: in consequence of this, he will not *leave them comfortless*,

^a 1 Kings xviii. 38, 39.

^b John xiv. 18.

^c Ver. 23.

^d Ephes. ii. 21, 22.

^e Psalm cxxiii. 14.

^f Ezek. xlvi. 35.

^g 2 Cor. vi. 18.

forlorn, or *orphans*, as is Christ's word concerning them *; but *will come* unto them, in a spiritual way, as he promises; and shew his paternal love to them, and care of them, bringing food in his hands for them; asking one and another of them, *Children, have ye any meat* †? and puts it into their hands and mouths, and blesses *Zion's* provisions, the word and ordinances, to them, and *satisfies his poor with bread*; with the bread of the gospel; with *the bread of life*, Christ Jesus. He comes unto them as to his flock, and as the shepherd of it; it being under his peculiar watch and care, and he the proprietor of it: his own the sheep are, the sheep of his hand, and the sheep of his pasture: to these he comes; and he looks well to this his flock; and inspects narrowly and carefully into their state, case, and condition: he comes to search and seek out those that are straying, and scattered in the dark and cloudy day; to look up that which is lost and driven away, and restore them, and *lead them into green pastures, and beside the still waters*; to bind up broken hearts, and broken bones, and strengthen the sick, and heal all their spiritual maladies, and do all the offices of a good shepherd to them; by feeding them in a good pasture, and making them to lie down in a good fold ‡. He comes unto them, as to his friends, and pays kind visits; he makes a *feast of fat things* for them, in his holy mountain; he *brings them into his banqueting house*; he sits down at table with them; he *sups with them, and they with him*; whom he welcomes to the entertainment he makes for them; saying, *Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved* §. To observe no more; he comes unto his people met together for worship, as his special favourites; for whom he has a peculiar respect, and admits to peculiar nearness to himself, and to peculiar enjoyments; whom he remembers with the favour he bears to his chosen ones; having *loved them with an everlasting love*, and distinguished them by the blessings of his grace, bestowed upon them; to those he loves, he shews his covenant; the blessings and promises of it, and their interest in them; discloses the secrets of his heart's love unto them, and sheds it abroad in them; makes known more fully to them the great salvation, and restores unto them the joys of it; indulges them with near and intimate communion with himself; and *manifests himself to them*, as he does not unto the world: by all which it appears, they are the delight of his soul, and the darling of his heart; the favourites of heaven, and friends of God.

3. It may be asked, how it may be known when God is come unto his people, in a spiritual manner, in public service and worship? In answer to which, it may be said, that it may be in some measure known, when the ministers of the word are assisted by him, both in praying and preaching; when they manifestly

pray

* *ępawę.* John xiv. 18.

† John xxi. 5.

‡ Ezek. xxxiv. 12—16.

§ Cant. i. 12. and ii. 4. and v. 1.

pray with the spirit, and with the understanding, and have their hearts enlarged in prayer; and are directed to suitable petitions for those they represent; and have much freedom in their own souls, and much nearness to God, and familiarity with him; and when they have, in their ministrations to the people, presence of mind, liberty of expression, a door of utterance, and fulness of matter; when they are brought forth *in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*; and they are not straitened in themselves; but find a pleasure in their work, and have their own hearts affected and warmed; which may not only be felt by themselves, but be discerned by others. Also, the presence of God may be observed, when the word preached by them is owned for conviction and conversion; when under it men are pricked to the heart, and set a seeking after the right way of salvation; as the three thousand under *Peter's* sermon, on the day of Pentecost; and as those in *Cornelius's* house, on whom the Spirit of the Lord fell, while the same apostle was preaching; when the Spirit of God effectually convinces men, by means of the word, of sin and the evil nature of it; lays open all the sinfulness of their hearts, and brings to their remembrance the iniquities of their lives; and they are told, as the woman of *Samaria* was by Christ, all that ever they did; and then being *convinced, and judged of all, and the secrets of their hearts made manifest*, as if the minister had privately been acquainted with their lives and characters, they *fall down on their faces, and worship God, and report that God is in his ministers, and with his people, of a truth*. Likewise, this appears to be the case, when the gospel is not only the means of faith, by which it comes, as it does by hearing the word; for when the hand of the Lord, or his power, goes along with his ministers, and accompanies his word, then men believe; but, when it is increased thereby; when the word is food for faith; when there are in souls a desire after the sincere milk of the word; an appetite for it; a gust and relish of it; when it is found under the ministry of it, and is eaten by faith, and is the joy and rejoicing of the heart; when it is not only received by faith, in the love of it, but is mixed with it, and digested by it; and so becomes very nourishing, strengthening, and edifying. Moreover, this may be discerned, that God is come unto, and is present with his people, at such times, when their affections are moved and raised, and their minds enlightened, and judgments informed and established in the truth of the gospel; when these two go together, raised affections, and instructed minds; for it is dangerous to have them separated; when the word is like fire, and at once both warms the heart and illuminates the mind; and when, at the same time, the hearts of God's people *burn within* them; as did the hearts of the two disciples, that traveled with Christ to *Emmaus*, while he *talked with them by the way, and opened to them the scriptures*; the eyes of their understandings are enlightened, and

▪ 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.

▪ Luke xxiv. 34.

and the veil is removed from them, and they behold *wondrous things out of the law*^b, or doctrine of the gospel; when the Lord opens their understandings, that they may understand the scriptures, as Christ did his disciples; and the Spirit of the Lord *leads them into all truth, as it is in Jesus*; and applies it powerfully and comfortably to them, and they are established and confirmed therein; and then, ere they are aware, their affections are caught, and these rise up, *like pillars of smoke perfumed with frankincense*, and their souls are *like the chariots of Amminadib*^c; are on the full speed upwards, heaven-ward, and God-ward. Again; then may the presence of God be perceived by his people, in public worship, whilst attending the word and ordinances; when the promises of the gospel are opened and applied; when a word that is sent unto *Jacob*, lights on *Israel*; when a word is spoken in season to weary souls, and it suiteth to their case and circumstances, and is so understood and observed; and which gives peculiar pleasure and delight, and yields a *joy unspeakable, and full of glory; for a word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver*^d. And so it appears very sensibly, when the love of God is again manifested; when the experiences of the saints are renewed and confirmed; when fresh light is thrown upon the work of grace on their hearts, and the evidence of it is clear; and in *Jehovah's light they see light*, and are satisfied of the truth of grace in them; when the desires of their souls are drawn out after God, and their hearts pant after him, *as the hart pants after the water-brook*; and after the name of Christ, and the remembrance of it: and they are indulged with intimate communion and fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and have some fresh pledges and tokens of their love to them. And now, it is this which makes the house of God delightful, the *tabernacles* of the Lord *amiable* and lovely; *a day in his courts better than a thousand* elsewhere; yea, to be more eligible to be a *door-keeper in the house of God*, than to dwell in the *tents of sin and wickedness*: it is the presence of God and Christ; the discoveries of the love of Father, Son, and Spirit; the rich displays of divine grace, and those interviews which believers have with God; and the sweet fellowship they have with him and one another, that makes *Wisdom's ways ways of pleasantness, and all her paths paths of peace*^e; yea, amidst such spiritual and ravishing enjoyments as these, of a place of religious worship, it may be truly said, *this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven*^f.

4. The wonderfulness of enjoying such a favour, as to have God come to his people, and be with them in a spiritual manner in places where they meet to worship him, will appear, by considering the contrast between the great *Jehovah*, who promises to come unto them, and does; and the persons he comes

^b Psalm cxix. 18.^c Cant. iii. 6. and vi. 12.^d Prov. xxv. 11.^e Psalm lxxxiv. 10. Prov. iii. 17.^f Gen. xviii. 17.

comes unto, and who enjoy his gracious presence. The one is, *the Creator of the ends of the earth*; the maker and former of all things visible and invisible; the earth, the sea, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, and all that in them are; the angels of heaven, men on earth, the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, and the cattle on a thousand hills; with whom, and before whom, and in comparison of him, all the nations of the world are *as a drop of a bucket, as the small dust of the balance; nay, are as nothing; yea, less than nothing, and vanity.* And, on the other hand, those he comes unto, and pays them a visit, and graciously converses with, are creatures of his; dust, earth, and worms: it is marvelous he should cast an eye upon them; with whom it is a condescension, a humbling of himself, to look upon things in heaven; it is amazing he should care for them in a providential way, support them in their beings, follow them with his goodness and mercy, and bestow upon them daily the bounties of his providence; with respect to which, it is with wonder said, *What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?*^c But how must the wonder rise and increase, when it is observed, that this great and glorious Being, that has given being to all worlds, and creatures in them, vouchsafes to come unto such poor nothings, in a way of special grace and kindness; and communes with them in a spiritual manner, and tells them how he loves them, and has loved them, with an everlasting love; unbosoms himself to them, and communicates the riches of his grace, and assures them of their right and title to everlasting glory and happiness! Moreover, he who promises to come, and does come, to his people worshipping at his footstool, is the *possessor of heaven and earth*^b; as he has made them both, he has a right to each; the one he has reserved to be an habitation for himself; the other he has given to the children of men; the one he has made his throne to sit on; the other his footstool to tread on; and both are his property, and at his dispose, with all things in them: the riches of both worlds are his; and yet these riches are nothing to the perfections of his nature he is possessed of. And now, this *high and holy one*, that *inhabits eternity*, and *dwells in the high and holy place*¹, and not in temples made with hands, is graciously pleased to come unto poor frail mortals, that dwell in earthly tabernacles, in cottages of clay, which have their foundations in the dust, and visit *beggars upon the dunghil*; from whence he takes them, and sets them with *princes*, that they may inherit *the throne of glory*^k; as well as takes up his abode with *such that are of an humble and contrite spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones.* He who condescends to come unto his people, and be seen in the midst of them, is the King of kings, and

^c Job vii. 17, 18.^b Gen. xiv. 22.¹ Isai. lviii. 15.^k 1 Sam. ii. 8.

and Lord of lords; the Lord of the whole universe; whose the kingdom of nature and providence is, and who is the governor among the nations; that presides over all kings and princes, and over all kingdoms and states; *who sits enthroned in the highest heavens, and does what he pleases in heaven and earth*; and orders all things after his sovereign pleasure; and whose will cannot be resisted, or his power controled, or his hand stayed; or he be called to an account for any thing done by him; nor does he, nor will he, *give any account of his matters to the sons of men*; but all are, and must be, accountable to him; kings and governors; those in the highest, as well as in the lowest class of life. Now, it is this great and universal Monarch, that vouchsafes to descend from heaven, in the displays of his love and grace, and shew himself among the *poor of this world, though rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom*¹; to come and make known himself, his Son and gospel, and open the treasures of his grace, to persons who, in the esteem of men, are *things that are not*, and are reckoned by them *the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things*^m. It would seem strange, and be very surprizing, and be thought an instance of wonderful condescension, should an earthly king go in a public manner, in his royal robes, and with his attendants, to the cottage of a poor peasant; there enter, sit down, eat and drink, and freely converse with him for an hour or two; and yet, this is not to be mentioned with this wondrous favour of *the King eternal, immortal, the blessed and only potentate*, shewing himself in the assemblies of his saints, sitting down at table with them, and communing with them from above the mercy-seat; where they behold the King in his beauty, being held forth in the galleries of the ordinances; and sometimes in so glorious a manner, that they with wonder and rapture say, *How glorious was the king of Israel to day*ⁿ?

Once more; He who promises to come, and does come, and is among his people, while worshipping him, is a holy, just, and righteous Being; a God of *purer eyes than to behold iniquity* with any approbation or pleasure, or so as not to correct or punish for it; *who is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; glorious, as in all the perfections of his nature, so more especially in his holiness; being perfectly pure, unspotted, and untarnished, just and true, and without any iniquity at all: and yet, the persons he deigns to come unto and take up his residence among, are sinful men; such as have sinned in *Adam*, and are made sinners by his disobedience; who are *conceived, shapen, and born in sin*; and are by nature, corrupt, depraved, polluted, and guilty creatures, and so *children of wrath, as others*; who have in time past lived according to the course of this world, in sin and wickedness, *servicing divers lusts and pleasures*: and though now called by grace, yet have sin dwelling in them, and are frequently guilty of transgressing the law of God, in thought, word, or deed;

¹ James ii. 5.^m 1 Cor. i. 28. and iv. 13.ⁿ 2 Sam. vi. 20.

and are often revolting and backsliding from God, and doing those things which might justly provoke the eyes of his glory; and yet he is pleased to *come unto them, and take up his dwelling with them*. Now, there is nothing that can account for all this, but his being the God of all grace; *a God gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth; a God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin*, as he has proclaimed himself; it can be ascribed to nothing else but to his free, rich, sovereign grace; not to any deserts of men, or on account of any service done by them; which when done in the best manner, is unprofitable, with respect to him. It is all marvellous loving-kindness; it may well be wondered at, for it cannot be accounted for in any other way, but on the foot of free and unmerited grace.

Solomon, at the dedication of his temple, said, *but will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him; how much less this house that I have built?* It is wonderful that such an infinite and incomprehensible Being should dwell on earth; it is more wonderful, that he should dwell with men on earth; it is more wonderful still, that he should dwell with *sinful men* here. But yet, since he has said, he *will come* unto his people, where his name is recorded, it may be expected and believed he will; for he is a faithful God, a covenant-keeping God, true to every word of promise made by him; he *will not suffer his faithfulness to fail*; he cannot deny himself, nor will he *alter any thing that is gone out of his lips*: Christ has promised, that where his people, though ever so few, are gathered together in his name, and where his ministers preach in his name, and ordinances are administered in his name, and in the name of his Father, and of the blessed Spirit, *he will be with them, even unto the end of the world*^o: And he has not only promised for himself, but for his divine Father also, that such as keep his commandments, from a principle of love to him, *they will come unto them, and make their abode with them*^q; and this being promised, may be most surely depended upon. If the Lord says, he will come, nothing shall hinder his coming: not Satan; he may hinder, as he sometimes has hindered the ministers of the gospel from coming to the churches, and ministering to them, for their comfort and edification; as he hindered the apostle *Paul*, and others, from going to *Thessalonica*; as he affirms, *Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again, but Satan hindered us*^r; but, when God says he will come, and is resolved to come, and pay a gracious visit to his people, Satan, and all his principalities and powers, cannot hinder: if any thing, the sins of God's people are most likely to hinder his coming to them; as they sometimes are the cause of his departure from them, and of their not having sensible communion with him;

your

^o 1 Kings viii. 27.

^q John xiv. 23.

^p Matt. xviii 20. and xxviii 19, 20.

^r 1 Thess. ii. 18.

your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face you. But when it is his pleasure to come among his people, and indulge them with his gracious presence, even these shall not hinder; he will come *leaping on the mountains, skipping on the hills*¹, of all their sins and transgressions, revoltings and backslidings, indolence, negligence, and unbelief. So much for the first instance of God's regard to places where his name is recorded, and the first argument used, to encourage his people to meet and worship him there. I proceed,

Secondly, To consider the other instance and argument made use of, the promise of blessing them; *and I will bless thee*. God, when he comes unto his people, and pays them a visit, he does not come empty-handed; he brings a blessing, or blessings, along with him. And,

1. His very coming to them, his presence itself, is a blessing; a wish for this, is the sum and substance of the blessing of the high-priest, pronounced over the children of Israel, and on their account; *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace*². It is the presence of God, the displays of his grace and power, the shine of his face, and the light of his countenance, that fill every petition; and, indeed, a greater blessing than these cannot be enjoyed. Nothing is more desirable to a gracious soul, than the presence of God; be he where he will, or come and go where he will; this is what he is importunate for, that it might be with him; as *Moses* said, *If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence*³. It signifies nothing where such a man is, or what he has, if he has not the presence of God; this is better to him than life, and all the enjoyments of it; whilst others are saying, *what will shew us any good?* Any good, any temporal good; any of the good things of this life will satisfy a worldly mind, but not a gracious heart; such will say, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*; and, when this favour is granted, and enjoyed, they will add, with praise and thankfulness, *thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and wine increased*⁴. No temporal mercy can so delight the heart of a good man, as the presence of God, and communion with him; his absence is darkness, and death, his presence is light, and life; it is night when he withdraws himself, and that causes weeping; it is morning when he appears again, and that brings joy; this was the experience of the Psalmist; *for his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*⁵. This might be exemplified in the case of *Mary Magdalen*, weeping at the sepulchre of Christ, when her Lord was taken away from her, and she knew not where he was laid; and

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of

¹ Isai. lix. 2.² Cant. ii. 8.³ Numb. vi. 24—26.⁴ Exod. xxxiii. 14.⁵ Psalm iv. 6, 7.⁶ Psalm xxx. 5.

of the disciples sorrowing, during the time of Christ's lying there; but, when he was risen again, and appeared to them, the one, exulting, said, *Rabboni*, which is to say, master; "O my dear Master, is it thou?" and of the other, it is said, *Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord*^a; nothing more desirable, nothing more delightful, than the presence of God and Christ; nothing so much like heaven as this; this perfectly and everlastingly enjoyed, is heaven; *In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore*^b. Wherefore, it is no wonder that this should be *the one thing*, that should be uppermost on the hearts of God's people, when they are worshipping in his sanctuary; that they may see his face, *behold his beauty*, and have a view of his *power and his glory*^c; as they have sometimes seen them there with inexpressible pleasure and satisfaction: and when they are thus favoured, they are blessed indeed! This is an antidote against all fears; they have nothing to be afraid of from all their enemies, men or devils, the rage of the one, or the reproaches of the other; or the severest persecutions; nor indeed, any affliction, trial, or exercise; *nay, though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death*, since God is with them; as he is, when they pass even through fire and water; wherefore since he says to them, *Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God*^d; they may say in return, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid*^e? And particularly, there is no need to fear any enemy, within or without, whilst worshipping him, since he is present: for, *if God be with us, and for us, who shall, or can be against us*^f?

2. The Lord blesses his people with fresh supplies of grace: what they have received, though it is much, and very abundant, yet not sufficient; as they are called to fresh duty and service, they want more grace; particularly to assist them in the duties of religion; in acts of public worship; in waiting upon God, and serving him in his sanctuary: to do this aright they have need to have grace in their hearts, and that in exercise, and a fresh supply of it; that they may worship him *in spirit and in truth; in righteousness and holiness; acceptably, with reverence and godly fear*; and they may expect a supply of it from him. *My God*, says the apostle, *shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Jesus Christ*^g. The people of God are full of wants: they have many indigencies; they always stand in need of more grace; and never do they need more than when they are engaged in the public exercises of religion; to keep their hearts from wandering from God, and intent upon his word; to enable them to receive it in love, and mix it with faith; and in all, to seek the glory of God: and they may hope to have it, since God, their covenant-God and

Father,

^a John xx. 13, 16, 20.

^b Psalm xvi. 11.

^c Psalm xxvii. 4. and lxiii. 2.

^d Isai. xli. 10.

^e Psalm xxvii. 1.

^f Rom. viii. 31.

^g Phil. iv. 19.

Father, is the *God of all grace*; and is able to make all grace to abound towards them; that they having all sufficiency of it, may abound in every good work^a; whether performed in a more public, or in a more private way: and he has promised to give more grace to the humble dependents on him, and worshippers of him. Christ the mediator is full of Grace; all fulness of it is laid up in him; to be distributed to his people, whenever they want it; and as they have already received from thence, and grace for grace^b, or an abundance of it, they may have more by application to him for it: for he is a *sun and shield*; he will give grace^b; more grace to them that seek unto him: and there are the means of grace, the word and ordinances, which are the *golden pipes*; through which the *golden oil*^c of grace is communicated from Christ unto his saints; and there is the *throne of grace*, which they may come boldly to at all times, that they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help them in time of need^d; and to have a full supply of grace at such a time; as every time we worship God is, is a blessing indeed!

3. The Lord blesses his people when he comes unto them, while they are waiting upon him, and worshipping him, with peace: it is said *the Lord will bless his people with peace*^e; as if this was the one and only blessing he blesses them with; or, at least, the chief and principal one: and, indeed, it is a very comprehensive blessing; it includes all prosperity, temporal and spiritual; and all kind of peace, outward and inward; especially peace of conscience, tranquility and serenity of mind; that *peace of God* which he is the author and giver of, *that passeth all understanding*^f of natural and unconverted men, who know not the way of peace; are strangers to, and intermeddle not with the joy those have that believe in Christ. This peace is from God; whence he is called *the God of peace*^g; who is not only at peace with his people through the blood of Christ, but gives peace unto them; and indeed, he only can give it; wherefore it is asked of him: and if ever it is had, it must come from him. This is a frequent prayer of the apostle's for the churches, *Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*^h. It is to no purpose to apply for it, or expect it elsewhere; and if he gives it, none can take it away; nor even disturb it, unless he suffers it: *when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble*ⁱ? In vain, do Satan, or the world, or any other enemy, seek to hinder the one, or make the other. This peace is through Christ; who is not only the prince of peace, *the man, the peace*, who is our peace, and has made peace by the blood of his cross; but gives it to his followers; even such peace as the world cannot give, nor take away; and which he continues with them amidst all their tribulations in this world: it flows from him, and from God through him; through his precious

^a 2 Cor. ix. 8.^b John i. 14, 16.^c Psalm lxxiv. 11.^d Zech. iv. 12.^e Heb. iv. 16.^f Psalm xxix. 11.^g Phil. iv. 7.^h Heb. xiii. 20.ⁱ Rom. i. 7.^j Job xxxiv. 29.

cious blood, which speaks better things than that of *Abel*; which speaks pardon, and so peace, to guilty souls; and by removing guilt, settles and secures peace; and through his righteousness, by which being justified, souls come to have peace with God through Christ; and are in no fearful apprehensions of present or future wrath; and through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ; in the view of which they joy in God, through him, by whom they have received the atonement of all their sins and transgressions; the consequence of which must be peace and joy.

And this great blessing, in which the comfort and happiness of the spiritual life so much consists, is enjoyed in a way of believing: the more faith, the more conscience-peace, and spiritual joy: it is assured as being what God has promised, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee*^k; and it is a prayer of faith; and when so made, it may be expected it will be answered, *the God of hope fill you with all joy, and peace in believing*^l; and it is the experience of the saints, that the more faith is in exercise, in religious duties, in prayer, in hearing of the word, or in attendance on any ordinance; the more spiritual peace is enjoyed: And which blessing the believer is often favoured with, in public worship; in performing the duties of the house of God; and in observing his commands and ordinances: for though there is no reward for keeping them, yet *in keeping of them there is great reward*^m; and this reward is peace of mind; and a sufficient one it is; and which all the Lord's people are blessed with, more or less, that keep close to him in his own ways, and pay a proper and constant regard to his institutions and appointments. *Great peace have they which love thy law, or doctrine; the doctrine of faith; the doctrine of the gospel; and shew their love by a close and constant attention to it, and to the ordinances of it; nothing shall offend them*ⁿ; disturb their peace, and interrupt their joy; they shall walk comfortably in the light of God's countenance; go on their way rejoicing in Christ; feeling in their breasts a joy unspeakable, and full of glory; and so by good experience, they find the truth of this, that *wisdom's paths are paths of peace*^o.

4. Another blessing God blesses his people with, who meet and worship him in places where his name is recorded, is the free and full forgiveness of their sins: This is only of God: none can forgive sin but him, against whom it is committed; whose law is transgressed, and whose justice is affronted: Were there any that could, they would be such as were like him, at least in this respect; whereas there are none. *Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage*^p! There is none like him for it; and this he does of his rich grace and mercy; and for the

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^k Isai. xxvi. 3.

^l Rom. xv. 13.

^m Psalm xix. 11.

ⁿ Psalm cxix. 165.

^o Prov. iii. 17.

^p Mich. vii. 18.

sake of Christ, his blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction: Hence the apostle exhorts the saints to *forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake*, saith he, *hath forgiven you*[†]: and though this is done at once, and for all sins together; yet as every fresh commission of sin occasions fresh guilt to rise in the conscience, there is need of a renewed application of pardoning grace and mercy; which believers are sometimes favoured with, through the public ministration of the word; where the name of the Lord is recorded, and the blessings of his grace are published; and this among the rest. Thus when the prophet *Isaiab* was cast down under a sense of the pollution and guilt of sin; when in a visionary way he was in the temple of the Lord; one of the *seraphim*, an emblem of gospel ministers, took a *live coal from the altar*, expressive of the expiating blood, and atoning sacrifice of Christ, and *touched his lips with it*, saying, *thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged*[‡]; signifying in a declarative way, according to the tenor of the everlasting gospel, and the doctrine of pardon in it, that his iniquity, of which he was truly sensible, was forgiven for the sake of the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God; and in this way, and at such seasons, namely, under the ministry of the word, is the pardon of sin sometimes applied and sealed to the consciences of God's people; and a special blessing this is: *blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered*[§]: This is a chief and principal blessing in the covenant of grace; it stands first in the article of redemption; yea, redemption by the blood of Christ, is made chiefly to consist of it; that is explained by it; *in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*[¶]: the doctrine of it, is a main and principal one, in the ministration of the gospel; one of the first ordered to be preached and published in it; and is of the utmost importance; and it is among the first-rate blessings we are to call upon our souls to be thankful and bless God for. On this much of the peace, the comfort of the people of God depend: when he would have them comforted, it is by telling them that *their iniquity is pardoned*; and when he would have them be of good cheer, it is by assuring them *their sins are forgiven*; without which they cannot: but this will make the bones that are broken to rejoice; and will cure every soul-sickness and malady: for when this grace is applied, *the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick*; the reason is, *the people that dwell therein, shall be forgiven their iniquity*^{**}; though storms and tempests may arise in the conscience of a sinner, through guilt fastened on it, yet let but a word of pardon by Christ be spoken, all is hush and quiet; there is immediately a calm: and without this blessing, and a sense of it, a man cannot stand before God, and serve him in his sanctuary with pleasure; but let his conscience be sprinkled and purged by the blood of Christ,

and

† Ephes. iv. 32.

‡ Isai. vi. 5—7.

§ Psalm xxxiii. 1.

¶ Ephes. i. 7.

** Isai. xxiii. 24.

and that be applied to him for pardon; and then he will serve the living God freely and cheerfully: and indeed, no one can look into eternity with comfort, and think of a future state with any satisfaction, unless he has a good hope through grace, of an interest in this blessing; but when he sees that God has in love to his soul, cast all his sins behind his back; and in his mercy to him, has thrown them into the depths of the sea; so that when they are sought for they shall not be found, being all freely and fully pardoned; then, though upon the brink of eternity, and just launching into another world, he can sing and say, *O death, where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and that is taken away by Christ; The strength of sin is the law, and that is fulfilled by him: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory over sin, law, hell and death, through our Lord Jesus Christ**, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice.

5. The Lord also blesses his people with a justifying righteousness, and with fresh views of their interest in it, whilst they are serving him in places where he records his name, by the ministration of the gospel; for therein is this *righteousness revealed from faith to faith*†; from one degree of it to another, until they arrive to a full assurance of its being theirs: and they are happy indeed, who receive this blessing from the Lord; even *righteousness from the God of their salvation*; they are truly blessed, thrice happy persons that are favoured with this grace, and indulged with a lively sense of it: *David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works*‡; but it is not easy to give after him the whole description of that happiness: such have acceptance with God; God is well pleased with Christ, and with all his people in him, being clothed with his pure and perfect righteousness; with which righteousness he is well pleased; because by it the law is magnified and made honourable; his justice is satisfied; and all his perfections reconciled and honoured in the justification of his people by it; and not only are their persons *accepted with God in the beloved, through the righteousness of Christ*, and for the sake of it; but their services and duties, their sacrifices of prayer and praise also. Moreover, such have great peace in themselves, much quietness and ease of mind; for, *the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever*‡; not of the righteousness of man, which is impure and imperfect, and cannot justify before God; and, therefore, can never lay any solid foundation for peace; but of the righteousness of Christ, by which those that are justified, have peace with God, and in themselves; for, *the kingdom of God, in them, is righteousness and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*‡; that is, these are the fruits and effects of the righteousness of Christ, being received by faith, and so making a part of that

* 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

† Rom. i. 17.

‡ Rom. iv. 6.

‡ Isai. xxxii. 17.

‡ Rom. xiv. 17.

that kingdom of grace, in the heart of a believer, which can never be moved: to which may be added, that such who have an interest in this righteousness, are secured from condemnation and wrath; *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ*, and are justified by his righteousness; for his blood-shed, sufferings, and death, which are a principal part of this righteousness, are their security from condemnation; so that they shall never enter into it, but shall *pass from death to life*; and they may assure themselves, that as they are justified by the blood of Christ, they shall be saved from wrath, through him: to say no more; they must needs be blessed and happy, since they are hereby intitled to eternal life. Hence, justification by Christ's righteousness, is called, the *justification of life*¹; for, being justified through it, they are *made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life*², and shall most assuredly enter into it; for, this righteousness will answer for them in a time to come, and give them admission into the kingdom of heaven; which a man's own righteousness, be it what it will, will leave him short of.

6. Such as serve the Lord, and worship him in a spiritual manner, where *his name is recorded*, are blessed by him with eternal life itself; for, *there the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore*¹; they are here blessed with an enlarged view of it; *life and immortality*, or an immortal life, being more clearly brought to light by the gospel², and the ministrations of it; that presenting to faith the best account that is given of the unseen glories, and invisible realities of another world; and here, under the gospel-ministry, saints are sometimes indulged as with a sight of the *King in his beauty*; so with a prospect of the good land *that is very far off*³; their hope of possessing it is more and more encouraged, and their faith of it increased; and are, indeed, made to rejoice in the believing views, and hope of the glory of God, they have some glimpse of; yea, *he that believes hath eternal life*, in some sense, already; he has it in promise, and in faith and hope; and he has the earnest and pledge of it, yea, the beginning of it, which is grace in him, and the knowledge of God in Christ; for, *this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*⁴; which spiritual and experimental knowledge, unto which life eternal is annexed, is increased yet more and more, by means of the word and ordinances, the memorials of the name of God in his house; these are appointed for that purpose, and continued for that end; *till we all come in, or into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*⁵; and this is no small encouragement to attend upon them: and when all this is considered, in how many instances, and by how many ways, God blesses his people, that meet and worship him,

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¹ Rom. v. 18.² Titus iii. 7.³ Psalm cxxxiii. 3.⁴ 2 Tim. i. 10.⁵ 1st Cor. xiii. 17.⁶ John xvii. 3.⁷ Ephes. iv. 13.

where he records his name; it will clearly appear what a regard he has to such places, and what inducements there are to his people to attend them.

This will be more evident, if it be observed, that these blessings are blessings indeed; true and real ones; such as *Jabez* prayed for, when he said, *O, that thou wouldst bless me indeed*^a; or, “in blessing, bless me:” some blessings have only an appearance of blessings; are rather imaginary than real; at least they are not to be mentioned with these; as the outward blessings of life, temporal good things; for they sometimes are turned into curses, and are curses to wicked men; but these are covenant-blessings, the sure mercies of *David*, which come from a covenant-God, through Christ the mediator of the covenant; and in a way of covenant-grace, which makes them sure to all the spiritual seed of Christ: these are spiritual blessings, are of a spiritual nature, in distinction from corporal ones, from *blessings of the basket, and of the store*; are suited to spiritual men, and make for the welfare of the spirit and soul of man; and are brought down, and brought near, revealed, and applied by the holy Spirit of God, who takes them, and shews believers their interest in them: these are solid and substantial blessings; in comparison of which, temporal ones are things which are not, that have no solidity and substance in them, mere nonentities; but the blessings of grace, which saints are made to inherit now, are substance; and that glory they shall possess hereafter, is a better and more enduring substance, than any thing enjoyed here. In a word; the blessings God blesses his people with, who are found true and spiritual worshippers of him, where he records his name, are unchangeable, irreversible, and for ever; he never repents of them, nor revokes them; when God gives commandment to bless his people, and does bless them, they are blessed; and it is not in the power of men or devils to reverse such a commandment, or such blessings; they come from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning; and they are like him, invariable and unalterable; what *Isaac* said to *Esau* concerning *Jacob*, is applicable to these blessings; *I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed*^b. And, it may be strongly argued from hence, that if a poor, frail, weak, and dying man, would not make any alteration in a blessing he had conferred on his son, though earnestly solicited to it; much less will that God, who is the immutable *Jehovah*, the everlasting *I Am*, make any change in, or reverse the blessings he has bestowed on his people: no, whatever he does in this way, is for ever; there is an inseparable connection between the blessings of grace, and eternal glory; to whom he gives the one he gives the other; *whom he did predestinate, them he also called*; and *whom he called, them he also justified*; and *whom he justified, them he also glorified*^c.

To

^a 1 Chron. iv. 10.^b Gen. xxvii. 33.^c Rom. viii. 30.

To conclude; We see how strong are the reasons, how forcible the arguments, how great the encouragement, to engage us to attend the house and ordinances of God; for, if his presence and blessing are not sufficient, what will be? The Lord, to encourage the people of *Israel* to wait at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, promised to meet them there, and commune with them: and Christ, to encourage his ministers and churches to attend to his word and ordinances, promised his presence with them, *to the end of the world*; than which nothing greater could be suggested to them: and, since God is to be met with in public places of worship; his grace is there displayed and communicated; Christ is to be found, and with him life, and righteousness, and salvation, and the love and favour of God to be obtained and enjoyed; this may induce us to a constant attendance in them; *Blessed is the man*, says wisdom, or Christ, *that beareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors; for whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.* But then it should be observed, that the places where attendance is to be given, in a religious way, are *where the name of the Lord is recorded*; there only his presence and blessing are to be expected; not where there is no mention of him; where the free grace of God, in the salvation of men, is not set forth; where the name of Christ is not spoken of, but studiously concealed, and but only occasionally, or now and then taken notice of under some low epithet or another; but, instead thereof, man's free-will is exalted; the power and purity of human nature cried up; justification and salvation are attributed to the works of men, and only a moral scheme is advanced and enforced; in such places, the presence and blessing of God are not to be met with; and, indeed, they are here rarely thought of, or sought for; but, if *the name of God is recorded* in a place, in the sense in which it has been explained, it matters not what the place is, or is called, as has been observed; since *Jehovah dwelleth not in temples made with hands*^u, at least is not limited and restrained unto them; nor does he regard the form and manner in which they are built; he dwells in a more stately temple than any that can be erected on earth; *the heaven is his throne, and the earth his footstool*; and, therefore, he may well say, *where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?*^v Since there is none built, or can be built equal to the glory of his Majesty; therefore our great concern should be, to worship him in a spiritual manner, with our whole spirits, in the exercise of spiritual graces, and under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God, and to give unto him the glory due unto his name, even to each divine person; to the Father, who has chosen us to holiness and happiness; to the Son, who has redeemed us by his precious blood; and to the Spirit, who has regenerated and sanctified us, and is the earnest of our future glory.

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^v Prov. iii. 34. 35.^u Acts xvii. 24.^w Isai. lxvi. 1.

S E R M O N XVII.

The Law in the Hand of CHRIST.

Preached May 24, 1761, at Broad-Mead, in Bristol.

DEUT. X. 5.

And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.

MOSES being called up to mount *Sinai*, the Lord delivered to him two tables of stone, with the writing of the law upon them; when he descended from thence, perceiving that the children of *Israel* had sinned, by making and worshipping the golden calf, in great indignation at it, he cast them out of his hands, and broke them at the bottom of the mount: for this sin wrath came upon the people, and many of them fell by the sword of the sons of *Levi*; upon which *Moses* had compassion on them, and intreated the Lord for them; who promised to make his goodness pass before him, and proclaim his name gracious and merciful; and ordered him to hew two tables of stone like the first, and come up into the mount, and bring them with him, and he would write upon them the same words which were on the first; and also directed him to make an ark of shittim wood to put them in; all which he did: for having hewed two tables of stone, he carried them up to God in the mount, who wrote on them the ten commandments, according to the first writing, and gave them to *Moses*; who having received them, turned himself, as our text says, from the place where the divine Majesty was; and came down from the mount, from mount *Sinai*, with the two tables in his hands, and the writing of God on them, one table in one hand, and the other in the other hand; and put the tables in the ark which he had made, or ordered to be made by *Bezaleel*; for it was the same with that he made, and not a temporary one made for the present purpose till that was finished; and there they be as the Lord commanded me; there the two

tables

tables were when *Moses* rehearsed what is contained in this book on the plains of *Moab*, which was about eight and thirty years after the delivery and renewal of the tables on mount *Sinai*; and here they were in *Solomon's* time, when the ark was brought into the temple built by him; and when, as it is said, *there was nothing in it, save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb*^a; and here they continued as long as the ark was in being. In discoursing on these words, and in order to improve them to some spiritual purposes, I shall consider,

- I. The ark *Moses* made, into which the tables were put, as a type of Christ.
- II. What was put into the ark, the two tables of stone on which the law was written.
- III. What the putting of the tables into the ark signified; and,
- IV. The continuance of them there; *there they be as the Lord commanded me.*

I. The ark may be considered as a type of Christ, both with respect to the names and epithets given unto it, and with respect to the matter of which it was made.

First, There is an agreement between that and Christ, in the names and titles by which it is called; its general name is an *ark* or chest, such an one in which men put their wealth and riches, their gold and silver, their jewels and precious stones, and whatsoever is of worth and value: *in Christ* are put and *bid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, all the riches of grace and glory*; besides the fulness of the Godhead which dwells bodily in him, it has pleased the Father that all fulness of grace should dwell in him, for the supply of the wants of his people in all ages of time; *he is full of grace and full of truth*; there is a fulness of justifying grace and righteousness in him, a fulness of pardoning grace, a fulness of sanctifying and persevering grace; and from him and by him does the Lord supply the need of his people, according to his riches in glory, or glorious riches which are in him.

The ark is sometimes called *the ark of God*^b, being made by his order and direction, and for his service and worship, and was his property: Christ, as a divine person, is the Son of God, his own Son, his proper Son; as mediator, he was set up, constituted, and invested with this office, by him; as man, he prepared a body for him in council and covenant, and in time actually formed the human nature, and filled and adorned it with the gifts and graces of his Spirit. Sometimes it goes by the name of the ark of his strength, *Arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place; thou, and the ark of thy strength*^c. Christ is both the mighty God and the mighty man, the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong

^a 1 Kings viii. 9.

^b 1 Sam. iv. 11, 13, 17, 19, 21, 22.

^c 2 Chron. vi. 41.

strong for himself and for his people ; in whom there is not only righteousness, but strength for them, to enable them to exercise every grace, to bear up under every affliction, to withstand every temptation, to oppose every sin, and to perform every duty of religion ; for though they can do nothing of themselves, yet they can do all things through the strength of Christ communicated to them. The ark is also called *the ark of the covenant**, because the law or testimony, which sometimes has the name of *a covenant*, was put into it : and not only the law has been fulfilled in Christ, but the covenant of grace was made with him, as the head and representative of his people, and is kept and stands fast with him ; he is the surety, mediator, and messenger of it, yea, the covenant itself ; he is the sum and substance of it ; all the blessings of it are in his hands, and all the promises of it are yea and amen in him. The ark has the epithet of *holy* given to it ; *Josiah* ordered the Levites to put the *holy ark* into the temple built by *Solomon*† : Christ is the holy one of God, holy in his divine nature, glorious in the perfection of his holiness, and is such as is not to be found in creatures, angels, or men ; there is none holy as he is ; the *seraphim* cover their faces when they celebrate this perfection of his ; he is holy in his human nature, that is the holy thing born of the virgin, without the spot and blemish of original sin ; he was holy and harmless in his life and conversation here on earth, did no sin, nor was conscious of any ; and he is the fountain and source of all holiness to his people ; and *is of God made unto them sanctification, as well as wisdom, righteousness, and redemption* ; to all which may be added, that the ark is called the glory of God, the face of God, and Jehovah himself* ; being a symbol of his presence : Christ is the brightness his Father's glory, the angel of his presence, and Jehovah our righteousness.

Secondly, The ark may be considered as a type of Christ, with respect to the matter of which it was made ; it was made of wood, even of shittim wood, and that covered with gold : it being of wood, may denote the meanness of Christ in the human nature ; *when he was found in fashion as a man* ; in his state of humiliation, he appeared *in the form of a servant*, and was of no reputation among men, emptied himself, as it were, and seemed as if he was stripped of the glories of Deity, which were hid under the coarse veil of humanity ; he took upon him all our sinful infirmities, *was in all things made like unto us, excepting sin* ; and hence he was disesteemed of by men, despised and rejected by them, yea rejected from being a man ; was scarcely allowed the name of a man ; and was reckoned a worm, and no man. It being Shittim wood of which the ark was made, and which was incorruptible and durable, may signify the incorruption of Christ, even in the human nature ; for though he was crucified through weakness,

* Heb. ix. 4.

† 2 Chron. xxxv. 3.

* Psalm lxxviii. 61. and cv. 4. Numb. x. 35, 36.

weakness, died the death of the cross, and was laid in the grave, yet he was not left there so long as to see corruption; though he was dead, he was soon raised from the dead, and now lives for evermore. *Melchizedek* was an eminent type of Christ, *he having neither beginning of days, as God, nor end of life now as man*; and having an *unchangeable priesthood*^f, which does not pass from one to another, and in which there is no succession. Christ is durable, even everlasting in his person, offices, grace, and fulness, and in the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. The wood of which the ark was made, being covered with gold, and having a crown of gold on it, may point at Christ, whose head, the principal nature in him, is as the most fine gold; and who as mediator has a crown of pure gold set on his head by his divine Father, and whom we now see by faith crowned with glory and honour in the human nature in heaven. It may be expressive of the richness of Christ as man and mediator, whose riches of grace and glory are unsearchable; and of the worth and value believers in him put upon him, and of the high esteem he is had in by them, and how exceeding precious he is to them.

There are one or two things more, which though not reducible to either of the above heads, yet are worthy of notice; as that the ark was portable, and might be carried on occasion from place to place, as it sometimes was; for which purpose it had rings at the four corners of it, two on each side of it, and staves provided to put into those rings; and which also were made of Shittim wood covered with gold, and were emblems of the ministry of the word, and of the ministers of it; who, though mean in themselves, are adorned and enriched with the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and have the rich treasure of the gospel put into their earthen vessels; and are chosen vessels, as the apostle *Paul* was, to bear the name and gospel of Christ in the world, and carry it about from place to place; so the disciples of Christ carried it through all the cities of *Israel*, and from *Judea* into the Gentile world, and through the several parts of it; and it was brought from the eastern into the western parts of the world, and at length to these northern isles of ours. Moreover, let it be observed, that there was but one ark. Some Jewish writers^g think there were two arks; one that *Bezaleel* made, and this made by *Moses*; the one had the tables in it, and the other went out to battle on occasion: but for this there is no foundation. There was but one ark, and so there is but one Son of God, the only begotten of the Father; *one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*; one Saviour and Redeemer; *the same to day, yesterday, and for ever*; there is none besides him; there is *no other name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved*. In this ark is salvation, and no where else.

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^f Heb. vii. 2, 24, 25.^g Vid. Jarchium in v. 1.

H. I shall next consider what were put into the ark, two tables of stone, with the law written upon them by the Lord himself; and may inquire into the matter, number, writing, and form of them.

1st, The matter of them; they were of stone; of what stone is not said, nor is it of any great avail to know what it was. Some Jewish writers^a will have them, at least the first tables, to be of the sapphire stone, which is not probable; and what they ground it upon is not sufficient to support it, namely, *Exod. xxiv. 10.* where the elders of *Israel* are said to see the God of *Israel*; and *there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone*: it is more probable these tables were marble slabs, since there was a great quantity of marble in those parts; and the rock at *Sinai* was a marble rock; granite marble of a reddish colour, as appears at this day^b; and one of the paraphrasts^c expressly calls them two marble tables: however, it is certain they were tables of stone, to which the apostle opposes the *fleshy tables of the heart*^d. Now their being of stone may denote either,

1. The hardness of the heart of man, which is called a *stony heart*^e, and is as hard as a piece of the nether mill-stone; as hard as the adamant stone, which is the hardest of all stones; it is obdurate and obstinate, inflexible, and not subject to the law of God; nor can it be, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God is exerted on it, and makes it pliable, and bends it to it: without this men live and die in the hardness of their hearts, and *after their hard and impenitent heart treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and righteous judgment of God*. Or rather these tables being of stone denote,

2. The firmness, stability, and duration of the law, which is invariable, unalterable, unchangeable, and eternal: *Concerning thy testimonies, says David, I have known of old, that thou hast founded them for ever*^f; they were made to continue for ever; and they do, and will continue for ever, even as long as there is any use for them in the world; they are more unalterable and unchangeable than the laws of the Medes and Persians. The law is not destroyed by Christ, but fulfilled by him; not a jot or tittle of it has failed, but all has been fulfilled: and whoever breaks, or teaches men to break, the least of the commandments of it, *shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven*, be reprov'd and chastis'd, if not punish'd for it. This must be understood, not with respect to the ministry of the law by *Moses*; as such it has ceased, and the cessation of it as a ministry of his, was signified by the casting the tables out of his hands, and the breaking of them. *The law was given by Moses*, and as it was a ministrat'ion of his, it concern'd the Jews only; it was given to him for them, and it was given by him to them, and to them only; and ceased as such when their church and civil

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^a Targum Jon. in *Exod. xxxi. 18.*

^f See *Shaw's Travels*, p. 317, 443. Ed. 2.

^b Targ. Jon. in loc.

^c 2 Cor. iii. 3.

^e Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

^f Psalm cxix. 152.

state were at an end, and the gospel-dispensation took place; when *grace and truth*, the doctrine of grace and truth, came by *Jesús Christ*: *the law and the prophets*, as ministered by *Moses*, and them, were until *John*, the forerunner of Christ, and Christ himself came, and ministered, and held forth both law and gospel in a different manner; wherefore, when *Moses* the giver of the law, and *Elias* the chief of the prophets, were with Christ when transfigured on the mount, a voice came from the excellent glory, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him*; not *Moses* nor *Elias*, but *him*, and *him* only. *Moses* was the lawgiver to the Jews, but Christ is the lawgiver to us Christians. The Jews boasted that they were the disciples of *Moses*, but our greatest glory is, that we are the disciples of *Jesus*: when we say, therefore, that the law is immutable and unalterable, it must be understood not of the ministry of it, but of the matter of it, and that as moral; for whatsoever of a ceremonial kind may be thought to be in it, there is a disannulling of that, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of it; but whatever is of a moral nature in both tables, is unchangeable and eternal; whatever was *holy, just, and good*, under the former dispensation, or in ages past, is so now. The first table of the law concerns the worship of the one true and living God, and the reverence that is due to his name; and though the time and place of worship, and the outward forms and rites of it are alterable things, yet worship itself, as it is of a moral and spiritual nature, and consists of acts of devotion to God, of prayer to him and praises of him, and lies in acts of faith in him, fear of him, and a reverential affection for him, and obedience to him, is the same in all ages, unchangeable and unalterable. The second table of the law respects our neighbours, and our conduct towards them; and whatever was injurious to their characters, persons, and properties in former times, is so still, and ever will be, and to be carefully avoided: and particularly the firmness, the constancy, stability, and durability of the law, are to be understood of it, as it is in the hands of Christ, the king and lawgiver in his house, where it abides firm and sure, unalterably fixed, and is held forth by him as a rule of walk to his people under the gospel-dispensation; so that they are *not without law to God, but under the law to Christ*.

2dly, The number of these tables deserves some notice, which were *two*, as containing the distinct duties which are owing both to *God* and *man*. Our Lord accordingly has reduced the several commandments on them to *two* general and comprehensive ones, in answer to the question put by the scribe, *Which is the great commandment in the law?* *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind: This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour*

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° John i. 17.

P Matt. xvii. 5.

9 1 Cor. ix. 21.

bour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Moreover to these two tables answer the tables of the heart and mind, on which the law is re-inscribed in regeneration and conversion; according to the promise in the covenant of grace, *I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts*; and though the mind and heart are in effect the same, yet they are distinctly mentioned, and as it should seem with reference to the two tables of the law; and the apostle, when he puts in contrast the tables of stone on which the law was written, and the fleshy tables of the heart on which the epistle of Christ is written, uses the plural number.

3dly, The writing on them, what it was, and whose it was; what was written on the tables, were the decalogue or the ten words; the same which the Lord spoke with an audible voice on mount Sinai, in the hearing of the children of Israel; the same he wrote on two tables of stone, plainly and legibly, that they might be easily read, and that even *be that ran might read them*, and that they might remain and be read in after ages; for *litera scripta manet*; and that they might remain unalterable, as Pilate said, concerning the inscription he put on the cross of Christ, *What I have written, I have written*; signifying that it should continue as it was, and not be altered; so what God has written, he has written, and it shall remain so without any alteration: and this writing, both on the former tables and on these latter tables, were the Lord's own writing, written by the finger of God himself; Moses wrote nothing, he only brought the two tables hewed, but quite empty and destitute of any thing on them; what was written was by the Lord himself: so the re-inscription of them on the hearts of men in regeneration is the Lord's own work, according to his promise; they are the epistle of Christ, *written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God*; it is not men nor ministers that inscribe these things on the fleshy tables of the heart, but the Lord himself; it is not by might or power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts: and what was written on these renewed tables of stone, was exactly the same that was written on the former; the same laws in the same words and in the same letters. The law of God is the same, let it be where and when it will: the same law as moral was written on the heart of Adam in innocence; and the remains of the same law are to be observed in the Gentiles, since *they do by nature the things contained in the law, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts*: and the same is written again by the Spirit of God in the hearts of his people in conversion; and it is the same law which was in the heart of Christ, and he became subject to, and is the fulfilling end of, for righteousness to those that believe in him.

4thly,

^r Matt. xxii. 36—40.

^s Heb. viii. 10.

^t 2 Cor. iii. 3.

^u John xix. 22.

^w 2 Cor. iii. 3.

^x Rom. ii. 14, 15.

ably, The form of them; they were slabs of marble, hewed and formed into tables by *Moses*; but the matter of them was still the same: they were tables of stone, denoting the same things as before, and which have been observed; and the hewing of them by *Moses* may denote the greater polishing of the law, or the brighter edition of it by him; it is but a rough draught of it, which is found written on the hearts of the Gentiles; but the law, as delivered to *Moses*, and given forth by him, was such as no nation under the sun had, besides the Israelites; *What nation is there so great, says Moses, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day?* The Psalmist *David* likewise takes notice of the distinguishing kindness of God to *Israel*, in giving them his word, statutes, and judgments, which he did not to others; and for which therefore they had reason to praise the Lord, and which he thus expresses: *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.* And the apostle *Paul* enumerating the peculiar privileges of the children of *Israel*, reckons among them *the giving of the law, and the service of God*; in the enjoyment of which they had the advantage and the preference to the nations of the world.

III. I proceed to shew what the putting the tables into the ark signified. And this denotes,

1st, The being of the law in the heart of Christ, of which he himself says to his God and Father, *Thy law is within my heart*^b; where it was in a much higher sense than it was in the hearts of the Gentiles, who by nature do the things in it; or than it was in the heart of *Adam* in his innocent state; or than it is in the heart of a regenerate man. And its being in his heart, is expressive of the perfect knowledge he has of it: as a divine person, he is omniscient and knows all things, as mediator; the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him; and the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and knowledge rest upon him; as man, he was filled with wisdom, and increased in it; and as he spoke such words of wisdom and grace as never man did, being full of the doctrines of grace and truth, so he had such knowledge of the law as never man had. This appears from his ready answer to the scribe, which he delivered in so full and concise a manner, when he questioned him about which was the greatest commandment in the law, before observed. It denotes also his strong and cordial affection for it. *David* describes a good man, and some think the Messiah, as one *whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night*^c; and of himself, and from his own experience, he could

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say,

^a Deut. iv. 8.

^b Psalm. cxlvii. 19, 20.

^c Rom. ix. 4.

^b Psalm xl. 8.

^c Psalm i. 2.

say, *O how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day*^d; in which, as in other things, he was a type of Christ: and if every man that is born again delights in the law of God after the inward man, and takes pleasure in obedience to it, much more must Christ, whose *meat and drink it was to do the will of him that sent him*^e; one part of which was to obey and fulfil the law of God. Yea this includes and supposes complete conformity of heart and nature, of life and conversation in Christ unto it. There is a most perfect agreement between him and that. Is that holy? so was he in heart and life. Is that just? he is Jesus Christ the righteous. Is that good? he is good, and did good, and went about constantly doing good. Does the law require a holy nature perfectly free from sin? it is to be found in Christ, who is *holy, barmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*; free from the spot of original sin, and from any blemish of actual transgression. Does it demand and insist on sinless obedience? This is to be met with in none of *Adam's* race, only in Christ, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.

2dly, The putting the two tables of the law into the ark, signifies Christ's subjection to the law, which was not only in him, but he was under that. As a Jew, he was under the civil law: a Jew he was by birth; the *Sibilob* that was to come, and did come from the tribe of *Judab*; from which tribe the whole body of the nation were denominated Jews. He was of the family of *David*, which was of that tribe. He was born at *Bethlehem Ephratah*, or *Bethlehem of Judab*: so that as the apostle says, *it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judab*^f; and was a native of that land, and strictly and properly a Jew; and as such was subject to the laws of his country; and even when it was reduced to a Roman province, and obliged to pay tribute to the Roman governors, and which he did not refuse to do; for as he taught men to give to *Cæsar* the things which were *Cæsar's*, he did the same himself, and even wrought a miracle to perform it: for when the receivers of tribute came to *Peter* for it, he ordered him to cast his hook into the sea, and out of the first fish that came up, to take a piece of money, and pay the tribute for him and himself; so far was he from being chargeable with the imputation laid upon him, that he was an enemy to *Cæsar*, a stirrer up of sedition, a perverter of the nation, and forbid the people to give tribute to *Cæsar*. As he was a son of *Abraham*, he was under the ceremonial law, and subject to that; so he was throughout the whole course of his life: he was circumcised the eighth day, presented by his parents to the Lord in the temple at the proper time, and went up to *Jerusalem* with them to keep the pass-over, when but twelve years of age; we often hear of him at the Jewish festivals in their synagogues and temple, attending the service of them; and one of the last actions of his life was keeping the pass-over with his disciples before he suffered.

^d Psalm cxi. 97.^e John iv. 34.^f Heb. vii. 14.

suffered. The ceremonies of the law were shadows of him, of which he was the body and substance, and had their accomplishment in him. As a creature, as a man, he was under the moral law, and subject to that, as every man is and ought to be: being made of a woman, or born of one, he was in course *made under the law*; and *being found in fashion as a man*, he was in the form of a servant, and under obligation to do duty and service, to *fear God and keep his commandments*, which is *the whole duty of man*^g, or the duty of every man^h: especially he was under this law, and obliged to obey it, as he was the surety of his people. That he became their surety is certain; hence he is called the *surety of a better testament*ⁱ: he engaged in the covenant of grace, which is the better testament, to be the bondsman of his people, to pay their debts for them, to satisfy divine justice, to redeem and save them, to bring them back, and restore them, and set them before his divine Father; all which could not be done without fulfilling the law. This was a principal part of the will of God, which he agreed to do, saying, *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire*, such as were of a ceremonial kind, they being insufficient to atone for sin, and take it away; but the sacrifice of himself, body and soul, he did desire, which was typified by the sin-offerings and burnt-offerings under the law; *Then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God*^k; which was to offer himself a victim to divine justice, and be subject both to the precepts and penalty of the law, which as a surety for sinners he was obliged to be, and was: he was subject to the precepts of the law, and strictly observed them; he did always the things which pleased his Father, and all things that were pleasing to him, even his whole will and pleasure, and omitted nothing which he commanded and required; by which means he was fit to be a sacrifice for sin, since in him was no sin: he was not guilty of any breach of the law, in thought, word, or deed, and hereby became a proper pattern and example for his people to copy after; for though they are not able perfectly to conform to him as such, yet he is worthy of their imitation in all they can; and it becomes them *to walk even as he walked*^l, though they can only do it in an imperfect manner: and besides the precepts of the law, as the sinner's surety, he was subject to the penalty of it; for though, as a mere creature, and a sinless man, he was only bound to keep the commands of the law; yet as a surety for sinners he was obliged to bear the penalty of it in their room and stead, which they through disobedience to the law were liable to, which penalty is death, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*^m; which is not only true of the first sin

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^g Eccles. xii. 13. ^h כל האדם ויהי hoc est totum hominis, Junius & Tremellius; hoc est omnium hominum, Piscator, Gejerus. ⁱ Heb. vii. 22. ^k Psalm xl. 6—8.

^l 1 John ii. 6.

^m Gen. ii. 17.

of man, but of every other, for *the wages of sin is death*^a; not death corporal only, but death eternal, or the wrath of God, which comes upon the children of disobedience, even on every one that has no share in the suretyship of Christ; but for whomsoever he became a surety, for them he became obedient unto death, and bore the curse of the law and wrath of God, and thereby delivered them from it.

3dly, The putting the tables into the ark, signified Christ's fulfilment of the law in the room and instead of his people. He not only had it in him, and was made under it, but he perfectly fulfilled it. This it became him to do as a surety; *it became him indeed to fulfil all righteousness*, civil, ceremonial, and moral, but especially the latter; since his work and business was, as a surety, to bring in everlasting righteousness for the justification of his people, and thereby justly and truly merit and claim the character of *the Lord our righteousness*. He came into the world in our nature, to fulfil the moral law and the righteousness of it: *Think not*, says he, *that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil*^b. Some of the Jews thought that Christ was an Antinomian, as these words plainly shew; just as some ignorant persons now reckon the faithful ministers of the gospel to be: and if our Lord himself was so ill thought of, it need not seem strange that his faithful followers should have such a brand of infamy fastened upon them: but certain it is, that Christ came not with such an intent, nor did he do any thing in doctrine or practice which tended to destroy the law, but every thing which served to fulfil it; being sent *in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*^c, as represented by him. And this is done, and effectually done; he is *become the end of the law*, the fulfilling-end of the law *for righteousness to every one that believeth*^d. This is completely done; it is finished, and was finished when he died the death of the cross: and hereby *the law is magnified, and made honourable*^e; more so by the obedience and sufferings of the Son of God, than by the obedience of angels in heaven, or of Adam in paradise, or by the sufferings of the damned in hell to all eternity; the obedience and sufferings of these being that of creatures, whereas the righteousness that Christ has brought in and yielded to the law, is the righteousness of God; not only what is approved of by God, and accepted with him, and imputed by him to his people, but is what was wrought by him, who is God as well as man: and though his suffering the penalty of the law was in the human nature, yet in that nature as in union with the Son of God: whence the law has had such a glory put upon it, and an honour done it, it never otherwise could have had; wherefore we should look not to our own righteousness as justifying, which is
but

^a Rom. vi. 23.

^b Mat. v. 17.

^c Rom. viii. 3, 4.

^d Rom. x. 4.

^e Isai. xlii. 21.

but filthy rags, but to the righteousness of Christ, which he is the author of, and is in him; and who was made *sin* for his people, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him.

IV. The last thing to be considered is, the continuance of the tables in the ark; which remained there until the time that *Moses* was about to die, even many years after they had been put there; and they remained there many ages after that; and which may signify the abiding of the law in the hands of Christ, the anti-type of the ark, even under the gospel-dispensation; the typical ark, and the tables in it, being no more, having their full accomplishment in Christ.

1st. Let it be observed that there is a sense in which the law is abolished, and continues not; the law and gospel are set in a contrast by the apostle; the one is said to be *done away*, and the other *that which remaineth*; which is the everlasting gospel, the word of God that abides for ever. When the law is in a sense said to become *dead*, and believers in Christ *dead* to that, and *delivered from it*, this must be understood of it as a covenant of works; as such it was made with *Adam*, the federal head of all his posterity, in which he was a figure and type of the Messiah that was to come, the covenant-head of his spiritual offspring. This covenant *Adam* broke, and all his posterity in him; and so he conveyed sin and death to them, from which there is no deliverance but by Christ the second *Adam*: and he has redeemed his people that were under the law, and subject to the curse and condemnation of it, from it, as a covenant of works, entailing death and damnation on them; so that they are not *under the law* as a covenant of works, but *under grace*, the covenant of grace; even as they are not under the law of sin as a reigning principle in them, but under grace as a governing one.

Likewise the law remains not as a yoke of bondage: it gendered indeed unto bondage, and brought a spirit of bondage on them that were under it; but Christ has made his people free from it, and called them to liberty; and they are bid to *stand fast in the liberty with which he has made them free*, and *not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage*. And indeed the law itself, as in the hands of Christ, is a law of liberty, and which his people serve cheerfully and voluntarily, being *made willing in the day of Christ's power upon them*; not only to embrace his gospel, and submit to his ordinances, but *to serve the law of God with their whole mind and spirit*. The commandments of it are not grievous and heavy, being assisted by the Spirit and grace of God to obey them from right principles, and from right views; not to obtain life, but from a principle of life and grace implanted in them; so that this burden, if it may be called one, is light and easy, and borne with delight and pleasure.

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• 2 Cor. v. 21.

• 2 Cor. iii. 11.

• Rom. vii. 4, 6.

• Rom. vi. 14.

The law remains not as a terrifying law; it was attended with terror when delivered on mount *Sinai*; it was a fiery law to the Israelites, when they heard it spoken out of the midst of fire, and saw the lightnings, and heard the thunder that accompanied it, it made them tremble, and *even Moses himself exceedingly feared and quaked*; and when it comes into a sinner's conscience, it works wrath, and leaves a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation. It is dreadful to them that are under it; hence, says the apostle, *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law* ^a? its dreadful menaces and curses? But the believer in Christ has nothing to fear from the terrors of the law and its threatenings, for he is delivered from the curse and condemnation of it by Christ; and though it thunders out terrible volleys of curses on such who are of the works of it, and are under it, and *continue not in all things written in it to do them*, yet none of these can reach to or fall on the believer in Christ; for *Christ has redeemed him from the curse of the law, being made a curse for him*: nor is there any condemnation, not one condemnation ^c, were there as many sentences of condemnation pronounced as sins committed, not one of them that can be executed on them that are *in Christ*, who are secured in his person, and redeemed by his blood; since he has been condemned for them, and sin has been condemned in his flesh, when he suffered and died for them; and therefore *who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died* ^d; whose death is a security from all condemnation by sin, Satan, the world, or by their own hearts and consciences. They that believe in Christ are passed from death to life, and shall never enter into condemnation; and therefore, however the law may be a cursing and damning law to others, it remains not so to them.

Moreover it remains not, and is not to be sought unto for justification; for *by the deeds of it there shall no flesh*, or any man, *be justified in the sight of God*; but a man, and every man that is justified in a gospel sense, is *justified by faith, without the deeds of the law* ^e; and it is a vain and fruitless thing to seek for righteousness by it. The Jews, who *followed after the law of righteousness*, and pursued it with great vigour and earnestness, did not attain unto it, *because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law* ^f; and this is the case of every man that takes the same course: nay, it is not only vain and fruitless to attempt to obtain righteousness that way, but it is sinful and wicked; for such who go about to establish their own righteousness, not only betray their ignorance of God's righteousness, and the pride and vanity of their hearts, and *trust in themselves, and despise others*, but even submit not to, yea treat with neglect and contempt, the righteousness of the God-man and mediator, Jesus Christ ^g. But then,

2dly,

^a Gal iv. 21.^c ὅτι κατήχησα. Rom. viii. 1.^d Rom. viii. 33.^e Rom. iii. 20, 28.^f Rom. ix. 31, 32.^g Rom. x. 3.

2dly, In other respects the law continues invariable, unalterable, and unchangeable; nor is it made null and void under the gospel-dispensation, or by it; *Do we make void the law through faith?* Do we disannul it, set it aside, and make no use of it, or render it of no effect, either through the grace of faith, or believing in Christ, or through the doctrine of faith in general, the gospel, or through the particular doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, of which doctrine the apostle is treating? *God forbid:* it is detested by us, *yea we establish the law*^d; we set it on its proper basis, on a sure foundation; and bring that righteousness to it wrought out by Christ, which is commensurate to all its demands, and gives it honour^e: for *we know that the law is good*, the author of it is good, who is God; the matter of it is good, being *holy, just, and good*; and the use of it is good, *if a man use it lawfully*^f; for there is a lawful and an unlawful use of the law. It is used unlawfully when men make the works of it the terms of their acceptance with God, the matter of their justification before him, and the causes or conditions of their salvation. Otherwise it may be lawfully used; and it is of use to believers themselves, as,

1. To point out to them *what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God*^g; what that is which is holy, just, and good; what ought to be done, or not to be done; what should be carefully performed, and what shunned and avoided; what is a man's duty to God and to his neighbour. For the law of God, as we have seen, includes both, and is a transcript of the holy and unchangeable will of God; what is his pleasure men should do or obtain from.

2. Another use of it, and for which it remains, is, that it is a glass in which believers may behold the deformity of their nature, the impurity of their hearts, and the imperfection of their obedience; and it is only of this use to enlightened minds: for of what service is a glass to a blind man? hold it before him, and he can see nothing in it, or by it: so set the law before an unenlightened sinner, and he will see nothing in it, nor through it; but an enlightened man, a believer in Christ, can see his face in it, and perceive what manner of man he is, in his nature, life, and actions: and when he compares himself with the law that is holy, just, good, and spiritual, he sees that he is in himself unholy, unrighteous, evil, and carnal, and sold under sin, as the apostle did^h: when he is led to observe the extent of the law, and the spirituality of it, reaching to the thoughts of the heart, as well as to the outward actions of life, he cries out with *David, I have seen an end of all perfection, thy commandment is exceeding broad*ⁱ: he despairs of attaining to perfection by it, and even of attaining to a righteousness through it, adequate to its requirements; he grows out of conceit

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^d Rom. iii. 31.^e See Sermon XIII called, The Law established by the Gospel, on Rom. iii. 31.^f 1 Tim. i. 8.^g Rom. xii. 2.^h Rom. vii. 12, 14.ⁱ Psalm cxix. 96.

with himself and his own righteousness, which he now renounces and rejects in the business of his justification before God, and acceptance with him. Wherefore,

3. The law is occasionally of further use to believers, to endear the righteousness of Christ unto them, and to make them value it the more; when they see their own righteousness in the account of the law, being neither as to matter nor manner done as that requires; that it is a covering too narrow to wrap themselves in, and a bed too short to stretch themselves on; that it will not cover their naked souls, nor shelter them from the wrath and justice of God, or render them acceptable in his sight. How precious then is the righteousness of Christ, when set before them as revealed in the gospel, from faith to faith; that being the righteousness of God and not of a creature; a righteousness pure and perfect, well-pleasing in the sight of God, answerable to all the demands of law and justice, which justifies them that believe, from all things they could not be justified from by the law of Moses; an everlasting righteousness, and which will answer for them in a time to come! hence they love it, prize it, praise it, lay hold upon it, and desire to be found in it, living and dying, and not in their own.

4. The law is in the hands of Christ as a rule of walk and conversation, directing believers how to conduct and behave themselves under his influence. The whole scripture, given by inspiration of God, is the standard of faith and practice, and the rule of both: the gospel-part of it is profitable for doctrine, and is the test of that; and the law-part of it respects duty, and points to that; wherefore *to the law and to the testimony; if men speak not, and act not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*^k. Christ is king and lawgiver in his house and kingdom, the church; and besides some positive commands which he has delivered out, there is a repetition of the law in the New Testament; a new edition of it, published under the authority and sanction of Christ; so that we are now *under the law to him*^l, and under new obligations to obey it, as held forth by him. And it is to be obeyed from love, in faith, and to the glory of God, without any sinister, selfish, mercenary ends and views. It is to be obeyed from love to God and Christ; *the end of the commandment is charity, or love; out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned*^m: not the terrors of the law, but the love of Christ constrains believers in him to yield a cheerful obedience to it; which they do through faith in him, depending on him for grace and strength to serve him in it. Of all men in the world none are under greater obligations to be careful to maintain good works than believers, and none so capable of performing them as they, and none so ready to do them; and in doing which they seek not themselves, but the glory of God; and which,

as

^k Isa. viii. 20.^l 1 Cor. ix. 21.^m 1 Tim. i. 5.

as it should be, they make their chief end, as in civil things, so much more in religious duties; and when they have done all they can, and are assisted to do, they own they are but unprofitable servants; do not and cannot merit any thing at the hands of God, but expect eternal life and salvation as the free gift of God through Christ. And now, true believers, who behold the law in the hand of Christ, and as fulfilled by him, *delight in it, after the inward man*; and though *with the flesh they serve the law of sin*, to the grief and distress of their souls, yet *with the mind the law of God*ⁿ.

Upon the whole, let it be an instruction and direction to you to look to the law only as in Christ; viewed otherwise it is a terrible law, a fiery one, working wrath and threatening with it; throwing out its menaces, curses, damnation, and death; but view it in Christ, and there it is fulfilled, its curse removed, its demands answered, and that itself magnified and made honourable; and appears lovely and amiable, to be delighted in and served with pleasure. Look upon both tables of the law as in the ark, look to the ark, and them in that; and forget not to cast an eye to the mercy-seat so near it, which was a cover or lid unto it, and of equal length and breadth with it; the mystery of which you will easily understand, that Christ in his obedience, sufferings, and death, and as the propitiation, is equal to all the demands of law and justice. The ark, with the tables in it, the mercy-seat upon that, the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat, between which the *Shekinah* or divine Majesty dwelt, are such a glorious spiritual hieroglyphic as was never seen in the world besides; such a group of wonders, such an assemblage of the mysteries of grace, such a cluster of glorious truths are in it, which when you behold, say, if ever you saw a sight like this! The ark, and the tables in it, signify, as we have seen, Christ, and the law fulfilled by him, and continued in him; the mercy-seat, Christ the propitiation, and the grace and mercy of God streaming through him as such; the cherubim, the ministers of the word in general; and being two, may respect the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles and ministers of the New, looking at one another, and agreeing together, and both pointing at Christ the mercy-seat; among whom Jehovah dwells, and with whom he is and will be unto the end of the world. Here may be seen at once the law fulfilled and justice satisfied, mercy in its triumphs over justice, and yet both in perfect harmony and concord. Here *mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other*. Most of these truths may be seen together in one passage of the apostle; *whom*, speaking of Christ, *God hath set forth*, in his eternal purposes and decrees, *to be a propitiation*, (*ἰλαστήριον*), the word the Greek version uses for the mercy-seat) *through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission*

O O 2

of

ⁿ Rom. vii. 22, 25.

of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus°.

° Rom. iii. 25, 26.

S E R M O N XVIII.

The Doctrine of the Wheels, in the Visions of Ezekiel, Opened and Explained.

Preached April 25, 1765, to an Assembly of Ministers and Churches, at the Meeting-House of the Rev. Mr ANDERSON, in Grafton-street, Westminster.

E Z E K I E L X. 13.

As for the Wheels, it was cried unto them in my bearing, O Wheel.

SOME time ago, on a public occasion, I delivered a discourse (since printed) concerning the *Cberubim*, or Living Creatures^a, frequently mentioned in these visions of *Ezekiel*; and I then intimated, that as by the *Cberubim* we are to understand the Ministers of the Gospel; so by the *Wheels*, the Churches of Christ under the Gospel-dispensation. And since I am about to preach to an assembly of Churches, there can be no impropriety in treating on such a subject at this time.

Various are the interpretations given of these Wheels. The more commonly received sense of them is, that they signify the World, and all things in it, which are changeable, unsettled, and uncertain; and the Providences of God, which are various and different, and cause changes, revolutions, and vicissitudes, in men and things: *one generation passeth away, and another cometh*; some are wheeling out of the world, and others wheeling into it; things whirl about continually as the wise man says^b of the wind, and return again according to their circuits; and yet they are not carried by a blind impetus, but are under the guidance of unerring wisdom, and under the direction of the omniscient Being, *whose eyes run to and*

^a Called the Doctrine of the Cherubim opened and explained, in a Sermon preached at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr John Davis, at Waltham Abbey, August 15, 1764.

^b Eccles. i. 4, 6.

and fro through the whole earth^c; hence it is thought these wheels are said to be full of eyes: and though the providences of God, many of them are intricate and obscure, and so are as it were a *wheel within a wheel*; the reasons of them are not easily penetrated into, nor the ends God has in view at once to be seen; *his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out*^d; yet there is a harmony and consistency between them, they are all of a piece; the Wheels have all *one likeness*; and when the mystery of God in providence shall be finished, and his judgments are made manifest, they will appear harmonious, beautiful, and delightful. But from this generally received interpretation, many have thought fit to recede; some, as by the Cherubim, or Living Creatures, understand the Churches of God, composed of living saints; so by the Wheels they suppose angels are meant^e, and that what wheels are to chariots, that angels are to churches, useful and subservient to them; *ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who are the heirs of salvation*^f: others are of opinion, that churches and members of churches are designed both by the Cherubim and the Wheels; by the one the superior members of churches, and by the other the inferior ones^g: such a distinction in churches may be admitted, for *God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, &c.* and the rest of the members, the private and common ones, may be reckoned the inferior, yet all useful and necessary; the Cherubim are thought to be meant by the former, the Wheels by the latter; and a chariot without wheels is of little or no use, as wheels without a chariot, or other carriage, are insignificant; and thus, as the apostle argues with respect to the members of an human body, *the eye cannot say to the head, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you; nay much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary*^h. Others, as they interpret the Cherubim of the ministers of the gospel, and I think rightly, so the Wheels of the work of their ministryⁱ, which is sometimes called a course, race, or running; thus *John's* ministry is said to be *his course*, and the apostle *Paul* joins his course and ministry together, as meaning the same thing; and elsewhere directs, *to pray that the word of the Lord might have free course, and be glorified*^k: and it is observed, that there is but one wheel, one faith, one doctrine of faith, or system of truths to be delivered and received; and though ministered by different persons, and these have different gifts, yet, as to the sum and substance of it, is the same; as the apostle says, *The Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Sylvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay*^l; we did not contradict ourselves, nor one another;

^c Zech. iv. 10.^d Rom. xi. 33.^e Cocceius in loc.^f Heb. i. 14.^g Vid. Polanum in loc.^h 1 Cor. xii. 21—23, 28.ⁱ Starckius in loc.^k Acts xiii. 25. & xx. 24. 2 Thes. iii. 1.^l 2 Cor. i. 19.

ther; there is an unity, harmony, and consistence, in the ministrations of the gospel; the wheels have one likeness: and though the doctrines of the gospel are mysterious, abstruse, and hidden to many, are like a riddle, or an enigma, or as a wheel within a wheel; yet they are plain to enlightened minds, to them that find spiritual and experimental knowledge: and as wheels when set in motion roll on with force and rapidity; so the doctrines of the gospel, when the Spirit of God is in those wheels, or when they are attended with his energy, they come with demonstration and power, and are the power of God unto salvation.

But the key for the interpretation of the Wheels, as of the Cherubim, is to be taken from *John's* vision in the fourth chapter of the *Revelation*; for as the Cherubim, or living creatures, in *Ezekiel's* visions, are the same with *John's* four beasts, or living creatures; so the Wheels here are the same with the *four and twenty* elders there, which are the representatives of gospel-churches; described by their number, in allusion to the *four and twenty* courses of the priests, in the times of *David*; by their character, as *elders*, in distinction from the church of the Old Testament, and its members; who were as children in their non-age, under the elements of this world; whereas gospel-churches, and their members, are young men and fathers, grown men in knowledge and understanding; by their seats, and thrones on which they sat, expressive of their power and authority of judging and determining things relative to their own affairs within themselves; as who shall be received among them, retained by them, or excluded from them: *What have I to do*, says the apostle, *to judge them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?*^m They are also described by their raiment, *clothed in white linen*; that fine linen, clean, and white, which is the righteousness of the saints, and that is the righteousness of Christ; and by *having on their heads crowns of gold*, signifying they are made kings and priests unto God by Jesus Christ. And now that these and the wheels signify the same, may be concluded partly by their situation; the same situation the elders have in *John's* vision, the wheels have in *Ezekiel's*; in *John's* vision there was a throne, and one on it, the Lord Jesus Christ; next to this throne were the four living creatures, or ministers of the word; who receive their commission, power, and authority, gifts, grace, light, and knowledge, from Christ on the throne; next to them are the elders, or gospel-churches, to whom they communicate what they receive from Christ; see *Rev.* iv. 2, 4. and v. 6. and vii. 11. So in the visions of *Ezekiel*, there was a throne, and nearest to the throne were the Cherubim; and by the Cherubim were the wheels, see *Ezek.* i. 15, 26. and x. 1, 2, 6, 9. and partly by their dependence on one another, and their

^m 1 Cor. v. 12.

their order of operation: in *John's* vision the four living creatures move first, and give the lead in divine worship, *Rev.* iv. 9, 10. and v. 14. So in *Ezekiel's* visions, as the Cherubim, or living creatures moved, so the wheels did; *when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; and when the living creatures were lift up from the earth, the wheels were lift up,* *Ezek.* i. 19. And again, *when those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when these were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them,* ver. 21. see also chap. x. 16—19. In this light, in this view of things, I shall consider the wheels, and shew the agreement between them and gospel-churches; and my business will be to observe their name, their number, their situation, their form, figure, and appearance, and their motion.

First, Their name, Wheels, or Wheel; *as for the Wheels, it was said in my bearing; or they were called in my bearing,* by the following name, *Galgal*^a; which signifies something that may be rolled, a wheel, and that is round as that is, a circle, or a globe, or sphere^b: now as the round and circular form is a symbol of perfection; this may denote the comparative perfection of gospel-churches to that of the Old-Testament-church under the law: *the law made nothing perfect*; the sacrifices of it were not perfect, nor could it by them make the comers thereunto perfect: *but the bringing in of a better hope did*^c; Christ, who is come an high priest of good things to come, the ground and foundation of all solid hope; he by one sacrifice has perfected his people for ever, obtained perfect peace and reconciliation, made a full atonement, wrought out a complete righteousness, and procured a full pardon, and is become the author of eternal redemption and salvation; *God having provided some better thing for us,* under the gospel-dispensation, *that they,* of the former dispensation, *without us should not be made perfect*^d: they were, as before observed, as children not grown up to maturity; but members of gospel-churches, in comparison of them, are arrived to the measure of the stature of Christ; though in comparison of the church triumphant, or saints in heaven, they are imperfect, know but in part, and prophesy but in part. The word here used, as hinted before, signifies a globe, or sphere, and is used of the heavenly sphere, the concave, or expanse, which surrounds our globe, and in which the heavenly bodies move; and it is translated *heaven* in *Psalms* lxxvii. 18. *The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven;* in *Galgal*, in the heavenly sphere: and it is easy to observe, that the gospel-church-state is called *the heavenly Jerusalem*^e, in distinction from the former dispensation,

^a קרא הגלגל להם ipse vocatæ sunt vel fuerunt orbis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; see the margin of our Bible; the words may be rendered, as for Ophannim (Wheels) they were called in my hearing Hagalgal, the orb or sphere.

^b Vid. Maimon Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 4.

^c Heb. vii. 19.

^d Heb. xi. 40.

^e Heb. xii. 22.

tion, and *heaven* itself; and in which sense it is almost always, if not always, used throughout the book of the *Revelation*; and this may suggest unto us, that members of gospel-churches are, or should be, souls born again, born from above; heaven born souls, partakers of the heavenly calling, and such as are pressing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ.

Gospel-churches may be signified by wheels, because of their moveableness and changeableness. Wheels are rolled about and moved from place to place, and so have churches been. The first gospel-churches were planted in *Judea*, and then the kingdom of God, or gospel-church-state, was taken from thence, and carried into the Gentile world, where various churches were raised, as the seven churches of *Asia*; and what was threatened to one of them, the church of *Ephesus*, has been true of them all; that the candlestick, or church-state, should be removed out of its place; for where are those churches now? Gospel-churches were first in the eastern part of the world, then they came more westerly, and now more northerly, where their chief seat is. Thus they have been wheeled about, and perhaps may take another circuit more southerly. Gospel-churches are not always in the same state and condition, as well as not in the same place: sometimes in prosperity, and sometimes in adversity; sometimes in a state of persecution, and sometimes in a state of peace and liberty. The first gospel-church was at *Jerusalem*, and was at first prosperous and numerous; but at length a persecution arose, by which its members were made havock of, and its ministers scattered abroad; and so it fared with other churches; but after a time the churches had rest throughout *Judea*, *Galilee*, and *Samaria*, and were edified and multiplied; and so it was with the churches among the Gentiles, they had tribulation *ten days* under the ten Roman emperors that persecuted them; and then there was *silence in heaven for half an hour*; peace and quietness in the churches for a small space of time; in the reign of *Constantine*. At one time, the church is represented in a most glorious and splendid manner, as *clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars*; expressive of her dignity, and of her purity in doctrine and worship; and presently we hear of her taking two wings, and fleeing into the wilderness, where she is nourished for a *time, and times, and half a time*; and in a changeable state on one account or another, have the churches of Christ been ever since; our forefathers in the last century suffered persecution; we now enjoy peace and liberty; what this will issue in, time only can discover.

The Cherubim are sometimes called *the chariot of the cherubim*; not that they themselves, abstractedly considered, form a chariot; though the Lord is said *to ride upon a cherub*; but, they with the wheels make one; for a chariot

without

* Acts viii. 1 and ix 31.

† Rev. ii. 10. and viii. 1.

Rev. xii. 1, 6, 14.

‡ 1 Chron. xxviii. 18.

§ Psalm xviii. 10.

without wheels, as before observed, is of no use; but with wheels is fit for carriage; such is the church of Christ; it is said, *king Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon*; by king Solomon is not meant literally Solomon king of *Israel*, but a greater than he, Christ his antitype, the prince of peace: and by the *chariot* he made for himself, his own use, service, and glory, may be meant his church; which, as composed of persons possessed of the fragrant graces of the Spirit, and having the odours of prayer and praise, and being persevering saints in faith and holiness, may be said to be made of the sweet-smelling and incorruptible wood of *Lebanon*; and in this chariot Christ rides up and down in the world, and does his work and business: and indeed wherever there are wheels of any sort, and upon any account, there is work to be done; and there is scarce any manufacture, but there is a wheel made use of in one part and branch of it, or another: and in and by the churches of Christ much work is done; here the gospel is preached, the ordinances are administered, the sacrifices of prayer and praise are offered up, souls are converted, and saints edified and comforted, and God in all things glorified. And when wheels are in motion, they make a great rattling and noise: we often read of the *rushing* of chariots, of the *rumbling* of their wheels, and of *the noise of them* on the tops of mountains; see *Jer. xlvii. 3. Joel ii. 5.* and when there is any work doing in the churches of Christ, especially any thing remarkable, it makes a great noise in the world. So in *Judea*, when the gospel was first preached there, and souls were in great numbers converted, and churches planted, the Sanhedrim, the elders, scribes, pharisees, and sadducees, were alarmed with it; and in the Gentile world, wherever there was a *door opened*, a door of opportunity to preach the gospel, and a door of utterance in ministers, and a door of entrance into the hearts of men, *there were many adversaries*; to oppose Christ's ministers, to stir up men against them, and give out the cry, *those that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also*: yea, there are great noises and shoutings in ministers of the word, and the churches themselves, when any remarkable and extraordinary work is going forward; so at the time of the Reformation, which the *xth* chapter of the *Revelation* describes, when the voice of Christ was *as when a lion roareth*, he being *the lion of the tribe of Judah*; *the seven thunders*, the *Boanergesses*, or sons of thunder, *uttered their voices*; and when the judgments of God will come down upon antichrist, and upon the antichristian states, and the marriage of the lamb will be come, and the church, the lamb's wife, made ready for him, and the spiritual reign of Christ will take place, a great voice of much people will be heard in heaven, the church; and a voice out of the throne, and

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† Cant. iii. 9.

* 1 Cor. xvi. 9.

* Acts xvii. 6.

the voice of a great multitude, as of many waters, and of mighty thunderings, saying *Allelujah, salvation, glory, honour, and power, to the Lord our God: the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*, Rev. xix. 1—7.

Secondly, The number of the wheels is next to be considered. They are called *wheels*, in the plural number, in our text, and yet according to it were named *a wheel*, one wheel, as elsewhere in the vision, and yet *four*; see chap. i. 15, 16. they seem to be formed in this manner, like two hoops put in a cross and transverse manner, which intersect each other; and make four semicircles; and these four semicircles make one globe or sphere; and so there were one and yet four, and four and but one. Indeed from ver. 9, 14. it seems as if there were four in this form, since there was a wheel to every cherub, and every wheel had four faces; that is, on the four semicircles: now considered as one wheel, they represent the church catholic and invisible, *the general assembly and church of the first-born*, consisting of all the elect that have been, are, or shall be, even all *those whose names are written in heaven*; and this is but one, of which Christ says, *There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number*; many visible congregated churches, and a great number of particular saints: *My love, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, the choice one of her that bare her*^b. There is but one church, of which Christ is the head, *the head of the body, the church*; but one church, that he has loved with an everlasting love, and has *given himself an offering and sacrifice for unto God*. But particular congregated churches are many; and they are signified by the number *four*, partly with respect to the four cherubs, as appears from ver. 9. *And when I looked, behold, the four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub*; so in the first gospel-churches, *in every church elders were ordained*; and in every city, that is, wherever there was a church, an elder, or pastor was appointed, and constituted over it; and for the most part but one in a church; though in some churches, which might be very large, there were more: hence we read of the elders of the church at *Ephesus*, and of bishops in *Philippi*^c; but in the seven churches of *Asia*, there was but *one* angel, pastor, or bishop over each church, *one wheel by one cherub*; and partly the number *four* may be used with respect to the four parts of the world, where churches have been, or will be placed. Christ gave his apostles a commission to *preach the gospel to all nations*, in every part of the world; and they did go, and *their sound also, into all the earth*, and unto the ends of the world; and multitudes were converted, and churches raised in all parts of it; and so it will be again, before the end of the world, and the coming of Christ; *the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord*; great numbers will be converted in the
four

^b Cant. vi. 8, 9.

^c Acts. xx. 17. Phil. i. 1.

four parts of the world; God will bring the spiritual seed of Christ, and of his church, *from the east, and gather them from the west; he will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth*^d; who shall be gathered into gospel-churches; and at the close of time Christ *will send forth his angels, and gather together his elect from the four winds*^e, where they have lived in a gospel-church-state.

Thirdly, The situation of the wheels; they were upon the earth, and by the cherubim.— 1. They were upon the earth; *Behold, one wheel upon the earth*, chap. i. 15. and where one was, the four were; this is observed, to distinguish the churches of Christ here, from the church triumphant in heaven. Christ's family is partly in heaven, and partly on earth: those whom Christ redeemed and gathered together in one head, himself, and reconciled unto God, are *things in heaven, and things on earth*; the chosen, redeemed, and called, are first gathered into Gospel-churches on earth, before they are removed to heaven, from whence they will descend again, as a bride adorned for her husband. This points out the place where saints for the present are; though they are chosen, and called out of the world, yet they are still in it; and the work done in churches is done by them whilst in the world; here the gospel is preached, and ordinances administered, conversion-work wrought, and edification in the way and manner it is; these are only done on earth: and this may also denote that the moveable and changeable state of the churches of Christ, before observed, is only on earth, and in the present earth; for in the new earth, the tabernacle of God that will be there and then with men, will be *a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken*^f; no removing, no rolling, no wheeling from place to place, no change of state, condition, and circumstance; when *the ransomed of the Lord are come to Zion, to the church above, everlasting joy will be upon their heads—and sorrow and sighing shall flee away*^g: though this may likewise signify the firmness of gospel-churches; they are not in the air, nor on the sea, where wheels cannot be employed, but on *terra firma*; and what that is to wheels, Christ is to his churches, the basis and foundation of them; the Lord has founded *Zion*, and it is well founded; he *has laid in it for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, which is Jesus Christ; the foundation of the apostles and prophets*; of their laying ministerially; and on which gospel-churches in all ages are laid, a rock firm and sure, against which the powers of hell and earth cannot prevail. 2. The wheels are said to be *by the cherubim, or living*

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creatures;

^d Isai. xliiii. 5, 6.^e Matt. xxiv. 31.^f Rev. xxi. 3. Isai xxxiii. 20.^g Isai. xxxv. 10.

creatures; see chap. i. 15. and x. 9, 16, 19. to be put in motion by them. The churches are placed by the ministers of the word, near them, and beside them, to put them in mind of, and to stir them up to the exercise of every grace, faith hope, love, &c. and to put them in mind of every duty both towards God and man; that they be ready to every good work, and careful to maintain them; and to put them in remembrance of the doctrines of the Gospel they have made a profession of, that they hold them fast unto the end. They are placed by them to instruct them in matters of faith, to declare to them the whole counsel of God, and keep back nothing from them that may be profitable to them; and to go before them, and give the lead to them in matters of worship, and to direct them in matters of discipline; to observe to them the rules of it, that they withdraw from persons that walk disorderly; and *an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject*. They are placed by them to watch over them, to watch for their souls, for the good of them, and to preserve them from every evil and false way, from immorality and heresy, from every thing dangerous and pernicious. They are called *watchmen*, in allusion both to watchmen that go about the city, to give the time of night, and notice of any danger; and to watchmen on the walls, set there to descry an enemy, and give the alarm of his near approach, to provide against him. They are placed by them, the churches by the ministers, that they may feed them with knowledge and understanding, with the wholesome words of Christ, with the words of faith and good doctrine, with *the sincere milk of the word, and with the bread of life*. Wherefore, if any should make the inquiry, where Christ feeds his flocks, let them take the answer and direction he gives; *Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds tents*^b; go where the cherubim and wheels be, where ministers and churches meet together for religious exercises.

Fourthly, The form, figure, colour, and appearance of the Wheels, the description of which is various. 1. They are said to have four faces, as in the following verse; ver. 14. *And every one had four faces; the first face was the face of a cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle*; the same with the faces of the cherubim. Ministers and churches are, or should be, of the same mind, of the same judgment, and of one accord; they should have the same face and look, and draw the same way; and then they are like *a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot*¹; they will put shoulder to shoulder, and serve the Lord with one consent. The first face was that of a cherub, that is, of an ox, as appears from chap. i. 10. which has its name from *plowing*, in which the ox was employed, and gives the denomination to the whole figure: now this is a proper emblem of the members

^b Cant. i. 7, 8.¹ Cant. i. 9.

of gospel-churches, it being a clean creature that chews the cud; and so describes such who ruminate on the word, who meditate in the law and doctrine of God night and day, constantly, as they have leisure and opportunity; and their meditation is sweet when they are led to the nature, perfections, and promises of God, to his everlasting love, and the covenant of grace, to the person, offices, and grace of Christ. The ox is patient under the yoke when accustomed to it; and so are faints who have learnt, and have been inured to bear the yoke in their youth; whether the yoke of Christ's commands, which is easy and light; or the yoke of affliction, reproaches, and persecution, which they bear patiently for Christ's sake; *tribulation works patience* in them, and *patience has its perfect work*. The ox is a laborious creature, strong to labour, and constant in it; and so fitly represents the members of gospel-churches, who are, or should be, *steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*; as the members of the first gospel-church were, who *continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers*.

The *second* face was the face of a man; signifying that they were knowing and understanding persons; were, in understanding, men, and had attained to a large measure of knowledge of divine and spiritual things, and were still *growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ*; and that they were, or should be, humane, kind to one another, tender-hearted, and put on bowels of compassion and tenderness to each other; and forgive one another any quarrel they had, as God for Christ's sake forgave them; and that they were sympathizing with each other in every condition and circumstance; *wept with those that wept, and rejoiced with those that rejoiced*.

The *third* face was the face of a lion; denoting courage, boldness, and intrepidity in the saints, who are, and should be, as bold as a lion in the cause of Christ, and in the profession of him, holding fast his name, and not denying his faith, even where Satan's seat is; not being afraid of the faces of men, as they have no reason; for if God is for them, and on their side; if he is their light and life, their salvation and strength, they have nothing to fear from men or devils.

The *fourth* face was that of an eagle, a bird that has a piercing eye, and soars aloft, and describes such who mount up with wings as eagles, in the exercise of faith and love; who dwell on high, in God and Christ, and upon everlasting things; who seek after, and set their affections on things above, where Jesus is. 2. *The appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a beryl stone*, ver. 9. so in chap. i. 16. which was one of the precious stones in the high priest's breast-plate, and one of the twelve foundations of the new *Jerusalem*, and with which the hands of Christ are said to be adorned. This may denote the preciousness of the members of gospel-churches, what worth and value they are of in the esteem of Christ; these precious sons of *Sion* are not only comparable to fine gold, for their lustre,
splendor,

splendor, worth, and duration; but to jewels and precious stones: *they shall be mine*, says Christ ^k, *when I make up my jewels*: and may signify the beauty and glory of the churches of Christ, and the members of them; whose *cheeks are comely with rows of jewels*, and their *necks with chains of gold*^l; as they are adorned with the graces of the Spirit, and arrayed with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the garments of his salvation; when they are as richly decked as the bridegroom, with his ornaments, and the bride with her jewels. The colour of the beryl is the colour of the sea, or a sea-green; and the word for it, *Tarfisib*, is used for the sea itself; and may lead to think of the fluctuating state of the churches of Christ in this world; which is as a tempestuous sea, and they as ships upon it, *tossed with tempests*, and not comforted; Christ is their pilot, faith the cable, and hope the anchor, sure and steadfast; and through the skill, ability, and guidance of the pilot, they are brought at last, through many storms and tempests, to the desired haven.

3. The four wheels had *one likeness*, ver. 10. and chap. i. 16. Gospel-churches consist of one and the same sort of persons; who are enlightened by the Spirit of God to see their lost state by nature; are directed to Christ alone for salvation, and obtain like precious faith for nature, though not to the same degree; and whose experiences are similar: for *as face answers to face in water*^m, so do the hearts and experiences of God's people answer to each other: for though the Spirit of God may take a different course with some than with others; some have more of, and are held longer under, the terrors of the law; whilst others are drawn with the cords of love, almost at once; they may have different promises applied, and different providences may be sanctified to them; yet the sum and substance, and tendency of their experience are the same, to debase the creature, exalt Christ, and magnify the riches of God's grace. Gospel-churches have the same faith, the same doctrine of faith; for there is but one faith delivered to the saints; they have the same ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper; and the same officers, bishops and deacons; they have the same power and authority to choose their own officers, as the first church did *Matthias* in the room of *Judas*; and deacons, when they became necessary: they have the same power to receive and exclude members; they are independent of others, and *call no man master on earth*; they have the same form of government, under Christ their Head, Lord and Master, whom they own and profess to be their King, Lawgiver, and Saviour, and no other. They have pastors over them under Christ, whom they not only honour and esteem, but yield subjection to, when ruling well, according to the laws and institutions of Christ.

They are said to be *a wheel in the middle of a wheel*, ver. 10. and chap. i. 16. not inclusively, as if one wheel was included in the other; for then they would

not

^k Mal. iii. 17.

^l Cant. i. 10.

^m Prov. xxvii. 19.

not be alike, but one would be lesser than another; but they were put in that cross and transverse way before described, so that they seemed but one wheel, one globe or sphere; that is, one catholic church, built on the same foundation of the apostles and prophets; and which grows up into an holy temple in the Lord, and is built as one habitation for God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

5. The rings, circles, and circumferences of these wheels deserve some notice: as for their rings, it is said, chap. i. 18. *they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four.* (1.) These were very high, and so must in proportion be very large; and which may signify the visibility and extensiveness of the churches of Christ under the gospel-dispensation, especially in the latter day. The churches of Christ are like a city upon an high hill, which cannot be hid, but is seen at a great distance. They are built upon a rock, that is exceeding high; and in the latter day they will be exalted above the high mountains and hills, the kingdoms and states of this world; and will be so enlarged when the nation of the Jews, and the fulness of the Gentiles are brought in, that there will be want of room for the members to dwell in them, *Isai. ii. 2.* and chap. xlix. 20. (2.) They are said to be very dreadful, as the church militant is to her enemies, *terrible as an army with banners*; having Christ as a general at the head of it, with a large number of good soldiers of his under him, and accoutred with the whole armour of God, in rank and file, and colours flying; and as the church will be in her elevated state, when her slain witnesses are risen, and shall ascend to heaven; that is, come into a glorious and happy state in the sight of their enemies, and seven thousand men of name slain, and the remnant affrighted. Or the word may be here rendered *reverent*; they were both reverent and reverent; respectable, in high esteem, as the church will be in the latter day, even to great personages; *kings will be nursing fathers to her, and queens nursing mothers; and they will bow down towards her, and lick the dust of her feet,* *Isai. xlix. 23.* and reverent; or *there was fear, or they had fear in them*; the fear of God is in his churches; he is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints; and the true members thereof serve him with reverence and godly fear. (3.) These rings were *full of eyes round about*; the same is said of the wheels, that is, of the rings of them, *ver. 12.* This shews that the members of gospel-churches are such who have the eyes of their understanding enlightened by the Spirit of God, to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the demerit of it; to behold the preciousness, excellency, suitableness, and fulness of Christ, as a Saviour; to look to him for life and salvation, for righteousness and strength, and every supply of grace; and that they have an insight into,

† Cant. vi. 4. 10.

° So Dr Lightfoot's Prospect of the Temple, *Eccl. p. 2055.*

‡ *למה להם* & timor illis erat, Cocceius, *ℳ Starckius.*

into, and knowledge of the truths of the gospel, which are unseen and unknown to natural and carnal men; being led into them by the Spirit of truth, and having that anointing which teacheth all things necessary to salvation: and they are full of eyes, to watch over themselves and others; over themselves, that they walk circumspectly, *not as fools, but as wise*, as becomes the gospel of Christ they profess; and over others, *looking diligently*, *πισκοποιεῖτε*, acting the part of a bishop or overseer, as every member of a church in this respect should: *lest any man fail of the grace of God*; come short of it, drop or deny any doctrine of grace: *lest any root of bitterness*, immorality or heresy, springing up, trouble some of the members, *and thereby many be defiled* ¹ with bad principles, or with bad practices.

Fifthly, The motion of the wheels; which motion, 1. Was not retrograde; *they went on their four sides, they turned not as they went*, ver. 11. neither to the right, nor left: or *they returned not when they went*, chap. i. 17. they did not go back, but went straight on; true members of gospel churches, are such *who draw not back to perdition*, but go on believing; having *put their hand to the plough* ², having made a profession of Christ, and his gospel, they neither look back, nor *draw back*, or they would not be *fit for the kingdom of heaven*; they turn not to the right hand, nor the left; but walk on in Christ, and their profession of him, as they have received him, and in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, which he has appointed to be observed. 2. Their motion is the same with the cherubim, or living creatures; as the one moved, so the other did; the wheels *went by the cherubim*, by the *sides* of them, ver. 16, 19. Ministers are, or should be, examples to the churches in purity of doctrine and conversation; and churches should *walk as they have them for an example*, and *be followers of them, so far as they are followers of Christ*; they are to go by their side, and keep pace with them in faith and practice; *when they*, the cherubim, *stood, these*, the wheels *stood*; *when they were lifted up, these lift up themselves also*, ver. 17. see chap. i. 19, 21. Churches observe the motions of the ministers, and act accordingly; they give the lead in worship, as before observed; when they lift up their hearts with their hands in prayer and praise, the members of churches follow, and join them; when they are in elevated frames of soul in their work, and are warm and lively in their ministrations, generally speaking, the churches are so likewise; but if they are dull and heavy, motionless and inactive, slothful in business, and not fervent in spirit, the members are so too; as ministers are, for the most part, the churches be. 3. The wheels followed the head, which guided and directed them: *to the place where the head looked, they followed it*, ver. 11. the head or face on each semicircle, the same with those

¹ Heb. xii. 15.

² Heb. x. 39. Luke ix. 62.

of the Cherubim; and so may denote ministers, pastors, guides, and governors of the churches; whose faith they are to follow, considering the end of their conversation; or rather Christ, the head of the church, the Lamb, that is to be followed whithersoever he goes, and in whatsoever he directs; unless, 4. The Spirit of God is meant, since it is said in chap. i. 20. *Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went*; truly gracious souls *walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*; they are *led by him into all truth, as it is in Jesus*; and they walk in all the paths of faith and duty, as they are influenced and guided by him in a right way, to the city of their habitation, to a land of uprightness; for, 5. *The Spirit of the living creatures was in them*, ver. 17. that is, in the wheels, chap. i. 20, 21. the spirit of life which is in Christ, and from Christ, is in his ministers; and the same spirit that is in the ministers, is in the churches; and he is in both a spirit of life, and a spirit of liberty, in the exercise of grace, and performance of duty; for there is but *one spirit* in all, though in a different measure; even as saints are by *one spirit baptized into one body*, the church, and are *called in one hope* of their calling¹ to the same happiness and glory.

Now these visions of Ezekiel, in this and the first chapter, as they give a glorious and beautiful representation of the state of ministers and churches under the gospel-dispensation; they may be read with pleasure, delight, and profit, when spiritually understood; yet they are closed with a melancholy scene of things; the cherubim are represented as mounting up from the earth, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of *Israel* above them all, ready to take their flight, and depart, ver. 19. and chap. xi. 22, 23. which may signify the removal of gospel-ministers from earth to heaven by death, and the breaking up of gospel-churches, and the departure of God from his professing people, of which we have already had some instances: and, without pretending to a spirit of prophecy, things will continue to go on in this way, worse and worse, till the kingdom of God will be taken from us, the candlestick be removed out of its place, the glory of God depart, and an *Ichabod* be wrote on his interest; which will be completed when the witnesses are slain; and then scarce a cherub will be seen, nor a wheel in motion; the dead bodies of the witnesses will lie unburied, none daring to shew a decent regard unto them. From what has been said, we may learn,

1. The nature of gospel-churches, the matter of which they consist, the form of them, the work that is done in them, and by them, and their state, condition, and circumstances, under the present dispensation. 2. The necessity there is of an harmony between ministers and churches: it is highly requisite they should agree, and act in concert; the wheels should be by the cherubim, and move as they do; they should join and unite to promote the interest of religion,

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 13. Ephes. iv. 4.

or things will never go on happily and comfortably. 3. This may instruct and direct us to pray for the Spirit of God to be poured down upon both ministers and churches; that ministers may have a larger measure of it, and that the spirit of the living creatures might be in the wheels; the same, or a like measure of the spirit that is in ministers, might be in the churches; and for this we should pray importunately and incessantly; for we shall never have happy times, or halcyon days, *until the Spirit be poured down upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest; then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field; and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever; and my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places* †.

† Isaiah xxxii. 15—18.

S E R M O N XIX.

The Necessity of Christ's making Satisfaction for Sin, proved and confirmed.

Preached June 19, 1766, to an Assembly of Ministers and Churches, at the Reverend Mr BURFORD'S Meeting-House, in Goodman's-Fields.

HEBREWS II. 10.

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

IN the preceding verse we have an account of the low estate and condition our Lord was brought into in human nature; he was made *a little lower than the angels*: so he was with respect to his incarnation in general; for whatever may be said for the likeness or equality of an human soul without sin, to an angelic spirit, both being spiritual substances, rational and intelligent, immaterial and immortal; it is certain, that the corporal part of human nature

is inferior to the nature of angels; but what the apostle has respect unto in particular, is Christ's suffering death in human nature; in, and during which, he was made *a little*, or as it may be rendered, and as it is in the margin of some Bibles, *a little while lower than the angels*; that is, whilst he was suffering death, and lay under the power and dominion of it; seeing angels die not: but he *tasted death for every man*, or rather for *every one*; that is, for every one of the sons, that he was to bring to glory; for every one of the brethren he was not ashamed to own as such; for every member of the church, in the midst of which he sung praise; and for every one of the children God gave unto him, and for whose sake he partook of flesh and blood, as the context shews. Now, in the words read, a reason is given why Christ was made thus low; and the necessity of his suffering and tasting death for his people is observed, *for it became him*, &c. It was fitting and necessary that if God would save sinners, and bring them to glory, that the Saviour of them, should suffer in their room and stead all that the law and justice of God could require. Hence we read, that Christ *must suffer many things, and be killed: and ought not Christ to have suffered these things?* Matt. xvi. 21. Luke xxiv. 26. There was a necessity for it, by the decree of God, by which it was determined; by the covenant-engagements between the Father and the Son, in which it was agreed to and settled; and by the prophecies of the Old Testament, which spoke of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, and therefore must be endured; or otherwise, *how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?* Matt. xxvi. 54. and the salvation of sinners made his sufferings necessary, as without which it could not be obtained.

In the words there is a periphrasis of the divine Being, by which he is described; and such a like descriptive circumlocution of him is in *Romans xi. 36. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things*. Here he is described as the final cause or last end of all things, *for whom are all things*; for he has made all things for himself, for his own glory, for the glorifying of all his perfections; and as the efficient cause of all things; *by whom are all things*, that is, by whom all things are made; all things in nature, for he has made the heavens, the earth, and the sea, and all that in them are; and all things in providence are done and overruled by him; *my father worketh hitherto*, says Christ, that is, all things in providence, *and I work* conjunctly with him, *John v. 17.* and all things in grace for they all take their rise from him, and are begun by him, being planned by him; *All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. v. 18. An intimation is likewise given of a gracious design of his to save and bring some persons to glory, who are said to be *sons*, and these *many*. Sons by divine predestination, whom God predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ; for whom this blessing is provided and secured in covenant, which

runs thus, *I will be their father, and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* Whom Christ has redeemed from under the law, that they might receive the adoption of children; and to whom, believing in Christ, he gives the power and privilege to become the sons of God; and so they are openly and manifestatively the children of God, by faith in Christ; and to these it is their heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom: and since they are many, even the many that are chosen of God; the many that Christ gave his life a ransom for; the many, for the remission of whose sins his blood was shed; the many that are made righteous by his obedience; hence many mansions of glory are prepared for them in Christ's Father's house: and there is a way in which they are brought thither. God has chosen them *through sanctification of the spirit, and the belief of the truth, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.* Christ has died for them, and by means of his death, they receive the promise of the eternal inheritance, and the inheritance itself. God calls them by his grace to eternal glory, and makes them *meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light:* the person by whom they are brought thither is Christ, here called *the captain of their salvation;* that is, the author of it, as he is said to be in a following chapter, chap. v. 9. whom God appointed to be the Saviour of men, and who has with his own arm wrought out salvation for them; in whom it is, and in no other: and the way and means by which he has procured it, is by his perfect sufferings and death; *for though he was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;* and *being made perfect,* that is, in suffering, *he became the author of eternal salvation,* as in the place before referred to; and it was necessary, that he, the surety and Saviour, *should suffer, the just for the unjust,* in their room and stead, *to bring them unto God,* into his presence here, and unto eternal glory hereafter. This was necessary for the glorifying of his divine perfections; not only those of grace and mercy, but of justice and holiness. The plain sense of the words is this; that since it was the design and pleasure of the all-wise and all-powerful former, and maker of all things, to bring some of the sons of men, and who are made the sons of God, to eternal glory and happiness, by Christ the captain and author of their salvation; it was becoming and fitting, and so necessary, that he should completely and perfectly suffer in their room and stead, all that the law and justice of God could require to make satisfaction for their sins; and so be brought to glory in a way consistent with the divine perfections.

I shall not insist on the various doctrines contained in these words: I shall take no farther notice of those which relate to the being, nature, perfections, ways, and works of God; nor to the adoption of his people, nor to the glory they are brought unto; nor to their salvation, and to Christ, the author of it;

nor

nor to the sufferings of Christ, and the completeness of them; only to the *satisfaction* of Christ by them, and the *necessity* of that.

The word *satisfaction* is not syllabically expressed in scripture, as used of that which is made by Christ; but the thing itself is frequently spoken of. What Christ has done and suffered, in the room and stead of sinners, with content, well-pleas'dness, and acceptance to God, is what we call *satisfaction*; and this is plentifully declared in the word of God; as when God is said to be *well-pleas'd for Christ's righteousness sake*, and with it; because it answers all the demands of law and justice; and by it the law is magnified and made honourable: and when the sacrifice of Christ, and such his sufferings be, is said to be *of a sweet-smelling savour to God*, because it has expiated and made atonement for sin; that is, made satisfaction for it, and taken it away, which the sacrifices under the law could not do; hence there was a remembrance of sin every year; but by the sacrifice of Christ it is put away for ever, *Isai. xlii. 21. Eph. v. 2. Heb. ix. 26.* and chap. x. 3, 4, 14. and there are also terms and phrases used of Christ and his work, which are equivalent and synonymous to satisfaction for sin, and expressive of it; such as *propitiation, reconciliation, atonement, &c.*

The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sin, is the glory of the Christian religion; what distinguishes it from all other religions, and gives it the preference to them; and without which, that itself would be of little worth. It is a doctrine of the utmost importance, for without satisfaction for sin, there can be no salvation from it. The *Socinians* take a great deal of pains to damn themselves, and every body else, as much as in them lies, by denying and attempting to destroy this doctrine, which only secures salvation: if there are such things as *damnable heresies*, as the scripture assures us there be, the denial of *Christ's satisfaction* is certainly one; since without this, sin cannot be pardoned, nor a sinner saved, nor a son brought to glory. Those that set themselves to oppose it, are in dangerous circumstances; and if they do it wilfully, obstinately, and knowingly, which is what the apostle means, when he says, *if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth*, of this truth, the atoning sacrifice of Christ, by denying that; such are inevitably lost and undone; there is no help nor hope for them in heaven or in earth, from angels or men, or from any quarter whatever; for *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins*; there never will be another atoning sacrifice offered up, another Saviour provided, another Jesus sent to save men from their sins, by making satisfaction for them: there will be nothing else but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries of this truth, or who are contrary, and oppose themselves to it; for *if he who despised Moses's law*, neglected and broke the

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the moral law, and the precepts of it, *died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the son of God?* denied and rejected the eternal sonship of Christ, as the Socinians do, *and hath counted the blood of the covenant an uncleanly or common thing*; no other than the blood of a mere creature, as the same persons affirm, and of no more efficacy to take away sin than that? see *Heb. x. 26—28.* how much does it concern us then to receive and embrace this truth, and earnestly contend for it, which is of so much importance in the great affair of our salvation.

I propose not to treat of the doctrine of satisfaction, at large, in all the parts of it, which cannot be comprized in a single discourse. I shall not consider the ground and foundation of it, and on which it proceeds, which are the council and covenant of peace, and the suretyship-engagements of Christ therein; nor the causes of it, the efficient and procuring, the impulsive and moving causes of it; nor the matter of it, the fulfilling of the whole law, as to precept and penalty; or Christ's doing and suffering all that the law and justice of God could require; nor the form and manner in which it was made, through Christ's bearing the sins of his people imputed to him; for this doctrine includes the imputation of their sins to Christ; and through his dying for their sins, thereby making atonement for them; and through his dying for sinners, in their room and stead, as their surety and substitute; nor the ends which were to be answered, and are answered by it: I shall only very briefly treat of the *necessity* of it; shewing that without it sin cannot be pardoned, nor a sinner saved, nor a son brought to glory. And there are two things I desire may be granted, and which I think may be easily granted, and then satisfaction for sin will appear necessary; and they are, the one, that men are sinners; and the other, that it is the will of God to save sinners, at least some sinners; but if neither of these are facts, a satisfaction is unnecessary, and it is in vain to talk about it.

First, Let it be granted that *men are sinners*; and, one would think, this would be allowed at once, unless any can work themselves up into such a fancy, that they are an innocent sort of beings, whose natures are not depraved, nor their actions wrong, neither offensive to God, nor injurious to their fellow-creatures; and one would imagine the opposers of Christ's satisfaction have entertained such a conceit of themselves, or they would never set themselves against a doctrine so suitable and salutary to them; but if this is the case with them, scripture, experience, conscience when awakened, and daily facts are against them. The scriptures declare that *all men have sinned in Adam*, are made, constituted and accounted sinners by his disobedience; yea, that they are actual sinners, *have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God*; that they are *all under sin*, involved in the guilt and pollution of sin, under the power and dominion

dominion of it, and liable to punishment for it; and that this is the case of all, not one excepted. Now as men are sinners, they are transgressors of the law of God; for *sin is a transgression of the law*; and every transgression of that, and disobedience to it, has received, does receive, or will receive a *just recompense of reward*; that is, righteous punishment: there never was a sin, nor will be one, but what is punished either in the sinner, or in the surety for him; 1 *John* iii. 4. *Heb.* ii. 2. the law being broken, it accuses of sin, pronounces guilty for it, proceeds to curse and condemn, passes the sentence of condemnation and death; which, without a satisfaction, must be executed; the sanction of the law is death: the law is never abrogated, nor the sanction of it changed, altered, nor abated; God never relaxes that; though he puts a favourable construction on his law, by admitting a surety in the room of the delinquent, yet punishment is always inflicted.

Men by sin are alienated from the life of God, are estranged from him, are set at a distance from him, and are in a state of separation from him, as to communion; and without reconciliation and satisfaction made for sin, can never be admitted to it. An irreconcilable sinner can never enjoy nearness to God and fellowship with him; for *what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?* a righteous God with unrighteous men? and whenever it is had, it is the fruit of Christ's sufferings and death; he *suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them unto God*, who were at a distance from him with respect to communion, though not with respect to union; to bring them into his gracious presence, into an open state of favour with him; it is through his blood, making peace for them, that *they who were afar off from God, and fellowship with him, are made nigh, and favoured with it*, 1 *Peter* iii. 18. *Ephes.* ii. 13, 14. I do not say that the satisfaction of Christ procures the love of God, it is the fruit and effect of it; but this I say, it opens the way into the embraces of his arms, stopped up by sin, which must be removed, in order to enjoy them.

And here let me observe to you something relating to experience, which you would do well to lay up in your minds; it may be of use to you hereafter, when you may be tempted to doubt of your interest in Christ's satisfaction. Have you any reason to believe that you have, at any time, had communion with God, in private or in public, in your closet, or in the family, or in the house of God, under any ordinance, either the ministry of the word, or prayer, or the supper of the Lord? Then you may be assured Christ has made *satisfaction* for you; or you would never have enjoyed such communion.

Again; Men by sin are become enemies unto God, and therefore a reconciliation, or *satisfaction* for sin is become necessary: they are *enemies in their minds, by wicked works*; there is an inward enmity in their hearts, which is outwardly

wardly discovered by their evil actions; yea, their carnal mind is enmity itself against God; and besides this, there is, on the part of God, a law-enmity, an enmity declared in the law: in the eye of the law, and in the sight of justice: having sinned, they are viewed as enemies to God, and rebels against him, and so are declared in and by the law, and considered as such: not that there is any real enmity in the heart of God to elect sinners; this is inconsistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love to them; but there is a law-enmity which must be slain and removed, and was slain and removed in and by the death of Christ: as when subjects rise up in rebellion against their king, there may be no enmity in his heart to them, yet by the law of the land, they are declared and looked upon as enemies, rebels, and traitors to his crown and government; and are treated as such, and proceeded against in due form of law, though at length pardoned, at least, some of them; and it is this sort of enmity which makes the satisfaction of Christ for sin necessary. Had there been only an inward-enmity in mens minds to God, manifested by their works, that might have been removed, and is removed, by the Spirit of God causing the arrows of the word to be sharp in the hearts of such enemies of the king; whereby the people fall under him, lay down the weapons of their rebellion, and submit unto him; and are reconciled to the righteousness of Christ, to the way of salvation by him, and to his laws and government; and by the grace of God, the enmity of their hearts is overcome, and love is implanted in their souls. To remove this enmity, the sufferings and death of Christ seem not necessary; and though it is said, while God's elect *were sinners, Christ died for them*; and when they *were enemies, they were reconciled to God by his death*; yet this is not to be understood of the inward depravity and enmity of their hearts; for the far greater part of those for whom Christ died, and whom he reconciled, were not then in a state of actual corruption and enmity, for they were not in actual being; but the sense is, that they were then considered as sinners in *Adam*; and as enemies, rebels, and traitors in their apostate head; when Christ died for them, and reconciled them to God, by making satisfaction for their sins, which this enmity made necessary: there is a twofold reconciliation, with respect to this twofold enmity; the one is the work of Christ, the other the work of the Spirit of Christ; the one was made at Christ's death, and by it; the other, at conversion; and we have them both in one text, *Rom. v. 10. If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, then the law-enmity was slain, and reconciliation and satisfaction made for sin; *much more, being reconciled*, that is, by the grace and Spirit of God at conversion, when the inward enmity is removed, and the heart is filled with love to God, and is made willing to serve him; *we shall be saved by his life*. A text worthy to be written in letters of gold; no such passage is to be found any where but in the word of God; not in all the voluminous writings of the heathens; it contains a
 thought,

thought, a sentiment, which could never have entered into the heart of man to conceive of, had it not been revealed by God himself in the sacred scriptures; ENEMIES RECONCILED TO GOD BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON! Thus then it appears, if men are sinners, and so transgressors of the law, and aliens from God, and enemies to him, *satisfaction* must be made for their sins, if ever they are pardoned, saved, and brought to glory.

Secondly, The other thing to be granted, in order to make satisfaction for sin appear necessary, is, that it is the will of God to *save sinners*, at least, some of them; and this surely will be allowed by such who believe a divine revelation. God has decreed to save some; he has resolved upon it within himself, and has said, *I will save them by the Lord their God*. He has appointed some not unto wrath, which they deserve, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ. He has chosen them to it, *through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*. There are some who are ordained unto eternal life, who are vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; and there was a provision made for their salvation in the council and covenant of grace. In the council of peace between the Father and the Son, the scheme of salvation was planned; and in the covenant of peace it was settled, and the Son of God was agreed upon to be the author of it; and accordingly, in the fulness of time, he was sent to be the Saviour of men; and he came to seek and to save that which was lost, and he has *saved his people from their sins*. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that *Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners*; and he has obtained salvation for them; and that by his sufferings and death, by the shedding of his blood, to which it is ascribed; *being made perfect in suffering, he is become the author of salvation*; he has redeemed men to God by his blood, and reconciled them to him by his death; all which was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God: what Jews and Gentiles did to Christ, and what he suffered by them, were no other than what the hand and counsel of God determined before should be done; and therefore it was necessary they should be done, and that Christ should suffer and die to make *satisfaction* for the sins of men.

Some have affirmed, that God could forgive sin, and save sinners without a satisfaction: this is said by the Socinians^b, and by some others, (I am sorry to say it) who own that a satisfaction is made, and that it was fit and expedient it should be demanded and made, at least, some sort of one, as some have expressed it; but to say it was fit and expedient, is giving up the point; for what was fitting and expedient to be done, in the affair of salvation, was *necessary*: God could not but do, or will to be done, what was proper and fitting to be done. Such a way of talking tends to undermine the doctrine of satisfaction by Christ;

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^b Socinus de Jesu Christo Salvatore, par. 1. c. 1. & par. 3. c. 1; Prælection. Theolog. c. 16—18. pag. 566, 567, 570. Racov. Cateches. c. 8. qu. 12.

and to encourage, and strengthen the hands of the Socinians, the opposers of it; much the same arguments being used by the one as by the other. Indeed, it is not becoming us to limit the holy One of *Israel*, or to lay a restraint on his power; we should proceed cautiously and warily in this matter. His power is unlimited, *power belongs to God*; infinite, unlimited, unbounded power; he can do more than we can think or conceive of; with him nothing is impossible; yet it is no ways derogatory to the glory of his power, nor is it any impeachment of it, nor does it argue any imperfection or weakness in him, to say there are some things he cannot do; for not to be able to do them is his glory, when to do them would be weakness and imperfection; and the scripture warrants us in so saying, which, for instance, more than once, says, that *God cannot lie*; for that is contrary to his veracity and truth; nor can he commit iniquity, that would be contrary to his purity and holiness; nor can he do any act of injustice to his creatures, that would be contrary to his justice and righteousness; nor can he deny himself, that would be against his nature, and the perfections of it; and for the same reason, he cannot forgive sin without a satisfaction; for that would not accord with his perfections, as will be seen presently. After all, it is a vain and fruitless thing to dispute about the power of God, what he can do, or what he cannot do, in a case where he has declared his will, what he will do, or will have done, as in the case before us; for at the same time that he proclaimed his name, a God *forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin*; it is added, *by no means clearing the guilty*, that is, without a *satisfaction* to his justice; or not letting go the guilty unpunished, *Exod. xxxiv. 7. Numb. xiv. 18*. Nor is a pardoned sinner left altogether unpunished, as the same phrase is rendered in *Jer. xxx. 11*. for though he is not punished in himself, he is in his surety. Besides, in the everlasting covenant of grace God made with his son, he declared to him what was his will in this case, and which he agreed unto, and came into the world to do, saying, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*; and what was that? to offer up the body prepared for him, together with his soul, an offering for sin, to make atonement and satisfaction for it; and which is farther manifest from our Lord's prayer in the garden; which, could there have been another way of pardoning sin, and saving sinners, than through the blood, sufferings, and death of Christ, as a sacrifice and satisfaction for sin, that importunate request would have brought it forth, *O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*: if the persons thou hast given me, and I have undertook to save, can be saved, and their sins pardoned, without my drinking this bitter cup of sufferings and death for them, let me be excused drinking it; *nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, thy will be done; and what that will was that was done, is notorious.

It may be said, that to affirm that God cannot forgive sin without a *satisfaction*, is to make God weaker than man; and to represent him as not able to do what

men can do^c: a creditor can forgive a debtor, when he is unable to pay the debts that are owing to him; and an offended person can forgive an offender against him; and, in some cases, should, and is to be commended for the same. But it should be observed, that sins are not pecuniary debts, and to be remitted as they may. They are indeed called *debts*, not properly, but allusively; if they were proper debts, they might be paid in their kind, one sin by committing another, which is absurd; but they are called debts, because as debts oblige to payment, so these oblige to punishment; which debt of punishment must be paid, either by the debtor, the sinner, or by a surety for him; sins are criminal debts, and can be remitted no other way. God therefore in this affair, is to be considered not merely as a creditor, but as the rector and governor of the world; as the judge of all the earth, who will do right; as the great lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy, and who will secure his own authority as such; do justice to himself, and honour to his law, and shew a proper concern for the good of the community, or universe, of which he is the moral governor. So, though one man may forgive another a private offence committed against himself, and as it is an injury to him, he cannot forgive one, as it is an injury to the commonwealth, of which he is a part. A private person, as he cannot execute wrath and vengeance, or inflict punishment on an offender of the law; so neither can he let go unpunished one that has offended against the peace and good of the commonwealth: these are things that belong to the civil magistrate, to one in power and authority; and a judge that acts under another, and according to a law which he is obliged to regard, can neither inflict punishment, nor remit it, without the order of his superior. God indeed is not under another, he is of himself, and can do what he pleases; he is the maker and judge of the law; but then he is a law to himself; his nature is his law, and he cannot act contrary to that. Wherefore as *Joshua* says, chap. xxiv. 19. *he is an holy God: he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins*; that is, without a satisfaction to his justice, which is his nature, and to his law, which is his will, the honour of both which he is jealous of; sin is *crimen læsæ majestatis*, “a crime committed against the majesty of God;” it disturbs the universe of which he is the governor, and tends to shake and overthrow his moral government of the world; it introduces atheism into it, and has a tendency to bring it into disorder and confusion; and to withdraw creatures from their dependence on God, and their obedience to him; and therefore requires satisfaction, and an infinite one, it being objectively infinite, as committed against an infinite Being; and therefore satisfaction for it cannot be made by a finite, but by an infinite person, as Christ is; and such a satisfaction the honour of the divine Being, and of his righteous law transgressed by

^c Socin Prælect. ut supra c. 16.

sin, requires; which leads to observe, that to forgive sin without a satisfaction, does not accord with the perfections of God.

1. Not with his justice and holiness: God is naturally and essentially just and holy; all his ways and works proclaim him to be so; he is *righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; all creatures acknowledge his justice and holiness; angels ascribe the same to him; the angel of the waters said, *Thou art righteous, O Lord*; devils must confess it; men good and bad own it; wicked *Pbaraob* said, *The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked*: the good prophet *Jeremiab*, and even when distressed about the providences of God, and under a temptation about them, could not but acknowledge the justice of God, *Righteous art thou, O Lord—yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments*. God the righteous Lord loves righteousness, and hates iniquity; he is of purer eyes than to behold it with delight; he is not a God that takes pleasure in sin, but bears an utter hatred to it; he cannot but hate it, and shew his hatred of it, which he does by punishing it; and punitive justice is essential to him, though the Socinians, in order to enervate the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, deny it⁴; but *God is a consuming fire*; and as it is natural to fire to burn combustible matter put to it, so it is natural to God to punish sin and consume sinners with the fire of his wrath, comparable to thorns and briars. The righteousness of God is seen and known by the judgments which he executes in the punishment of sin and sinners, for which he is applauded, commended and praised; it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble his people; his judgments on antichrist and the antichristian states, are pronounced true and righteous by angels and saints, by the angel of the waters, and by the voices of much people in heaven, *Rev. xvi. 6, 7. and chap. xix. 1, 2.* And the last judgment will be a righteous one, when sinners will be judged according to their works, and sentenced to everlasting punishment: nor does it comport with the justice of God to let sin and sinners go unpunished.

2. Nor with the truth and veracity of God, with respect to his holy and righteous law. God had a right to give a law to his creatures, and it became him as the Governor of the universe to give a law to them; for *where there is no law, there is no transgression*; men may live with impunity, no charge can be brought against them; *sin is not imputed where there is no law*: but God has given a law, which is *holy, just, and good*, and which shews what is his good and perfect will; and this law has a sanction annexed unto it, as every law should have, or it will be of no force to oblige to an observance of it, and deter from disobedience to it; and the sanction of the law of God is nothing less than death, than death eternal, which is the just wages and proper demerit of sin; and which God has declared he will inflict on the transgressor, *in the day*

⁴ Socin. Prælect. Theolog. c. 16. Racov. Cateches. c. 8. qu. 20.

day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die; which as it was the sanction of that positive law, is of every moral precept. Now the veracity, truth, and faithfulness of God are engaged to see the sanction established and threatening executed, either upon the transgressor himself, or on a surety for him; for the judgment of God, is, that such a person is worthy of death; and his judgment is according to truth, and must and will most certainly take place; *let God be true, and every man a liar.*

3. Nor does it agree with the wisdom of God, that sin should be forgiven without a satisfaction for it. It is not the wisdom of any legislature to suffer the law not to take place on a delinquent; it is a weakness whenever it is admitted; and is either through fear of some persons or things, or through favour and affection, and the influence of some about the throne of a prince; it may be called tenderness, lenity, and clemency, but it is not justice: nor is it an act of prudence; the consequences of it are bad; it tends to weaken the authority of the legislature, to bring government into contempt, and to embolden transgressors of the law, in hope of escaping with impunity; the all-wise law-giver will not act such a part: besides, the scheme of man's reconciliation and redemption by Christ, is represented as the highest act of wisdom known to be formed and brought about by God; for *herein he has abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence*: but where is the consummate wisdom of it, if it could have been done in an easier way, with less expence, without the sufferings and death of his Son? Had there been another and better way of saving sinners, infinite wisdom would have found it out, and divine grace and mercy would have pursued it. *

4. Nor does it seem so well to comport with the great love and affection of God to his Son Jesus Christ, called his beloved Son, his dear Son, the Son of his love, to send him into this world in the likeness of sinful flesh, to be vilified and abused by the worst of men; to be buffeted, lashed, and tortured by a set of miscreants; and to put him to the most cruel, painful, and shameful death of the cross, in order to make reconciliation and atonement for sin, if sin could have been forgiven, and the sinner saved without all this; even by a hint, a nod, a word speaking to a sinner, telling him his iniquities were forgiven, and he should be saved: nor does it so fully express the love of God to his saved ones, but tends to lessen and lower their sentiments of it. God giving his Son to suffer in the room and stead of sinners, to die for them while they were sinners, to be the propitiation or propitiatory sacrifice for their sins, is always ascribed to the love of God, and represented as the strongest expression of it; but where is the greatness of this love, if salvation could be effected with less expence, and at an easier rate? and indeed if it could have been done in any other way: the greatness of his love appears in this view, either the sinner must die, or Christ must

must die for him; now rather than the elect sinner should die, such was the love of God to him, that he chose his only-begotten Son should die for him.

To evince the necessity of a *satisfaction* for sin, in order to forgiveness of it, it may be further observed, that there is something of it appears by the light of nature in the sentiments and practices of the heathens, who had nothing else to direct them in this affair; which though it did not provide and direct to a proper satisfaction for sin, yet gave some hint of the necessity of one: by the light of nature they were led to see the evil of sinful actions, at least of some of them; hence accusations of conscience in them upon sinning: they were also sensible by it, that when sin was committed, deity was offended, and even angry with them, and incensed against them; hence those dreadful horrors and terrors of mind in them, lest they should be punished by it: they saw it was necessary that deity should be appeased some way or another; hence the various, though foolish and fruitless methods, they took to appease the anger of God; and some even barbarous and inhuman; as to *give their first-born for their transgressions, and the fruit of their bodies for the sins of their souls*; which shews their sense of a necessity of making some sort of satisfaction for offences committed, and of appeasing *justice, or vengeance*, as they call their deity; *Acts xxviii. 4.* As for the Jews, who were favoured with a divine revelation, the case is quite clear with them, that they had knowledge of the doctrine of satisfaction for sin, and pardon upon the foot of it; and were directed by the sacrifices they were instructed to offer, to the proper method of satisfaction for sin and pardon of it, through the sufferings and death of the Messiah: all their sacrifices, especially those of a propitiatory kind, were typical of it, and plainly shewed the necessity of a satisfaction for sin; and plainly pointed out forgiveness as proceeding upon it: how often in the book of *Leviticus* is it said, that the *priest should make atonement for the sins of the people, and their sins should be forgiven them?* see chap. iv. 20, 26, 31, 35. and chap. v. 10, 13, 16, 18. and chap. vi. 7. Indeed these did not and could not really, only typically, expiate sin, and make atonement for it; but if God could forgive sin, without any *satisfaction* at all, why not forgive it on the foot of such sacrifices? The true reason is, and it is plain, because he could not, consistent with himself and his own perfections, do it without the sacrifice of his Son, typified by them. Wherefore, upon the whole, it may be strongly concluded, that a plenary satisfaction for sin by what Christ has done and suffered, was absolutely necessary to the forgiveness of sin; *without shedding of blood is no remission*: there was no typical remission under the law, without the shedding of the blood of animals; and there was no real remission or forgiveness of sins then nor now, without the shedding of the blood of Christ, *Heb. ix. 22.* there never was, nor never could be, any without it.

There

There are various objections made to this doctrine; some of the more common and principal ones I shall take notice of, and return a brief answer to.

1. It is suggested, as if the doctrine of *satisfaction for sin* to the justice of God, and as required and received by that, is inconsistent with the mercy of God, and leaves no room for it*. But the attributes of justice and mercy are not contrary to each other, they both subsist and accord together in the same divine nature. God is described by them both, *gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful*, Psal. cxvi. 5. merciful, though righteous; and righteous, though gracious and merciful; see *Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.* and as they agree as perfections in the divine Being, so in the exercise of them they do not clash with one another, no not in this affair of satisfaction; here *mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* Justice being satisfied, a way is opened for mercy to display her stores.

2. It is objected, that pardon of sin upon the foot of a full satisfaction for it, cannot be said to be *free*; this, it is suggested, eclipses the glory of God's free grace in the forgiveness of sin†: it is certain, that remission of sin is through the tender mercy of God, and is owing to the multitude of it; it is according to the riches of free grace, and yet through the blood of Christ, and both are expressed in one verbe as agreeing together; *in whom (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*, Ephes. 1. 7. The free grace of God is so far from being eclipsed in the forgiveness of sin through the *satisfaction* of Christ, that it shines the brighter for it; for consider, it was the free grace of God which provided Christ to be a sacrifice for sin, to atone for it; as *Abraham* said to *Isaac*, when he asked, *Where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?* *My son*, says he, *God will provide himself a Lamb for a burnt-offering*, Gen. xxii. 7, 8. so God of his rich grace and mercy has provided Christ to be an offering and a sacrifice for sin; and his grace appears the more, in that it is his own Son, his only-begotten Son, he provided to be the atoning sacrifice, the lamb to take away the sin of the world: it was grace that set him forth in the divine purposes and decrees, proposed him in counsel and covenant, and sent him forth in time to be the propitiation for sin; it was grace to us that he spared him not, but delivered him up for us all; and it was grace in God to accept of the satisfaction made by Christ; for though it was so full and complete as nothing could be more so, yet it would have been a refusible one, had he not allowed Christ's name to be put in the obligation. Had it not been for the compact and covenant agreed to between them, God might in strict justice have marked our iniquities, and insisted on a satisfaction at our hands; he might have declared, and abode by it, that *the soul that sinned, that should die*; it was therefore

* Socin. Prælect Theolog. c. 18. p. 571. de Servatore, par. 1. c. 1.

† Racov. Catechef. c. 8. qu. 15.

therefore owing to the free grace and favour of God, to admit of a surety in our room, to make satisfaction for us; and it was grace to accept of that satisfaction, as if made by ourselves. Besides, though it cost Christ much, his blood, his life, and the suffering of death, to make satisfaction for sin, and procure the forgiveness of it by it; forgiveness cost us nothing, it is all of free grace to us. Moreover, *grace* in scripture is only opposed to the *works* of men, and satisfaction by them, but not to the work of Christ, and his satisfaction.

3. It is pretended, that the scheme of pardon, upon a *satisfaction*, makes the love of Christ to men greater than that of the Father, and so they are more beholden to the one than to the other; it represents the one as tenderly affectionate, compassionate, and kind to sinners; and the other as inexorable, not to be appeased, nor his wrath turned away without satisfaction to his justice^a: but the love of both is most strongly expressed in this affair of Christ's satisfaction; and he must be a daring man that will take upon him to say, who of them shewed the greatest love, the Father in giving his Son, or the Son in giving himself, to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin; for as it is said of Christ, that he *loved the church, and gave himself for her*; and loved us, and gave himself for us; and loved me, says the apostle, and gave himself for me, *Ephes. v. 2, 25. Gal. ii. 20.* So it is said of the Father, that he *so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son* to suffer and die for men; and that *herein his love was manifested, not that we loved God, but he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*; and that he *commended his love towards us, in delivering up his Son to death for us, and that while we were yet sinners*; John iii. 16. 1 John iv. 9, 10. Rom. v. 8. Can there be greater love than this expressed by both? and which is greatest is not for us to say.

4. It is said, if Christ is God, a divine person, he must be a party offended by sin; and if he has made satisfaction for it, he must have made satisfaction to himself, which is represented as an absurdity^b. All this will be allowed, that Christ is truly God, a divine person in the deity, and as such equally offended with sin as his divine Father; and that he made satisfaction, and that in some sense to himself too, and yet no absurdity in it. There are some cases in which men may be said to make satisfaction to themselves, without being charged with absurdity; indeed in case of a private pecuniary loss, it would be a mere farce, and quite absurd for one to repair the loss, and make it up to himself, and make satisfaction to himself for it; but in case of a public offence to a community, of which he is a part, he may be said, by making satisfaction to the whole body, to make satisfaction to himself, without an absurdity. So a member of parliament, having violated the laws and rules of the house, and is called to the bar to make

^a Racov. Catech. c. 8. qu. 16.

^b Socinus de Servatore, par. 3. c. 4. p. 102.

make satisfaction, when he makes satisfaction to the house, he may be said to make it to himself, as a member of it. It is possible for a lawgiver to make satisfaction to his own law broken, and so to himself, as the lawgiver. Thus *Zaleucus*, "a famous legislator, made a law which punished adultery with the loss of both eyes; his own son was the first that broke this law, and in order that the law might have full satisfaction, and yet mercy be shewn to his son, he ordered one of his own eyes and one of his son's to be put out; and so he might be said to satisfy his own law, and to make satisfaction to himself, the lawgiver." But in the case before us, the satisfaction made by Christ, is not made to God personally considered, that is, to any one person in the Deity singly and separately, but to God essentially considered in all the three persons, or rather to the *justice* of God subsisting in the divine nature common to the three persons. This perfection subsisting in the divine nature as possessed by the first person, the Father, is offended with sin, repents it, requires satisfaction for it, and it is given by the second person in human nature, or as God-man; the same divine perfection subsisting in the divine nature as possessed by the second person, the Son of God, shews itself in like manner in loving righteousness and hating iniquity, is affronted by sin, and demanding satisfaction for it, it is given it by him as the God-man and mediator; who, though a person offended, could mediate for the offender, and make satisfaction for him, without any absurdity or contradiction, as making satisfaction to himself. The same may be observed concerning the *justice* of God, as a perfection of the divine nature possessed by the third person the Spirit, requiring satisfaction, and having it given by Christ, the surety and Saviour of sinners; so that the satisfaction is not made to one person solely and singly, but to the justice of God in all his persons; who is the Lord, Judge, and Governor of the whole world; and who ought to maintain, and does and will maintain the honour of his justice, and of his glorious majesty, and of his righteous law.

5. Once more, it is said¹, that this doctrine of Christ's *satisfaction* for sin, weakens mens obligation and regard to duty, and opens a door to licentiousness; but this is so far from being true, that on the contrary it strengthens the obligation, and excites a greater regard to duty, and promotes holiness of life and conversation in those who have reason to believe that Christ has made satisfaction for their sins; for the love of Christ in dying for them, in being made sin, and a curse for them to satisfy for their sins, constrains them in the most pressing manner to live to him, according to his will and to his glory; being bought with the price of Christ's blood, and redeemed from a vain conversation by it; they are moved the more strongly to glorify God with their bodies and spirit, which are his, and to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear. The grace of God

¹ Racov. Catech. c. 8. qu. 17.

which has appeared in the gift of his Son, and in Christ's gift of himself, to be the Redeemer and Saviour of his people, and to be their atoning sacrifice and reconciler, teaches them most effectually to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this evil world, 2 Cor. v. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 20. 1 Peter i. 17, 18. Titus ii. 11, 12. To close with a word or two :

1. We may learn from hence the vile nature of sin, the exceeding sinfulness of it, what an evil and bitter thing it is; that nothing can make atonement and give satisfaction for it, but the bloodshed, sufferings, and death of Christ.

2. We may observe the strictness of divine justice, that would make no abatement, but insisted upon Christ's doing and suffering all that the law could require to make satisfaction for the sins of his people; and if it spared not the Son of God, standing in their room and stead, but demanded and had full satisfaction at his hands, it will not spare christless sinners, who have no interest in his satisfaction; and what a fearful thing will it be to fall into the hands of the living God, the judge of the whole earth, who will do right?

3. Let us admire and adore the perfections of God, his wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, as well as his love, grace, and mercy, which shine so gloriously in this affair of *satisfaction and reconciliation for sin* made by the blood of Christ; *for it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

S E R M O N X X .

*The quiet and easy Passage of Christ's purchased People through
Death to Glory.*

Preached to a Congregation of Protestant-Dissenters, in *Carter-lane, Southwark.*

EXODUS XV. 16.

Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm, they shall be as still as a stone, till thy people pass over, O Lord; till the people pass over which thou hast purchased.

THESE words are part of the song which *Moses* and the children of *Israel* sung at the Red sea, after they had passed safely through it, and the Egyptians were drowned in it: a song worthy of notice, being the first and most ancient song that is on divine record; for though there were doubtless songs of praise to God sung before this by the people of God, there being ever more or less occasion for them; yet this is the first the scriptures give us any account of: a song that not only concerned the children of *Israel*, and their then present case and circumstances; but what was typical of other things, and had respect to times to come. *Moses*, the penman of it, and who was an instrument in the hand of God of the deliverance sung in it, was a type of Christ the Redeemer of his people. *Israel*, who shared in this deliverance, and joined with *Moses* in singing this song, were a typical people, a figure of the church of God, called *the Israel of God*^a, consisting of whatsoever nation; whom God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and the holy Spirit effectually calls and sanctifies; and the redemption and salvation, the subject-matter of this song, was typical of redemption and salvation by the precious blood of Christ: a song this, that not only respects the then present situation of the people of *Israel*, but looks forward to future times, and reaches to the kingdom of Christ in all ages of the world, to the end of time, even to eternity itself; as appears from the close of it; *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever*: a song, the like to which will be sung by the church and people of God in the latter day, upon a similar occasion; the destruction of *Egypt*, spiritually or mystically so called; the ruin of the anti-

^a Gal. vi. 16.

christian *Pbaraob*; the conquest that will be made by the saints over the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name; when they will stand upon a sea of glass, as *Israel* of old by the Red sea, with the harps of God in their hands, and sing the song of *Moses*, and the song of the Lamb^b: and indeed this song of *Moses* and the children of *Israel*, at the Red sea, may with sufficient propriety be called the song of the Lamb, or of Christ; since he is the principal person concerned in it, and to whom it is sung; he being the Redeemer of *Israel*, in a literal sense, and the author of that salvation, the praise of which they now celebrated. He is the Angel of the Lord, (for Jehovah the Father is never so called) who appeared to *Moses* in the burning bush, and sent him to *Pbaraob*, to demand the dismissal of the children of *Israel*; and it was he that did all the signs and wonders by him in the land of *Egypt*, and in the plains of *Zoan*; it was he that brought *Israel* from thence, and went before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. He is the same Angel of the Lord, that went before the camp of *Israel*, who removed behind them at the Red sea, and looked through the pillar upon the Egyptians, troubled their host, took off their chariot-wheels, returned the waters of the sea upon them, and covered and drowned them in it; on account of all which this song is directed to him; and all the characters in it agree with him. He is the strength and song of his people, in whom they have peace and joy, righteousness and strength; he is become their salvation, the author of spiritual and eternal salvation; he is their Lord and God, and exalted by them; he is a Man of War, inured to it, expert in it, and has fought the battles of his people for them with all their spiritual enemies, and has got the victory over them. The Lord of Hosts, of armies above and below, is his name; his right hand has displayed its glorious power in the destruction of *Pbaraob* and his host; and will still more gloriously display the same in the ruin of anti-christ and all his powers. He is preferable to all others for the holiness of his nature, both divine and human, in which he is glorious; and for the matter of his praise, the glories and excellencies of his person, the blessings of his grace, and the great things done by him; in many of which he is fearful, tremendous and terrible, and in all to be feared and revered; and for his works which he did both before and in his incarnate state; which are wonders, amazing and surprising, and especially the great work of our redemption: and he it is that had led forth the people of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, in mercy; and was leading them into *Canaan's* land, and guiding them thither in his strength; and who brings forth all his people out of worse than Egyptian bondage, and leads and guides them safely to his holy habitation in heaven.

The former part of this song, to ver. 13. in the letter of it, respects things past, real facts, what were already done, for which praise is given. The latter

part

^b Rev. xv. 2, 3.

part from thence is wholly prophetic, and contains a prediction of future events, of the dread of *Israel* that should fall on several nations as they passed along, who would hear what great things had been done for them, and by them; and of their quiet and easy passage over the river of *Jordan* into the land of *Canaan*; and of their firm and sure settlement in it, *ver. 14—17.* all which had its certain accomplishment. It is said, *the people shall bear and be afraid*; that is, the nations of the world in general; for the affair of the plagues of *Egypt*, and of the deliverance of the children of *Israel* from thence, their passage through the Red sea, and the drowning of *Pharaob* and his army in it, were heard all over the world, and struck a panic in all the nations of it; see *Deut. ii. 25. sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina*; the land of the *Philistines* adjoining to *Canaan*, and through which, in the common way, the road of the *Israelites* lay to it; and so they would be, and were in great concern lest they should suffer by them: *then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed*; the people of *Idumea*, then governed by dukes; who upon the tidings of the wonderful things done for *Israel* in *Egypt*, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness, were surprized, and astonished, and filled with fear, *Deut. ii. 4. the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them*; as it did on *Balak* king of *Moab*, and on his princes, which literally fulfilled this prophecy, *Numb. xxii. 2, 3. all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away*; as their heart did melt through fear when they heard what God did for *Israel* against the *Egyptians* and the *Amorites*; and understood they were on their march toward their land, to invade it, and dispossess them of it, as appears from *Josuea ii. 9, 11, 12.* with this compare the case of the kings of the earth, when *Egypt*, spiritually or mystically so called, will be destroyed, and the people of God saved out of it, *Rev. xviii. 2, 4, 9, 10.* next follow the words which have been read; *fear and dread shall fall upon them*; upon all the nations in general, and upon those before mentioned in particular, and especially on the *Canaanites*: *By the greatness of thine arm, they shall be as still as a stone, till thy people pass over, O Lord; till thy people pass over which thou hast purchased*; the people of *Israel*, to whom it is said of God, *Is not he thy father that hath bought thee?* They were a people in a sense purchased by him; being redeemed by him out of *Egypt*, and wonderfully taken care of by him in providence; whilst these passed over the river *Jordan*, in order to go into *Canaan's* land and possess it; their enemies, awed by the power of God, visible in what he had done for them, were like stocks and stones, stood stupified and immoveable; had not power to act, nor stir a foot in their own defence, or against *Israel*, come to invade them; nor in the least to molest them, nor to attempt to stop them in their passage through the river, nor dispute it with them; but were as stupid as stones, having

* *Deut. xxxii. 6.*

having no spirit or courage left in them; see *Johua* iii. 15—17. and chap. v. 1. which may be considered as an emblem of the quiet passage of Christ's purchased people through the ford or river of death, to the *Canaan* of everlasting rest and happiness. And in this view of things I shall endeavour a little to improve the words of our text, by observing,

- I. That Christ has a people, and these are a purchased people.
- II. That this purchased people must pass through death to glory, and will pass through it safely.
- III. That this their passage, as it is always safe from their spiritual enemies, it is, generally speaking, quiet and easy from them; they are not suffered to disturb them.
- IV. That this is owing to the greatness of the arm of the Lord, or to his almighty power.

I. That Christ has a people which are his purchase; concerning whom may be observed the following things.

1. Who the people are that are Christ's, and are purchased by him. These are men; for as for angels, they cannot come into the account of purchased ones; the evil angels Christ has nothing to do with as a Saviour, nor they with him: the good angels, though they are the objects of electing, yet not of redeeming grace; though Christ is the head of election to them, yet not the author of the redemption of them: for as they never were in bondage, they cannot be said to be redeemed, or bought again; besides their nature is incapable of dying, or of such a passage as the purchased people of Christ are obliged unto: but the purchased people are men, the sons of men, with whom the delights of Christ were from everlasting; whose persons and cause he espoused, and for whom he undertook as a surety to obey, suffer and die in their room and stead; and by so doing to redeem and save them. In order to which he took on him their nature, and not the nature of angels, and in that nature made a purchase of them; *ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men*^d; of whose race they are, and among whom they live, and to whom they are liable to be servants, whom Christ has bought with the price of his blood: but then these are not all men, or all the individuals of mankind; for they are *redeemed from among men, and out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation*^e; and therefore cannot be all men, or all of every kindred, tongue, people and nation; if Christ had made a purchase of all men, all would be saved, for his purchase cannot be lost: indeed we read of some, that *deny the Lord that bought them,*

^d 1 Cor. vii. 23.

^e Rev. xiv. 4. and v. 9.

them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction^f; but it is not clear that our Lord Jesus Christ is there meant, or the purchase of his blood there spoken of; but rather, that the God of *Israel* is intended, and his peculiar dealings in providence with that people, on account of which he is said to *buy* them: but supposing that Christ and his purchase are designed, this may be understood not of his real purchase of those who were eventually destroyed, but of their former profession of him as the Lord that had bought them, which they supposed and claimed, though it was not really so. The people of Christ are a distinct people; distinguished by the love of God to them, by his choice of them to eternal life, and by the covenant of grace into which they are peculiarly taken, and are interested in all the blessings and promises of it; and by the effectual vocation of them: and as they are a distinct people in Christ's intercession, for whom he prays, and not for the world; so in redemption by his blood, they are a peculiar people, whom he has redeemed from all iniquity; to whom he has a peculiar right, for whom he has a peculiar value; on whom he bestows peculiar blessings; and whom he admits to a peculiar nearness to himself: they are indeed *the church of God which he has purchased with his own blood*^g; that church of which he is the head, and for which he has given himself, that he might *sanctify, and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; even the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven*; that is to say, the elect of God: these and every one of them are bought by Christ, and all of them, their souls and bodies; and though the redemption of them is of their souls principally and chiefly, yet of their bodies also; wherefore being not their own, but *bought with a price*, they are under obligation to *glorify* him that bought them, in their *body and spirit, which are his*^h: these are they which are called *the purchased possession*ⁱ; not heaven, as some have thought, to which redemption cannot with any propriety be ascribed; but a people for the Lord's possession, which he has bought for that purpose; nor are any but persons ever said to be purchased by Christ; which leads me to observe,

2. That Christ, and he alone, is the purchaser of these people. The Son of God was appointed the redeemer of them in eternity, and was sent in the fulness of time to redeem them; and Christ has redeemed his people from sin, law, hell, and death; the Lamb has redeemed them, or bought them again by his blood; being *God over all, blessed for ever, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; the only potentate, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein*; he was able to make this purchase, and none but a divine person was equal to it; wherefore God is said to purchase the church *with his blood*.

and

^f 2 Peter ii. 1.

^g Acts xx. 28.

^h 1 Cor. vi. 19. 20.

ⁱ Ephes. i. 14.

and as he was able to make this purchase, he was willing to do it; God in his infinite wisdom *found* him, and pitched upon him to be the *ransom-price* of his people; upon which he said concerning them, *Deliver them from going down to the pit*^c: and Christ voluntarily agreed to be that ransom, and said, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*^d; and accordingly he did come in human nature, in the form of a servant, *not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many*^e; and indeed by his becoming man, and so our *Goel* or near kinsman, the right of purchase and redemption belonged unto him. If a man, according to the Levitical law, could not redeem himself when sold, his uncle, or his uncle's son, or any near of kin, might do it; and so the redemption and purchase of inheritances belonged to such, as in the cases of *Boaz* and *Jeremiah*. Thus Christ, partaking of the same flesh and blood with his people, and they being sold, and in a state of bondage; the right of redemption or purchase devolved on him, as it was agreed it should in the counsel and covenant of grace and peace; and accordingly he has actually made the purchase: he *has* purchased the church with his blood; the thing *is* done; *ye are bought with a price*; this has been *testified in due time*; full proof is to be, and has been made of it. But I go on to observe,

3. The price with which these people are purchased by Christ; the purchase-money that was laid down for them, or given as a valuable consideration on their account: and this is sometimes said to be the *flesh* of Christ, which he *gave for the life of the world*^h; for the obtaining and securing the life of his chosen ones, even his whole human nature, which he took into union with his divine person; and so is said to be *made flesh*ⁱ; or a *partaker of the same flesh and blood* with his people; in which flesh or human nature he was put to death, and so obtained eternal redemption for them. Sometimes his *blood* is represented as the purchase-price; *not corruptible things, as silver and gold, but the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot or blemish*^k: he is said to purchase the church *with his own blood*^l; and to redeem us unto God *by his blood*^m; which was a sufficient price, since it was the same blood with ours; for he partook of the same flesh and blood with us: it was not the blood of bulls and goats which was given as the purchase-price; but it was the blood of a man, and the blood of an innocent person, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. It was the blood of the harmless and innocent Lamb of God, without spot or blemish, either of original or actual sin, and so fit to be the ransom-price; and besides, what gave it its value, virtue, and efficacy, is, that it is the blood of him that is God as well as man, and both in one person; the blood of Jesus Christ,

^c Job xxxiii. 24.^d Psalm xl. 7. 8.^e Matt. xx. 28.^h John vi. 51.ⁱ John i. 14.^k 1 Peter i. 18, 19.^l Acts xx. 28.^m Rev. v. 9.

Christ, the Son of God; and so as it has a virtue to take away sin, and cleanse from it, has an intrinsic worth and value in it to make a purchase of all God's elect. Sometimes the life, which is in the blood, the life of Christ, is made to be the ransom-price: he *laid down his life for the sheep*ⁿ; which his father gave him, and made his care and charge; his life went for theirs, and for the redemption of them; he *gave his life a ransom for them*^o: yea, he is said to *give himself*, ἀπαλλάττον, "a ransom-price" for all^p his people, Jews and Gentiles, men of all nations, ranks and classes; and all sorts of sinners, greater and lesser; even his whole human nature, soul and body, as in union with his divine person, which were given, as for a sacrifice and offering for the sins of men, so for the ransom of them. And how great must this be! we sometimes hear of a king's ransom, given either by a king, or for one; such is the ransom of Christ, it is given by him the King of kings, and is no other than himself; and it is given for his people, who *are made kings and priests to God by him*; which must needs be a great one. Now it may be proper to inquire,

4. To whom this price was paid for the purchase of these people. Not into the hands of Satan; for though he is the god of this world, he is so by usurpation; and though he works effectually in the children of disobedience, and even leads captive God's own people, in a state of unregeneracy; yet he has no rightful claim unto them, nor just possession of them; and therefore, as there was no necessity of making a purchase of them from him, so neither has any been made: they are indeed ransomed from the hand of him who is stronger than they, even the strong man armed, in whose power they were whilst in a state of nature; but then this is done by power; and though in consequence of a price paid, yet not into his hands, but into the hands of another; and so the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered. But the price of Redemption is paid into the hands of God, into the hands of divine justice. Christ has redeemed his people *unto God*^q by his blood; by giving himself an offering and a sacrifice unto him; by fulfilling his law, and satisfying his justice. God has a sovereign right unto them, and a sovereign disposal of them, and could give them to whom he will; and he gave them to his Son: *thine they were; and thou gavest them me*^r, on condition of his making *his soul an offering for sin*; or giving himself to *redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people*^s. God is he against whom they have sinned, and whose law is broken by sin: *for sin is the transgression of the law*^t; and the dishonour done to that must be removed, and the honour of it repaired and restored; and Christ, by his obedience, sufferings and death, has magnified the law, and made it

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honourable.

ⁿ John x. 15.^o Matt. xx. 28.^p 1 Tim. ii. 6.^q Rev. v. 9.^r John xvii. 6.^s Titus ii. 14.^t 1 John iii. 4.

honourable. Justice by sin is injured and offended; and the judge of all the earth will do right, and insist upon a full satisfaction to his justice; and therefore *Christ is set forth to be the propitiation for sin*, to declare the justice and righteousness of God; which is glorified by *Christ being made sin and a curse for his people*, and by laying down his life a ransom-price for them. Sins are so many debts, and they are exceeding numerous; more than ten thousand talents are owing, and man has nothing to pay with; he has run into debt with God, and to him must the payment be made, either by himself, or by his surety; and now Christ, the surety of his people, in paying off their debts, has put a valuable consideration for them into the hands of God, to whom he has made the payment; and so he has blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that lay against them. To conclude this head of discourse, let us briefly consider,

5. The nature of this purchase. It is a special purchase; a peculiar people that Christ has redeemed; a special people that he has purchased; a special price which he has laid down for them, and which arises from his special love of them, and from whence flow special blessings and favours to them. It is a proper purchase: there is a purchasing or buying things in an improper sense, which is done *without money, and without price*; so grace, and the blessings of it, are bought of Christ; that is, by making application to him, they are freely had and enjoyed: but this purchase is made with a price; *ye are bought with a price*^a; though not with the price of gold and silver, and such like corruptible things; yet with the price of Christ's blood, with his flesh, his life, himself, as has been before observed. It is a legal purchase, good and valid, and against which no objection can be laid; it is a sufficient price that is given, what was agreed to by the parties concerned; by God, to whom it is paid, who is satisfied with it; by Christ, who engaged to give it, and has made payment of it; nor can any thing be alledged to invalidate the purchase either by law or justice; nor can any one, for the future, lay any claim to the persons purchased, but he to whom they of right belong; who has a most clear and indubitate right and title to them; as by his Father's gift, who gave them to him to be his portion and inheritance, so by his own purchase: wherefore he claims an interest in them on this account, saying, *I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine*^b; and they are neither their own, nor another's, but the Lord's; and as they are not the vassals of Satan, they ought not to be the servants of men, but serve and glorify the Lord, and him only. As the purchase *Jeremiah* made of the field of his uncle's son was firm and valid, when the evidence of the purchase was subscribed and sealed, the witnesses taken, and the money weighed and paid; so the purchase which Christ has made is much more so, being sealed with

^a 1 Cor. vii. 23.

^b Isa. xlii. 1.

with his blood, and testified in due time in the everlasting gospel, the evidence of this purchase; the scriptures are the writings which contain it, shew and prove it. It is a full and complete purchase; it is a purchase of the whole election of grace; of all the children of God scattered about in the world; of all the Lord's people that ever have been, are, or shall be, in it: these may truly be said to be the pearl of great price, which Christ the merchant-man came into this world to seek for, and found; and finding it, sold all that he had, shed his blood, parted with his life, and gave himself for it, and bought it: and it is the greatest purchase that ever was made, or can be made, and which none else could ever make; such as are possessed of the greatest riches, *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever*^a; it must do so, for any thing that they can give as a redemption-price for it; they are not able with all they have, and had they the whole world, and all that is in it in their possession, they would not be able to purchase one single soul, or give a sufficient ransom-price for it: whereas Christ has purchased the whole church of God, thousands and millions of the souls of men; even a great multitude out of all nations, kindred, people, and tongues, which no man can number. But I proceed to consider,

II. The passage of this purchased people over *Jordan's* river, or through the ford of death; and the necessity of it, and their safety in it.

1. Death is a passage from this world to another, out of time into eternity. It is a going from hence elsewhere: says our Lord, *the Son of man goeth*; that is, he is about to die, *as it is determined*^b; which is going the way of all the earth; and he expresses his own death by departing out of the world, and going to the Father; and the apostle *Paul* signifies his desire to die in the same language; namely, *to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better*^c than to stay in this world. Death is like taking a journey or a voyage, and it is a long one; it is a man's going to *his long home*^d, and a long one it is; for he goes the way, and to the place whence he shall return no more; the place that knew him, or the people of it, shall know him no more there; he will not return to the same place, situation, and circumstances in which he was before. Death is sometimes represented as a passage through a low, lonesome, and dark valley; *though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil*^e; and here the emblem is, passing over a river, and crossing from shore to shore, wading in the midst of it, in order to get to land; particularly a passing over the river *Jordan* to get into *Canaan's* land. Now,

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^a Psalm xlix. 6—8.^b Luke xxii. 22.^c John xiii. 1. Phil. i. 23.^d Eccles. xii. 5.^e Psalm xxiii. 4.

2. This passage is altogether necessary; it must be, there is no avoiding it: it is the way that all men go, all the inhabitants of the earth, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, good and bad; it is become necessary by the decree of God, which is inflexible: *it is appointed for men*, for men in general, for all men, *once to die*, or to go through a change equivalent to it. This is the statute-law of heaven, and must be obeyed: the grave is *the house appointed for all living*^a; and all are brought unto it, and laid in it: though the grave of some is very different from that of others; yet there are receptacles for the dust of all, into which they are conveyed; and good men as well as others are brought to the dust of death: and there is a necessity of it; *the time drew nigh that Israel must die*^b; that truly good man, that plain, honest-hearted man, *Jacob*; that gracious man, so powerful and prevalent in prayer, *Israel*; he must die as other men, as his ancestors *Abraham* and *Isaac* before him did; and the time was just at hand, according to the course of nature, and by the appointment of God, when he must submit to the stroke of death: and this is the case of all, the most pious and useful: *Your fathers, where are they?* They are all gone from hence, they have all passed over *Jordan*, they are all departed into another world, an endless eternity: *And the prophets, do they live for ever?*^c No, they live but for a short time: when they have done the work they were sent to do, they are called home to their father's house, to inherit the promises. Indeed the death of good men is different from that of others; different in the manner of their dying, being in faith, in hope, in comfort: and different in the issue and end of it, eternal life and happiness: hence *Balaam*, a wicked man, desired to *die the death of the righteous*, and that *his last end might be like his*^d; but die they do, and must; and even though Christ has died for them, and by dying has abolished death. Through Christ's death indeed they become dead to sin, and live unto righteousness; they live a spiritual life, which will never be extinct; and they will never die the second death: but then they are not exempted by Christ's death from a corporal one; they are delivered from it as a penal evil; it is not a curse, but a blessing to them; the sting of it is taken away; and they receive no hurt and damage by it; yea it is of advantage to them, as they hereby get rid of a body of sin and death; and as it is an outlet from sorrow and distress, and an inlet to everlasting peace and joy. However, it is necessary and unavoidable; as there was no other way for the Israelites to enter into the land of *Canaan*, but by passing over the river *Jordan*; there is no other way of going to heaven, of entering into the everlasting rest, into eternal life, but through the ford of death: I say, there is no other way in the ordinary course

of

^a Heb. ix. 27.^b Job xxx. 23.^c Gen. xvii. 29.^d Zech. i. 5.^e Numb. xxiii. 10.

of things; for though there have been two persons, and but two, *Enoch* and *Elijah*, who went to heaven by a translation and assumption of soul and body at once, yet these were extraordinary instances; and even these passed through a change somewhat similar to death, as those will, that will be found alive at the personal coming of Christ: but though this is, and will be the case of all the Lord's purchased people, yet,

3. This their passage is attended with the utmost safety; there is no danger in it; no evil is to be feared from it: as all *the people of Israel passed clean over Jordan*^a, perfectly, completely¹; not one was lost or missing in the passage over it; so all Christ's purchased people pass safely through death to eternal glory; none ever were lost in it; nor will any be missing at the great day, when Christ makes up his jewels, and takes the account of them, to see that all are safe. There is nothing of the saints lost at or by death, not even their bodies; though the dead are said to be *not*^b, yet they are not annihilated; they are not in the land of the living, nor in the same form and condition they were; but they are not reduced to nothing: they are indeed returned to dust, from whence they were; but then that dust is something: and the dust of the saints is precious dust, and is under the special and peculiar care of Christ, who engaged, agreeable to the will and injunction of his divine Father, to *raise it up again at the last day*¹; and this is his fixed resolution and determination; *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death*^m: and this will be done at the last day; *these dead men shall live again*; and as sure as Christ's dead body was raised again, so sure shall theirs, and be fashioned like to his glorious body. *The dead in Christ*, upon his appearance, *will rise first*; and happy those, that will have a part in this first resurrection; they shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years, and the second death shall have no power over them; and when it will most clearly appear that they have been no losers, but gainers by death; their corruptible, dishonourable, weak and natural bodies being raised incorruptible, glorious, powerful and spiritual ones: and as at death their bodies are not lost, and in the issue suffer no loss, but gain advantages; so their souls immediately go to heaven; they are carried at once by angels into *Abraham's bosom*; they are in an instant with Christ in paradise: this made the apostle *Paul* desire to depart out of this sinful world, knowing he should be immediately with Christ, in the full enjoyment of him; in which felicity the spirits of just men made perfect in death continue in a separate state until the resurrection-morn; when they will be all brought with Christ, and be re-united to their bodies, and live for ever with him: so that though all the Lord's purchased people pass through *Jordan's* river, they all come safe at last in soul and body to *Canaan's* land;

^a Joshua iii. 17.¹ תמוך Perfekte transisset, vel plene, Tigurine version.^b Jer. xxxi. 15.¹ Joha vi. 39.^m Hosea xiii. 14.

land; nor shall any one of them be lost or missing; they are ordained to eternal life, and shall possess it: whom God predestinates he glorifies; they are put into the hands of Christ, and are under his care, and he has engaged to keep them, and does keep them, and will present every one of them to his Father, saying, *Lo, I, and the children thou hast given me*^a; they are purchased with the price of Christ's blood, and his blood shall not be shed, nor the price of it paid in vain; they are united to him, and are one with him, and *because he lives, they shall live also*^b; they have his spirit and grace as the *earnest of their inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession*^c; wherefore there is no danger, nor need there be any fear, in their passage to heaven and glory; and even was there a shipwreck in it, as in death there is none, though in life there may, with respect to troubles and distresses; there may be what is similar to one; yet like *Paul*, and the mariners with him in such a circumstance, some on-board, and some on broken pieces of the ship, they all come safe to land^d. Which leads me on further to observe,

III. That for the most part, or generally speaking, the purchased people of Christ have a quiet and comfortable passage over the ford of death, into the land of promise and rest. As when the children of *Israel* went out of *Egypt*, not a dog was suffered to move its tongue against them; nor any person to give them the least molestation or disturbance; so when they passed over *Jordan's* river to go into the land of *Canaan*, none of the *Canaanites* appeared to stop their passage, or dispute it with them, but were as *still as a stone* till they passed over; and when they heard what a wonderful passage they had, the waters of *Jordan* being dried up until they were clean passed over, *their hearts melted within them*. And so it is commonly with the saints in the hour of death; their spiritual enemies, who have given them so much uneasiness in life, are not suffered to distress them in their last moments. As,

1. The sins and corruptions of their nature, which dwell in them, and are of all the worst enemies they have; for *a man's enemies are the men of his own house*^e, as these are: they are inmates with him, and yet at enmity with him, and give him a great deal of trouble and vexation; they hinder him from doing the good he would, and put him upon and urge him to do the evil he would not; and so break in upon his peace and comfort: they are *the law in his members warring against the law of his mind, bringing him into captivity to the law of sin*; which greatly grieves him, and makes him cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* But the believer perceiving his dissolution drawing nigh, spies deliverance from it *through Jesus Christ our Lord*^f; which

^a Heb. ii. 13.

^b Acts xxvii. 44.

^c John xiv. 19.

^d Mic. vii. 5.

^e Ephes. i. 14.

^f Rom. vii. 23—25.

which makes him thankful, and fills him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Now he sees those Egyptians that made his life bitter, and brought him into bondage, and induced a spirit of bondage on him, all dead on the sea-shore; having no power over him, and much less any influence to bring him into condemnation and death; now, those croaking toads, as Dr Goodwin¹ called them in his dying-hour, he finds and feels falling off from him; and in a short time will hear no more their croaking language, or their disagreeable noise and sound: nor is he in any fear from them, having a comfortable view of the free and full forgiveness of his sins through the blood of Christ; and of his justification before God, and acceptance with him through his pure and perfect righteousness.

2. An evil heart of unbelief is often very distressing to the saints in their present situation: unbelief is a sin that easily besets them; entwines about them, and entangles them; insinuates itself into them, and greatly bereaves them of their peace and comfort, and God of his glory. Their unbelieving hearts, by reason of sin, condemn them, and fill them with doubts and fears concerning their eternal state, and make them very uneasy and uncomfortable; though God is greater than their heart, and knows all things²; what love he has in his heart towards them; what provision he has made in covenant for them, and the great salvation his Son is the author of on their account. But often so it is, when they come upon their dying-beds, their unbelief goes off, their doubts and fears are dissipated, and their faith increases, and so their spiritual peace and joy in believing; and they are able to say with the apostle, *I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day*³; and though there may not be in all dying saints the like degree and exercise of faith, or such as amounts to a full assurance, or holy triumph of it; yet there are some actings of it, and which are attended, more or less, with peace and comfort: *These all died in faith*⁴; in the faith of God, as a covenant-God; in the faith of Christ, as the only Redeemer and Saviour; and in the faith of future glory and happiness: and even a good hope, through grace of these things, is attended with spiritual joy and comfort; and this the good man has in his death; for when *the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, the righteous hath hope in his death*⁵; and it is such a hope as makes not ashamed, and is never disappointed.

3. Satan is a very busy adversary with his temptations in the present life; and the best of men are not free from them, and are often galled and grieved with them; and sometimes they have their conflicts with him on their dying-beds; but they come off more than conquerors through him that has loved them. And when this enemy of souls comes in like a flood, threatening to carry all before him,

¹ See his Life prefixed to the 10th vol. of his works, p. 19.

² 1 John iii. 20.

³ 2 Tim. i. 12.

⁴ Heb. xi. 13.

⁵ Prov. xiv. 32.

him, and swallow up the faith and hope of the children of God, and fill them with darknes, doubts, and fears, and black despair; *the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him*^r; the person, blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ, and baffles all his designs, and secures the peace and comfort of the saints. And God can, and sometimes does, chain up this lion and stop his mouth, so that not one hideous roar of his shall be heard while the believer is passing over *Jordan's* river, or through the ford of death.

4. The terrors of death are frequently taken off of Christ's purchased people when they come to die; yea, even such *who through fear of death have been all their life-time subject to bondage, are then delivered from it*^s; who have been greatly distressed on account either of the pains they shall endure on a death-bed, or of the agonies of their dying moments, or of what shall follow after; these fears have all vanished and disappeared, when death has come in view. Instances of this kind have been many, and well known: many a timorous soul in health, when they are upon the shores of eternity, just ready to launch into it, and are in the full view of it, have sat and sung, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord*^t; and if you mark *the perfect man, and behold the upright*, you will observe that *the end of that man is peace*^u; not only that his end or death issues in eternal peace; but the last end he makes is a peaceful one, or is attended with spiritual peace. I will not peremptorily say, that this calm, serene and peaceful frame of soul attends every dying saint; but I believe for the most part it does, if not always. For though the believer may have his darknes, doubts and fears, and many conflicts of soul whilst on his dying-bed; yet usually these are all over and gone before his last moments come, and death does its work and office upon him: and from the gracious promises of God to *be with* his people even unto *death*; and from the scriptural accounts of dying saints; and from the observations I have made through the course of my life; I am of opinion that, generally speaking, the people of God die comfortably; their spiritual enemies being made to be *as still as a stone*, while they pass through the floods of *Jordan*, or the cold streams of death.

IV. This is ascribed to the greatness of the arm of the Lord, or to his almighty power. There were many things which contributed to make the passage of the Israelites over the river *Jordan* easy and comfortable, and which encouraged them to it; and somewhat similar to them the people of God are favoured with oftentimes in their passage through death; which are of singular use and service to them. As,

1. It

^r Isai. lix. 19.

^s Heb. ii. 15.

^t 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

^u Psalm xxxvii. 37.

1. It was no small encouragement to the people of *Israel* in their passage over *Jordan*, to see the priests of the Lord go before them, and their feet stand firm and sure on dry ground in the midst of it. So when private christians behold their faithful guides and ministers stand fast in the faith, both in life and at death; whose *faith* they follow, and *the end* of whose *conversation* they consider; it greatly animates and encourages them to look to and trust in the Lord and Saviour, they do; who is *the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*^d: when they observe that they abide stedfastly by the doctrines of the gospel they preach throughout the whole of their lives; and when they come to die, these are the support of their souls, and by means of which their feet stand firm in *Jordan's* river, and they stagger not in the view of death and eternity; this gives a life to weaker saints, and is a means to encourage them to follow them cheerfully, *who through faith and patience inherit the promises*. Besides, ministers of the gospel, as they are useful in their public ministrations to speak comfortably to the people of God, which is a principal branch of their work, even to assure those that believe in Christ of the pardon of their sins through his blood, and of their justification by his righteousness, and of eternal life as the free gift of God through him; so they are often serviceable to the saints in their last moments, by speaking a word in season to them; which tends to encourage their faith and hope, and to increase their joy and peace in believing, and to direct their views to that glory they are hastening to, in the hope of which they rejoice and are glad.

2. Another thing which served greatly to encourage the people of *Israel* to follow the priests through *Jordan's* river, was the ark of the covenant which they bore before them as they passed through; and which ark was a type of Christ, and of the law being fulfilled in him, and of the covenant of grace made with him. And a sight of Christ, as *the Lord our righteousness*, and as *the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness*, and of an interest in the covenant of grace, and the blessings and promises of it, and of an interest in God, as a covenant-God, and in Christ as the mediator of it, will set a soul above the fears of death, and cause it to pass cheerfully and comfortably through it; as it did *David*, some of whose last words, a little before his death, were these; *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow*^e.

3. Not only the priests of the Lord, and the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth, went before the Israelites when they passed over *Jordan*, but the living God himself was among them; and which was manifest from that wonderful display of his power in parting the waters, and causing them to stand up

^d Heb. xiii. 7, 8.^e 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

on an heap, for them to pass through as on dry ground; which must be a great inducement to go on cheerfully into the midst of it, fearing nothing: nor can any thing be a greater encouragement to saints in their last moments, and when upon the brink of eternity, than to have some plain manifestations of the presence of God with them, and the displays of his love and grace to them: hence says David, *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me*^f. And this God, who is the God of his people, and their guide in life, will be their God for ever and ever, and *will never leave them nor forsake them*; and he will be *their guide unto death*^g; until they come to it, and will then be their guide through it; so that it must be safe and comfortable walking through *Jordan's* river, when God is with his people as their God and guide; and which he has promised to be, and they may depend upon.

4. A sight of the waters of *Jordan* divided; those that came down from above rising up and standing on an heap; and those that came from the sea of the plain falling, being cut off, and the midst of the river appearing to be dry ground, must needs give the people of *Israel* courage to venture into it, and follow the priests in it. And so when the believer has a view of all difficulties in his passage removed, which before presented to him, and all his doubts and fears scattered, and his objections answered, death is no more formidable to him; he meets it with pleasure, and passes through it with boldness and cheerfulness; having no fearful apprehensions of danger in it, or hurt from it, of being overwhelmed with the floods of it, or of perishing in his passage through it. But,

5. The stillness of the enemies of Christ's purchased people, while they pass over, is attributed to *Jehovah's* arm; who has such an arm as no creature has; *hast thou an arm like God*^h? no, none has: kings are said to have long arms, because their power is large and extensive, they can come at persons and things out of the reach of others; but their arm is not to be compared with the arm of the Lord, of whom it is said, *thou hast a mighty arm, strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand*ⁱ: so mighty, as not to be resisted by any; so strong, as to crush his most potent enemies; and so high, as not to be reached by any of them, or hindered from striking a fatal blow; and which, the higher the hand is, or is lifted up, comes with the greater force. On this mighty arm the purchased people of Christ lean, whilst they are passing through the wilderness of this world, and are coming up out of it; and so go on safely, cheerfully, and comfortably: it is on this they are borne, and carried all their days, even to old age and hoary hairs; by the mighty power of this arm they are preserved from their enemies; they are kept through faith unto salvation, and they are

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^f Psalm xxiii. 4.^g Psalm xlvi. 14.^h Job xl. 9.ⁱ Psalm lxxxix. 13.

conducted safely through the dark valley of death, and over this river *Jordan* into the land of uprightnes. And it is owing to this that their enemies are as still as a stone, while they pass over; the arm of the Lord is greater than theirs; his power is infinitely superior to what is in them; their hands are held, their mouths are stopped, their clamours are silenced; they are not suffered to move their lips, to bring any charge against the saints, and much less exert any power over them. *Jehovah* subdues their iniquities, removes all the objections, doubts and fears of an unbelieving heart; rebukes the tempter, and *kills the enemy, and the avenger*^k; and so a safe, easy and quiet *entrance is ministered abundantly, richly, plenteously*^l *into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*^m. But I shall now close this discourse, by observing the use that may be made of it.

1. This may serve to put us in mind of *death*, and to expect it: it lies in our way to the heavenly *Canaan*; there is no entrance into the one, without passing through the other: if therefore we are looking for the blessed hope laid up for us in heaven, or are waiting for the hope of righteousness by faith; we should live in a continual expectation of death, and should frequently meditate upon it, and endeavour to make it familiar to us; that when we come to the brink of this river, we may not be surpris'd and intimidated with its swelling floods.

2. This may have a tendency to take off the *fears* of death, which often attend the people of God, when their thoughts are led to dwell upon it; they are fearful what frame of soul they shall then be in; they are afraid their graces will be weak, and their enemies strong; their sins will stare them in the face; their hearts will fail through unbelief; Satan will be busy with his temptations, noisy and clamorous with his charges; and the terrors of death will set themselves in array against them. But when they observe, that God has promised his presence with his people, that he will never leave them in life nor in death; will be their God and guide to it, and through it: will silence all their enemies, and make them as still as a stone; they have then nothing to fear, but may say as *David* did in the view of death, and with respect unto it, *I will fear no evil*ⁿ.

3. This may encourage the weakest believer, and assure him, that he shall go safely and even quietly through this dark valley, and over this swelling river; who is sometimes ready to argue after this manner, that if he has run *with the footmen*, and *they have wearied him*; either striving to keep pace with fellow-saints of the same class with him, or to get before them, but through the weakness and weariness of the flesh has not been able; or striving with the corruptions of his nature, and endeavouring to overcome them, is wearied by them; *then how* can he think to *contend with horses*, or horsemen; to enter the lists with those that are above his match, with Satan and his principalities and powers?

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^k Psalm viii. 2.

^l Πλούσιος.

^m 2 Peter i. 11.

ⁿ Psalm xxiii. 4.

ers? and if in the land of peace wherein he trusted, he has been wearied and distressed in a time of health and outward prosperity, which he promised himself a continuance of; then how shall he do in the swelling of Jordan^o? or in the hour of death, when that shall appear formidable and terrible to him? but God can abate this swelling, and bring down its rising waves and floods, and make it smooth and quiet; yea, divide its waters, and form a path of dry land between them to pass through, easily and safely; or, in other words, remove the seeming difficulties in the passage, and make it a comfortable and pleasant one.

4. This may instruct us to look beyond death and the grave to the heavenly glory. As on the other side of Jordan's river lay a most delightful and fruitful country, the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey; so on the other side of death, and the grave, lies a land of promise, a land of rest, a land of uprightne^s; a better country than this earthly one, abounding with heavenly fruits, and rivers of pleasure; and where there is fulness of joy; and which the Elysian fields can give us no idea of; but faith gives us a glimpse of them, being the evidence^p of those unseen glories and invisible realities; wherefore let us look by faith, *not at things which are seen, which are temporal, but at things which are not seen, which are eternal^q*; and let us *gird up the loins of our minds*, and be in a waiting posture, expecting to enjoy those everlasting things; and *hope unto the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ^r*.

5. This may assure the Lord's purchased people, such who have any reason to believe that they are purchased with the blood of Christ, that as they shall safely and quietly pass over Jordan's river, so they shall most certainly possess the promised land, and inherit everlasting life; for Christ will surely see the travail of his soul; he will never lose his purchase; the price of his blood can never be paid in vain, as it so far would be, if any of those he has purchased should come short of eternal glory and happiness. Beside, such have not only Christ's purchase to trust unto, and depend upon for their security; but they have the Spirit, and his grace, as *the earnest* of their enjoyment of the inheritance, *until the redemption of the purchased possession^s*; wherefore it may with the greatest assurance be concluded, that *the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away^t*.

^o Jer. xii. 5.

^p Heb. xi. 1.

^q 2 Cor. iv. 18.

^r 1 Peter i. 13.

^s Ephes. i. 14.

^t Isai. xxxv. 10.

FUNERAL SERMONS.

S E R M O N XXI.

*The Glory of God's Grace displayed, in its abounding over the
aboundings of Sin.*

Occasioned by the Death of Mr JOHN SMITH, Preached at the Time of
his Interment, *April 15, 1724.*

ROMANS V. 20, 21.

*Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin
abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto
death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life,
by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

IT is the manifest design of this Epistle to explain and vindicate the great doctrine of a sinner's free justification before God by the imputed righteousness of Christ: And in order to set this doctrine in its proper light, our apostle takes this following method; he first proves that all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, are involved in the guilt, and are under the power of sin; that they are all destitute of a righteousness, and not capable of attaining one by the deeds of the law: and then proceeds to tell us, that that righteousness, by which a sinner is justified before God, *is manifested without the law*, though both the law and the prophets bear testimony to it; that it is the righteousness of God, wrought out by one who is God, as well as man; that our justification by it springs from pure, free, and rich grace, *through the redemption that is in Christ*; and that the way by which it is conveyed and applied to us, is by an act of God
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the Father imputing it to us, and by our faith apprehending it, as our justifying righteousness before God; from whence abundance of peace, joy and comfort arise to our souls: This is now the sum and substance of the first four chapters of this Epistle; and in this fifth chapter, our apostle sets forth the stupendous love of the Father in giving his Son to die, and the inexpressible love of Christ in shedding his precious blood for sinners, whilst such, that they might be justified by it, and saved *from wrath to come*; and also takes an occasion to compare the heads of the two covenants, *Adam* and *CHRIST*, and shews how *sin and death* came into the world by the one, and *righteousness and life* by the other; and how much the glory of superabounding grace appears in our justification to life by Christ.

And in handling this great doctrine of justification, he does, as he goes along, obviate those objections which were then formed against it; "that it made void the law, discouraged the performance of good works, and countenanced licentiousness;" which are the very same objections that are now formed against it; and which, to me, is an evidence of the sameness of doctrine; that is to say, that the doctrine of justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, which we preach and assert, is the same which the apostle preached and asserted, because the same objections are levelled against the one as the other; and confirms me in the belief of this, that the doctrine of justification by works is not the scripture-doctrine, because it will not admit the same objections to be made against it, which that doctrine had. Now I apprehend that there is in the words which I have read, an anticipation of an objection, which might be made against the doctrine the apostle had asserted, after this manner; If there is no justification by the deeds of the law, if sin was in the world, and death by sin so universally extended its empire before the law was given, then for what purpose was the law introduced? The apostle answers, *that the offence might abound*; an answer much like to that which he gives to a like objection in *Gal. iii. 19. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions.* Though it is thought by others, that the apostle having treated concerning the state of things from *Adam* to *Moses*, subjoins those words, lest any should think that the law was given to deliver men from sin, and repair the loss sustained thereby; however, it is evident from the words, that one end or consequence of the law's entrance was, *that sin might abound*; and sin is permitted to abound, that there might be an opportunity, or an occasion for super-abounding grace to manifest itself; and grace does thus abound, that so it might reign.

My time will not allow me to make and improve those doctrinal observations, which these fruitful words would furnish us with; therefore the method which I shall take in speaking to them, will be to discourse,

I. Concerning the law's entrance, and the end or consequence thereof.

II. The aboundings of grace over abounding sin.

III. The reign of grace in opposition to the reign of sin.

I. I shall discourse concerning the law's entrance, and the end or consequence of it; it will therefore be proper to explain these three things in discoursing on this head.

1. What we are to understand by the law.

2. What by the entrance of it.

3. In what sense the offence abounded by it.

1. What we are to understand by the law: By the law is meant either the ceremonial or the moral law; the ceremonial law was a shadow of good things to come; it prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ, and was the Jews schoolmaster, which led them to him; it consisted in the observation of meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed on the Jewish church, until the time of reformation^a. It may not be amiss if we consider a little, how far the words will bear this sense. The ceremonial law entered but for a time, it was not to continue always; and this is thought by some to be the import of the Greek word *παιδεία*; and it is the observation of^b one of the ancients, that the apostle does not say the law was given, but it entered, and that on purpose to shew that the use of the law was but temporary. The moral law abides for ever, as a rule of life, but the ceremonial law was to continue but for a time, even until faith came^c, that is, Christ, who is both the object and author of faith; for Christ the substance being come, those shadows vanished and disappeared: His blood being shed, which cleanseth from all sin, no more need of the blood of bulls and goats, nor of those divers washings and purifications; this great sacrifice being offered up, the daily sacrifice ceased; and spiritual ordinances being instituted, no more need of carnal ones.

Again; The ceremonial law was superadded to the moral law; it was an appendage to it, it entered in^d over and above that. The moral law was given to discover the evil of sin; the ceremonial law was superadded to it to lead the faith of God's children, under that dispensation, to a proper atoning sacrifice for it.

Again; The ceremonial law was an indication of that great evil which is in sin; God's requiring sacrifices to be offered for the typical expiation of sin, does manifestly shew how highly he repented it, and of what an evil nature it is; and if you will but consider the frequent reiteration of those sacrifices, and how there was, notwithstanding them, a remembrance of sin made every year^e; also how far
short

^a Heb. ix. 10.

^b Chrysof. in Lud. de Dieu in loc.

^c Gal. iii. 23. 25.

^d Supervenit, Castalio. Præterea introit. Beza.

^e Heb. x. 1—4.

short of perfection these sacrifices left the comers thereunto, and how impossible it was that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin; you will then easily observe the vile nature of sin, and how it abounded and became exceeding sinful by this law.

Lastly, As the design of this law was to lead the faith of God's children to the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; so it was not only to shew us what sin is, and how highly displeasing to the great God; but also how much his superabounding grace appears in the remission of it, through the blood and sacrifice of Christ prefigured thereby; so that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. But then,

By the law may be meant the moral law, which was given by *Moses*, and is mentioned in opposition to that *grace and truth* which came by Christ. *The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*^f. The sum of which law is love to God, and love to our neighbour; as appears from the answer which Christ gave the lawyer who put this question to him; saying, *Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment: And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets*^g. Hence it is that the apostle *Paul* says, that *love is the fulfilling of the law*^h. And this is the law which I apprehend is meant in the words of my text. I shall now therefore consider,

2. What is meant by the entrance of this law. We may consider the law as it entered into the world by *Moses*, as it was *ordained by angels in the band of a mediator on mount Sinai*, and also as it enters into the conscience of a poor sinner.

The entrance of the law by *Moses*, does not suppose that there was no law previous to that which was given by him; for there was a law of nature which was inscribed on *Adam's* heart, and continued there during his innocent state; some broken remains of which are yet to be found, even in the very Heathens, as is manifest from *Rom. ii. 14, 15*.

Besides this, there was also a positive law given to *Adam* as a covenant-head, recorded in *Genesis*. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*ⁱ. Through the transgression of which law he ruined himself and all his posterity, and that for ever, had it not been for the kind interposition and efficacious mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus then there was a law antecedent to the law's being given on mount *Sinai*.

Nor

^f John i. 17.

^g Matt. xxii. 35—37.

^h Rom. xiii. 10.

ⁱ Chap. ii. 17.

Nor does it suppose that this law, which entered into the world by *Moses*, is of a different nature from that which was inscribed on *Adam's* heart, in his state of innocence; but only that it was delivered in another manner, the one was written upon *the fleshy table of the heart*, the other upon tables of stone; the one was given to *Adam* to be kept by him, the other was put into the ark, which ark was a type of Christ; the one was delivered as a covenant of works, the other only as a rule of life, to shew what is to be done, and what to be avoided, to discover the nature of sin, and the creature's inability to keep that law; in order that souls under a sense of these things, might make application to Christ, who was made under this law, and is become the fulfilling end of it for *righteousness to every one that believes*^k: so that the law of nature, and the law of *Moses*, for substance, are the same. Again:

The word here used may denote the time of its entrance, it *intervened*^l, it came, as it were, between *Adam's* sin, and Christ's sacrifice for it; the offence was committed long before the law entered; and the law entered long before Christ's sacrifice was offered; it entered into the world between them both. The offence is permitted, and after some considerable time the law is given, that *the offence might abound*; and after as long a time, Christ comes to atone for this offence, that *grace might superabound*. Quickly after the offence was committed, a promise of grace was made; now between that promise, and the fulfilling of it, the law entered. But we may consider the law, as it enters into the conscience of a poor sinner, and thus it enters privately, secretly, and as it were by stealth; and in this sense is the word used, where we read of false brethren *unawares* brought in, who came in *privily*, *παρασιδδου*, crept in, as it were by stealth, *to spy out our liberty*; now the law as given by *Moses*, did not enter in such a manner; there were present *ten thousands of saints*, that is, Angels. And so also when the Lord spake the *ten words*, *all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking*^m; so that the law was not given in a private manner, but in the presence of angels and men. But when the law comes and enters into the conscience of a man, it is suddenly, at unawares, and it immediately causes *sin to abound*. An instance of this, we have in the apostle *Paul*; *for I was alive*, says he, *without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died*ⁿ. He thought himself, before the commandment came, as good, holy and righteous as any man, and in as fair a way for heaven; but when the commandment came nearer to his conscience, and he saw the perfection, and spirituality of it, and was thereby powerfully convinced of the filthiness of his nature, and the imperfection of his

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obedience,

^k Rom. x. 4. ^l *παρασιδδου*. Hoc est quasi media inter reatum illum (i. e. *Adami*) & hanc Christi gratiam constituit. Vorst. in loc. ^m Exod. xx. 18. ⁿ Rom vii 9.

obedience, immediately sin revives, abounds, and *appears exceeding sinful*, and he becomes a dead man in his own apprehension; thus the words may be referred to the use of the law; though I am rather inclined to think they are to be understood of the law's entrance by *Moses*. Thus much for the law's entrance; we shall now consider,

3. The end or consequence thereof; that was, *that the offence might abound*: By the offence, we may understand either the sin of *Adam*, or any, or all other sins, and transgressions; there is some reason to believe that by *the offence*, the apostle primarily intends the sin of *Adam*; because it is that sin which he particularly treats of in the preceding verses, as also the word *παράνομον*, which the apostle makes use of here, signifies a *fall*, and so may intend what we commonly call the fall of *Adam*; though, I confess, the word is sometimes used for actual sins and transgressions. But however, it may not be amiss to consider how this offence of *Adam's* abounded by the entrance of the law of *Moses*.

1st. The guilt of *Adam's* sin has abounded to all his posterity, being imputed to them; for in the preceding verses we are told, that *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; and that by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners*. Now the apostle asserts, in *Rom. iv. 15. that where there is no law, there is no transgression*; and in chap. v. 13. that *sin is not imputed where there is no law*; so that the objection then is, how could sin exist, and be imputed, and death by it reign over the sons of men, when there was no law given? I answer, There was, as I have before observed, a law of nature written upon *Adam's* heart, the same in substance with the law on mount *Sinai*; which law was broke, through the violation of a positive command, and thereby sin did exist, and was justly imputed by God; *Adam* then standing as a common person, and representative of all mankind; but by the fall, this law and light of nature became weak and dim, so that the existence and imputation of sin did not appear so manifest; wherefore the great God thought fit to renew the law on *Sinai*, that the offence might be more conspicuous, and the imputation of it appear more just; thus *the law entered, that the offence might abound*.

2^{dly}. Not only the guilt of this sin is imputed, but a corrupt nature is propagated to all his posterity; for *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one*: This corruption of nature, which is sometimes called by the apostle, *sin*, and *sin that dwells in us*, abounds in every man, and by the law abounds more and more, according to what the apostle says in *Romans vii. 8. But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence*; that is, "This inherent corruption of my nature took the opportunity, through the law's prohibition of sin, to stir up in me the lusts of the flesh, and carnal de-

" fires

“fires of the mind, and pushed me on to a performance of sinful actions.” Thus *the law entered, that the offence might abound.* But,

3dly, By the entrance of the law of *Moses*, Adam's sin appears *exceeding sinful*, attended with aggravating circumstances. For though the eating of the forbidden fruit, may seem to be a small offence, yet if you consider what an indignity was offered to the great God thereby, how his divine authority in his holy command was trampled upon, the glorious perfections of his justice, truth and power were despised, his pure and perfect image in man, which consisted in *righteousness, and true holiness*, defaced, and also that glory which the creature by its service should have brought to him, lost thereby, it was great. “He at one place (as it is well expressed by a learned divine) breaks both the tables, and all the commandments. 1. He chose him another God when he followed the devil. 2. He idolized and deified his own belly. 3. He took the name of God in vain, when he believed him not. 4. He kept not the rest and estate wherein God had set him. 5. He dishonoured his father which was in heaven; and therefore his days were not long in that land, which the Lord his God had given him. 6. He massacred himself, and all his posterity. 7. He committed spiritual fornication in eyes and mind. 8. He stole that which God had set aside not to be meddled with. 9. He bare witness against God, when he believed the witness of the devil above him. 10. He coveted an evil covetousness, which cost him his life, and all his progeny.” Thus he broke all the commandments. Now it is the law, which thus discovers the heinousness of this sin, in those particular instances. And in this sense *the law entered, that the offence might abound.*

By *the offence* we may also understand any, or all actual sins and transgressions; now let us see in what sense they abound by the law.

First, The law makes a plain and open discovery of them, and sets them forth in their own proper colours; for by *the law is the knowledge of sin*⁹, yea, the apostle tells us, that he *had not known sin but by the law*; it is a glass wherein we may behold in the light of the Spirit, our inward deformities, as well as the grosser sins of life; though it is neither a magnifying, nor a multiplying glass, it does not make sins to appear greater than they are, nor more than they really be; but it discovers those sins to be great ones, which before were looked upon to be but small; and those to be sins, which before were not esteemed so; and thus sin abounds by the law's entrance.

Secondly, It makes sin to abound by a prohibition of it; not that any fault is to be charged upon the law; but upon the corrupt heart of man, which, the more it is restrained and prohibited from doing any thing, the more eager it is to effect it. It is just like a person in a violent fever, who the more he is restrained

¹ Lightfoot, Vol. 1. p. 1027, 1028.

⁹ Rom. iii. 20. and vii. 7.

from drinking, the more he thirsts after it; or like a torrent of water, which when attempts are made to stop it, it rises, swells, rages, and overflows the more; such is the untoward, perverse and corrupt heart of man: thus when the Lord would have the Israelites go into the land of Canaan, then they refuse; but when the Lord had forbid them to enter, then they must needs go in all haste; so also when circumcision was God's ordinance, then the nations round about loathed it, and the Jews for it; but when it was abolished by Christ's death, then it needs must be taken up, as necessary to salvation. Oh, the abominable corruption of man's heart!

Thirdly, The law being given, sin committed against it, is attended with more aggravating circumstances; it is committed against light and knowledge; here can be no plea of ignorance, *no cloke for sin*; for he that *knows his Lord's will*, and does not according to it, *shall be beaten with many stripes*¹; it is bidding an open defiance to heaven, and a despising and trampling under foot the majesty and authority of God, intamped on his law; for according to the majesty and greatness of the lawgiver, does the offence in proportion arise: This law, which sin is the transgression of, being given forth by that great lawgiver, *who is able to save and to destroy*, makes the offence to be the more heinous. And thus *by the entrance of the law sin abounds*. This may suffice for the first head of discourse. I shall now,

II. Discourse concerning the abounding of grace over the aboundings of sin. *First*, I shall endeavour to shew where it does so. *Secondly*, Give some instances of God's superabounding grace.

First, I shall endeavour to shew where it does do so; that is, where grace does so much abound, more than sin. 1. In the human nature; sin did and does abound therein. No sooner did sin enter into the world, but, like a fretting leprosy, it overspread and infected it; all human nature being then in *Adam*, the blood of all being then in his veins, was tainted by sin; and he then representing all his posterity, they sinned in him, according to *Romans v. 12. Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that $\alpha\iota\omega\iota$, in whom all have sinned*. Sin so abounded in, and by *Adam* to all his posterity, that there is not one, who descends from him by ordinary generation, who is free from it. Jews and Gentiles are all under it; *there is none righteous, no not one*²: the disease is universal and epidemical.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ, in the fulness of time assumed the same human nature; *because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same*³; and the nature which Christ assumed, was attended with all

¹ Luke xii. 47.² James iv. 12.³ Rom. iii. 9.⁴ Heb. ii. 14.

all sinless, though not sinful infirmities; therefore he is said to be sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and not in sinful flesh itself; now in this nature Christ appeared full of grace and truth; there is an infinite, inexhaustible, overflowing, and superabounding fulness of grace dwells in him, that we from thence might receive grace for grace. Thus in the same kind of nature, *where sin abounded, grace does much more abound.*

2. In the several powers and faculties of the soul, *where sin abounded, grace does much more abound.* Sin has abounded, and does abound, in every power and faculty of the soul of a natural man; as the disease is universal, with regard to persons, the descendents of Adam, so it is with regard to the several parts and faculties of the souls of those persons. What is said of the Jews, in their political state; is true of every man in his natural state; *the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores**; they are not only destitute of all righteousness, but filled with all unrighteousness; empty of all that is good, and full of all that is evil; sin abounds and overflows in their corrupt hearts, which are continually casting up the mire and dirt of sin; from thence proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies[†]. O, what an abounding, what an overflowing of sin is here? The heart is hardened, *and dead in trespasses and sins*, the will obstinate and perverse, the judgment depraved, the understanding darkened, the mind and conscience defiled, and the affections become inordinate. What wretched work has the abounding of sin made in the soul of man!

Now where sin has thus abounded, grace in effectual vocation superabounds; for by powerful efficacious grace, in conversion, the stony heart is taken out of the flesh, and an heart of flesh is given; new principles of life and love infused, and all sorts of grace implanted; the will is subdued and brought into subjection to Christ, the judgment is informed, and the understanding enlightened; nay, an understanding given to know him, *whom to know is life eternal*; the mind and conscience are purged from dead works to serve the living God, and the affections set upon things which are above. What an amazing, surprising change is this! O, abounding, superabounding grace!

3. This is true of the poor Gentiles, among whom *sin has abounded*, and *grace also has much more abounded*; and this the Syriac[‡] scholiast particularly takes notice of in this place; *sin* exceedingly spread itself, and overflowed in the Gentile world; there being nothing but the dim light of nature to guide, and no positive laws and commands of God to direct them, no wonder that sin should so much abound among them; it having no other bounds nor limits, but the weak law of nature to restrain it; but the greatest wonder is, that *grace* should

* Isai. i. 5, 6.

† Matt. xv. 19.

‡ Syr. Schol. in Lud. de Dieu in loc.

should here superabound. This was the great mystery, *which in other ages, preceding the gospel-dispensation, was not so made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel*^a. How was the grace of God magnified in their vocation! the abounding of *sin* among them made the superabounding *grace* of God appear the more glorious: what beauty and glory does the apostle cast upon the free, and rich grace of God, manifested in the conversion of Gentile sinners? Who, when he had drawn up a large list and catalogue of the vilest sinners, adds, *And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*^b. Thus *where sin* so much abounded, *grace did much more abound*.

4. This is eminently true of some particular persons, such as a *Manasseh*, a *Mary Magdalen*, a *Paul* before conversion, who looked upon himself as *the chiefest of sinners*, and could not but admire superabounding grace in his conversion; saying, *I, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, I obtained mercy*^c; and so must every one, more or less, admire boundless grace, who have been *plucked out of the burning, and translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son*. But I will now proceed,

Secondly, To give some instances of God's superabounding grace in the acts of it, *to us-ward who believe*.

1st, Superabounding grace manifests and discovers itself in conversion and regeneration; the state out of which sinners are brought, and the blessings, which are then bestowed, as also the mighty grace, which is then wrought, and the surprising change, which is then effected in them, are so many evidences of the overflowings of God's love and grace towards them, and in them. Well may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be said to *beget us again unto a lively hope, according to his abundant mercy*^d, abundant mercy indeed! Abounding, superabounding grace! That he should, without any regard to our will or works, *of his own will beget us with the word of truth*^e, and *quicken us when dead in trespasses and sins*; is an instance of his free, rich, sovereign, inconceivable and eternal love; here is the first display and discovery of grace and mercy to a poor sinner; it is true, there was grace and mercy in God's heart before, grace and mercy in the covenant before, and grace and mercy shewn in giving Christ, but until now the poor soul knew nothing of it. This river of God's love and grace ran under-ground from all eternity, and is now broke up in effectual vocation, and comes with its full flows into the sinners heart; which is now plentifully

^a Ephes. iii. 5, 6.

^b 1 Cor. vi. 9—11.

^c 1 Tim. i. 13.

^d 1 Peter i. 3.

^e James i. 18.

tifully filled therewith, having as much as its narrow vessel can receive; so that *where sin abounded, grace does much more abound*; an instance of this we have in the apostle Paul, who tells us in 1 Timothy i. 14. *And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*; was exceeding abundant, ὑπερπλήσσει, there was an *overplus* of it; he had as much, nay more, than he could contain; it overflowed, it ran over and over; O abounding, superabounding grace!

Nay further, as there is a display of grace in the conveyance of it into the sinner's heart at conversion, even to a redundancy, so there is a sight and view given to the soul of exceedingly much more in the heart of God; it beholds God as *the God of all grace*, and views a boundless ocean of love and grace in him; O glorious sight! O happy discovery! this is what the apostle prayed for, for the Ephesians, that they might *be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge*.

Again, Superabounding grace manifests itself in our justification; how often does the apostle in the preceding verses, when he takes notice of the grace of God, displayed in Christ's justifying righteousness, use those words, *much more*, in order to set forth the great abundance thereof? The grace of God is manifested in sending Christ to bring in this righteousness, by which we are justified; and the grace of Christ is as evident in working it out; and when it was wrought out, the grace of the Father appears in accepting it in our room and stead, as also in imputing it to us, *without works*, and giving us faith to lay hold upon it: In short, there is so much of the grace of God conspicuous herein, that we are said to be *justified freely by it*. And a learned interpreter^g, upon this place, is of opinion, that by this *superabounding grace* we are to understand, by a metonymy of the adjunct, the obedience of Christ, which is of grace imputed to us for righteousness; it is certain that there is more virtue in Christ's righteousness to justify, than there is in sin to condemn; for those who are once justified shall never be condemned, there being *no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus*. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect*^h? who dare do it? who can do it? and if they do, to what purpose will it be! seeing *it is God that justifies*; *who is he that condemneth*? *it is Christ that died*. Those who are justified by Christ, are completely *justified from all things, from which they could not be by the law of Moses*; they are perfectly justified from all sin, and eternally secured from all wrath and condemnation. O glorious grace!

-Again, Superabounding grace appears in the forgiveness of our sins: what rich grace is this, that our sins, which are many, should be forgiven us! Sins which are attended with aggravating circumstances, sins against light and knowledge,

^e Ephes. iii. 18, 19.

^f Rom. iii. 24.

^g Piscator in loc.

^h Rom. viii. 1, 34.

ledge, against grace and mercy, secret and open sins; sins before and after conversion; sins of thought, word, and deed, of omission and commission; all sins, past, present, and to come; all are fully and freely pardoned through the blood of Christ, *according to the riches of God's grace*; grace! rich grace indeed! What reason had a *David*, a *Manasseh*, a *Mary Magdalen*, a *Peter*, to admire this abounding grace in the pardon of their sins? Nay, has not every pardoned soul reason so to do? What grace is it, that God should lay our iniquities on Christ, and that he should bear them, and take them away? that God should remove them as far from us *as the east is from the west*, and blot them out, and remember them no more; that when they are *sought for*, they shall not be *found*, because he hath pardoned those, whom he hath reserved for himself¹!

So also it does appear in our adoption; that we, who are *by nature children of wrath, even as others*, whose carnal minds have been at enmity against God, should be adopted into his family, is grace indeed; had he made us his servants, it had been an act of grace; but to make us his sons, is an act of superabounding grace; so that we have reason to say as the apostle *John*: *Behold what manner of love bath the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God*². If we consider what we were by nature, how unlovely and undesirable, and that God stood in no need of us, we need not wonder to hear him thus saying, *how shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the bests of nations?* though we have a great deal of reason to wonder and be amazed to hear him say, *thou shalt call me my father, and shalt not turn away from me*³.

Now as the superabounding grace of God does thus appear in our regeneration, justification, remission and adoption, so also it will in our glorification; for our salvation is all of grace, from first to last. If it is an act of abounding grace to beget us again to a *lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance*, and to make us heirs of it, then will it be much more so, to put us into the possession of it; if we can observe superabounding grace now, we shall be much more capable of observing it in that state where all imperfection will be done away; then shall we *bring forth the head-stone with shoutings, crying, grace, grace, unto it*. This will be the delightful theme and happy subject, which the saints shall be entertained with throughout the endless ages of eternity.

But before I dismiss this second general head, I would just observe to you, that this clause in the text seems to be added to prevent despondency, and to comfort distressed minds, who, seeing that the law was so far from justifying from sin, or diminishing it in them, that, on the contrary, it abounded by it, might imagine that there was no room to hope for deliverance, and so give way

to

¹ Jer. l. 20.² John iii. 1.³ Jer. iii. 19.

to diffidence and despair; the apostle, I say, seems to add these words, to prevent this, and administer comfort, *but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*; that though sin has overflowed all human nature, and spread itself over all the powers and faculties of the soul of man, yet there is an infinite fulness of grace with God, which grace he plentifully sheds abroad in the hearts of poor sinners: *Therefore let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption*^m.

Also these words may be considered as the end of the permission of sin, and the entrance of the law, *that it might abound*. God voluntarily permitted the sin of Adam, and that with a design to magnify the glory of his grace in the salvation of sinners; he suffered that first sin to enter into the world, which was the foundation of all after ones, that he might have an opportunity of displaying the perfections of his grace and mercy; then he sends *the law* into the world, that thereby, that sin, and all others, might appear in their proper colours, as they are in themselves, *exceeding sinful*; that so the sinner himself, in the light of the spirit, might more easily observe the superabounding grace of God in his deliverance from them. This may suffice for the second head of discourse. I now proceed to discourse,

III. Concerning the reign of grace, in opposition to the reign of sin. It may be very proper, in the first place, to say something concerning the reign of sin, which the apostle affirms was *unto death*.

The dominion of sin is universal; it has extended its empire over the whole race of human creatures: Elect, as well as non-elect, are under the power and dominion of it, until by irresistible, powerful, and efficacious grace, they are translated out of that kingdom into the kingdom of God's dear Son; and then sin shall not have dominionⁿ, *ὡς κυριεύουσι*, "shall not lord it over them," because they are *not under the law, but under grace*; they are then no longer the subjects of sin, because translated into another kingdom, and so become the subjects of Christ; who is the head of the covenant of grace, as Adam was of the covenant of works; by whom sin, and death by sin, set up their empire in the world. Now it does not become any of those who profess themselves to be Christ's subjects, to yield any obedience to the laws or lusts of sin; *let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof*^o.

And as sin's empire is universal over every man, in a natural state, so its seat and throne are in every heart which is in the same condition; from thence it issues forth its laws, which have a mighty power in them to enforce obedience thereunto, from the several parts, both of soul and body: Hence you read of *the law of sin*, in opposition to *the law of the mind*, which law of sin has some-

^m Psalm cxxx. 7.ⁿ Rom. vi. 14.^o Rom. vi. 12.

times very great strength in a regenerate man, and is a ruling governing principle in an unregenerate one; even as *the law of the mind*, or the law of grace, is a ruling governing principle in a believer: also mention is made of it, in opposition to *the law of God*, the one requiring obedience thereunto, equally as the other; as also you will find that and *the law of death* coupled together, because the kingdoms of both are of the same beginning, extent and duration; when sin entered into the world, death did so too; when sin set up its empire, death did likewise: over whom sin reigns, death does also; and when the one ceases, then will the other; their laws, interests, and kingdoms stand and fall together^p.

And as it has erected a government in the world, and issues forth its laws, so it has its voluntary subjects, who observe these laws, not out of fear, but love; *though while they promise themselves liberty*, they become *the servants of corruption*; and are mere slaves and vassals to sin, while they are so greedily *filling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind*: And for all this hearty and cheerful service, they will have no other stipend paid them, than death; *for the wages of sin is death*^q; which is what our apostle intends, when he here says, that *sin hath reigned unto death*: and how it has done so, will deserve our consideration. *Sin hath reigned unto death*,

1. By subjecting all to a corporal death; this is what is intended in the threatening annexed to that positive law given to *Adam*, as a public person, mentioned in *Genesis* ii. 17. though not to be understood exclusive, either of a spiritual or eternal death. Now *Adam* breaking that law, he himself immediately entered into a state of mortality; from that time his body became mortal, and a sentence of death passed upon him, and all his posterity; so that from that time this kind of death, or what is equivalent to it, has reigned, and will continue to the end of the world to reign over all the sons and daughters of *Adam*. But here a question arises, which deserves consideration, and that is this, namely, How comes it to pass that believers are not exempted from this kind of death, seeing *Christ* has undergone it in their room and stead, and made satisfaction for that sin, and all other sins of theirs, which first introduced it? I answer, It is true, *Christ* has done all this for them, and yet they are not exempted from death; nevertheless, through *Christ's* death and satisfaction, it ceases to be a penal evil, it is disarmed of its sting, and becomes one of the believers privileges, *death is yours*^r. So that now, *blest are the dead that die in the Lord*; the saints may, as often they do, in their last moments, when God puts it in their mouths, sing that song, *O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory!* For death to them is the end of all sorrow, a total abolition of sin,

^p Rom. v. 12, 14.

^q Rom. vi. 23.

^r 1 Cor. iii. 22.

^s 1 Cor. xv. 55.

fin, and a happy transitus or passage to the heavenly glory; and therefore it is they are not exempted from it.

2. Sin hath reigned unto death, by bringing upon all a spiritual death, whereby they are destitute of all spiritual life and motion, and incapacitated to perform any spiritual action; and in this condition are all the elect of God, as well as others, till the Spirit of life from God enters and speaks life into them; *and you hath be quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins*¹; where the apostle does not only observe, to the believing Ephesians, the blessing of grace which was then bestowed on them, and that deplorable condition which they were formerly in; but also what it was which brought them into it, namely, their sins and trespasses; for, if it had not been for grace, they had never been quickened, so if it had not been for sin, they had never been dead. But,

3. *Sin hath reigned unto death*, inasmuch as it hath rendered all deserving of eternal death; for *the wages of sin is death*, that is, eternal death, as is manifest from the antithesis or opposition, in the following words, *but the gift of God is eternal life*; and this bids fair to be the sense of the words in my text; for if the reign of grace be according to the reign of sin, and the reign of grace be unto eternal life, then the reign of sin must be unto eternal death. Now, I say, all, by sin, are deserving of this death, though it is not inflicted upon some, because of Christ's satisfaction, only upon those who live and die in a state of impenitence and unbelief; for *the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death*²; what in another place of scripture is called *eternal damnation*, is here called the *second death*; a phrase peculiar to *Jobn* in his Revelation, though frequently made use of by the ^v ancient Jews in the same sense; thus you see in what sense *sin hath reigned unto death*.

I shall now consider the reign of grace, in opposition to this reign of sin. And we may, by *grace* here, understand either grace in the heart of God, which is gloriously displayed in our salvation, or else grace in our hearts, which is wrought there by the Spirit of God.

First, By grace may be meant, grace in the heart of God; and then taking it in this sense, we may observe that God's grand design in the contrivance, accomplishment, and application of man's salvation, is to set forth and magnify the glory of his grace; which end and design of his are effectually answered;

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for

¹ Ephes. ii. 1.

² Rev. xxi. 8.

^v Thus Onkelos in his Targum, on

Deut. xxxiii. 6. paraphrases after this manner, let Reuben live in eternal life, and not die, תַּיִתֵּן אֱלֹהִים, the second death; to the like purpose the Jerusalem Targum on the same place, which adds, the death, which the wicked die in the world to come.

for grace reigns, and reigns gloriously in every part thereof; it is gloriously* displayed in the election of a certain number in Christ unto eternal life, and therefore called *the election of grace*^x; upon the very mention of which, the apostle in the next words thus argues: *And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work*; an argument which the adversaries of grace can never answer; a dilemma they are plunged into, out of which they can never emerge: it is also gloriously displayed in that everlasting covenant made with Christ before the world began, which is so well stored with valuable blessings, and *exceeding great and precious promises*: It likewise gloriously appears in the mission of Christ into this world, *to obtain eternal redemption for us; for God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*^y: Grace also manifests itself in effectual vocation; for he *hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus, before the world began*^z; and to also in our justification, adoption, remission, and glorification, as has been more fully evinced under the second general head. And now let us not forget to take notice, that this grace reigns in a way of righteousness, consistent with the glorious perfections of God's holiness and righteousness. God, in drawing the glorious model and platform of man's salvation, so ordered it, that there should be no disagreement between the divine perfections, but that all should shine with an equal glory; and therefore he *set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus*^a: So that through Christ's fulfilling the law, atoning for sin, and satisfying divine justice, the honour of God's holiness is effectually secured, and the glory of his righteousness displayed, as well as his grace and mercy magnified; thus *mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other*^b. With this glorious scheme, and the sweet harmony of it, was our dear deceased friend often affected; and I scarce ever heard him mention this place of scripture, which is the subject of our present discourse, but I always observed, that he took it in the sense now delivered, which made me the more willing to take notice of it.

But then again, grace reigns unto eternal life, by Christ; it shall never be frustrated; God will never be disappointed of his end, to wit, the glory of his grace. It reigned from all eternity, it reigns in time, and it will reign to all eternity: It reigned in the contrivance; it reigned in the accomplishment, and it reigns in the application of it; for God has so ordered it, that it should be

by

^x Rom. xi. 5.

^y Rom. v. 8.

^z 2 Tim. i. 9.

^a Rom. iii. 26.

^b Psal. lxxv. 10.

by faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed^c; and it will reign till it has brought us to the full possession of salvation, even eternal life, by Christ. But secondly, let us now consider the words, as they may refer to grace in us.

This supposes an ejection of the strong man armed, a demolition of sin's empire and throne in the sinner's heart; which are effected by the powerful grace of the Spirit, in making *the weapons of our warfare effectually mighty for the pulling down those strong holds*. It also supposes a principle of grace implanted by the same hand; which principle exerts itself, reigns, and maintains its ground against all opposition, which it will do, if true, though it be but small; for it is an incorruptible, immortal, never-dying seed, *a well of water, which springs up unto eternal life*; and a good work, which being begun, *shall be performed until the day of Christ*.

Also this grace reigns by righteousness; it is supported and maintained by it; as Solomon says, *the king's throne is established by righteousness*; so is this throne of grace by Christ's righteousness imputed, and his grace imparted. All our peace, joy and comfort, in a great measure, result from, and are maintained by faith's living on Christ's righteousness, and by an apprehension of our justification by it; *for being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God^d*. Also this work of grace is maintained by fresh supplies of grace, from that fulness which is in Christ, out of which every believer does receive, more or less, *even grace for grace*. Now both these together, namely, righteousness imputed, and grace imparted, will bring a soul safe to eternal life. Christ's righteousness is our title to, and the Spirit's grace from Christ, is our meetness for, heaven; and without both these none shall enter there. Now I will only add this one observation more, that is, that all this grace, righteousness, and eternal life, come to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. All the discoveries of grace, which are made to our souls, are through Christ; and all that grace which is implanted in us, is from him, as well as all those fresh supplies by which it is maintained. Also that righteousness, by which we are justified, is in him, and that eternal life, which we are the expectants of, is through him.

Thus have I endeavoured to open and explain to you, this glorious and comfortable portion of scripture, according to the desire of our deceased friend, whose character may now be expected from me. I apprehend that the design of funeral discourses is not to praise the dead, but to instruct the living; and sure I am, our dear friend had no such thing in view, when he desired a discourse

^c Rom. iv. 16.^d Rom. v. 1, 2.

course from this text, on this occasion. How well he filled the relations of an husband and parent, his wife and children are here the mournful witnesses. How well that of a neighbour, many of you here present can attest; and how well he behaved himself as a member and officer of this church, that universal esteem he gained among the members thereof, is a sufficient indication. The inward frame of his soul was generally very warm and lively; and with an uncommon seriousness, warmth and affection, would he speak of the great things of God. His light in the gospel was very considerable, and his conversation agreeable to that gospel which he professed; notwithstanding his employment in the world, daily threw him in the way of a great many snares and temptations. In short, he appeared to be an instance of mighty grace, reigning through righteousness unto eternal life. I shall add no more, but some brief improvement of this discourse, and so conclude.

1st, What encouragement is here for poor sinners from hence to hope for grace and mercy through Christ? What though, poor soul, thou seest the aboundings of sin in thy nature, and in every power and faculty of thy soul; yet look up and view the superabounding grace of God streaming through the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; it is a mercy that thou seest the plague of thine own heart, and art not left to thy native blindness, to a vain conceit of the goodness of thy estate, when thou wert *poor, wretched, miserable, and blind and naked*; take heart, therefore, and do not be discouraged; Christ's *grace is sufficient for thee*; and where sin abounded, grace hath much more so; there is enough in Christ for thee; there is righteousness to clothe, and bread to nourish, grace to sanctify, strength to support, and every thing needful for thee; go to him as a poor perishing sinner, implore his grace, and venture on him, I dare say he will not reject thee.

2^{dly}, Though here is encouragement for *sinners* from hence, yet no encouragement to *sin*. The doctrine of grace is no licentious doctrine; it gives no liberty to sin, nor encourages persons in it; however it may be clamoured against, and bespattered by persons who neither understand the doctrine, nor have felt the power of it on their souls: what though there is more grace in Christ to save us, than there is sin in us to damn us, or because the more sin has abounded in us, the more his grace superabounded in our salvation; does it thence follow that we are, by this doctrine encouraged to *continue in sin that grace may abound*? No, *God forbid*; how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Which the apostle takes notice of in the beginning of the next chapter, foreseeing what objections would be formed against it, and how much it would be aspersed by a spiteful and ill-natured world. And whatever may be advanced against it, this doctrine is the foundation of all real holiness, the saints bulwark against apostacy, and their magazine of solid consolation.

3^{dly}, If

3dly, If the grace of God is so apparent in our salvation, what reason have we to admire it, and to glorify God for it? The grace of the Father abounds towards us, and the grace of the Son abounds towards us, and so does the grace of the Spirit; therefore we should be equally concerned for the glory of the eternal three, whose grace has much more abounded where sin did abound; and this we cannot but do, when we consider what has been bestowed on us, and how much more is yet in reserve for us, though we are altogether undeserving of it.

4tly, Seeing that without Christ's righteousness imputed, and his grace imparted, none can enter into the kingdom of heaven; how much should souls be concerned for both; that this grace might be within them, and Christ's righteousness put upon them, that *being thus cloathed, they may not be found naked?*

And then, lastly, With what comfort can any look death in the face, if sin reigns over them, and not grace in them? over them will the second death reign eternally; for none shall reign with Christ in glory, but those in whose hearts grace has reigned here.

But, on the contrary; how cheerfully do those resign themselves into the arms of Christ when death approaches, who have known *the grace of God in truth?* These shall for ever reign with Christ, and dwell in his presence; *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore:* these shall live in the continual view, enjoyment, and admiration of boundless grace; ascribing *blessing and honour, and glory, and power, unto Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

S E R M O N XXII.

Job's Creed: or, Confession of Faith.

Occasioned by the Death of the Reverend Mr EDWARD WALLIN,
Preached June 18, 1733.

J O B XIX. 25—27.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.

THIS chapter contains *Job's* answer to *Bildad* the Shuhite, who, in the preceding chapter, had represented him as a wicked man, and one that knew not God, and had said many severe things concerning him; which shews, that he looked upon him as rejected of God, and devoted to ruin and destruction; all which he concluded from his present afflictions, and conduct under them. *Job* replies, by granting, that he was under very great and sore afflictions, which he particularly enumerates, and therefore was a proper object of pity and compassion, and ought not to be used in the barbarous and inhuman manner he was by him and his other friends; and, that he ought not to be traduced as a wicked man, and ignorant of the divine Being; since he did know God, as his living Redeemer; was able, in the midst of all his afflictions, to exercise faith and hope in him, and to believe that he should everlastingly enjoy him. And though *Bildad* had represented destruction^a near at hand, which should devour the strength of his skin; yea, even his whole strength, and bring him to the king of terrors: this gave him no frightful apprehension; he knew in whom he had believed, and to whom he had committed both soul and body: though

^a Job xviii. 12, 13.

though he saw himself in a wasting consumption, reduced to skin and bones, and had reason to conclude, that he should in a short time be laid in the silent grave, and the remains of his body be the repast of worms; yet he believed he should rise out of his dusty bed, live again, and be for ever blessed with uninterrupted communion with his living Redeemer. Bildad had intimated, that his *light should be put out; and the spark of his fire should not shine; that the light should be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle should be put out with him*^b. Job, on the contrary, was fully assured that his Redeemer would plead his cause, bring him forth to the light, and he should behold his righteousness: That though for a time he should be shut up in the dark and gloomy grave, yet he should rise from thence, and in his flesh see God, whom he should see for himself, and his eyes should behold, and not another.

These words may be considered as containing the substance of what was Job's support under his present troubles, the unkind treatment of his friends and others, and in the views of death and eternity. His troubles were many and great; he had lost both his children and his substance, his brethren and acquaintance were estranged from him, his kinsfolk failed him, and his familiar friends had forgotten him; his maids counted him a stranger, and his servants refused to obey him; his breath was strange to his wife, young children despised him, and all his inward friends abhorred him; his body was filled with a lothesom disease, and was become a mere skeleton, his bones cleaved to his skin and flesh, and he just escaped with the skin of his teeth; and in this most sorrowful condition had none to pity him, or shew any compassion to him. Add to this, that he had received the sentence of death in himself, and judged that he was near his last end, and long home: *My face, says he, is foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids is the shadow of death*^c. *My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, and the graves are ready for me.* He was waiting and looking for death and the grave, and endeavoured to make them easy and familiar to him: *If I wait, says he, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness: I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister*^d. Now Job's support under all this was, his settled and secure interest in a living Redeemer, the delightful prospect he had of his appearance in the latter day, the resurrection of the same body by him, and the glory and happiness which should follow upon that; and indeed, nothing short of this can yield solid relief and comfort, when afflictions press hard, death stares in the face, and an awful eternity is in view.

Such were the joy and peace this good man's soul was filled with, through believing these things, that for the glory of the Redeemer's grace, and the encouragement of others, he is desirous that the words by which he had expressed

^b Job xviii. 5, 6.^c Job xvi. 16.^d Job xvii. 1, 13, 14.

them, might be transmitted to the latest posterity. O, says he, *that my words were now written; O that they were printed in a book; that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever.* This refers not to what he had said before, to the apology and defence he had made for himself against the unjust censures of his friends; but to what follows after, to the words of my text, to which these are a preface; and it ought to be observed, that the Hebrew participle *Vau*, placed at the beginning of my text, is not to be rendered by the adverbative *but*, as it often is, nor by the copulative *and*, as frequently it is, nor by the illative or causal participle *for*, as it is here in our translation, but by an explanatory¹, such as *namely*, or *to wit*; and so the words stand in connection with the former in this manner; *O that my words were written; O that they were printed in a book; that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever; namely, (or to wit) I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.* He would have these words written, that they might abide; and not written only by a private person, and for private use, but he would have them printed or engrossed (for printing is not to be taken in a strict sense, it being a late invention) by some public notary, and registered among the public acts, which are most likely to continue; but inasmuch as books and writings may be lost, are liable to corruption and rottenness, to be eaten by moths, or consumed by fire, he would have his words engraven with an iron pen, on sheets of lead²; upon which, as well as on brass, it was usual to engrave public acts for long preservation; and fearing lest this should not be sufficient, he desires they might be cut out on some rock or another, where they might abide for ever. And perhaps he may mean the rock out of which his tomb was made, in which he designed to be interred; since it was customary with the eastern people to make ready their tombs beforehand, and to hew them out of rocks, as appears from the instance of *Joseph of Arimathea*; and then *Job's* request and wish is this, that though he desired no stately monument to perpetuate his memory, no pyramid or marble statue to be erected for him; a tomb cut out of a rock was sufficient for him; yet he earnestly begged, that these words might be his *אבן הירידה*, his "funeral epitaph;" that these, even these, might be inscribed on his sepulchral monument, his rocky grave, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.* that so every one that passed by might read them; and, if it was the will of God, receive some advantage by them. *Job* had his wishes in some measure answered, though, perhaps, not in his own, yet in a better way. These words of his are written in the most public book in the world, and are among the most authentic records, "the Scriptures
" of

¹ Job xix. 23, 24.

² Vid. Noldii Concordant. Particular. Ebraeo Chald. p. 287. n. 1208.

where several instances are given of this use of it.

³ Postea publica monumenta plumbeis voluminibus, mox & privata linteis confici cepta, aut ceris, Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 13 c. 11. Fuit que antiquissimi moris, publica monumenta plumbeis voluminibus; privata autem linteis describi: in quibus nonnunquam publica, Alex. ab Alex. l. 2. c. 30.

“of truth,” where they stand, and will stand to the latest ages, as a testimony of his faith in Christ, and for the support and encouragement of other saints.

These words may be rightly called *Job's* creed, or the confession of his faith, which consists of various articles; some of which respect the living Redeemer, and his interest in him; and others, his state and condition at, by, and after death, and to all eternity; and are as follow:

- I. That he had, and he knew that he had, an interest in a living Redeemer.
- II. That this living Redeemer should stand upon the earth at the latter day.
- III. That as for himself, he should die, return to dust, and be devoured by worms;
- IV. That he should rise again from the dead, with true flesh, and the same body. And,
- V. That he should enjoy the beatific vision of God to all eternity.

I. The first article in this creed of *Job*, is, that he had, and knew that he had, an interest in a living Redeemer, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*^b; or, as the words may be literally rendered, *I know my living Redeemer*; by whom we are not, with some Jewish writers^d, to understand any mere man, who was then alive, or should hereafter live, and rise up, and plead the cause of *Job*, assert his right, and defend his innocence; for, as a learned interpreter observes^e, the word *Redeemer* properly belongs to God, and is scarce ever used in scripture of any other, in any sense of it. Some persons may be said to be redeemers, inasmuch as they have been God's instruments to deliver his people, such as *Samson*, *Gideon*, and others; particularly *Moses*, is said to be “a ruler and a deliverer, σωτήρας, a redeemer^f,” because he was made use of by God for the redemption of his people *Israel* from *Egypt*, and was an eminent type of the Redeemer Jesus. Some^g think by the living Redeemer, is meant God the Father; and it must be allowed, that he is often called so in the Old Testament; he being *the Rock of Israel*, and *the high God their Redeemer*: but then it may be observed, that all the temporal redemptions and deliverances of God's people under that dispensation, are easily applicable to the Messiah, *the Angel of his presence*, who in his love and pity redeemed them, and bore them, and carried them all the days of old^h; and certain it is, that he was spoken and prophesied of, and promised, under the character of a Redeemer, to the Old Testament

z z 2

faints,

וְיָדַעְתִּי כִּי חַי הַיּוֹמָה אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה Et ego novi Redemptorem meum vivum, Ar. Montan.

^d Rejected by Ramban in Mercer in loc.

^e Vox Redemptoris proprie Dei est, & vix in scriptura reperitur de alio dicta, quam de Deo, quocumque modo sumatur. Bolducius in loc. Aët. vii. 35.

^g So Mercer in loc.

^h Isai. lxiii. 9.

saints, and as such they expected him; who being come, has by his blood obtained eternal redemption for his people: I conclude therefore, that he is principally designed in my text. There are several things to be considered in this first article of faith:

First, The character of Christ as a Redeemer.

Secondly, The excellency of him as such, a living Redeemer.

Thirdly, Job's interest in him, my Redeemer.

Fourthly, The knowledge he had of this, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.*

First, I shall consider the character of Christ as a Redeemer; what it supposes; how he came to sustain it; and how qualified he is for it.

1. It supposes persons to be redeemed; the Redeemer and the Redeemed are correlates, they mutually imply, and have a respect to each other. It will not be unnecessary to inquire, who these persons are; these are not all the individuals of human nature, which have been, are, or shall be on the earth; for if these are all redeemed by Christ, they are redeemed by him either in whole or in part; if in part only, then Christ is a partial, or an imperfect Redeemer, which must reflect dishonour upon him; if they are wholly redeemed, then they are redeemed from all sin, and the consequences of it, and in the issue shall be eternally saved; which cannot be said of all mankind. Besides, (if so, those who are redeemed could not be said to be redeemed from among men, or, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, or to be a peculiar people. Those whom Christ has redeemed are such as the Father has chosen in him, and has given to him to be his people and portion; electing and redeeming grace being exactly commensurate to each other: *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited and redeemed his people.* But my design is not to enter into this controversy now.

2. It supposes those persons redeemed to have been in a state of bondage and slavery, as they are by nature to sin; they are the servants of it, vassals to it, shut up in it, are overcome by it, and in bondage under it; for *while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.* They are also under the law shut up in it, imprisoned by it, in bondage to it; they are under it as an accusing, convincing, and condemning law, and as considered in themselves exposed to the curses of it: They are likewise taken and led captive by Satan at his will, who is therefore called by the name of *captivity*; and as he by his suggestions and temptations fetters them the more strongly in their lusts, so by his terrifying them with the fears of death, they are sometimes a considerable while *subject to bondage.*

3. It

• Rev. xiv. 4. and v. 9. Titus ii. 14.

• Luke i. 68.

• 2 Peter ii. 19.

• Psalm lxxviii. 18.

3. It implies a deliverance from all this; redemption obtained by Christ, from which he is denominated a redeemer, is a deliverance from sin, from all sin, and all the wretched consequences of it; *he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity*. It is owing to redemption by Christ that his people are in time delivered from the dominion of sin, to which they were subject, are secured for ever from the damning power of it, and shall hereafter be entirely freed from the very being of it. It is also a deliverance from the law; it is not an exemption from obedience to it, as a rule of walk and conversation; but from the curse and condemnation of it as a covenant of works; *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us*. It is likewise a deliverance from Satan; by virtue of it, *the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered*; the strong man armed is spoiled of his goods, sinners are delivered from the power of darkness, are turned *from the power of Satan to God*, and this because Christ *has ransomed them from the hand of him that was stronger than they*. In a word, Christ has ransomed his people from the power of the grave, redeemed them from death, and has *saved them from their enemies, and from the band of all that hated them*.

4. This redemption which gives Christ the character of a redeemer, is obtained either by power or by price. There is a redemption by power; thus God redeemed the people of Israel out of Egypt, *with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments*; and in this way Christ has redeemed his people from Satan and other enemies; for by the strength of his arm he has *destroyed him who had the power of death, which is the devil*; and by the greatness of his might has *spoiled principalities and powers*, and rescued his people from the devouring jaws of death and destruction. There is also a redemption by price; *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price*; which price is not *corruptible things, as silver and gold, but the precious blood of Christ*. This is the ἀντίλυτρον, "the ransom, the redemption price," which is a sufficient one, it being the blood of an innocent person, the spotless lamb of God, and the same blood with ours, and shed in our room and stead; and besides all this, the blood of the Son of God, and therefore must have an infinite virtue and efficacy in it: This price was paid, not into the hands of Satan, by whom we were detained captives, but into the hands of God, the sovereign proprietor of us, against whom we have sinned, and whose justice must be satisfied. Christ has *redeemed us to God by his blood*.

5. If it should be asked, how came Christ to be the Redeemer of his people? It may be answered, that his Father called him to it, and appointed him this work in the counsel of peace, when he said to him, *Is it a light thing, that thou shouldst*

¹ Titus ii. 14.

² Gal. iii. 13.

³ Jer. xxxi. 11.

⁴ 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. ⁵ 1 Peter i. 18, 19.

⁶ Rev. v. 9.

shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth⁷. Christ agreed to all this, and a covenant was entered into by them both, which for its original, substance, and end, is commonly called *the covenant of grace*, and from this principal article of it, *the covenant of redemption*; in consequence of which Christ was sent in the fulness of time to redeem them that were under the law⁸; and by his blood he has procured it, and is of God made unto us that, as well as other blessings of grace.

6. Christ was sufficiently qualified for this work. As God, the Lord of hosts, he is a mighty Redeemer, able to save to the uttermost, and has a fulness of abilities answerable to the undertaking. As man, he has a right unto it, being the *Goel*, the near kinsman of his people, which is the sense of the words^a in my text, to whom, according to the law, the right of redemption belonged. As God-man and Mediator he was fit for it, having a proper regard to both parties, and a just and strict concern for *things pertaining to God, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people*. The redemption which Christ has effected is a complete and an eternal one, and is what could never have been procured by any other person, or in any other way. The excellency of this redemption, and the author of it, cannot be sufficiently expressed by us: There is one peculiar epithet given him in my text, which I am now naturally led to consider, which is,

Secondly, That Christ is a Redeemer that *liveth*, or a *living* Redeemer; which may design,

1. The existence of Christ: in this sense the phrase is used in *Heb. vii. 8.* where it is witnessed of *Melchizedek, that he liveth*, that is, exists, or is in being. Christ was in being in *Job's* time, and existed then under the character of a Redeemer. Indeed, he was in being before *Job* or *Abraham*, or any other person; before *Abraham* was, *I am*, says he^b; he was in the beginning with God, and was God, by whom all creatures were brought into being; he existed as a Redeemer from the foundation of the world; he was not only so in designation and appointment, but in reality; the virtue of his future redemption reached to all the Old Testament saints, who were all justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; had all their sins pardoned through that blood, which was shed for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first testament; and saved by the grace of the same Lord Jesus Christ as we are; they then viewed him as Job did, and we do now, as the living Redeemer, who then existed as such.

2. The

⁷ *Isai. xlix. 6.* ^a *Gal. iv. 4.* ^b *אֵלֵי אֲרָדִיעַ אֵלֵי אֲרָדִיעַ Redemit, vindicavit, vindicavit. Particip. אֲרָדִיעַ propinquus, cognatus, qui jus vindictarum habebat. Buxtorf. Sic vocat Christum. Job xix. 25. qui carnem nostram assumens factus est noster frater, consanguineus, ut nos ex potentate diaboli redimendi jus ad ipsum pertineret. Schindler. lex Pentaglott. Col. 267. ^c *John viii. 58.**

2. The eternity of Christ. To say that Christ lives, or is living, is to say, that he is eternal: As God, he is *from everlasting to everlasting*; as God-man and Mediator, he was *set up from the beginning, or ever the earth was; his goings-forth*, in the covenant of grace, were *of old, from everlasting*; he is the *alpha* of all God's ways, and the *omega* of all his works; he is the *first and the last, the beginning and the end, which is, and which was, and which is to come*.

3. The stability, permanency, and immutability of Christ. This stands opposed to the inconstancy, and mutability of every thing in this world, which *Job* had a large experience of, and under which he was supported by this consideration. There was a change in his outward circumstances, his substance was gone, but his Saviour was in being; his children were dead, but his *Redeemer lived*; his friends and relations were fickle, inconstant, mutable, but his *Jesus was the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*^c. What supported *Job*, may support faints in the like circumstances; whatever changes and vicissitudes they undergo, Christ remains *the same, and his years fail not*: Though friends and relations die, and the strongest ties and bonds of nature are unloosed, and every relation ceases, as those of husband and wife, parents and children, master and servant, pastor and people, yet *the Redeemer ever lives*, and relation to him can never be lost. Though as man he once was dead, he will die no more, *death shall have no more dominion over him*; he is alive, and shall live for evermore, and that for the good, comfort, and happiness of his people; for *he ever liveth to make intercession for them*^d.

4. The life of Christ. This he has in himself for all his people; he has a fulness of life, he is the fountain of it, all spiritual and eternal life spring from him: As God, he has an original, underived life, which is not given him by, or received from another; but as Mediator, the Father has *given him to have life in himself*; and this gift is in consequence of a request of his to him; *he asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever*^e. He came into this world that his people might have life, and that in abundance; he gives it to them, and it is secured in him; their *life is hid with Christ in God*^f: This lays a solid foundation for faith and hope, both with respect to a final perseverance in grace and holiness, and to the resurrection of the body at the last day: *Because I live, says Christ, ye shall live also*^g; which is, and will appear to be true, both of a spiritual and corporal life. But,

Thirdly, Job expresses his faith in Christ as *his Redeemer*; he asserts and claims his interest in him, when he calls him *my Redeemer*; which is more than to say or believe that he is *a Redeemer*. It is one thing, with the men of *Samaria*

^c The Chaldee Paraphrase renders the Word by דקיי firm, stable, durable; the Septuagint by αἰώνιος , perpetual, constant, which always continues. ^d Heb. vii. 25. ^e Psalm xxi. 4.

^f Col. iii. 3.

John xiv. 19.

Samaria, to know, believe, and own, that Christ is the Saviour of the world; and another thing, with *Job* and other believers, to know, own, and declare him to be *our* Saviour and Redeemer; the one without the other will be of little avail; the one is indeed absolutely requisite to the other. The disciples of Christ are justly reprehended for their slowness to believe, and for their hesitation about Christ's being he who was to redeem *Israel*. And on the other hand, such are commended who believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah and Saviour of the world; for without believing that he is a Redeemer, we cannot believe in him as ours; but then, such a faith is not to be depended on, because it may be where there is no true grace, -no going out to Christ, relying on him, or committing any thing to him.

Again, Such an act of faith as *Job* here puts forth on Christ, is more than a bare reliance on him, or hope of interest in him. Souls, when first awakened to see their need of Christ, and the worth of him, long for an interest in him, but cannot claim it; their language is, give me Christ, or I die; but cannot see their property in him; under a sense of their perishing condition, and with some encouraging hopes of finding grace and mercy, they venture on him, resolving, that if they perish they will perish at his feet; they put their mouths in the dust, if so be there may be hope; and sometimes encourage themselves, that *there is hope in Israel concerning this thing*; and so are helped to trust in the Lord, and stay themselves upon the mighty God of *Jacob*. But,

This is expressive of a very strong act of faith, such as was the church's, when she said, *My beloved is mine, and I am his*^b; and *Thomas's*, when he made a declaration of it in these words, *My Lord and my God*¹; and the apostle *Paul's*, who could say, *Who hath loved me, and hath given himself for me*^k.

Now let it be observed, that it is not this, or any other act of faith, that gives a soul an interest in Christ; not this act, because then none could be said to have an interest in him, unless they had the faith of assurance; nor any other act, because a man cannot believe unless he is alive in Christ; and no man can be alive in Christ without an interest in him; consequently then an interest in Christ is before faith, and not by it; *he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die*^l. An interest in Christ is not got but given; it is not obtained by faith, nor any other act of the creature, but is owing to the free grace of God. Faith views an interest in Christ as freely given; asserts and claims it on that act of grace, but does not procure it.

An interest in Christ is the greatest of blessings: To be able to say these two words in faith, *my Redeemer*, is the greatest mercy in the world. If a man could say, the whole world was his; all the riches of the *Indies*, the vast treasures that lie in the several parts of the universe; all the kingdoms, inheritances, and possessions

^b Cant. ii. 16.¹ John xx. 28.^k Gal. ii. 20.^l John xi. 26.

possessions of the earth his, what would it signify, if he could not say, that Christ was his? This is the chief of mercies, and what gives a title to all the other blessings of grace; which are all the believer's, because *Christ is his*, and *he is Christ's*: It is a discovery of this which supports the soul in dying moments, and when just ready to enter upon an invisible world. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever*^m. Job not only had an interest in Christ; but,

Fourthly, He knew it: *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. This was not a mere speculative knowledge of the Messiah, which he might have by special revelation, as Balaam had, or from the first intimation of him, as *the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head*, to our first parents; which was, no doubt, traditionally handed down to Job's time; but Job not only knew that there was a Redeemer promised, that he then existed, but he knew him to be *his Redeemer*. Nor was this knowledge only a knowledge of approbation. Those who savingly know Christ, do approve of him above all other persons or things in heaven or in earth; he is to them *the chiefest among ten thousand*: They value him for his personal excellencies, and proper qualifications to be a Redeemer; they like and approve of him to be theirs, as did Job, when he said, *He also shall be my salvation*ⁿ. But then this was not all, he not only approved of him as a Redeemer, but he knew him to be his. Nor was this knowledge only a fiducial one; they that know his name, his person, blood and righteousness, will put their trust in him; and as their knowledge of him increases, their confidence in him will grow. And such a trust was reposed in him by Job, who could say, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*^o; but he does not stop here, he mounts the highest step in the ladder of faith, and rises up to a full assurance of it; he could say as the apostle Paul long after did, under greater light, and larger discoveries of Christ; *I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day*^p.

The doctrine of assurance is decryed by Papists, and now-a-days discouraged by many who are called Protestants, and understood experimentally by a very few. It is true, indeed, that for a man to know his interest in Christ, and title to heaven, is the highest pitch of grace he arrives to here; yet this may be attained under the influences of the Spirit of God, without an extraordinary revelation, as is objected. You will say, how do any know their interest in Christ, or that he is their Redeemer? I answer, this may be, and is known, from the inhabitation of the Spirit in them, *Hereby we know, that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit*^q. This is known also from the testimony of the Spirit witnessing with their spirits, *that they are the children and heirs*

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^m Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26.ⁿ Job xiii. 26.^o Job xiii. 15.^p 2 Tim. i. 12.^q Job iv. 13.

of God, and co-beirs with Christ; and from the work of the spirit upon their souls, which is a fruit and effect of redeeming grace; and from the benefits of redemption being applied to them, such as righteousness, pardon of sin, atonement, and the like; this is certain, that they to whom the blessings of redemption are applied, are interested in the Redeemer, who may justly conclude, from their receiving *the earnest of the redemption of the purchased inheritance*, that they shall enjoy the whole: The connexion between grace and glory is inseparable, and he that has the one may be sure of the other. So much for the first article of *Job's* faith.

II. The second article in this creed is, that the living Redeemer *shall stand upon the earth in the latter day*. The word *day* is not in the original text, but is a supplement of the translators; hence some interpreters leaving it out, refer the word *latter* or *last*, not to time, but persons, about whom they cannot agree: some ' ascribing it to God the Father, who is *the first and the last*, the eternal God, who, as he is before all creatures, so he will continue after all have had their beings, and have acted their part in this world. Others ' to Jesus Christ, to whom the same characters of *Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*, belong. Others to ' *Job* himself, who, they suppose, calls himself *the last upon the earth*, that is to say, "the meanest among men", the most despicable "of creatures, the off-scouring of all things, and the refuse of the earth;" and yet, notwithstanding this, declares his faith and confidence, that he should *stand*, keep his ground, maintain his cause, and carry his point against his friends, having an interest in such a Redeemer. But, for my own part, I am inclined to think, that the *living Redeemer* mentioned in the first article, is designed in this, and that the words belong to him, which, according to the different versions they will admit of, refer to different things.

1. Reading them as they are rendered by our translators, *He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*, they may design the incarnation of Christ, and hold forth *Job's* faith in it. This was an article in his creed, that the same Redeemer, who then lived and existed in heaven, should descend from thence, not by local motion, but by assumption of the human nature, and stand and dwell with men here upon this earth. Thus, according to *Job's* faith, *the word was made flesh and dwelt among us* *; conversed with mortals upon earth upwards of thirty years, travelled over the land of *Judea*, took many fatiguing journeys, went about doing good, at length died for his people, and was buried in this earth.

Now

* Vid. Mercerum in loc.

* Vid. Caryl in loc.

* Vid. Bolducium in loc.

* So Ulpianus Myforum, "the last of the Mysians," a poor mean people in Phrygia, was used proverbially of one that was exceeding despicable and contemptible. Quid porro in Græco sermone tam tritum atque celebratum est, quam, si quis despiciatui ducitur, ut Myforum ultimus dicatur, Cicero. Orat. 24. pro L. Flacco, p. 785. Ed. Gothofred.

* John i. 14.

Now it was in *the last days* that God sent this Redeemer, and *spake to us by this his Son* ^v: It was *once in the end of the world* that Christ appeared to put away sin by *the sacrifice of himself*.

2. If we read the words as they may be, and are rendered; *He shall rise the last out of the earth, or dust* ^z. Then they express *Job's* faith in the resurrection of Christ, that as he should appear on earth, converse a while here, then die, and be buried, so he should rise again; God would *not leave his soul in hell, (or the grave) or suffer his holy One to see corruption* ^a. When Christ is said to rise *the last* out of the dust, this is not to be understood, as though he should be the last man that should rise from the dead; so far from this, that he is the *first* that rose from the dead to a life of immortality: God first shewed him the path of an immortal life, hence he is called *the first-fruits of them that slept*, and *the first-born from the dead* ^b; but when he is said to rise *the last*, this, as ^c some well observe, is to be understood of him as the last *Adam*, in opposition to the first man; and so it is written, *The first man, Adam, was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit* ^d. The resurrection of Christ is a considerable article of faith, much depends upon it; it has a great influence both on our justification and regeneration: The whole system of the christian religion is nothing without it; if this is not true, our faith and hope are both in vain; nor have we any reason to expect the resurrection of our bodies, or look for the blessed hope. Hence the resurrection of Jesus was a principal subject of primitive preaching, and ought not to be neglected now.

3. If we translate the words as they may be translated, thus, *He shall stand at the latter day above, or over the earth*, they may refer to Christ's second coming to judgment, when he will descend from heaven, come in the clouds of it, and appear in the air, over the earth, where he will be met by the living saints, and will judge the world in righteousness. This was a very early article of faith; the Jews say ^e, that the dispute and quarrel between *Cain* and *Abel* was about this; the one asserting, the other denying, that there would be a future judgment. However, *Enoch*, the seventh from *Adam* ^f, prophesied of it, and of *the coming of the Lord with ten thousand of his saints*, to execute it. It was known and believed in *Job's* time; he asserts it, and acquaints his friends with it; *that ye may know*, says he, *that there is a judgment* ^g. This has been, and ought to be, a generally received truth, "that after death is judgment." Nothing is more certain, than

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^v Heb. i. 2. and ix. 26. ^z Nempe ego novi Redemptorem meum vivum, qui postremus ex pulvere (terra) surget. So Noldius in his Concordant. Ebraeo-Chald. particular. p. 676. n. 1750. where he gives many instances of the particle *by* being so used.

^a Psalm xvi. 10.

^b 1 Cor. xv. 10. Coloss. i. 18.

^c Caryl in loc. Lightfoot, vol. II. p. 279. See also Junius in loc.

^d 1 Cor. xv. 45.

^e So the particle *by* is rendered in Gen. i. 20. Ezek. i. 25. and in other places.

^f In Targum Jon. & Jerus. in Gen. iv. 8.

^g Jude 14, 15.

^h Job xix. 25.

the coming of Christ to judgment: or, than that *we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*¹.

4. If we render the words as they may be rendered, thus, *He shall stand at the latter day against the earth*², they may intend the general resurrection of the dead by Christ. The bodies of men are laid, imprisoned, and detained in the earth, nor is it in the power of any creature to release them; but Christ will appear, and *stand against the earth in the latter day*; he will contend with it, and get the victory over it; death and the grave will be obliged to surrender up their dead to him, who *has the keys of hell and death*, and can at his pleasure open the gates of the grave, and set the prisoners free; destroy the power of death, and quicken the dust of men. This now is, and ought to be, an article of our creed, which was one of *Job's*, of the Old Testament saints, and the ancient Jews in general, and of Christ and his apostles, namely, *that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust*³.

III. The third article of *Job's* faith is his own mortality and dissolution; he knew and believed that he should die, return to the dust, and be consumed by worms. Though he puts an *if* upon man's dying in one place, *if a man die*⁴; yet it was no question with him, whether he would die or no, for in the same chapter he says, *man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not: Man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he*⁵? Nor had he any doubt about his own mortality and death, he knew that God would *bring him to death, and to the house appointed for all living*⁶; he looked for it, he expected it in a little time; *when a few years are come, says he, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return*⁷.

Death is the fruit of sin; God threatened it in case of disobedience to his will; it entered into the world by it, is the just wages of it; and since all have sinned, none are exempted from it, or what is equivalent to it; *It is appointed unto men once to die*; no man can secure himself from it, or *hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war, neither shall wickedness deliver such who are given to it*⁸. Such who are hardened in sin, and would out-brave death and hell, who say, *we have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; their covenant with death shall be disannulled, and their agreement with hell shall not stand*⁹. And indeed, the righteous are as liable to the stroke of death as the wicked; *Your fathers,*
where

¹ 2 Cor. v. 10.

² So *hy* is often rendered, as in *Isai. xxix. 8. Jer. xi. 19. Ezek. xxix. 2.* and in many other places.

³ *Acts xxiv. 16.*

⁴ *Job xiv. 14.*

⁵ *Job xiv. 1, 2, 10.*

⁶ *Job xxx. 23.*

⁷ *Job xvi. 22.*

⁸ *Eccles. viii. 8.*

⁹ *Isai. xxviii. 15—18.*

where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever? It may, perhaps, seem strange, that these should die, since *Christ has died for them, and abolished death, and him that had the power of it*: And indeed, though they do die, they do not die like other men, there is a difference between the death of the righteous and of the wicked; Christ by dying has took away the sting of death, removed its curse, and turned it into a privilege and blessing; *death is yours*: It is not inflicted on them as a penal evil, or by way of punishment for sin, but that they may be entirely rid of it; and that when their bodies are raised immortal, incorruptible, spiritual and glorious, these, with their souls, may enjoy an eternity of happiness.

Death is here expressed by a destruction of the body by *worms*, and by a consumption of the reins; *after, or besides my skin, worms will destroy this body, and my reins will be consumed within me*". Death is properly a separation of soul and body; the consumption of the body in all its parts, internal and external, skin and reins, is the fruit and effect of death and the grave; where the body lying a little while, is subject to corruption and rottenness. Now by this destruction of the body we are not to understand an annihilation of it, for though the body returns to dust, and sees corruption, yet it is not reduced to nothing. The *dead* indeed *are not*; they are not in the land of the living, existing among, and conversing with men, as formerly, yet they are in being. God will destroy *not only meats, but the belly*; not as to its substance, but as to its present use, when it will be no more employed in the service it now is. If the body was annihilated by death, Christ would lose part of his purchase, yea, part of his mystical self, and the Spirit his dwelling-place; for the bodies of the saints, as well as their souls, are bought with the price of his blood, and are members of him, and temples of the Holy Ghost. Besides, the resurrection would not be properly a resurrection, but a new creation".

IV. A fourth article in *Job's* confession of faith is, the resurrection of the same body. This he firmly believed, though he knew his body would be destroyed by worms, and his reins be consumed within him; otherwise he could not have said, or believed, or hoped, that he should *see God in his flesh, and for himself*; and, that his eyes should *behold him, and not another*. When he says, in another place, *If a man die, shall he live again*? which, according to the usual sense of such interrogations, without a negative particle, must be answered, No, he shall not live again; his meaning is, that he shall not live again in this world, he shall not live a natural mortal life again, supported in the manner it now is. And when he says of himself, that in a little time he shall

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* Zech. i. 5.

† 1 Cor. iii. 22.

‡ So Noldius, p. 12. n. 80.

* See my second sermon on the Resurrection, in the second volume of the Lime-street sermons,

P. 451—453.

† Job xiv. 14.

go to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death, from whence he should not return⁷; he means, that he should return no more to his house, neither should his place know him any more⁸, nor to a mortal state, or to the business and employments of this life; for, that being once laid in the grave, he should not rise again until the heavens be no more⁹; that is, until the end of the world, when there will be an universal resurrection of good and bad. Job had no scruple upon his mind about the resurrection, nor do these passages imply any; no man more firmly believed it, or more clearly asserted it. Two things are to be observed in this article;

1. That he believed he should rise with true flesh; in my flesh shall I see God. The bodies of men at the resurrection will not be airy, ethereal, or celestial bodies, destitute of flesh, blood, and bones; they will not be turned into spirits, but will be like the body of Christ after his resurrection; who said to his disciples, being terrified, supposing they had seen a spirit, *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have*¹⁰. It is true, the bodies of the saints will be raised spiritual ones; they will be subject and subservient to the soul or spirit, employed in spiritual service, and delighted with spiritual objects, and live without natural helps, as spirits; but then they will not be changed into spirits, or lose their former true nature and substance. The apostle indeed says, *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*¹¹; by which he means, not flesh and blood simply considered, but as either sinful or mortal, or both; therefore *this mortal must put on immortality, and this corruption must put on incorruption*.

2. That he believed he should rise with the same body; otherwise, he should see God, not in his own flesh, but in another's; not for himself, but for another; not with his own eyes, but with the eyes of another, a stranger, as the word signifies¹²; a strange body, to which he was not united, in which he never dwelt, and which he never was acquainted with before. If the same body is not raised, it will not be properly a resurrection; nor are the figurative phrases just, by which it is sometimes expressed, as quickening the seed sown in the earth, awaking out of sleep, and the like. Besides, the places from whence the dead will be summoned; the subject of the resurrection; this vile and mortal body; the several instances of resurrections past, prove the identity of raised bodies: And indeed, it is inconsistent both with the justice and goodness of God, to punish or glorify other bodies than those we carried about with us here¹³. But I proceed to,

V. The

⁷ Job x. 21.

⁸ Chap. vii. 10.

⁹ Chap. xiv. 12.

¹⁰ Luke xxiv. 39, 40.

¹¹ 1 Cor. xv. 50—53.

¹² אֲרֵי Alienus, extraneus a radice אֲרֵי Alienari, Abalienare. Buxtorf.

¹³ See these arguments at large in my second sermon on the Resurrection, in the second volume of the

V. The fifth and last article of this creed, and that is, the beatific vision of God, which *Job* firmly believed he should enjoy; concerning which may be observed the following things:

1. That the vision of God he believed, and expected he should have, when raised from the dead, would be a corporal one; hence he says, *In my flesh shall I see God*, and *mine eyes*, my fleshy eyes, *shall behold him*. Therefore, by God we are to understand, not God essentially considered, but God personally considered in the Son, or *God manifest in the flesh*. God will be seen through the Mediator; in heaven much of the glory of the Deity will shine through the humanity of Christ; the human nature of Christ will be a glorious object for the saints to look at. To see Christ on earth was the desire of kings and prophets. It was one of *Austin's* three wishes, which were these, to see Christ in the flesh, *Paul* in the pulpit, and *Rome* in its glory. In heaven saints will see Christ *as he is*, as *crowned with glory and honour*; raised to the highest dignity in the human nature, shining with the brightest majesty it is capable of: and when they are thus blessed with this delightful, desirable, and everlasting sight, they will have their wishes, and Christ his prayers answered; such as, *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory*^f. I would not be understood, as though I thought this corporal sight will be all the saints will have of God; no, the intellectual vision of him, with the eyes of the mind, will be enlarged to the highest degree it is capable of, and the understanding will be everlastingly employed in such contemplations of the being, perfections, and glory of God, as are now inconceivable to us, and inexpressible by us.

2. This vision will be very distinguishing; it will be such an one as many others will not be blessed with; *mine eyes shall behold him, and not another*, or a *stranger*. Such who are strangers, both to themselves and Christ, are unacquainted with the new birth, know nothing of the grace of God in truth, shall never see him; *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*^g, and none but them. As a *stranger does not now intermeddle with the joy of saints*, so neither shall he hereafter: A stranger, an hypocrite, such an one as *Balaam, shall see him, but not now; shall behold him, but not nigh*^h; such may see Christ in his human nature, but not so as to enjoy his presence, and be delighted with his glory: The sight of him will throw horror into their minds, and confusion in their faces; *every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds* of

the Lime-street sermons, from p. 457 to 468, and in my first sermon, p. 398, 399, &c. I have shewn, that these words of *Job* are not to be understood, as they are by most Jewish, and some Christian writers, of a metaphorical, but a real resurrection; which is the true reason why I have taken no notice of it in this discourse.

^f *John* xvii. 24.

^g *Matt.* v. 8.

^h *Numb.* xxiv. 17.

of the earth shall wail because of him¹. But the sight the saints will have of Christ will be of a different kind, and produce different effects.

3. This sight will be an appropriating one; *whom I shall see for myself*, says Job; I shall see my own interest in him very clearly; this will turn to my own account; it will issue in my own pleasure and delight, profit, and advantage. Saints in the resurrection-morn, and when in heaven, will see Christ for themselves, and not for others; they will be able to appropriate him to themselves, and say, *My Lord, and my God*. Now, very often they can see him as a Saviour and a Redeemer for others, but not for themselves; they can believe for others, but not for their own souls; but in heaven they will see him for themselves, and that for ever; *their sun shall no more go down, neither shall their moon withdraw itself: The Lord shall be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended*².

4. This sight will be an assimilating and transforming one. Views of Christ in the glass of his gospel, promises, and ordinances, change the saints into the same image, in some measure, in this life; how much more will clear views of him hereafter? The true reason why the saints shall be so perfectly like Christ in the other world, is, because *they shall see him as he is*.

5, and lastly, This sight is exceeding desirable, will be greatly delightful, wonderfully satisfying, and will last for ever. This is the reason why saints are so desirous of departing out of this world, and to be with Christ, that they may see his glory, and enjoy his presence, the consequence of which is fulness of joy; for if a sight of Christ by faith now, fills the soul *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*, what must a sight of him do in the world above? Here *the eye is not satisfied with seeing*, but then it will be, both the eye of the body and of the mind; *as for me*, says the Psalmist, *I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness*³. And, to conclude, this vision will be an everlasting one, free from all clouds and darkness, obscurity and imperfection, and will not suffer any interruption. The saints *shall be for ever with the Lord, and behold his glory*.

Thus have I gone through the several articles of this creed, and considered the several parts of this portion of scripture, in compliance with the request of my deceased brother, and fellow-labourer in the gospel, whose remains we shall shortly commit to the grave, in hope of the resurrection of the just. His character may now be expected from me. I shall give a brief account of him (as I am able) chiefly as the saint and minister.

It pleased God to bless him with a religious education, under parents, who cheerfully and joyfully took *the spoiling of their goods* for the cause of Christ.

When,

¹ Rev. i. 7.

² Isai. lx. 20.

³ Psalm xvii. 15.

When, and at what age, the Lord called him by his grace, and revealed his Son in him, I am not certain; but evident it is, that it was betimes, and in his early days, since he not only made a profession of religion, but entered upon the public work of the ministry very young; having been, as I am informed, pretty near thirty years a pastor of this church, and yet died in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

He engaged in the work of preaching the gospel with disinterested views, and not upon any mean, mercenary, or worldly consideration, as sufficiently appears from this single instance; having a call to two several congregations at one and the same time, he chose rather, upon mature deliberation, to accept the call of the poorer and meaner church; believing it to be the mind of God he should do so, and that his work lay there; though at the same time he had a growing family, and under pressing circumstances of life. And though he had, afterwards, temptations thrown in his way to leave his small flock, he bravely resisted them, and cheerfully continued in his oversight of it.

And as he committed himself and his family to the care of divine providence, the Lord was not wanting to appear for him in an uncommon manner. How often have I, with others of my brethren here present, heard him relate, with the utmost pleasure, and gratitude of mind, the instances of providential goodness to him, with a single view to glorify God, and to encourage the faith and hope of others in him.

His indefatigableness was very considerable, as appears from the progress he made in some of the learned languages, and in other parts of useful knowledge, which recommended him to the pulpit and the press^m, and to every branch of conversation. Add to this, his laborious industry in keeping a school, at the same time he was engaged in public work, and had the pastoral care of a congregation.

His ministerial endowments and qualifications were such, as are rare in this present age. Besides a large experience of the grace of God, he had a considerable share of light and knowledge in the great truths of the gospel; he had an heavenly skill to lay open the wretched and miserable state and condition of sinners by nature, and to set forth the glory of Christ in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. His language was plain and easy, though strong and masculine, far above contempt, and yet free from the swelling words of vain rhetoricians. His reasoning was clear and nervous, his mien and deportment was grave, his address was with majesty, which at once had a tendency to command awe, engage the attention, and strike the affection. And, let me not forget to

^m He published two discourses, one on the death of the Reverend Mr John Noble, the other on the death of Mrs Mary Weare.

take notice of his excellent talent in prayer, and of that sweet and near communion he often enjoyed with God in the discharge of that work in private.

His success in the ministry was very great, he had many seals of it, both in conversion and edification; some of which went before him to glory, and others are here behind, and both will meet him in the great day of the Lord. There needs no further proof and demonstration of this, than the bare consideration of the low estate in which you, this church was, when he came among you, and the very flourishing one in which he has now left you: May it continue and increase.

His large knowledge of, and acquaintance with men and things, together with great sagacity and penetration, joined with labour and pleasure in it, fitted, and gave him an uncommon turn for business. How many will miss him for his private advice and counsels? What a loss will the churches in city and country sustain, who had a common share in his care and affections? And, how long has he been a father and a guide to you, my brethren, and myself? Have we not reason to cry as the prophet did, *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!*

But while I am speaking of his great concern for the public good of the churches of Christ abroad, let me not forget to take notice of his affectionate regard to you, this church, of which he was pastor, who, of all the branches of a Redeemer's interest, lay nearest his heart, and for whom he spent his time, his talents, and his strength. And here I cannot forbear reading a passage of his, in a paper fallen into my hands since his death, and which seems to be written at a time when he was engaged in prayer and tears for you; being, as I apprehend, fearful, at that time, of some divisions among you: His words are these, "O! that my present tears might cement the hearts of my dear members together in love, and that there might be no other contention among them, than what might express their self-denial for the sake of Christ, and their fellow-members, striving together for the faith of the gospel, but not with one another about different sentiments in matters not essential to true religion, or the public worship of God under the gospel. O! imitate a dear Redeemer in this self-denying, loving, and tender spirit and carriage one towards another; this will produce peace in the church; this will yield peace in your own souls; this will yield a comfortable reflection in the near view of death, and an eternal world."

Notwithstanding all his attainments, gifts and usefulness, he was humble, and entertained mean and low thoughts of himself; this might be seen in his carriage to those who were inferior to him. In the above-mentioned paper I meet with some lines of his, breathing out his sense of divine grace, and his own unworthiness. "O! says he, how unworthy have I always been of such
" dear

“ dear favours with which I have been indulged. I can say, in the views of
 “ many infirmities, I have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful in the
 “ ministry to the best of my light. — O! that I had but more light, and liberty,
 “ in my Lord’s work, in every respect. Alas! How short have I come of
 “ filling up the character I have unworthily bore in the churches.”

His conversation with men was free and pleasant, affable and courteous, instructive and diverting, which made him universally esteemed and beloved.

He was calm and quiet under afflictive providences, and much resigned to the divine will, and particularly throughout his last illness. When he was first seized, which was many months ago, and had *the sentence of death in himself*, he expressed himself in this manner, as I find his own words in the paper before referred to; “ And now, methinks, I am ready to yield up my soul into the
 “ hands of a dear Jesus, in whom alone I have hope, and with whom I long to
 “ be. I have been a wonderful instance of his grace, and indeed, of sovereign
 “ goodness, in that he should put such an one as I into the ministry, and uphold
 “ me so long in it, to some usefulness to poor souls, whom I hope to meet in
 “ the great day with exceeding joy.”

• During his long indisposition he was very comfortable in his soul, and satisfied about his eternal state. In my last visit to him, that he was able in any tolerable manner, with any degree of strength to converse with me, I asked him whether his faith in Christ was now steady; he replied, “ Steady, steady
 “ on the person of Christ, and those glorious truths of the gospel, which have
 “ been the support of my soul, and the delight of my ministry.” One of the last things he was heard to say before his death was, that the present dispensation was the most *delightful* one he ever was yet under. Which shews, that he must have great supports, and large discoveries of love in his last moments. And thus he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, and now makes one of the shining crowd, which stand before the throne, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. May we be able to make a right use of this melancholy providence: Should not the removal of such able and faithful servants of Christ send us to the throne of grace, to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, that his churches may be supplied, and his interest preserved?

S E R M O N XXIII.

The Head of the Serpent bruised by the Seed of the Woman.

Occasioned by the Death of Mrs MARTHA GIFFORD, late Wife of
the Reverend Mr ANDREW GIFFORD, Preached January 14, 1733.

G E N E S I S III. 15.

*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed
and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

THIS book of *Genesis* is, in order, the first of the inspired writings, and gives us an account of the first principles of all things: It informs us that the world had a beginning, and is the produce of a wife and powerful agent, and not the effect of blind chance, or owing to the confused jumbling of fortuitous atoms, contrary to the notions of many philosophers. In this we learn who the first man was; and when, and by whom the several parts of the earth were peopled: It gives us the best light into the rise of the first and early monarchies, about which there has been so much contest, and leads us into the true origin of moral evil among men; concerning which there has been so much dispute in the world. In short, it is the fountain of all sound divinity, true history and philosophy.

The *three* first chapters especially, are an epitome both of nature and grace, and give us, in one view, the rise, ruin, and restoration of the world. They may be considered as the *text*, on which all the following parts of scripture are the *comments* and *expositions*.

The first chapter furnishes us with a most divine and beautiful account of the creation, in the order of six days work; by which *we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear*; in which the glory of the divine power and wisdom is so abundantly manifest. We learn from hence, that the heavens and the earth were made out of nothing, and not from any pre-existent matter; that

the earth was without form, and void, a rude and undigested chaos, full of darkness and confusion, until the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters, and brought it into a beautiful form and order: Here we are informed when God first commanded light to break forth; when, by a firmament, he divided the superior and inferior waters from each other; when he made the sea, and caused the dry land to appear; when he clothed the earth with grass, and filled it with fruitful trees; when he bespangled the heavens with stars, and hung up his two great lights, the sun and moon; the one to rule the day, and the other the night; when he filled the several parts of the universe with proper inhabitants the air with fowl, the sea with fish, and the earth with cattle and creeping things; and after all, as the crown and master-piece of all his works, that he made man after his image and likeness; placed him over all the works of his hands, and put all creatures in subjection to him.*

The second chapter principally treats of the happiness of man in his state of innocence; and informs us, that the Lord God allotted him an habitation in the most fertile and delightful spot of ground in all the globe, even the garden of *Eden*; which was stocked with all manner of trees, pleasant to the sight, and good for food; and give him liberty to eat of the fruit of them all, excepting one: that the Lord brought before him every beast of the field, and fowl of the air, that he might give names unto them, and provided a proper help-mate for him, one that was *bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh*; which two being joined together by the Lord himself, spent their happy hours in the service of their Creator, and in their own mutual solace and delight. But then,

The third chapter introduces a strange and sudden catastrophe of things, and opens a dark scene of wickedness and ruin; in which the just now happy pair are involved, through the cunning and subtilty of a serpent: Here we are informed which of the two he attacked; what artful methods were made use of, by which he gained his point, seduced our first parents to eat the forbidden fruit, whereby they ruined themselves and all their posterity. This brought down the just resentment of God against both the deceiver and the deceived; and all three, the serpent, the woman, and the man, are summoned to appear before him, take their trial, and receive their sentence in a judiciary way: and because the serpent was the instrument of this apostasy and rebellion, he receives his just sentence of punishment first; the account of which we have in the words of my text, and in the preceding verse.

Now, whereas the *serpent* is represented as the contriver and author of this mischief to man, and upon him a judicial sentence, of which my text is a part,

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* As the hen, or any other fowl, broods upon its eggs or young, which is the sense of the word כִּרְחַפָּת, according to the Jewish writers; as R. Sol. Jarchi, R. Aben Ezra, R. Levi Ben Gersom, in Gen. 1, 2.

is pronounced, it will be necessary, before I proceed any further, to inquire, who we are to understand by it. I apprehend, that by the *serpent* is meant a true and real serpent, and not the mere form and likeness of one, in which the devil might appear for a time. This is evident from its being reckoned among the beasts of the field, ver. 1. from the cunning and subtilty which is there ascribed to it^b; and more especially from the nature of the curse denounced against it in my text, and in the verse before it, which is thus expressed; *And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* All which is literally true of this creature, the serpent; it is the most detestable and lothsome of all creatures; it is a reptile upon the earth; it goes upon its belly, however upright it might be before this sentence; it feeds upon what is exceeding mean; and between this and man is an irreconcilable enmity; the sight of a serpent is disagreeable to man, and the sight of a man is as abhorrent to a serpent; the serpent's gall is poison to man, and the spittle of a man is venomous to serpents. This antipathy to serpents, in the human nature, is observed to be still more strong in the female sex; and it is averred, that the bare foot of a woman pressing a serpent's head, never so little, is immediate death to it: and though this creature may, at unawares, bite the heels of men; yet man has such an advantage over it, that he can easily bruise and crush its head; which it being sensible of, is most careful to cover and hide. These are things which naturalists^c say of this creature, and, if true, shew that the curse denounced, is literally fulfilled in it; and consequently, that it was a real and proper serpent, which is here intended.

But then let it be observed, that not a mere serpent, or that only, is to be understood, but that as possessed and used by Satan as his instrument: This appears from its having a faculty of speaking; and more especially from its cunning and sophistical way of reasoning; nor is it rational to suppose, that human nature, in its bloom and glory, should be outwitted, seduced, and overcome by a creature so very inferior to it: besides, the writings of the New Testament ascribe the seduction and ruin of man to the devil. Our Lord calls him a *murderer from the beginning*^d; and sometimes this seduction is attributed to him, under the name of *the serpent*^e: And it is easy to observe, that the Devil and Satan^f, is called *the old serpent*; to all which agree the sentiments of many of the

^b See Matthew x. 16.

^c All these instances of antipathy are observed by the learned Mr Joseph Mede. from naturalists, in his works, Book I. Disc. 39. p. 295. Vid. Franz. Hist. Animal. Part IV. c. 1. Topfel's History of Serpents, p. 604, 606. ^d John viii. 44. ^e 2 Cor. xi. 2. ^f Rev. xii. 9. & xx. 2.

the Jewish writers^z; who acknowledge that Satan, whom they call *Samael*, and the Angel of death, names proper enough for him, was in the serpent, and was the cause of man's ruin, and is principally designed in the curse.

This clears the justice of God, and shews that the punishment of the serpent is not unreasonable; since it was made use of by Satan as an instrument to bring about his wicked designs. If the earth was cursed for man's sake, why might not this creature be cursed for Satan's sake, who had employed it to so vile a purpose? The punishing the instrument, or what is accessary, as well as the principal, does more discover God's detestation of the fact for which they are punished, as may be observed in other instances^b. But then,

Let it not be thought that the instrument only was punished, and the principal suffered to escape: No, this sentence of punishment, here pronounced, was chiefly designed against Satan, and to be inflicted on him; and every part of it is applicable to him; he is of all creatures accursed of God; he is now cast down from the realms of light and glory, in which he dwelt, and will never be able to rise more and regain his former place and dignity; he lives not upon *angels food*, as formerly, but upon earthly, impure, and fordid lusts. Between him and the woman's seed is an implacable enmity, which will issue in his everlasting ruin; whatever feeble attempts he may be able to make to defend himself, and destroy the kingdom of Christ. But on these things I have already more largely insisted, in a treatise^c published to the world some time ago. I go on to observe, that

These words, *I will put enmity, &c.* are spoken by a divine person, who is called *the Lord God*; at whose voice *Adam* trembled, and whose presence he dreaded; by whom we are to understand, either God absolutely, or personally considered; if as personally considered, then either the first or second person in the Trinity is designed. I am inclined to think that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in an human form to *Adam*, and spoke with an articulate voice to him; for *no man hath seen God the Father at any time; ye have neither heard his voice at any time, says Christ, nor seen his shape*^d. It is a rule that, perhaps, will meet with few exceptions in the Old Testament; that whenever any visible appearance of Jehovah was made, any shape assumed, or articulate voice uttered, it is to be understood of the second person; who, in the fulness of time, was to be made flesh, and dwell among us; and, indeed, who so proper to carry on a judicial process against these criminals? before whom should they take their trials? and from whom should they receive the sentence of condemnation, but from him who is the Judge of all the earth? *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed*

^z Zohar in Gen. iii. fol. 127, 1, 2. Targum Jon. in Gen. iii. 6. Vid. Aben Ezra in Gen. iii. 3.

^b Exod. xxi. 28. Lev. xx. 15.

^c The prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the

Messiah, literally fulfilled in Jesus, chap. i. p. 5, 6, &c.

^d John v. 37.

committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father¹: And who more fit to bring the first tidings of grace and salvation to fallen man, than he who was to be the GREAT PROPHET in Israel? By this means the gospel of our salvation first began to be spoken by the Lord in the garden of Eden, as it afterwards was in the land of Judea, in such a manner, and with such power and authority, as it never was before or since. Add to all this, that the paraphrases antiently used by the Jewish church, seem to incline to this sense; for the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan read the eighth verse thus: *And they heard the voice of the word of the Lord God walking in the garden, &c.* and the Jerusalem Targum reads the ninth verse after this manner: *And the Word of the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, &c.* And both Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase the tenth verse thus: *And he said, The voice of thy Word I heard in the garden, &c.* By the Word of the Lord, they mean the essential Word, the Messiah, who walked in the garden, called to Adam, and whose voice he heard. Now it is the very same person that continues talking with Adam and Eve, who, in my text, directs his discourse to the serpent; nor ought it to be any objection that he is here introduced speaking of himself, under the character of *the seed of the woman*, that should bruise the serpent's head, since this is not unusual, as appears from *John* iv. 10, &c.

The principal thing designed in my text, is the victory the Messiah should obtain over Satan. The enmity put between the woman and the serpent, between his seed and hers, breaking out into open war, was to issue in an entire conquest over the serpent and his seed, in which the Messiah would interest all his people. This, and only this, could be a support to Adam in his present state and condition. We are not to imagine, to use the words of an ingenious modern writer^m, "we hear God foretelling, with great solemnity, a very trivial accident that should sometime happen in the world; that serpents would be apt to bite men by the heels, and that men would be apt to revenge themselves by striking them on the head. What has this trifle to do with the loss of mankind, with the corruption of the natural and moral world, and the ruin of all the glory and happiness of the creation? Great comfort it was to Adam, doubtless, after telling him that his days should be short, and full of misery, and his end without hope, to let him know that he should now and then knock a snake on the head; but not even that without paying dear for his poor victory, for the snake should often bite him by the heel. Adam surely could not understand the prophecy in this sense, though some of his sons have so understood it."

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¹ *John* v. 22, e3.^m Sherlock's use and intent of Prophecy, p. 70, 71.

It is certain these were not the sentiments of the old Jewish church; for the paraphrases of *Jonatban* and *Jerusalem* understand the words of the Messiah; the former of which says, "There shall be a healing for the heel in the days of the King Messiah;" and much to the same purpose says the latter. The word מָחַיָּהוּ which is rendered *it*, is one of the names of God, and is so used in *Psalms* cii. 27. *Isai*. xlviii. 12. and well agrees with Christ, who is the unchangeable, omnipotent, and eternal HE, the *αὐτός*, who is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*. The work ascribed to him, which is the bruising the serpent's head, is what no other but the Messiah was to do, or could do, and is referred to in *Psalms* cx. 6. which Psalm belongs solely to the Messiah; where it is said of him, *He shall wound the heads over many countries*; which may be rendered, *He shall wound the head over a large country*; or, *he shall wound him on the head who is over a large country*; which can be no other than Satan, the god and prince of this world. Besides, *in the volume of the book*, in *κεφαλῆς βιβλίου*; at the head of the book, in the beginning of it, *it is written of Christ*, that he should *do the will of God*; which was to destroy Satan, the old serpent, with his works, and deliver sinful miserable man out of his hands; and can refer to no other prophesy than this, which stands at the head and front of the Bible; from the giving forth of which the Messiah has been spoken of by the mouth of all God's holy prophets, which have been since the world began. Nor can it be any just objection to his being the seed of the woman; that the word *seed* is a collective word, since it is often used to design a single person; as in *Gen.* iv. 25. and chap. xv. 2. and xxi. 13. From all which I conclude, that this is an intimation, and the first intimation of the Messiah, and of his work and office.

The manner in which this hint is given, is worthy of observation. It is commonly said, that these words contain the first promise of the Messiah, and of grace and salvation by him to sinful man; but it ought to be observed, that the words are not spoken to man, but to the serpent; not by way of promise to *Adam*, but by way of threatening to the devil: It is true, indeed, *Adam* was present, and heard what dropped from the lips of his Judge, which revived his fainting spirits and trembling heart, and sprung a dawn of light and joy in him, and laid a solid foundation for faith and hope, as to everlasting salvation.

These words contain a declaration of secret enmity between several parties, breaking out into open war, and the event of it.

The declaration of this mutual enmity is thus expressed: *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed*; that is, "I will put between you, and raise up among you an implacable and irreconcilable hatred, which shall not lie secretly burning in your breasts, but shall break out into

“open acts of hostility, one against another; there shall be a perpetual war between you.” Now in this battle there are two pair of combatants.

The one is the serpent and the woman; who is designed by the serpent, has been observed already: By the *woman*, cannot be meant the church, who is sometimes so called, both for her weakness and fruitfulness in her present state. Could this allegorical sense be admitted of, some passages in the twelfth chapter of the *Revelation* would serve as a proper comment on our text; particularly ver. 4, 13—15, 17.

But this mystical sense is not suitable; the text designs some certain woman literally understood, האשה “that woman,” by way of emphasis: Some say, the virgin *Mary*, that famous woman, the mother of Christ, who is said to be *made of a woman*; a woman that both was mother and virgin at one and the same time, who, for the sake of him whom she bore, is *blessed among women*; and upon that account *blessed by all generations*. But rather by this woman, we are to understand *Eve*, the wife of *Adam*, the woman that was then present, who had beguiled her husband, being seduced by the serpent; the woman into whose sections he had ingratiated himself, and with whom he had lately so familiarly conversed: This woman, seeing herself imposed on, and seduced by him, and herself and posterity ruined, is filled with hatred to him; which must be no small mortification to that proud spirit, to have the weak woman opposed, as his match.

The other pair of combatants are, the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman.

By *the seed of the serpent*, may be meant either evil angels, or wicked men, or both. Evil angels may truly be called the seed of the devil, since they are of the same nature and principles with him; they are his angels, he is the prince of them; they move at his orders, and obey his commands; and these bear not only a secret grudge, but keep up an open war against Christ and his saints. Wicked men also may properly enough be called his seed; the devil is their father, and they are his children; they imitate him, they do his works, and are called after his name, *serpents, and generation of vipers*. They hate Christ and his people, and persecute them that are after the Spirit. This has always been, and ever will be the case, as long as this present state of things continues.

By *the seed of the woman*, is not designed her immediate posterity, especially *Cain*; for whatever hopes she might have entertained at his birth, that she had brought forth the Messiah, the promised seed; which some conclude from her words, in chapter iv. 1. *I have gotten a man from the Lord*; which they choose to render, *I have gotten a man, the Lord*; and which *Jonatan* the Targumist paraphrases thus; “I have gotten a man, the Angel of the Lord;” I say, what-

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ever hopes of this kind she had encouraged in herself at this time, it appeared plainly afterwards that he was of the seed of the serpent, a child of the devil. Nor by the seed of the woman are we to understand the whole world, though, it is true, that *Eve is the mother of all living*; upon which account *Adam* gave her the name of *Eve*; yet many of her natural seed and offspring are children of disobedience, who are taken and led captive by the devil at his will, and in whose minds he works effectually; whatever aversion they may have to him, as he is represented as a frightful and horrible spirit, yet they have none to him, as an impure and wicked one; they love his works, and shew themselves to be his children, and will be cursed companions with him in everlasting flames. Nor can I see any reason why the elect of God should be here called the seed of the woman; it is true, believers are called *the seed of Abraham*, in a spiritual sense, *inasmuch as they are partakers of the same faith*, and tread in the same steps of obedience: They are also called the seed of the church frequently^o; and *Jerusalem*, which is above, is said to be *the mother of them all*, because they are born in her, and nursed up at her side; but they are never called the seed of *Eve*, in any particular and distinct sense from the rest of the world; the grace by which they are regenerated, not descending to them from her by natural generation. I conclude then, that by the seed of the woman, is meant the Messiah: I have given my reasons already; it is the same seed whom God afterwards promised to *Abraham*, more clearly and distinctly, saying, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*^o; which the apostle^a *Paul* directly applies to Christ. It will not now be improper to consider in what sense Christ is called *the seed of the woman*.

Some think, he is so called because of his birth of a virgin, since he is said to be the seed of the woman, and not of the man; which agrees with what is said of Jesus, that he was *made of a woman*: But the phrase does not seem to design the miraculous conception and birth of the Messiah; at least, it was not so understood by *Eve*, if it can be thought, as some learned men are of opinion, as has been before observed, that she had entertained some hopes and faith too, that she had got the Messiah; which she could not, had she known that he was to be born of a virgin; nor does it appear that there were any intimations of this kind, at least, any clear ones, until the times of *Isaiak*, who prophesied thus, *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel*^b. It may be, this phrase, *the seed of the woman*, is only designed to express the truth of Christ's incarnation, the reality of his human nature, that he should partake of the same flesh and blood with us; and, perhaps, the peculiarity of the expression may intend his assumption of a nature, and not a person; for Christ assumed not an human person, but an human nature, which

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^o *Isai.* xliii. 5. and xliv. 3. and lix. 21. &c.
^a *Gal.* iii. 16.

^b *Isai.* vii. 14.

^o *Gen.* xxi. 16.

is called that *holy Thing born of the virgin, the seed of Abraham*; and as here the *seed of the woman*. If Christ had taken to himself an human person, there must be two persons in him, which was the monstrous and absurd error of *Nestorius*, bishop of *Constantinople*, who lived in the fifth century, and was condemned by several councils. The human nature of Christ never subsisted of itself, which is proper to personality; it always was in union with the second person, subsisted in him, and was never separate from him since it had an existence. Besides, if Christ, as man, is a separate and distinct person, his actions and obedience, as such, would be of service to none but that single person; whereas, through Christ's assumption of an human nature in personality with himself, as the Son of God, all his actions, obedience, and sufferings as man, have a divine virtue and efficacy put into them, which renders the benefit of them communicable to as many as he pleases.

But to proceed: This phrase, *the seed of the woman*, seems to be used on purpose to comfort *Eve*, under her present sorrowful circumstances; that though she had beguiled her husband, through the seduction of the serpent, and was the cause of his, her own, and their posterity's ruin; yet one descending from her, of her seed and offspring, should avenge this wrong done her, by bruising the serpent's head, and thereby deliver her from his power, and save her with an everlasting salvation. The apostle refers to this, when he says, *And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression, notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing*; which last part of the text I would chuse to render thus, *Notwithstanding she shall be saved, or there shall be salvation for her, δια τῆς τεκνογονίας, by the birth of a Son*; that is, by the promised seed, the seed of the woman, the Lord Jesus Christ. Take the words in the other reading, and they furnish out no good sense at all, neither with respect to temporal or eternal salvation: If they are to be understood of temporal salvation in child-bearing, this is not true; since many good women, as *Rachel*, and others, have died in child-bed; nor can they be understood in any sound sense of eternal salvation, seeing bearing of children can never be thought to be either the cause or condition, or means of that, and which, as is by a learned man rightly observed, would be small comfort to those who bear none; but read the words, as I have observed they may be read, there is a glare of gospel light in them, and give us reason to conclude, that *Eve*, who was first in the transgression, was nevertheless saved, through the Messiah, and that all other women, who believe in the same glorious person, shall be saved also. What a mortification must this be to the devil, to hear, that though he had drawn the woman into the transgression, yet she should be saved from it; that though, through his temptations,

* 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14.

† See Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, Part I. p. 24, 25, and the notes of his learned editor, Mr Bedford.

temptations, she had been the cause of man's ruin, yet there should be one who would spring from her, that would be the author of salvation; and that the seed of that woman, whom he had deceived, should be the ruin of him. Now between Satan and his seed, evil angels and wicked men, on the one side, and Christ the seed of the woman, and the Head of the elect, on the other, there is a rooted enmity. The serpent and his seed hate Christ; those proud spirits could not bear that the human nature should be advanced to union with the Son of God, and be exalted above that of theirs; this is thought, by some, to be that which occasioned their apostasy from God. As soon as they had an intimation of this, they broke away from him in rage and wrath, and with a disdainful pride, left their first habitations of bliss and glory, and fell into mutiny and rebellion against their Maker, and into plots and conspiracies to hinder the salvation of man by the incarnate God; though all in vain, and to no purpose. As soon as the man Christ Jesus was born, Satan stirred up Herod to seek the young child's life to destroy it; and when he was grown up to the estate of man, he had the front to solicit him to destroy himself; he put the Jews more than once upon stoning of him, and, at last, put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray him; by which means he attained his end, so as to bring him to death, though it issued in the destruction of himself. The same hatred and malice are to be observed in all his seed.

On the other hand, Christ, the seed of the woman, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity, cannot but hate all the workers of it; whose trade and business it is to commit sin: He hates Satan and all his followers, maintains a war against them, in which he is the mighty conqueror; all his enemies will fall into his hands, to whom he will say, *Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*

This leads me to consider the issue and event of this mutual enmity, discord and war; the Messiah, the seed of the woman, *shall bruise the serpent's head*; and the serpent, the devil, *shall bruise the Messiah's heel*; a vast disparity this; great are the advantages of the one over the other. I proceed to inquire,

What may be meant by *bruising the serpent's head*. Perhaps, what the author of the epistle to the Hebrews says, will give us some light into it, when he observes, that *so far as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*. What is expressed in metaphorical terms in my text, is, in this scripture, signified without a figure; the bruising of the serpent's head, is the *destruction* of the devil himself; by which must be understood, not an annihilation of his being; for though that is in the power of the woman's seed, yet he will preserve him as a monument of his wrath and vengeance,

* Heb. ii. 14.

geance, to be a tormentor of others, and to be punished himself; therefore not an annihilation of him, but a destruction of his power, authority, dominion, and works, is intended. It may be, a passage of the apostle *John's* may instruct us in this matter yet more clearly, when he says, *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil*^w. The works of the devil are sinful works, which he, in all ages, has been plotting and contriving, soliciting men unto, and engaging them in. Christ was manifested in human nature to destroy these works; that is, to put away the sins of his people, make reconciliation for them, finish them, and make an end of them by the sacrifice of himself; and thereby save them from them, and from the wrath of God, which they deserve; in doing which, he has bruised the serpent's head, and confounded a design of his, which was to involve them in all the miseries of an eternal death, from which Christ has secured them; for he has *abolished death, another of the devil's works, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel*.

There is a threefold death, which sin is the cause of, and has introduced into the world, and which are the just wages of it, a corporal, spiritual or moral, and an eternal one; all which are, in some sense, abolished by Christ. Though his people, whilst in a state of nature, are *dead in trespasses and in sins*, yet he having procured spiritual life for them, puts it into them, preserves and secures it, so as they shall never die more, in that sense. They die, indeed, a corporal death; they are not exempted from the general decree of heaven, and lot of all men; they are *brought to death, to the house appointed for all living*. Daily instances confirm this, *Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever*^x? But then the sting of death is taken away, the curse is removed; death is not inflicted on them as a penal evil, or by way of punishment for sin, that being fully satisfied for by Christ. Death is one of the believer's privileges; it frees them from the troubles of this world, and lets them into the glories of another; wherefore, *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, they rest from their labours, and their works follow them*^y. Nor shall they always abide under the power of death; their bodies shall be raised immortal, incorruptible, and glorious; when, being re-united to their souls, they shall be received into the everlasting kingdom and glory of Christ, and spend an endless eternity with him in joy and praise; where they shall be for ever secured from the second death, which is the eternal death; *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power*^z. This is all owing to Christ, *the resurrection and the life*; who says, *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die*^a. This is comfortable to a believer, living and dying.

Morcover,

^w 1 John iii. 8.

^x Zech. i. 5.

^y Rev. xiv. 13.

^z Rev. xx. 6.

^a John xi. 25, 26.

Moreover, by the head of the serpent, we are not to understand the devil singly and alone; but the whole posse of devils with him, even all the powers of darkness, all the fiends of the infernal lake, who came out in a body, and attacked the Lord of life and glory, the seed of the woman, the true Messiah, when he hung on the cross; at which time, he *spoiled principalities and powers, ἀπεδυσμένῳ*, “unclothed them,” stripped them of their armour, and left them naked and defenceless, and *made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it*^b; which, when he had done, he *ascended on high; and led captivity captive.*

Again, The head being the seat of power, which commands the body and the members of it, may here intend the power, authority, and dominion, which the devil, as the god of this world, has usurped over mankind; and has endeavoured to establish among them, and in which he arrived to a very great pitch in the Gentile world; as is very evident from that universal idolatry which he spread over it, and which continued there for many hundreds of years. There was scarce any sort of creature in the world, but he prevailed upon the ‘heathens to worship, even some the most mean and contemptible; for they not only worshipped the heavens, and the host of them, the sun, moon, planets, and fixed stars, and the four elements, fire, earth, air, and water, but even fishes of the sea, fowls of the air, fourfooted beasts, and creeping things; nay, even vegetables, trees, plants, and roots, and such as leeks and onions; which made the poet^d deride them for their garden gods. Nay, the devil so far prevailed, as to obtain worship and adoration for himself, and that sometimes under ‘the name

^b Colofs ii. 15.

^c Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dierum, l. 3. c. 12. & l. 6. c. 26.

^d Quis nescit Volusi Bythinice qualia demens
 Ægyptus portenta cola: : Crocodilon adorat
 Pars hæc: illa pavet saturam serpentibus Ibin.
 Illic cæruleos hic piscem fluminis illic
 Oppida tota canem, nemo veneratur Dianam.
 Porrum & cæpe nefas violare & frangere morsu:
 O sanctas Gentes, quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis
 Numina.—

Juvenal. Satyr. 15:

^e Διὸς φοινίκης δὲ καὶ Φερικυδῆ λαβὸν τὰς ἀφροίμας. Ἰβηλογοὶ οὖν τὴν παρ’ αὐτῶν λεγομένην Ὀφιοῦτος Θεοῦ, καὶ τὴν Ὀφιοῦιδον. Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. l. 1. c. 10. p. 41. Ed. Paris. L. Vives in Ang. de Civ. Dei, l. 14. c. 11. reports from the same Pherecydes, of whom Eusebius speaks, that this god Ophioneus, or Serpentineus, was the prince of the demons, or devils, whom Jupiter cast down from heaven.

name and form ^f of a serpent, or in a ^g real one, in remembrance of that which he had used as an instrument ^h to ruin mankind. In our Lord's time, Satan fancied he had such a power over the world, as to dispose of it at his pleasure; and therefore, in an insolent and audacious manner, offered the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, to Christ, if he would fall down and worship him. The sacrifices which he instituted, and which were not only impure and trifling, but cruel and barbarous; such as the sacrifices ⁱ of human creatures themselves, is a full proof of what power and authority he had over men, and how much they were devoted to him, and infatuated by him: But now his head is bruised and crushed by the seed of the woman; he has not the authority he had in the Gentile world, Christ having sent his gospel thither, has dispelled the

former

^f Ἰψα novissime sacra & ritus initiationis ipsius, quibus Sebadiis nomen est, testimonio esse poterunt veritati: in quibus aureus coluber in sinum dimittitur consecratis, & eximitur rursus ab inferioribus partibus atque imis, Arnob. adv. Gentes, l. 5. p. 203. Ed. Elmenhorst. Vid. Clement. Alex. admon. ad Gentes, p. 11. Ed. Paris. & Jul. Firmic. de error. Proph. Relig. p. 18. Ed. Oxon. & Justin. Martyr. Apolog. 2. p. 70, 71. Ed. Paris. The figure of the Egyptian god Typhon, was in this manner: His upper part was human, his lower part was in the form of a serpent; he was represented with serpents coming out of his hands, and many others wrapping themselves about his body, Chartar. Hist. Deorum, p. 186. Imag. 71. Æsculapius was also worshipped in the form of a serpent, and is called by Ovid, Phæbeius anguis, Metamorph. l. 15. fab. 50. And by Horace, Serpens Epidaurius, Serm. l. 1. Satyr. 3. who, in the shape of a snake, was brought from Epidaurus to Rome, to free the city from the pestilence. an. U. C. 462. Vid. Liv. c. 11. Brev. & Sext. Aurel. Vidlor. de illustr. viris, c. 25. The Genii, which belonged to any place, city, or country, were painted in the same form. Virgil. Æneid. l. 5. v. 95. & Servius in ib. p. 896. Vid. Perf. Satyr. 1. v. 113.

^g Colebant enim bestias fere omnes, quas portentorum mater Ægyptus alebat, in his & serpentes & dracunculos, quos illi Agathodæmonas vocabant. Pignorii mens. Isac. Expof. c. 1. p. 5. Osiridis subfequentis capot ornat sacra serpens in tabula ita frequens, ut in mentem veniat mirari hominum foliditatem, qui a Deo opt. max. ita aberrarent, ut fœdum hoc animal venerarentur. Neque vero Ægypti tantum huic dementiæ affines. Indi enim Phœnicæ, Arabes, Babylonii, Pœni, Bæotii, Epirotæ, Sictonii, Epidaurii, Romani, & nostris hæretici quidam & novi orbis in colæ huic insaniz manus dederit. Ibid. c. 3. p. 23, 24. Vid. p. 26—28. & Tomafin. Cæcropii votum, p. 46, 47, 55. Serpents were sacred to Jupiter. Herodot. l. 2. c. 74. and to Æsculapius, Pausan. l. 2. p. 106, 136. and to Ceres and Minerva Chartar. Imag. Deorum, p. 100, 162.

^h Διονυσίου μαιώλην ὀργιαζούσι Βακχῶν, ἡμεφάρια τῆ ἰερῆ καὶ ἀγῶντι, καὶ τελεσκῶσι τὰς κερυμορίας τῶν φωνῶν, ἀποσημαίνου τοῖς ὄφιοι, ἰπολολυζοῦσι Ἐυαί. Ἐμὰ ἱκανῶν, διὰ πῆ ἡ πλῆθῃ παρεκκολεθῆσσι καὶ σημεῖον ὀργίων Βακχικῶν, ὄφιοι ἐστὶ τελεσκομῶν. αὐτὰ γὰρ κατὰ τῆ ἀκριβοῦ των Ἰβέρων φωνῶν, τὸ ὄνομα τῆ Ἐυαί δασυνομοῖοι, ἐμνησκῶνται ὄφιοι ἠ θηλιὰ. Clemens Alexandr. admon. ad Gentes, p. 9. Of the use of the word Eva, and the repetition of it in the Bacchanalian rites, when the idolaters appeared with serpents platted on their heads, see Virgil. Æneid. l. 6. v. 518, 519. l. 7. v. 388. Perf. Satyr. 1. v. 101; 102. and Catull. Epithal. Thetidis. Hence Bacchus is called Evius, Horat. Carmin. l. 2. Ode xi. v. 37.

ⁱ Vid. Cæsar. Comment. l. 6. Porphyz. de Abstinent. l. 2 §. 54—56. Ed. Cantabr. Minut. Fel. Cſtav. p. 33. Ed. Oxon. Clement. Alex. admon. ad Gentes, p. 27. Tertull. Apol. c. 9. Lactant. de fals. relig. l. 1. c. 21. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dierum, l. 6. c. 26.

former darkness and ignorance, which has opened their eyes to see their folly and madness, and has been the means of their shaking off the devil's yoke, of delivering them from the power of Satan, and of turning them from their idols to serve the living God.

Another way by which the devil got power and authority in the Gentile world, and which, for some time, he secured and established, was by setting up ^k oracles in many places; the most famous of which were those of ^l *Jupiter Ammon* in *Egypt*, and of *Apollo*, the same with ^m *Apollyon*, one of the names of the devil in *Rev. ix. 11. at Delphos in Greece*. These seem to be set up in imitation of the oracle of God, at which the people of *Israel* received answers by *Urim* and *Thummim*. The responses which the Gentiles received at their oracles, were generally delivered in a dark, intricate ⁿ, and ambiguous manner, so as to be sure

^k Herodotus takes notice of several oracles among the Egyptians, where, besides that of *Jupiter Ammon*, were the oracles of *Hercules*, *Apollo*, *Minerva*, *Diana* and *Mars*, and what was had in the greatest esteem, the oracle of *Latona* in the city *Butus*, l. 2. c. 83, 152, 155. Ed. Gronov. among the Grecians, besides that of *Apollo Pythias* at *Delphos*, were the oracles of *Branchidæ*. or *Apollo Didymæus* at *Miletus*, of *Trophonius* in *Labadia*, and *Amphiarus* in *Thebes*, and others at *Abæ* and *Dodona*, l. 1. c. 46. and 2. 52. and 8. 134. The same author makes mention of the oracles of *Mars* and *Bacchus* among the *Thracians*, l. 7. c. 76, 111. and of several among the *Ethiopians*, l. 2. c. 139. *Pausanias* observes, that there was an oracle of *Apollo Thyrsæus* at *Cyaneis*, upon the borders of *Lycia*, l. 7. p. 440. Ed. Hanov. of *Mercury* at *Pharæ* in *Achaia*, *ibid.* of *Hercules Buraicus* at *Bura*, *ibid.* p. 449. of *Apollo Ptous* at *mount Ptous*, near the city *Acraëphnum*, which *Herodotus*, l. 8. c. 135. calls *Acraëphia*, l. 9. p. 576. and of *Bacchus* in *Thrace*, *ibid.* p. 589. with others. Besides, there was an oracle at *Delos*, one of the islands called the *Cyclades*, and another at *Patara* in *Lycia*, which is a place mentioned in *Acts xxi. 1.* and of *Apis* in *Egypt*. *Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dierum*, l. 6. c. 2.

^l Concerning which, *Vid. Herodot. l. 2. c. 55. Pausan. l. 3. p. 195. Q. Curt. l. 4. c. 7.*

^m They both have their names from a word which signifies to destroy, τὸν δ' Ἀπολλωνα, ὡς ἀπολλοῦσα ἡμᾶς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς, ἢ ἀπολλοῦσα ἀφ' ἡμῶν αὐτᾶς; ἢ ἀπολλοῦσα, ταυτὲς τὴν ἡλικίαν αἰτίας τῆς περὶ ἡμεῖς. *Phurnutus de natura Deorum*, p. 92. Ed. Gale. *Macrobinus*, gives us the several etymologies of the name of *Apollo*, which, according to him, is the sun; and, among the rest, mentions this: *Alii cognominatum Apollinem putant, ὡς ἀπολλοῦσα τὰ ζῷα. Exanimat enim & perimit animantes, cum pestem intemperie caloris immittit. Saturnal. l. 1. c. 17.*

ⁿ Ὁ Ἀπολλων ἐκ τῆ ἀπολλοῦ ὀνομαζέται.

Eustathius in *Homer. Iliad. α.*

^o *Apollo* was called *Λοξίας*, from the intricacy and ambiguity of these oracles; Δοξίων δὲ ἐκ περιστολῶν ὄντων τῶν χρησμάτων ὡς διδωσι, Λοξίας ὀνομασθῆναι, *Phurnutus de natura Deorum*, p. 94. *Vid. Schol. Aristophan. Plut. p. 2. Ed. Genev. fol. Clemen. Alexandr. Strom. l. 5. p. 556.* where the same reason is given for this name. The common instances of these ambiguous responses are, that which was given to *Cræsus*, king of *Lydia*, *Cræsus Halyn penetrans magnam perverset opum vim*; which left it uncertain whether he should overcome the great army of the *Persians*; or *Cyrus*, who lay on the other side of the river *Haly*s, should conquer the army of the *Lydians*; also that which was delivered to *Pyrrhus*, king of *Epirus*, *Aio te Æacida Romanos, vincere posse.* From whence it could

not

sure to preserve the credit of the oracle, and the good opinion of the votary. These continued in great vogue for a time; but upon the coming of Christ, *the seed of the woman*, were struck dumb; the Gentiles were sensible of it, but were ignorant of the cause. The fullest proof of the ceasing of these oracles, and the reason of it, is the application of *Augustus Cæsar* to the oracle at *Delphos*, after the birth of Christ, who, when he had offered some hundreds of sacrifices, urged *Apollo* to give him an answer, who should reign after him, which was the last, as it is said, he ever uttered, and was delivered in three Greek verses to this purpose: "An Hebrew child that rules the blessed gods, hath commanded me to leave this dwelling, and go immediately to hell, from henceforward therefore depart in silence from our altars." It is also said, that *Augustus* upon his return to *Rome*, set up an altar in the Capitol, with this inscription on it, *The altar of the first-born of God*. A very considerable instance is this of the seed of the woman's bruising the serpent's head, for by silencing his oracles, his power and authority were greatly diminished. Now in some sense may be said the judgment of the Gentile world, and the prince of it to be cast out, as he was out of his oracle-temple: We have an account of something of this kind in the *Acts* of the apostles, where we read, that as the apostles went to prayer, a certain damsel, possessed with a spirit of divination; it is in the Greek text a spirit of *Pytkon*, the same with *Apollo*, met them, which brought her masters much gain

not be concluded whether he who was a descendant of *Æacus* should conquer the Romans, or the Romans conquer him. Much such another oracle was that which was given out to another, *Ibis*, *redibis nunquam per bella peribis*; where, by placing a comma either before or after *nunquam*, the words have a different sense; and in much such a way did the old serpent impose on our first parents, when he said, Ye shall be as gods, or angels; in which sense the word is sometimes used, knowing good and evil; where it is not certain whether he meant angels of light or darkness; most probably the latter, and that they should be like himself, and the rest of the apostate angels. See more instances of this ambiguous way of speaking, used in these oracles of the Gentiles, in *Paufanias*, l. 8. p. 474. 475.

• Vid. *Ciceron. de Divinatione*, l. 2. p. 1996. Ed. *Gothofred. Porphyri. in Euseb. Prepar. Evangel.* l. 5. c. 16. p. 204, 205. And *Plutarch. de tuis ekklouitwv xprstria.*

Ρ Παις Ἐσθριϑ κελίται μοι, θεοιο μακαριστοι ανασων
 Τοιδο θυμοι περιλιτοι, η̄ αιδη αυδις εκιδαι,
 Αποιοι απιδι οηγω εκ βωμω ημιτερω.

Suidas in voce *Αυγυϑ*, Tom. I. p. 377. Ed. *Kuster*.

• Sa'das in *ibid. Ryckius de Capitol. Roman.* c. 36. p. 427, 428.

• *Charp.* xvi. 16—18.

• *Apollo* was called *Pythius*, from the coming of the people to him, to inquire of him, and consult with him about difficult matters; his oracle is called so for the same reason; και ιεριθι τιο Διλφοιο ματιτοι τη Απολλωνη, περιανομασαι Πυθιοι, απο τω διεθ τωιο αυθρωπωιο ερχομιοιο πυθαυιδαι τα καθ' ιαυτοι. *Phurnutus de natura Deorum*, p. 94. Vid. *Schol. Aristoph. Phit.* p. 6. Ed. *Genev.* This is rejected by *Macrobius, Saturnal.* l. 1. c. 17. He is rather called so from the Hebrew word

gain by footeſaying; to which ſpirit Paul turned and ſaid, *I command thee, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, to come out of her; and he came out of her the ſame hour.* The old ſerpent not being able to ſtand before the ſeed of the woman, Chriſt Jeſus, in the miniſtry of his apoſtles.

The power of Satan over the bodies of men in the land of *Judea*, was very conſiderable about the time of Chriſt's being upon earth: It was a ſtrange and uncommon diſpenſation; doubtleſs, thoſe frequent and numerous poſſeſſions by devils were ſuffered, that the Son of God might have an opportunity of giving full proof both of his Deity and Meſſiahſhip. It is certain, that *he went about, and healed all that were poſſeſſed with devils*; they were obliged to quit their habitations at his order; he diſpoſſeſſed them wherever he came; they dreaded him, as their tormentor and deſtroyer; he turned out a legion of them at once from one man; the whole poſſe of them was not able to ſtand before him. Since thoſe times, it is remarkable that poſſeſſions of this kind have been very rare; which ſhews that *the ſeed of the woman has bruifed the ſerpent's head, and cruſhed this part of his power.* Chriſt has not only diſpoſſeſſed Satan of the bodies of men by his power, but of the ſouls of many by his goſpel, both among Jews and Gentiles; has delivered them from the power of darkneſs, and tranſlated them into his own kingdom.

The author of the epiſtle to the Hebrews obſerves, that the devil had *the power of death* formerly; this may be aſcribed unto him, becauſe he introduced ſin into the world, which brought in death; he tempts to ſin, and then accuses of it, and terrifies for it with the fears of death; and, in the Old Teſtament-diſpenſation, he was ſometimes employed by the Lord to inflict death upon offenders; he was God's executioner of it, ſo we read of ſome *who murdered and were deſtroyed of the deſtroyer*; the deſtroying angel, *the angel of death*, as the Jews were uſed to call the devil; by reaſon of this multitudes in that day were under a ſervile ſpirit, and, *through fear of death* in this way, *were all their liſetime ſubjeſt to bondage.* But now this power of Satan's is cruſhed, which he

word ὄφεις Pethen, which ſignifies a ſerpent; and Apollo is ſaid to have his name Pythius, from his killing the ſerpent Typhon, or Python, as appears from ſome verſes in Homer.

Τῆς δ' αὐτῆς καλίστου ἰμῖθ' ἄνθ' ἑλισσίο
 Ἐξ ἢ τῆς Πιθῶ κικλήσκεται· οἱ δὲ ἀνακλῆ
 Πιθῶν κακλήσιν ἰπώνυμοι.

Homer. Hymn. in Apoll. v. 372—374.

Vid. Ovid Metamorph. l. 1. fab. 8. Hygin. fab. 140. Hence the city of Delphos, where was the oracle of Apollo, was called Pytho, Pausan. l. 10. p. 619. The ſhe prophet that ſat on the golden Tripod, and delivered out the oracles, Pythia; the place of the oracle Pythium; and the feaſts and plays inſtituted to the honour of Apollo, Pythii ludi & feſta Pythia; vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dierum, l. 6. c. 2.

¹ 1 Cor. x. 10.

had either by usurpation or permission; the serpent's head is bruised; Christ the seed of the woman, has took into his own hands *the keys of bell and death*.

I take no notice of Satan's being called, *the prince of the power of the air*^a, because that does not refer to any power he has, or ever had, over the air in raising of winds, and the like; but of his dominion and government over the rest of the devils, who have their dwelling in the territories of the air, until they receive their final doom.

Once more: As the head is the seat of wisdom, by the serpent's head, and the bruising of it, may be meant his cunning and crafty schemes, all which have been, or shall be baffled and confounded by Christ, the seed of the woman. He once formed a scheme to ruin all mankind, which was drawn with so much cunning, and managed with so much craft and subtilty, that it succeeded so far, as that he thought all was sure; when, on a sudden, it was declared, that a Saviour was provided, who, in due time, was sent into the world, and saved his people from sin, law, hell, and death. He forms another scheme to take away the life of Christ: This was so craftily laid as to succeed; but then, through the death of him, Satan, who had the power of death, is destroyed. When the gospel was carried into the Gentile world, he opposed it with all the cunning he was master of: He stirred up the greatest wits of the age against it, but all in vain; *for it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*; and though the apostles preached *Christ crucified, to the Jews, a stumbling-block*; and *to the Greeks, foolishness*; but unto them which are called, both *Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God*; and maugre all the opposition made against their doctrines, *the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God, in the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations*; and *every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*. Satan is still framing many devices and stratagems against the saints, and makes use of many artful wiles and methods to ensnare their souls, distress their minds, and disturb their peace; he lays many snares and temptations in their way; but Christ, the seed of the woman, as he has both an ability and a heart to *succour them that are tempted*, so he will never suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape; and, in a little time, as he has bruised the serpent's head under himself, so he will bruise it under the feet of his saints; they shall never more be hurt or harrassed by that enemy of their souls.

In a word, the whole empire of Satan is crushed by the Messiah; he is no more the god of this world, as he was before the Messiah's coming; the prince of this world is judged, condemned, and cast out, and will still have less power than he now has, when *the Lord shall be King over all the earth, and his name one*; which

^a Ephes. ii. 2.

which will be when the Jews are converted, and *the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in.*

There is but one thing more to be taken notice of, and that is the bruising of the Messiah's *heel* by the serpent, which is the other part of the event, following the enmity, hatred, and war, between the devil and the seed of the woman. Some think, by the Messiah's *heel*, is meant hypocrites, who profess to be members of Christ's body, and are not, whom Satan gets an advantage over, draws with his tail, and casts down to the earth; but the heel of Christ, though it is the lowest part of his body, yet it is a part of it, which hypocrites are not. Others think, that the people of Christ, his members on earth, are designed, who are exposed to persecutions, raised by Satan and his emissaries, against whom they kick, and sometimes bruise. But, perhaps, some *slight trouble*, which Christ himself met with from Satan, may be intended; such as his temptations in the wilderness, where he *fasted forty days and forty nights*, from whence he was carried by the devil into the holy city, and set upon a pinnacle of the temple, and from thence to an exceeding high mountain; or his agony in the garden, his conflict with the prince of darkness there, when *his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground*, and his soul was *exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*; or rather by the *heel* of Christ may be meant his human nature, which, as his divine nature is the *head* and chief in him, this is the *heel*, the inferior and lowest nature in him, and what was frequently exposed to Satan's insults, temptations, and persecutions, and which he much struck at; and so far prevailed, as to bring him to a shameful and an accursed death; *the iniquity of his heels*, the sins of his people, which *he bore in his own body on the tree*, then *compassing him about*; but though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God; and though he was put to death in the flesh, yet was quickened in the Spirit, whereby he got an entire victory over Satan, and became *the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.*

From the whole of this passage we may learn, that the Messiah was to be God and man, to suffer, die, and rise again, and so become the Saviour of his people: If he had not been man, he would not have had a *heel* to be bruised; and if he had not been God, he could not have bruised the head of the serpent: His *sufferings* are fitly expressed by *the bruising of his heel*; his resurrection from the dead, after which *he ascended on high, and led captivity captive*, by his bruising the serpent's head; and, from the whole, it appears that he is *able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* I have done; I conclude my subject.

It may now be expected that I should say something concerning the deceased, whose death has occasioned this discourse. I understand she was averse to great and long encomiums; and, for my own part, I ever had a disinclination to them: However, what I shall say in this way upon the testimony of those that knew her, I believe, is just, and to be depended on. It pleased God to call her, by his grace, very early, and to engage her heart betimes to give up herself, not only to the Lord, but to a church of Christ, by the will of God, to walk with his people in all the ordinances of the gospel; and as it was through the preaching of the doctrines of grace that she was at first wrought upon, so she ever retained a value for them, and an esteem of them. God, in his providence, indulged her with a plenty of worldly substance; but this fulness was without forgetfulness of her God, or pride and haughtiness towards her fellow-creatures. As she was of an easy temper and disposition, and in easy circumstances of life, so the former was without indolence, and the latter not without industry. She had firmness and resolution of mind, both in the affairs of religion, and in the things of life, but without obstinacy and stubbornness. She was constant and zealous in the exercise of religious duties, but without dependence on them, or ostentation in them. In her last hours, this passage of scripture I have been discoursing from, and indeed the whole chapter, were very refreshing to her, when, as she said, the adversary was very busy; but Christ, the seed of the woman, who has bruised the serpent's head, appeared to her relief, and graciously assured her, that he that comes to him, *he will in no wise cast out*; and that he had *loved her with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness had drawn her to himself*; from whence there is reason to conclude a comfortable and well-grounded hope of her everlasting salvation and happiness; wherefore it becomes her relatives and friends, not to *sorrow as others, which have no hope*; for *if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*.

S E R M O N XXIV.

Occasioned by the Death of ELIZABETH GILL, Preached June 4, 1738.
To which is added, An Account of some of her Choice Experiences.

I T H E S S. IV. 13, 14.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.

I NEED not tell you what is the occasion of my reading these words to you at this time. This is done not so much on your account as on my own. You must permit me, this afternoon, to preach rather to myself and family than to you; though I hope what may be delivered may be of some service among you also. The apostle in this chapter exhorts the Thessalonians to a diligent discharge of several duties of religion, which became their character and profession; whereby they would be serviceable to one another, please God, and adorn the doctrine of Christ Jesus. He signifies, that they needed not to be wrote unto concerning *brotherly love*, because they were *taught of God to love one another*; but it seems, it was necessary, that they should be put in mind of some principal doctrines of christianity; such as concern the state of the pious dead; the resurrection of the just; the second coming of Christ; and the everlasting glory and happiness of the saints with him; in order to alleviate their grief, mitigate their sorrow, and support their spirits, under the loss of their dear friends, or near relations. It is not to be supposed, that they were entirely ignorant of these truths; but they were much out of sight, were not taken notice of and improved by them, as they should have been on such an occasion. So hard a thing is it for us to keep the doctrines of the gospel always in view; and harder still to make use of them, and live up to them, when we most want them. What can have a greater tendency to moderate our trouble, which naturally arises from the departure of our dearest friends, than to consider, that they are laid down to rest for a while; that they are asleep, and asleep in the arms of Jesus; that they will awake in the morning of the resurrection fresh
and

and cheerful; that Christ will bring them with him at his second coming, when we shall meet together again, and never part more, but *shall be for ever with the Lord*? With such words or doctrines as these, the apostle would have the persons he writes to, comfort one another under their present sorrowful circumstances. With this view he delivers what he does in the words before us, and in some following verses; and in order to pursue the same design, let us attend to,

- I. The representation the apostle gives of the state and condition of the pious dead, that they are *asleep*; and *asleep in Jesus*.
- II. The knowledge that living saints may have, and the notice they should take, of this their state and condition; *I would not have you to be ignorant*, &c.
- III. The nature, rule and measure, of that sorrow, which is to be expressed on the account of departed saints; *that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope*.
- IV. The comfortable assurance believers may, and should have, of the resurrection of the just, from the death and resurrection of Christ, which may serve as a proper allay of their grief and sorrow; *for if we believe*, &c.

I. It is worth our while to consider, and in our meditations a little to dwell upon the representation here given, of the state and condition of the pious dead; of those that die in Christ. As,

1. That they are *asleep*. It was in common use among the eastern nations, particularly the Hebrews, Chaldeans, and Syrians, when they spoke of their dead, to say, they were *asleep*. We have many instances of this way of speaking both in the Old and New Testament; frequently we read of such an one^a, as *David, Solomon*, &c. that he *slept with his fathers, and was buried*; that is, he died as they did, and was interred among them. This phrase is indeed sometimes promiscuously used of good and bad; as, when it is said, *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt*^b; but most commonly it is applied to good men; *Our friend Lazarus*, says Christ, *sleepeth, but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep*^c; that is, he is dead, and I go to raise him from the dead: So Christ is said to be *the first-fruits of them that slept*^d, not of all mankind, but of them to whom he is an head, who are members of his body, and die in him.

Now,

^a 1 Kings ii. 10. and xi. 43.

^b Dan. xii. 2.

^c John xi. 11.

^d 1 Cor. xv. 20.

Now, when the dead are said to be *asleep*, this is not to be understood of their souls, but of their bodies only. Some have given into this stupid and uncomfortable notion, that when the body dies, the soul falls into a deep sleep, and continues in a state of insensibility and inactivity until the resurrection; but the soul being immaterial is incapable of sleep, that only belongs to bodies; and it is easy to observe, that when the body is asleep the soul is awake, as appears from dreams and visions of the night; and when the body lies as it were dead, as in extasies and raptures, the soul is active; yea, the soul being freed from the body must be more active in spiritual services, than when in it, that being often an hindrance to it in the present state of things. Besides, when it is separate from the body it is most like to the angels, who *rest not day and night, saying Holy, holy, holy Lord God almighty*. Add to this, that if the souls of believers after death were to remain in a state of insensibility and inactivity, the case of departed saints would be much worse than that of the living; nor would the apostle *Paul* have been in a *strait between two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ*, had he known he must have remained in such a state; for it would have been better for him, and for the churches of Christ, to have continued on earth till the resurrection, than for his soul to be sleeping, senseless, and unactive: no, the souls of believers, as soon as separated from their bodies, enter into paradise, return to God, are with Christ in a state of happiness and joy, and are employed in praising the Lord, and singing the Lamb's new song. Were those passages of scripture which speak of the saints *sleeping* in death, to be understood of their souls, they would prove more than what is contended for; namely, that their souls die, since by *sleep* in all such places is meant no other than *death*. But these are to be understood of their bodies, which only are capable of it*.

Death is signified by *sleeping*, because there is a great resemblance between them. Sleep is a lively representation of death; an Heathen could take notice of this, and say, "O! foolish man, what is sleep but the image of cold death?" As in sleep, so in death, there is no exercise of the senses; one fast asleep can neither see, nor hear, nor feel, &c. Death also closes the eyes, stops the ears, deprives the body of feeling, and is an entire cessation of the senses, and all the operations that depend upon them. Hence the wise man gives this advice to such as are in life and health, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest*†. In both, persons are at rest; sleep is taken in order for rest, and rest is often taken in sleep. The grave is also a resting-place for the

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faints;

* See these arguments more largely insisted on, and improved in my second sermon on the resurrection, published in the Lime-street sermons, vol. II. p. 442, &c.

† *Stulte, quid est somnus gelidæ nisi mortis imago?* Ovid.

‡ *Eccles. ix. 10.*

faints; *There the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest*^h; that is, from the troublings of the wicked, whether wicked men or devils, or a wicked heart: They hear no more the cry of violence, nor feel any more the hand of the oppressor; wherefore *Solomon* says, *I praised the dead*, or, as the Chaldee paraphrast renders the phrase, *I praised those that lie down to sleep, which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive*¹. Death cures them at once of all the distempers and diseases of their bodies, and sets them free from all their pains and agonies: They that die in the Lord, or sleep in *Jesus*, rest from their labours and fatigues both of body and mind, and their works do follow them. Moreover, such as are asleep, they do not sleep always, they awake again out of sleep: So they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; particularly, those that sleep in *Jesus*, when he shall call unto them, they shall hear his voice, saying, *Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust*; they shall then rise immediately with the utmost pleasure, in perfect conformity to the image of *Christ*; which will be their great satisfaction; as the Psalmist says, *As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness*^k. Again, as the sleep of a labouring man is sweet to him, it refreshes nature, revives his spirits, and restores his strength; he lies down in the evening fatigued and weary, he rises in the morning brisk and chearful, and fit for business: So the faints at the resurrection will awake out of their sleep to great advantage; the body, which is sown in corruption, will be raised in incorruption; which is sown in dishonour, will be raised in glory; which is sown in weakness, will be raised in power; and, which is sown a natural body, will be raised a spiritual one, and so fit for spiritual employment and service. Add to all this, that both sleep and death are common to all men. Sleep is necessary for man, what he cannot do without, and is a blessing of nature that all more or less enjoy. Death is become necessary for all; the grave is the house appointed for all living. It is the decree of heaven, that man should once die, or pass under a change that is equivalent to death; for though we shall not all sleep, that is, die, yet we shall all be changed: And though death is the wages of sin, and so is a curse of the law entailed upon mankind, yet to them that die in the Lord it is a blessing; the curse is removed from their death, the sting is taken out of it by *Christ*; so he gives his beloved sleep, in a different manner from the rest of men. For,

2. The pious dead are not only asleep, but asleep in *Jesus*. Some¹ join the phrase *in or by Jesus* with the word *bring*, and read the sentence thus, *them that sleep, by Jesus will God bring with him*; intimating, that God will raise up the dead bodies of the faints by *Christ*, as *God-Man* and *Mediator*; for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; and that through him

^h Job iii. 17.

¹ ית שכיב ית Eccles. iv. 2.

^k Psalm xvii. 15.

¹ Græc. Schol. in Zanch. in loc.

he will bring them to eternal glory, and save them by him, the Lord their God, alone; by whom he resolved, determined, and appointed from all eternity, to save them. Others read the words, *them that sleep for or through Jesus*^m; that is, who die for the sake of Christ, and so restrain them to the martyrs of Jesus; who, they suppose, only will have part in the first resurrection, and are *the dead in Christ that shall rise first*, and whom God will bring along with Jesus at his second coming: But it should be observed, that the apostle in this epistle speaks of *the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints*ⁿ; they shall all come with him, not only the martyrs, but all the rest; wherefore I think the words are best rendered, as they are by our translators, *them that sleep in Jesus*; and it is the apostle's language elsewhere, *then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished*^o, and to be understood of all that die in the Lord, that is, who are interested in him; for we are not to limit such expressions to those who die in faith, in the lively exercise of faith on Christ. Many indeed have died in this comfortable manner, which has made their death easy to themselves, and delightful to their friends. So David died, as his last words testify; *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure*^p. So good old Simeon died in the arms of Jesus; I was just ready to say, with Jesus in his arms, expressing himself thus; *Lord, now leavest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation*^q. Thus died the great apostle of the Gentiles, who, as he could say in life, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day*^r; so when the time of his departure was at hand, with the greatest cheerfulness, and with full assurance of faith declared, saying, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day*^s. But this is not always the case of God's people; some of them are in the dark in their last moments, and go from hence under a cloud, and yet go safe, and may be said to *die or sleep in Jesus*, interested in him, and in union with him, which this phrase *in Jesus* is expressive of.

Union to Christ may be considered either as secret or open. God's elect had a secret union to Christ from all eternity, for they were *chosen in him before the foundation of the world*; and were as early *blessed in him* with all spiritual blessings; grace was given to them *in him* before the world began; and on account of this union were *preserved in him* in time, notwithstanding the fall of Adam; were represented in him, and by him, when he was crucified and slain, when

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^m Aretius, Hammond, &c. in loc.ⁿ Chap. iii. 13.^o 1 Cor. xv. 18.^p 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.^q Luke ii. 29, 30.^r 2 Tim. i. 12.^s 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

he was buried in the grave and rose again; hence they are said to be *raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*¹. Now this secret union to Christ becomes open and manifest in conversion; *I knew a man in Christ, says the apostle, above fourteen years ago*², meaning himself, who was converted so many years before the time of his then writing. In this sense are we to understand those words of the same apostle, where he says, that *Andronicus and Junia were in Christ before him*³; which cannot be said of their election in Christ, and federal relation to him, which commenced together. With respect to these things, one person cannot be said to be *in Christ* before another; but one man may be converted before another, and so *appear* to be in Christ before the other does, which is what the apostle means. Now this union is not dissolved by death; such as are once in Christ, are always so; they that are in him while living, are in him when they die; and will be *found in him* in the resurrection-morn, and day of judgment. Those whom Christ betroths to himself, takes into a near conjugal union and relation to himself, he betroths *for ever*. Love is the bond of this union, and there is nothing either in life or death that can unloose it. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that has loved us; for, adds the apostle, I am persuaded, that neither death nor life—shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*⁴. The bodies as well as the souls of the saints are united to Christ, and remain in union to him, even when they are asleep or dead; for though death dissolves the union between soul and body, it does not dissolve the union between the body and Christ; our *bodies are the members of Christ*, and continue to be so in the grave, as elsewhere; hence whilst there, they are at rest, and in the greatest safety, being under the inspection, care, and guardianship of Christ; to whom Jehovah, the Father, has declared it as his will, that *of all which he hath given him he should lose nothing, no not any of their dust, but should raise it up again at the last day*; and by virtue of this union will the pious dead be raised. Christ is *the first-fruits* of them, which represents, sanctifies, and ensures the whole lump: Because *he lives*, who was dead, *they* who are dead and sleep in him *shall live also*. This is what the apostle strongly argues in the words of our text, *If we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, then we should believe also, that them that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him*; for if the head is risen, the members shall be raised also. But let us proceed,

II. To consider the knowledge that living saints may have, and the notice that they should take, of the state and condition of them that are asleep in Jesus: *I would not have you to be ignorant concerning them that are asleep*. And,

1. We

¹ Ephes. ii. 6.

² 2 Cor. xii. 2.

³ Rom. xvi. 7.

⁴ Rom. viii. 35, 37—39.

1. We may be assured that they *are*, that they are in *being*, that they do *exist*; for, though they are gone from us, they are somewhere else. We are not to consider them as non-entities, as annihilated, as reduced to nothing, because they are departed from us. It is said indeed of *Rachel*, that she was *sweeping for her children*, and *refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not*^v; that is, they were not with her, they were not on earth, in the land of the living; but then it follows not, that they were not any where else. It is observed of *Enoch*, that *he was not*; that is, he was not on earth, conversing among men as before; he was in heaven with God, *for God took him*. Thus, though the places of our dear friends and relations, who die in the Lord, *know them no more*; though their families and acquaintance know them no more after the flesh, yet they are still in being; their souls are immortal and never die; and as soon as their bodies die, their souls return to God that gave them: as soon as these are separated from their bodies, as swift as angels can bear them away, they are carried by them *into Abraham's bosom*; they are lodged in the embraces of Christ, and continue with him in the heavenly paradise, till the last trumpet sounds, and the dead arise. Nor are their bodies, which are laid in grave, crumbled into nothing; they return indeed to the dust, but there is a wide difference between *returning to the dust*, and being reduced to *nothing*. These earthly tabernacles indeed are unpinned and taken down, and their several parts separated from each other; but then they are not utterly destroyed; and they will be put together again in a better frame and order than ever they were before; and so become fit and everlasting habitations for their souls to dwell in. The bodies of the saints are the purchase of Christ's blood, are members of his body, and the temples of the holy Ghost, and therefore can never be brought to nothing. Christ will not lose his purchase, nor any part of his fulness; nor will the Spirit of God lose his dwelling-place.

2. We should consider, and bear in mind, not only that they *are*, but that they are *asleep*, yea, *asleep in Jesus*, and so at rest and in safety. Such a view of the state of the dead serves to render death very easy and familiar to us; and to take off the horror, and those frightful apprehensions which are often entertained concerning it; for the death of a believer is but like a man's lying down on his bed at evening, where he takes a comfortable nap till the morning light, when he rises refreshed and satisfied. In this light *Job* represents it to himself and others, *Man*, says he, *lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more*^z; which general case of man he particularly applies to himself, and explains what he means by such expressions, saying, *If a man die, shall he live again? Yes, he shall live again; wherefore, says he, all the days of my appointed time, that is, in the grave, will I wait, with patience, until my change comes, at the*
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^v Jer. xxx. 15.^z Job xiv. 12, 14, 15.

time of the glorious resurrection; when *thou shalt call*, as one man may call up another in the morning to rise out of his bed, and attend his business, *and I will answer thee*; I shall awake at thy call; I shall rise at thy word of command, when I shall hear thee say, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment;" *for thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands*, to see it raised and restored to a more glorious form than it now exists in: Hence he could say *to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister: And where is now my hope? As for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust*^a. This consideration of the state of the dead, as of persons asleep, and at rest, serves also to moderate our grief and sorrow for the loss of any of our friends. Very pertinently may those words be applied to our present case, which our Lord spoke to the parents of the maid he raised from the dead, and others with them; *why make ye this ado and weep? THE DAMSEL IS NOT DEAD, BUT SLEEPETH*^b. What master of a family can be uneasy at finding his family, his wife, his children, his servants, in a sound fast sleep at midnight? May he not expect they will rise in the morning well and healthful, and ready to go about any service that may be proper for them. Sound sleep supposes healthfulness; and in case of illness and indisposition it promises a deliverance from it; as the disciples observed concerning *Lazarus*, when Christ said, *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; Lord, say they, if he sleep he shall do well*^c. The saints who are fallen asleep must needs do well; they cannot do otherwise than well, who not only sleep, but *sleep in Jesus*. Should it be asked, How shall we know that our friends died in Christ, or sleep in Jesus? It may be replied, Did they live in Christ? Did they live to him? If so, they died in him, and died to him; *for none of us, that is, of the saints, liveth to himself; and no man, of that sort, dieth to himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord*. So that from hence it may be strongly concluded, that, *whether we live or die, we are the Lord's*^d. Since therefore *our life*, and that of our friends, *is bid with Christ in God*; though we shall die, and they are fallen asleep in Jesus, yet, *when Christ who is our and their life, shall appear, we and they shall appear with him in glory*^e.

3. It may be known, and should be considered, that the pious dead, though they are at present asleep, they will not sleep always, they will awake again, they will rise from the dead. Nothing is more certain, than that there will be *a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust*; and as for the *dead in Christ*, they will *rise first*; they will have the start of the wicked dead by the space of a thousand years. The resurrection-day is the day of the Lord; and *one day*

with

^a Chap. xvii. 14—16.

^b Mark v. 39.

^c John xi. 12.

^d Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

^e Col. iii. 3, 4.

with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day^f. The saints will rise at the beginning of this day, in the morning of it, as soon as ever the sun of righteousness is risen, or Christ is come; but the rest of the dead^g, the wicked dead, shall not live again till the thousand years are finished; they will not rise till the evening of this day, towards the expiration of it; like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them, and retain them under his power all this long day; and the upright, the righteous ones, who are found in Christ and his righteousness, shall have the dominion over them in the morning^h. Happy then are they that are the Lord's, that die in him, they will share all the glories and advantages of the resurrection to eternal life: *blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests to God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.* The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, as it serves to support the people of God under present afflictions, and when in the view of death and eternity; as it did Job, who could say, *though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me;* so it tends to assuage that grief and trouble which attend the removal of our friends from us; and for that reason should be observed and considered by us.

4. We may assure ourselves, that the saints, while their bodies are sleeping in Jesus, and before they awake in the resurrection-morn, in the mean while, during this interval, their souls are in a state of happiness: they are mixed with the spirits of just men made perfect; they are attended with, and surrounded by an innumerable company of angels; they are in the presence of, and enjoy uninterrupted communion with God, Father, Son, and Spirit; in whose presence is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore: they are blessed with the vision of God, are employed in singing the hallelujahs of the lamb, enjoy the society of glorified spirits, and are in perfect peace and rest. If it should be said, how shall we know that this is the case of our departed friends? Could we be satisfied of this, we should sit easy under the loss of them; let this single question be put, is there any reason to believe the grace of God was bestowed upon them? If this is a clear point, the other is out of all doubt; for nothing is more certain than this, that to whom God gives grace he also gives glory. We may be assured of the happiness of our friends in the other world, from their having tasted that the Lord was gracious to them in this. Vocation, justification and glorification, are inseparably connected together; *whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorifiedⁱ.*

5. Add

^f 2 Pet. iii. 8.

^g Rev. xx. 5, 6.

^h Psalm xlix. 14.

ⁱ Job xix. 26, 27.

^k Rom. viii. 30.

5. Add to all these considerations one more, that in a little time we shall meet together again, and never part. Our friends are gone but a little before us; we are hastening after them as fast as the wings of time can carry us. The conduct of *David* is worthy of our imitation; *While the child was yet alive*, says he, *I fasted and wept; for I said, who can tell, whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me*¹. Or should the coming of the Lord prevent our going to them, for, who knows how soon he may come? He will bring all his saints with him, and we shall have a glorious meeting with them. *Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be together with the Lord*; wherefore we should comfort one another with these words. And seeing we cannot be wholly ignorant concerning them that are asleep; yea, we may assure ourselves of their happy state and condition; let us dry up our tears, and cease sorrowing, especially in any immoderate way, and what is unbecoming our christian character. Which brings me,

III. To inquire into the nature, rule, and measure, of that sorrow, which is to be expressed on the account of the decease of our friends and relatives; *That ye sorrow not*, says the apostle, *even as others which have no hope*. All sorrow for them is not denied and condemned; only such as was used by others, *οι λοιποι*, "the rest," who were no christians, but unconverted Gentiles. The apostle's view is not to encourage and establish a stoical apathy, a stupid indolence, and brutal insensibility; all which are contrary to the make of human nature, and to the practice of the saints, and even of Christ and his apostles. *Abraham* came to mourn for *Sarah*, and to weep for her; *Joseph* made a mourning for his father seven days; the children of *Israel* wept for *Moses* in the plains of *Moab* thirty days; *David* lamented the death of *Saul*, *Jonathian*, and *Abner*; Christ wept over the grave of *Lazarus*; devout men that carried *Stephen* to his burial made great lamentation over him; and our apostle, who gives the instructions in our text, signifies concerning his friend *Epaphroditus*, who was sick nigh unto death; that if the Lord had not had mercy on him he should have had sorrow upon sorrow: But excessive, immoderate sorrow, and all the extravagant forms of it the Gentiles ran into, are here forbidden. The Jews were not allowed to mourn for their dead after the manner of the Heathens; it was a standing law in *Israel*, *Ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead*^m; practices, it seems, which were used among the nations of the world: Though these people, as they were always prone to imitate the Gentiles, so they did in their forms of mourning for the dead; for as the Ro-

man.

¹ 2 Sam. xii. 22, 23.^m Deut. xiv. 1.

mans had their *Præfæ*, and the Grecians their *μαρτυρία*, so they had their מנות "mourning women;" see *Jer.* ix. 17. who by their dishevelled hair, naked breasts, and mournful voice, moved upon the affections, produced tears from others, and set them mourning and sorrowing: Such methods as these the apostle would not have christians give into, and especially such as carried in them rather marks of distraction than of affection; such as covering themselves with mud, dirt, and filth, tearing of their mouths and cheeks, smiting their heads, breasts, and thighs; which kinds of mourning were condemned by the wiser sort of the Heathens themselves; particularly by *Cicero**, who pronounces them *detestable*; of this sort was the mourning of *Alexander* for his friend *Hephestion*, who, when he died, cast his armour, gold, silver, and precious garments, into the fire with him; shaved his soldiers, and pulled down the tower and walls of the city of *Ecbatana*, where he was; upon which the Heathen historian himself observes°, that he *ἐπινοῖ βαρβαρικῶς*, "mourned in a barbarous way," or after the manner of the Barbarians, the more savage and uncultivated nations of the world; but these were the extravagancies, and furious transports of men that had *no hope*; when their friends died, they looked upon them, as entirely lost, as no longer in being; they had no expectation of seeing, meeting, and enjoying them any more, and this drove them into those madnesses and excesses. They had no notion of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; they were *without hope* of that, they looked upon it as a ridiculous principle, and judged it incredible, and so despaired of ever seeing their friends alive again: But we, who believe the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, should not sorrow as they did, and mourn over our friends as though they were lost, and never to be enjoyed more; this is to act contrary to our character as christians, to the doctrines of christianity, to the gospel of Christ, in which *life and immortality are brought to light*, and set in the clearest view before us. Even *Seneca* the Heathen may shame us out of such a conduct as this; who having some little notion of the immortality of the soul, and its future existence in a separate state, though none of the resurrection of the body, in a consolatory letter to *Lucilius*, on the account of the death of his friend *Flaccus*, thus expresses himself^p; "The thought of deceased friends is sweet and pleasant to me; for I have enjoyed them as one that was about to lose them; and I have lost them as one that may have them again." Had this man known and embraced the christian doctrine of the resurrection, how

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would

* Ex hac opinione sunt illa varia & detestabilia genera lugendi, præore, muliebres lacerationes genarum, pectoris, fœminum, capitis percussiones, Ciceron. Tusculan. Quæst. l. 3. p. mihi, 1845.

° *Ælian*, Var. Hist. l. 7. c. 8.

^p Mihi amicorum defunctorum cogitatio dulcis ac blanda est, habui enim illos tanquam amissurus amissum habeam. *Senec.* Ep. 63.

would he have improved it to the consolation of himself and friends on such an occasion as ours? Let us not sorrow then as such who are without any knowledge of this doctrine, and hope of this blessing. This I take to be the sense of the apostle, who is not to be understood of other christians who had no hope of the spiritual and eternal welfare of their deceased friends; not but that the sorrow of those who have a good hope of the future well-being of their dear relations, must, and ought to be greatly different from that of others who have no hope at all. But the apostle is speaking of other Gentiles, who were *without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*². I go on,

IV. To observe, the comfortable assurance that believers may, and should have, that the souls of their pious friends will be brought along with Christ; and that their bodies will be raised from the dead at his second coming; in which they may be confirmed by his death, and resurrection from the dead. We may hope, and should believe, that *them that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him*; that is, either Jehovah the Father will bring them with his Son, or Jehovah the Son will bring them with himself; for *the Lord our God shall come, and all the saints with him*³. When Christ shall move from the third heaven, where he now is in his glorified body, all the blessed spirits of men made perfect shall attend him; when he shall descend into the region of the air, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, the dead bodies of the saints that sleep in him shall awake and rise out of their dusty beds, and be re-united with their souls; when they shall proceed with Christ, at the close of that day, to the judgment of the world: For not only the twelve apostles shall be seated on twelve thrones, to judge the twelve tribes of *Israel*; and all the holy martyrs shall have thrones set for them, and judgment shall be given them; but even all the saints shall be some way or other concerned in that awful work: *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world*⁴? And when Christ has presented all his elect ones to himself as *a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*, and has taken a full view of them, he will take them up with him into the third heaven; he will introduce them into his father's house, and fix them eternally in those mansions which he has prepared for them; when he will see and enjoy with satisfaction the whole fruit of his labour, blood, and purchase, and have all his prayers and intercessions effectually answered; which have been made in such form as this, *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory*⁵. Now of all this the death and resurrection of Christ are a pledge and confirmation; for if we believe that

² Ephes. ii. 12.

³ Zech. xiv. 5.

⁴ 1 Cor. vi. 2.

⁵ John xvii. 24.

that Christ died and rose again, which are things beyond all doubt and question; these are the principal articles of the christian faith, that Christ was *delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*; then we ought to believe, that Christ will bring the saints with him, for whom he died, and raise up their dead bodies to everlasting life. He himself is risen from the dead, and has *the keys of hell and death*; he can and will unlock the graves of his people, and set them free; he is *the resurrection and the life*; he is both the efficient and meritorious cause of the resurrection of the just: He is the first-born from the dead, and the first-fruits of them that sleep in him. His resurrection is a pledge and earnest of the saints resurrection. As sure as his dead body is raised, so sure shall theirs be raised also, and be *fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself*". Since therefore, from Christ's resurrection, we may strongly conclude the resurrection of the saints; then we ought not to sorrow as those who are without hope of it, and may firmly believe, that those of our dear friends, of whom we have good hope through grace, that they have had an experience of the grace of God, that these sleep in Jesus, and shall be brought with him, and shall come forth to the resurrection of life. And, blessed be God, this is the case before us, which has been the occasion of this discourse; we have not only hope, but faith, even full assurance of faith, as to the truth of the work of grace upon the soul of our dear child. My affections will not permit me to give you an account of the ground and reason of this hope, this faith, this confidence; perhaps I may communicate it to you in another way. I find I must break off at once. Consider what has been said, and the Lord give us understanding.

▪ Phil. iii. 21.

An ACCOUNT of some Choice Experiences of ELIZABETH GILL,
 who departed this Life *May 30, 1738*, having entered the
 Thirteenth Year of her Age.

ELIZABETH GILL, daughter of JOHN and ELIZABETH GILL, was born *March 14, 1725-6*. She appeared from her infancy to be a child of a sweet disposition; of great solidity and thoughtfulness; of a quick understanding, and retentive memory. She was much reserved, and greatly delighted in retirement and solitude; was not addicted to play as children usually are, and if at any time she amused herself with the innocent diversions of her age, it was not in company with the rude and vain, but with the more sober and civilized sort of children.

As she grew up, she took much delight in reading good books; such as, BUNYAN'S *Pilgrims Progress*, JANEWAY'S *Token for Children*, and others of the like kind; and would observe the difference there was between some children and others; how, that some as soon as they began to speak, and before they could speak plain, learned bad words, and took the name of God in vain; when others were religiously inclined, and thoughtful about a future state; of which number she earnestly desired to be. She took great notice in hearing the word, and would afterwards repeat many things to her mother. She was a diligent observer of what passed in christian conversation; and among other things remarked, that the conversion of the people of God was sometimes occasioned by dreams, which put them on close thinking about the welfare of their immortal souls. This made her greatly desire, that the like might be the means of her conversion: Accordingly, some time after she dreamed, and in her dream had a view both of heaven and hell; the smoke of the latter came out in a most dreadful manner, and greatly terrified her; when she spied, as she thought, her schoolmistress, a gracious good woman, in heaven, having some reviving drops in her bosom; thither she wanted to get, and at length did get to her; where she thought herself in a most glorious place, and happy condition. Some time after she dreamed again, that a man on horseback appeared to her in a most terrible manner, threatening to kill her; at which she thought she was not at all daunted, but quietly and cheerfully submitted to the stroke of death; when, on a sudden, she found herself in a most delightful place, where were abundance

of people walking to and fro; but she observed that they took no notice of one another, nor said any thing to each other. When she awaked, she wished herself again in that pleasant place. This was about two years ago. Now, though she had had many thoughts before about a future state, after this she began to think more closely of it. This put her upon seeking and praying to God, that he would, as she expressed herself, *give her grace*; to which she was encouraged by those words, *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you*².

It pleased God now to show her her vileness, sinfulness, and unworthiness, the wickedness of her heart and nature; for notwithstanding all her solidity and sobriety, which seemed to be as it were natural to her, she thought herself one of the *wickedest creatures* upon earth. When she heard that her schoolmistress beforementioned should say of her, "Surely that child was sanctified from the womb;" she thought within herself, "Am I, Oh! she does not know how bad I am; what a wicked heart I have."

A remarkable instance of her sense of sin, and the tenderness of her conscience, as well as of God's sealing his pardoning grace to her soul, is what follows; at a certain time her brother standing in her way, she bid him remove; instead of doing which, he smiled at her, and gave her no answer; upon that she says to him, "The boy stands like a fool." But, O! What work did that word *fool* make in her poor conscience: She had no rest night nor day, for some time after; until it pleased God to apply to her, whilst she was crying alone by herself, those words, *I will pardon thine iniquity, and will remember thy sins no more*³; which calmed her conscience, and quieted her mind.

Her desires after Christ, and an interest in him, grew very strong; she found in her soul a very great affection for him; she would sometimes say within herself, "I love him; methinks, I could hug him in my arms." She thought it was a hard thing to come to Christ. But she sometimes hoped she had an interest in him, though she durst not say she had, for fears attended her. But on her death-bed, discoursing with her father about divine things, she dropped those appropriating words, *Christ died for me*; which being observed by him, he said to her, "My dear, can you say, *Christ died for you?*" Yes, said she, "*Christ died for me.*" Nay, one time she said, she thought she even saw Christ; when those words were made of wonderful use to her, *for yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry*⁴.

She had many sweet words of scripture brought home to her soul, which yielded her much spiritual refreshment. Among the rest, that portion of scripture, *I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness*⁵, was made very useful to her in a time of great distress;

² Matt. vii. 7.³ Jer. xxxi. 34.⁴ Heb. x. 37.⁵ Isaiah xli. 10.

distress; for being in great indisposition of body, and knowing what was coming upon her, and what she must go through, was much discouraged; but those words being set home upon her heart, she was much encouraged, cheerfully went through what she so much feared, and felt but little pain.

Sometimes she would be afraid, that the passages of scriptures which came to her mind did not come in a right way, and from the Spirit of God; but were what she had heard or read, and so thought of them again. She would listen with great attention and pleasure to the people of God, when discoursing about their experience of the grace of God; and would oftentimes observe to herself, that her case and theirs was alike, and that she felt and experienced the same things as they did; which gave her great satisfaction.

She had a great desire after, and a wonderful esteem of the grace of humility, both in things temporal and spiritual. She admired it in others, and wished for it in herself. She desired not to have a proud look, or carriage, or to behave herself proudly, in any respect. She thought within herself, that should she live to be a woman, and God should bless her with any thing of this world, she should chuse to go neat and clean, but would not spend her money in fine cloaths; but what she could spare would give to good people that were poor. And as to things spiritual, she was always fearful, lest any pride or vanity should appear in her: Hence she was shy of speaking of what God had done for her, lest it should seem, or be thought to arise from pride, and so be a matter of boasting. Hence she studiously affected to retire into corners, to read good books, and to desire of God to give her his grace. Frequently her bed, and time of sleep and rest, were the place and time of her serious and deepest meditations; for then, to use her own words, she could privately *speak to herself*. And God did clothe her with humility, and gave her the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in his sight of great price: And to the last she entertained a mean and low opinion of herself. When it was told her, that such an one had prayed for her, and such an one had prayed for her, she would say, "What, think of me! What, pray for me! Such an unworthy creature as I am!"

She expressed a very great veneration and respect for the hearing of the word, and other ordinances of the gospel: When at any time, under hearing the word, she found her heart wandering after, and her thoughts diverted to other things, as she sometimes did, whereby she lost much of what was spoken, it was a grief and trouble to her. And since her illness, how has she longed to enjoy opportunities of hearing the gospel preached, which she hoped to do with more attention and profit. Her father repeating in the family one Lord's day evening the heads of a sermon he had preached that day on *Prov. viii. 34. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my door, it was made*

made of much use to her. *Two* things she particularly observed; the *one* was, the necessity and usefulness of hearing the word, in order to the knowledge of Christ, and faith in him, which was proved from *Rom. x. 14. How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?* And the *other* was, the encouragement given to poor souls to wait upon the ministry of the word, taken from the instance of the poor man's waiting at the pool of *Bethesda*, who had an infirmity thirty-eight years, and at last had a cure.

At a certain time she and her brother having seen the ordinance of baptism administered by their father, they talked together about it; her brother said, he should not care to be baptized; he should be afraid. But, thought she, within herself, if things were but right with me; if I had but a *true knowledge* of things I should not be afraid, I should gladly be baptized. And sometimes she would think with herself, what a delightful thing it would be, should she go to the Lord's supper, and partake of it, with the saints and people of God. When she related this to her father on her death-bed, he being somewhat fearful, lest she should then labour under any discouragements, because she had not been baptized, nor had partook of the Lord's supper, told her, that though these are ordinances of Christ, and ought to be complied with, and submitted to by all that believe in Christ, who are proper subjects of them, and are satisfied of their right to them, as they have health and opportunity, yet salvation does not depend upon them; persons may be saved without them, through the grace of Christ, who have not an opportunity of submitting to them; to which she assented, and seemed very well satisfied.

She was greatly affected with the goodness, grace, and mercy of God, in taking such notice of, and giving his Son for such a sinful, unworthy creature, as she thought herself to be. She expressed much thankfulness for temporal mercies, and took great notice of the common mercies of life. When she rose in a morning she would think with herself, what a mercy it was, that she had been refreshed with rest, and preserved in the night season from fire and other dangers.

Her afflictions, pains and agonies, which were many and great, were borne by her, in her illness, with much patience; though she would sometimes complain, she had not, and was fearful she should not have patience enough. Sometimes she would think of the holy martyrs, and of their sufferings: "O! says she, What did they suffer! How were they burnt for Christ? With what patience did they endure? O! that I had but patience to bear what God is pleased to lay upon me."

Death was no king of terrors to her; she did not seem to have the least fear of it, nor in any respect, or on any account to be intimidated by it. She often expressed

expressed her willingness to die, and her readiness to submit to the will of God; and would observe, that God sometimes makes persons willing to die before they do, which was her case; nor could she see, she said, any thing in this world that was desirable, for which she might wish to live. And if at any time she signified any desire of living, she added, it was only *for her mother's sake*, who she knew would be greatly troubled at her death. Yea, she longed to be gone, and would often pour out her soul, in private ejaculations, to her dear Lord, with whom she desired to be. Her sister once observing her lips to move, as they often would when no voice was heard, said to her, "My dear, did you say any thing?" "No, says she, I was not speaking to you, nor to any body else; I was speaking to my dear Lord." In this frame she continued to the last, as long as she was sensible, and on *Tuesday, May 30th*, sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, aged twelve years, two months, and sixteen days. The dream she had of the man on horseback, was a lively emblem of her death, and the manner of it. Death seems to be represented by him, at whose awful stroke she was not in the least dismayed, but quietly submitted to it; and no doubt finds herself in that delightful place she thought herself to be in then, where God has *given her places to walk among those that stand by*.*

These things, with many others which cannot be perfectly recollected, were related by her, on her death-bed, to her father and mother, with whom only she had freedom of speech about spiritual things.

One thing is very remarkable, that while she was discoursing about these matters, as she sometimes would an hour, or an hour and a half together, she was quite another person; her spirits would revive; a briskness appeared in her countenance; she seemed to have no pain; nor was the least groan or complaint heard from her all the while; nor any appearance of even weariness throughout the whole interval; and would for some time after continue better, and more chearful, though before her agonies were very great: and she would also observe, that when she had pleasant thoughts, as she called them, she felt no pain.

* Zech. iii 7.

S E R M O N XXV.

Occasioned by the Death of Mrs MARY FALL, late Wife of the Reverend
Mr JAMES FALL of *Watford, Herts.* Preached *April 13, 1739.*

ISAIAH XXX. 21.

— *This is the way, walk ye in it* —

THIS part of *Isaiab's* prophecy was delivered by him at a time when *Sennacherib*, king of *Affyria*, had invaded the land of *Judea*, and was about to besiege the city of *Jerusalem*; which struck the inhabitants with great consternation, and put them on contriving different methods for their security. Some of them thought of going down to *Egypt*, or of sending to that nation for assistance, in this their time of extremity: for which they are sharply reproved in the beginning of this chapter: and are told, that *their strength was to sit still*^a, that is, to be quiet and easy, and abide in the city of *Jerusalem*; and not once think of betaking themselves elsewhere; when they might assure themselves of protection and safety: but this message from God, by the prophet, was slighted by them; *For thus saith the Lord God, the holy one of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength, and ye would not*^b. Wherefore they are threatened with swift ruin and destruction. But as the Lord always had a compassionate regard to his dear children, the remnant, according to the election of grace among that people; so he always took care to give out gracious promises for their relief and support in the worst of times. Accordingly it is said in the context; *And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you*^c; he will defer the execution of his judgments; he will not stir up all his wrath; but when the set time is come, he will arise and have mercy on you; *for the Lord is a God of judgment, who can do nothing but what is just and right, and every thing well and wisely; who always acts according to justice, with judgment and wisdom, and also with clemency, goodness and mercy; in which sense the word judgment is sometimes used: as when the prophet says, O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing*^d. And because the Lord is, in this sense, a God of judgment, it is a great encourage-

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agement

^a *Isaiah xxx. 7.*

^b *Ver. 15.*

^c *Ver. 18.*

^d *Jer. x. 24.*

agement to persons to wait for him, and trust in him; *blessed are all they that wait for him*, who place their hope and confidence in him, and not in men; who make use of no illicit methods, nor apply to others for help and assistance in time of distress; *for the people shall dwell in Zion, at Jerusalem*; that is, in safety, without fear of their enemies; *thou shalt weep no more*, or not long; *he, God, will be very gracious to thee, at the voice of thy cry*, prayer and supplication to him; *when he shall hear it, he will answer thee*, sooner or later, in his own time: *and though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction*, either now, at this present time, or hereafter, in the Babylonish captivity; *yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more*; or as others* read the words, *thy rain shall not be removed from thee*; for one and the same word^f signifies both rain and a teacher; because, doctrine from the mouth of the teacher, drops like rain upon the tender herb, and as showers on the grass; and is here to be understood of the rain of spiritual doctrine; so that the sense is much the same, and the meaning of the words this; that though the people of God should be attended with bodily afflictions, they should have spiritual consolation; and though they might have a famine of bread and water, yet not of hearing the word of the Lord. *Thine eyes shall see thy teachers*, in their proper places, doing the proper work of their office; *and thine ears shall bear a voice behind thee, saying; This is the way, walk ye in it*. The Lord will open thine ears to discipline, and thine heart to attend to the things spoken by him in the word of the gospel; when thou turnest out of his way, to the right hand or the left. The word being said to be *behind* them, points out their declensions and backslidings, who had said to the prophets, *get ye out of the way; turn aside out of the path; cause the holy one of Israel to cease from before us*^g. And it is thought by some^h, to be an allusion to schoolmasters, who stand behind their scholars, or at their back, to guide, teach, and instruct them. Othersⁱ think, the reference is to shepherds following their flocks; who, when they observe any of the sheep going out of the way, call them back; or rather, the expression seems to be borrowed from travellers; who coming to a place where are several ways, and being at a loss which to take, are inclined to turn to the right hand, or the left, when they are called to by persons behind them, at a distance from them, directing them in *the right way*^k; and such is this here directed to.

The

* Calvin, Munster, &c. ^f מורה Joel ii. 23. Quod si ibi significat pluviam, metaphorice notabitur is, qui de caelo descendit & irrigat ad justitiam. Coccei Lexic. in Rad ירה, p. 339.

^g Ver. 11. ^h Deum vero hic paedagogo comparat, qui pueros sibi ante oculos statuit, ut eos melius formet atque regat. Calvin. in loc.

ⁱ Loquitur autem ad similitudinem pastoris; qui oves aberrantes a tergo inclamans ad viam revocat, & illae audita voce ejus in ordinem redeunt. Musculus in loc.

^k So the Chaldee paraphrase explains the words, אוררה רתקנא דרא, *this is the right way*; with

The observation I make on the text is this: That the word of God, or gospel of Christ, is a full and sure direction to the people of God, as to the way in which they should walk.

This is the *more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed*¹. This is a *lamp unto your feet, and a light unto your paths*^m. It is the rule of faith and practice; by which the whole walk and conversation of the saints, both in faith and holiness, is to be directed. We are to follow God and not men; the Bible, and not the doctrines and inventions of men. Though a majority may be on one side of the question, we are *not to follow a multitude to do evil. All the world wondered after the beast*ⁿ. Nor are riches and learning to have any influence upon us, or weight with us, to incline us one way or another; were these a rule of judgment, our Lord must have been rejected as an impostor and deceiver. *Have any of the rulers, the heads and governors of the people, civil or ecclesiastical, or of the Pharisees, that learned body of men, believed on him? But this people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed*^o; a company of poor illiterate and contemptible persons. Not the traditions of men, the productions of carnal reason, natural schemes, or philosophical quirks, are to be regarded by us, but the word of Christ: *Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit; after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*^p. Nor are education-principles to be trusted to and depended upon, without examination; nor are we to be governed by the *customs of the people*, which are generally *vain*^q; but *to the law and to the testimony, if men speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*^r. We should *search the scriptures*^s, as the noble Bereans did, to see whether the things spoken are so or no; for *they are they which testify of Christ, of his person and offices, of his grace, blood, righteousness, sacrifice and satisfaction, and of the way of salvation by him; they are the standard to which all doctrines and practices are to be brought, and by which they are to be tried; and these contain full and sure directions with respect to both; they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*^t. If any are at a loss about the way in which they should walk; let them examine the way-marks, the *scriptures*, the word of God, and gospel of Christ; let them *stand in the ways, and see and ask for the old paths; Where is the good way, and walk therein*^u.

The method I shall take in the prosecution of this subject, will be as follows:

3 G 2

I. I shall

with which agree the comments of R. Sol. Jarchi, R. David Kimchi, and R. Aben Ezra, in loc. Though the Arabic version, following the Septuagint, represents them as the words of seducers, directing to a wrong way.

¹ 2 Pet. i. 19.^m Psalm cxix. 105.ⁿ Rev. xiii. 3.^o John vii. 48, 49.^p Col. ii. 8.^q Jer. x. 3.^r Isai. viii. 20.^s John v. 39. Acts xvii. 11.^t 2 Tim. iii. 16.^u Jer. vi. 16.

- I. I shall give some further account of *the word*, said to be *behind*; which directs to the way in which the people of God should walk.
- II. Shew what that *way* is which this word directs to.
- III. Inquire what is meant by *walking* in the way which is exhorted to. And,
- IV. Observe some advantages which arise to persons walking in this way, and which may be considered as encouragements to them to walk in it.

I. I shall give some further account of the *word behind*, which directs the saints to walk in the right way. And by this we are to understand, not the *word spoken by angels*^w; which is the law that was given to *Moses, by the disposition of angels*^x. When God appeared on mount *Sinai*, it was with great solemnity and majesty; *he came with ten thousands of saints*, his holy ones, the angels; *from his right hand went a fiery law*^y; which was received by those ministering spirits, and was *ordained*, or disposed of by them, *in the hand of a mediator*^z; which mediator was *Moses*. But though a word spoken by them, and delivered out with so much solemnity, required the strictest attention and regard; yet this is not the word intended here; for that was a *voice of words which they that heard, intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded*^a: it was a voice of terror, and devoid of mercy; it accused of sin; pronounced men guilty; cursed them on account of it, and was a ministration of condemnation and death. But the word in our text, is the still small voice of the gospel, the voice of Christ; which his sheep hear, and are capable of distinguishing from the voice of a stranger: it is a word clothed with power, and is effectual to many great and wonderful purposes; it is a soul-shaking, and heart-breaking voice. What is said of the voice of the Lord, may, in some sense, be applied to this; *The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty; the voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness*^b. This is a means not only of awakening and convincing, but also of quickening sinners, dead in trespasses and sins: *The hour is coming, and now is*, says Christ, *when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live*^c; yea, it is a soul-comforting and reviving word to his people; it is *the voice of the charmers, charming exceeding wisely*^d; it allures the hearts of believers; it ravishes their souls; it raises and engages their affections, and fills their minds with inexpressible delight and pleasure; it is a voice of love, grace and mercy. This word may be considered as spoken and delivered by the ministers of Christ, who are ambassadors for him, and stand in his stead: when they preach his gospel,

^w Heb. ii. 2.^x Acts vii. 53.^y Deut. xxxiii. 2.^z Gal. iii. 19.^a Heb. xii. 19, 20.^b Psalm xxix. 4, 5, 8.^c John v. 25.^d Psalm lviii. 5.

gospel, he speaks in them, and by them; so that he that hears them hears him; and he that despises them, despises him. Now this word, whether it be considered as lying in the Bible, or as spoken by Christ, or as delivered by his faithful ministers, is,

1. *The word of God.* It comes from him, was dictated by him, is the breath of the Almighty, was given forth by divine inspiration; the writers of it were moved by the holy Ghost; what is said by *David* of himself, is as true of all the rest of the penmen of the sacred scriptures; *the spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue*^c: so that what they wrote was not their own, but God's: yea, what our Lord Jesus Christ delivered, as the great prophet in *Israel*, was not his own, but his Father's: *The word which you hear, says he, is not mine, but the Father's which sent me*^e. And so what the true and faithful ministers of Christ preach, agreeable to the scriptures of truth, and the gospel of Christ, is to be regarded and received, *not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God*^b. And, indeed, the wonderful things which are done by it, and which can be ascribed to nothing else but the power of God going along with it, bear a testimony to it, and prove it to be his; such as quickening of dead sinners, opening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, softening hard hearts, subduing rebellious wills, reconciling minds which were enmity to God, to Christ, to his gospel, ordinances and people; and delivering souls out of the power of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

2. It is *the word of truth*^b. The scriptures, in which it lies, are the *scriptures of truth*; it comes from *the God of truth*: the sum and substance of it is Christ, who is *the truth*. It is opened and applied, and men are guided into it by the *spirit of truth*. It consists of a set and chain of truths which are inseparably connected together; the principal of which lies in those words; *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief*^a.

3. It is *the word of reconciliation*^b. It gives the plan and model of reconciliation, as it was drawn in the divine mind and counsel from everlasting: it points out this as the work cut out for the Messiah before he came; and acquaints us, that he assumed human nature in order to do it; and that the elect of God, even while they were enemies, were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and that he has actually, and compleatly, made peace for them by the blood of his cross; whence the gospel is called, *The gospel of peace, and the word preaching peace by Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all*^a.

4. It is *the word of righteousness*^m; not only because it teaches and engages men to live righteously and soberly, but because therein is *revealed the righteousness*

^a 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.

^c John xiv. 24.

^e 1 Thes. ii. 13.

^b Ephes i. 13.

^a 1 Tim. i. 15.

^b 2 Cor. v. 19.

¹ Ephes. vi. 15. Acts x. 36.

^m Heb. v. 13.

ousness of God, from faith to faith ⁿ; even that righteousness, which Christ, who is God over all, has wrought out for his people; which God is well pleased with, and graciously imputes unto them; his justice being satisfied with it, and his law magnified and made honourable by it; and which faith lays hold upon as a justifying righteousness; being pure, spotless, perfect and compleat; and so by it, *all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses* ^o.

5. It is *the word of life* ^p. It is *the Spirit which giveth life*; it is the means of giving and communicating spiritual life to dead sinners, when attended with the spirit and power of Christ; it is the favour of life unto life, and also the means of reviving and refreshing drooping believers; and moreover, shows the path of life, the way to eternal life and happiness by Christ; for *life and immortality are brought to light*, not by the light of nature, nor by the law of Moses, but *through the gospel of Christ* ^q.

6. It is *the word of salvation* ^r. It brings the news of salvation by Christ; it is a declaration of it; it gives an account both of the author and nature of it; it describes the persons interested in it; it encourages poor souls to look to Christ for it, and is the means of the application of it; *it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth* ^s.

Now such a word as this which comes from God, is clothed with his authority, has the signature of truth upon it, and is charged with matters of the greatest moment and concern; such as our reconciliation with God, our justification before him, and the way of life and salvation by Christ, ought to be attended to; and whatsoever that makes known unto us, enjoins on us, or directs us to, should be regarded by us; which brings me,

II. To shew you what that *way* is which this word exhorts us to walk in. The grand and principal way is Christ; the lesser ones are the paths of doctrine and duty, and each of these we are directed to by the word *behind us*.

1. Christ is the chief and principal way the word directs us to walk in; yea, he himself says, *I am the way* ^t. Under this head I shall endeavour to show you, (1.) What Christ is the way unto. (2.) What a way he is.

(1.) What he is the way unto: he is the way to the Father; he is the way to the covenant of grace, and to a participation and enjoyment of all the blessings and promises of it. He is the way of salvation, and to heaven, and eternal glory.

[1.] He

ⁿ Rom. i. 17.

^o 2 Tim. i. 10.

^p John xiv. 6.

^q Acts xiii. 39.

^r Acts xiii. 26.

^s Phil. ii. 16.

^t Rom. i. 16.

[1.] He is the way to the Father; he is the Father's way to us, and our way to the Father. *Jehovah* the Father never took one step towards the salvation of his people out of Christ; his thoughts about it began with him; he *possessed* him in the beginning of his way of grace, before his works of old^o, of creation and providence; all his purposes, resolutions, and determinations concerning that matter, were in him; the whole scheme of it is according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord^o: he drew the plan and model of reconciliation in him, in the counsel of peace that was held with him; he chose his elect in him, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in him; grace was given to them in him before the world began. All fulness of grace was put into his hands as Mediator, that they might receive out of it, in all generations, grace for grace. The goings-forth of God, in the way of grace to his people, both in eternity and in time, have always been through Christ. And as he is the Father's way to us, he is our way to the Father: *I am the way*, says he, *no man cometh unto the Father but by me*; none of all the individuals of human nature can come to him in any other way; but through him both Jews and Gentiles have an access by one spirit unto the Father^a; hence he is said to be able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him^b.

There is no way to God upon the foot of the covenant of works. Man was made after the image, and in the likeness of God; was in a state of friendship and amity with God; was the favourite and darling of heaven; was placed in the most delightful and fruitful spot in all the globe, and had a power to eat of every tree in the garden, excepting one; all the creatures of the earth were subject to him, and he had all things about him for convenience and delight: But man being in honour abode not long; sin soon separated chief friends; man listened to the voice of the tempter, turned his back on God, and apostatized from him; upon which he was both ashamed and afraid to appear before God, when called by him, but was obliged to it; and after his arraignment, trial, and sentence, he was drove out of his earthly paradise; and cherubims and a flaming sword were placed at the east of the garden, to keep the way of the tree of life; intimating, that there was no coming to God, nor obtaining life, by the covenant of works. *God is a consuming fire*; there is no drawing nigh to an absolute God, to God out of Christ: Who can engage his heart to approach unto him? There is need of a day's-man to lay his hands on both: There is no access without a Mediator. Christ is the Mediator between God and man, typified by *Jacob's ladder*, which was set upon the earth, and its top reached to heaven; he has assumed human nature, fulfilled the law, and satisfied divine justice in it, and so has removed the obstacles which were in the way of a sinner's coming to God.

He

^a Prov. viii. 22.^b Ephes. iii. 11.^c Ephes. ii. 18.^d Heb. vii. 25.

He takes his own people, as it were, by the hand, and leads them into his Father's presence, so that they have *boldness*, and *access with confidence*, by the *faith of him*^a: though they are *black* in themselves they are *comely* in him, through the perfect comeliness and righteousness he puts upon them; hence their persons are *accepted in the beloved*^a, and so likewise are their services; their prayers to God are odours of a sweet smelling savour, being presented to him perfumed with the incense of his mediation; their sacrifices of prayer and praise are acceptable to God through him; wherefore it is right that we should *by him offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name*^b; especially, since,

[2.] Christ is the way to the participation and enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant of grace. The covenant of grace was made with Christ from everlasting, as the head and representative of God's elect, and for, and on the behalf of them. It was ordered in all things for God's glory, and their good, being stored with all spiritual blessings suitable for them, and ensured to them; all which were put into the hands of Christ for them. Now, though all these blessings were originally provided, laid up, and secured in this covenant by the free grace of God, yet they all come to us through the blood of Christ; hence that is called *the blood of the everlasting covenant*^c. Nor is there any coming at any of them but by him; thus, for instance, forgiveness of sin is a blessing of the covenant; *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness*, says God, *and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more*^d: but then this comes to us through the blood of Christ; there is no pardon to be had in any other way, none to be expected from an absolute God, from God out of Christ; *in him we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace*^e. Nor can we come at it, but by him, and by saying as the poor publican did, *God be merciful, $\lambda\alpha\delta\omega\eta$, be propitious to me a sinner*^f; or, God be merciful to me a sinner, through the propitiatory sacrifice of his Son. Justification is owing to the free grace of God, as the impulsive and moving cause of it, but then it is also by the blood and righteousness of Christ, and *through the redemption*^g that is in him. Adoption is a blessing of grace, provided for, and bestowed upon the elect in the covenant of grace; but inasmuch as sin threw obstacles in the way of their actual and personal enjoyment of it, Christ came and redeemed them by his blood, that they might *receive the adoption of children*^h. In a word, though eternal life was promised in the covenant, before the world began, by God that cannot lie, yet Christ came to procure it for us, and convey it to us; he came that *we might have life, and have it more abundantly*ⁱ.

[3.] Christ

^a Ephes. iii. 12.

^b Chap. i. 6.

^c Heb. xiii. 16.

^d Heb. xiii. 20.

^e Chap. viii. 12.

^f Ephes. i. 7.

^g Luke xviii. 13.

^h Rom. iii. 34.

ⁱ Gal. iv. 4, 5.

^j John x. 10.

[3.] Christ is the way of salvation which the word of God directs us to, and the ministers of it shew unto us. He is the way of salvation which God has fixed, resolved, and determined on. God has appointed him to be his salvation unto the ends of the earth; and those which he has appointed not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation, he has appointed them to obtain it by Christ Jesus. The Lord, as he is determined to save them, he is determined to save them in this, and in no other way: *I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God; and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen*^a; wherefore, though there may be many devices in a man's heart; one man may contrive one way of salvation, and another man another, *nevertheless the counsel of the Lord that shall stand*^b. This is a way agreeable to all the divine perfections; the glory of them is great in this way of salvation; here *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other*^c. The rights and honours of God's justice and holiness are hereby secured, as well as the riches of his love, grace, and mercy, displayed. This is a way of salvation in which Satan is most grievously mortified; for it must be a great mortification to that proud spirit to have his head bruised, himself, and works destroyed, and for men to be saved by the seed of the woman; by Christ in human nature, the ruin of which nature he had contrived, and brought about. A way in which *the loftiness of man is bowed down, and the haughtiness of man is made low*^d; the creature is debased, his works of righteousness laid aside, a blast is blown on all his goodlines, and *the Lord alone is exalted*. A way which is entirely suitable to a poor sinner's case, in which every thing needful for him, pardon, and cleansing, righteousness, and holiness, grace of every kind, and also glory, are provided for him. Such a way of salvation is Christ, that the vilest and chiefest of sinners have no reason to despair of it; for whoever looks to him for it, and believes in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life. To say no more, it is a way in which the righteous, though they are said to be *scarcely saved*^e, by reason of their afflictions, trials, and temptations, yet they are, and will be certainly *saved with an everlasting salvation*.

[4.] Christ is the way to heaven and eternal happiness. Having obtained by his blood eternal redemption for his people, he is entered into heaven as a forerunner, to take possession of it in their name, and prepare it for them. He is the great captain of salvation, who brings many sons to glory, through the Spirit's work of grace upon their souls, and by virtue of his own blood and righteousness; by the one as their meetness, and by the other as their right to their heavenly inheritance, without which none will ever see or enter into the kingdom of heaven. But I go on,

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2. To

^a Hosea i. 7.^b Prov. xix. 21.

Psaln lxxxv. 10.

^c Isaiah ii. 17.^d 1 Peter iv. 18.

2. To shew what a way Christ is: he is the *only way*, a *new and a living one*, a plain and straight way, a narrow one indeed, but yet safe and sure.

[1.] He is the only way. *I am*, says he, *the way*; emphatically and eminently so, the best and the only one: he is the only way to the Father; no sinful man ever did, or could, or can, or will come to the Father, but by him; *there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*. He is the only way to the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it; none ever enjoyed any of them, but in and by him: he is the alone Mediator, surety, and messenger of it; he is the only way of salvation; he is *the head of the corner*; *neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved*[†]. It is in vain to expect it from any other person or quarter, from hills and mountains of duties, services, and works of righteousness done by us; in him alone is the salvation of *Israel*. There never was, nor never will be, any other way of salvation to heaven, and eternal glory; for though there may be ways which *seem right* to men, *the end thereof is death*[‡].

[2.] Christ is a *new way*[§]; not newly contrived or found out, for he was *set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*[¶]; nor newly discovered, for he was made known as the *seed of the woman*[¶] to our first parents, immediately after the fall; nor newly made use of, for he was *the lamb slain from the foundation of the world*[¶], to whose blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, all the Old-Testament saints looked, and by whose grace they were saved, as we are: but he is called the *new way*, in opposition to the old way, by the covenant of works, and because he is more clearly revealed as *the way* under the gospel-dispensation; *the holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest*, that is, so clearly, *while the first tabernacle was yet standing*[¶]. Moreover, he may be called so, because he was lately slain, his blood was newly shed, and his sacrifice but a little while ago offered up; he is *the new slain way*, “the new slain way,” as some[¶] render the phrase. Besides, he is the *new way*, because he is always new, and never old: he is *Jesus*, the way of salvation, *the same to day, yesterday, and for ever*[¶].

[3.] He is a *living way*. He is the living Mediator and Redeemer; our way to God lies not through the sacrifices of slain beasts, of dead carcases, but through a living Saviour, who is the author both of spiritual and eternal life. He gives spiritual life to his people, to enable them to walk in himself, *the way*; for there are none but *living* persons walk here, and he maintains that life in them, so that none in this way ever die, and *he gives unto them eternal life*. He is *the way*,

† Acts iv. 11, 12.

‡ Prov. xvi. 25.

§ Heb. x. 20.

¶ Prov. viii. 23.

¶ Gen. iii. 15.

¶ Rev. xiii. 8.

¶ Heb. ix. 8.

¶ Beza and Piscator, in Heb. x. 20.

¶ Heb. xiii. 8.

way, the truth, and the life; that is, the true way to eternal life; and he ever lives, and continues to be this way; though he was dead, he is alive for evermore, and has the keys of hell and death^a.

[4.] It is a plain and straight way; a plain way, that is, to them that know him to be the way of peace. What wisdom says of her words, that they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge^b, is equally true of Christ, as the way; who is such an one, in which wayfaring men, though fools, men of mean capacities, shall not err^c. This is no round-about way; there are no mazes and labyrinths, no windings and turnings in it. Christ is a straight way to the Father, the direct way of salvation, a near way to heaven: let thine eyes lock right on, and let thine eye-lids look straight before thee^d, to Jesus the captain of salvation, the author and finisher of faith; and so press on forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in him.

[5.] Christ is indeed a narrow way^e, $\pi\sigma\delta\lambda\iota\mu\omega\upsilon\eta\ \eta\ \sigma\delta\theta\epsilon$, “a pressed or afflicted way;” a way strewed as it were with afflictions, attended with difficulties and distress: all that walk in this way, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution^f, in one shape or another. They must expect tribulation in it; Christ has foretold it; none have been without it: This is a path all walk in to heaven; we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God^g. But then,

(6.) He is a safe and sure way; none ever perished, or ever will perish, in this way. It is said, no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there^h; that is, in safety: for though Satan goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devourⁱ, yet he cannot devour or destroy any that are walking in Christ the way; and though there may be many ravenous beasts of prey, such as principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places, which seek to oppress the redeemed that walk here; yet though they may disturb their outward peace, they can never take away their spiritual comforts, nor deprive them of their future happiness; for, as has been already observed, the righteous though they are scarcely saved, yet they are certainly saved at last.

2. There are other lesser ways and paths of doctrine and duty, which agree and fall in with, and relate unto Christ the chief and principal way, which the word directs saints to walk in: He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths^j. And,

(1.) There is the path of doctrine, of evangelical truths, which are sometimes called the way of the Lord. Apollon, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, is said to be instructed in the way of the Lord; that is, in the doctrines

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and

^a Rev. i. 18.^b Prov. viii. 9.^c Isai. xxxv. 8.^d Prov. iv. 25.^e Matt. vii. 14.^f 2 Tim. iii. 12.^g Acts xiv. 22.^h Isai. xxxiv. 9.ⁱ 1 Pet. v. 8.^j Isai. ii. 3.

and institutions of Christ, of which he had got some knowledge, though but small: wherefore *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, upon hearing of him, took him aside privately, and expounded to him the way of God more perfectly^k; that is, they led him more distinctly into the path of truth; by their means he became more acquainted with the doctrines of the gospel, and the truths of the christian religion. This is a way which every good man desires to walk in; he makes choice of it, and takes delight and pleasure in it. *I have chosen*, says *David*, *the way of truth*^l. Yea, it is a very agreeable and pleasing sight to such to see others walking in this path. The apostle *John* tells the elect lady, that he rejoiced greatly that he found of her children walking in truth^m; not only uprightly, and with integrity, in their lives and conversations, but in the truth of the gospel. And he expresses himself in much the same manner to *Gaius*; *I rejoiced greatly*, says he, *when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy, than to hear that my children walk in truth*ⁿ. Now it is the Spirit of God that is the guide of his people, and leads them into the way of truth: *When he, the Spirit of truth, is come*, says Christ, *he will guide you, ὁδηγήσει υμᾶς*, "he will lead you the way," into all truth^o; under whose guidance and direction, grace, influence and assistance, the saints are sometimes enabled to make considerable progress and advances in this way; for *the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*^p.

(2.) There is the path of ordinances, the way of Christ's commandments; particularly the two gospel-institutions of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*; which it is the will of Christ his people should attend unto, and walk in. Concerning which, the word gives plain directions.

The ordinance of Baptism our Lord himself submitted to, and so recommended it by his own example: he also clothed it with his authority, and gave commission to his disciples to practise it; who accordingly did administer it to proper subjects, and in a proper manner. And if any persons have any doubt or hesitation in their minds about either the subjects, or mode of baptism, let them stand in the ways and see; look up to the way-marks, the scriptures of truth, and there inquire, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein^q. Let them look over the accounts of the administration of this ordinance in the times of *John*, Christ, and his apostles: and as to the subjects of it, they will find that those who were baptized by *John*, the first administrator of this ordinance, were such as confessed their sins^r; who being made sensible of their sins of heart and life, made an humble and ingenuous acknowledgment of them: That those who were baptized by Christ, or rather by his orders, for

^k Acts xviii. 24—26.^l Psalm cxix. 30.^m 2 John, ver. 4.ⁿ 3 John iii. 4.^o John xvi. 13.^p Prov. iv. 18.^q Jer. vi. 16.^r Matt. iii. 6.

for *Jesus himself baptized not but his disciples*, were such who were first made disciples by him; that is, they were instructed in the knowledge of themselves and salvation by him; they were taught to *deny themselves, take up the cross, and follow him*. *Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John*¹; he first made them disciples, and then baptized them, or ordered them to be baptized: That those to whom this ordinance was administered by the apostles of Christ, after his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, were such who *received the holy Ghost as well as they*, who repented of their sins, and believed in Christ, or at least professed to do so. The instance of the eunuch is a remarkable one, to whose chariot *Philip* was bid to join himself, when he found him reading a passage in the prophecy of *Isaiah*; from which scripture, being taken up into the chariot with him, he preached Christ to him, gave him an account of his person, offices, doctrines and ordinances, and particularly this of Baptism: and when they were come to a place of water convenient for the administration of it, the eunuch says to *Philip*, *See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*²: upon which profession of his faith he baptized him. Now this man was a proselyte to the Jewish religion, a serious and devout man, and was employed in a religious way when *Philip* came up to him; and yet, notwithstanding all this, he had no right to this ordinance of Christ without faith in him, and a profession of it; nor would *Philip* administer it to him without it. Look over all these accounts, I say, and you will find the persons now described to be the only proper subjects of baptism: nor will you be able to observe, that ever any one infant was baptized by *John*, by Christ, or his apostles; or that there is either a precept or a precedent for such a practice, in all the word of God. And as to the mode of administration of this ordinance, if you have any scruple about that, look over the same accounts, and you will find that the first subjects of it were baptized in rivers, in places where was a large confluence of water, and chose for that purpose; and that they were there baptized by immersion, or covering the whole body in water. The first that were baptized by *John*, were baptized in the river *Jordan*; as was also our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom it is said, *when he was baptized, he went up straightway out of the water*³; not from the water-side, but out of it; which shews that he must have been in it; where he was baptized, not by sprinkling, or pouring water on him, but by immersion into it; for that he should go into the river, in order to be baptized in any other way, is not only ridiculous, but incredible. *John* also baptized in *Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water*⁴ there; a large confluence of it, fit for his purpose; and

¹ John iv. 1, 2.² Acts viii. 36, 37.³ Matt. iii. 6, 16.⁴ John iii. 23.

and his way of administration. When *Philip* baptized the eunuch, it is said *they went down both into the water*^a; not the declivity of the earth, to the water-side, or bank of the river; for this little silly trifling criticism is destroyed by what the historian observes before, that *they came unto a certain water*, the river *Eleutherus*, as *Beza*^y conjectures: They were come to the river-side, to the bank of it, when the eunuch desired Baptism; and it being agreed to, they went down into the water itself, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away *Philip*. Which circumstances clearly shew in what manner this ordinance was administered. Nor can any other mode but that of immersion answer to the primary signification of the word βαπτισμα; nor to the types of Baptism, *Noah's* ark, and the passing of the *Israelites* under the cloud, and in the sea; nor the end of baptism, which is to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ; nor the metaphorical baptisms of Christ's sufferings, and the extraordinary donation of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

The *Lord's Supper* is another ordinance of Christ, which he himself instituted and administered to his disciples, and ordered them to observe in remembrance of him; and which they accordingly did. The first christians were instructed in it, and taught to attend to it; and it is taken notice of, to their honour, that *they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer*^z. This is an ordinance to be performed with faith and fervency, in commemoration of the sufferings and death, sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ; and that frequently, and to be continued until the coming of Christ. And if any man has any doubt about the ordinance itself, let him consult the sacred oracles, they will direct him in this way; or about his right unto it, let him examine himself, and so let him eat^z. But besides these paths of particular ordinances, the word *behind us* directs us to,

(3.) The way of divine worship in general, both public and private. The worship of God was first personal, and then was set up in a family, in *Adam's* family; but when men increased into families, and these grew numerous, they joined together in public social acts of worship, and began to call upon the name of the Lord^b conjunctly, and in a public manner. When *Israel*, the people of God's choice, became a distinct nation, a tabernacle was set up by divine order, at the door of which the whole congregation was at certain times to assemble; and when they were established in the land the Lord their God gave unto them, a temple was built, whither the several tribes went up to worship the Lord in his holy mountain. Prophecies were delivered out under the Old-Testament dispensation; that the saints under the New should call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent^c; which were remarkably fulfilled in the first christians,

^a Acts viii. 36, 38, 39.

^y In loc.

^z Acts ii. 42.

1 Cor. xi. 28.

^b Gen. iv. 26.

^c Zeph. iii. 9.

tians, who met together to pray and hear the word, and *were of one heart and of one soul*^a; nor ought we to *forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as we see the day approaching*^c. There is also *private worship*, which should be attended; the people of God ought to meet in private together, and pray with one another; build up one another in their most holy faith, and converse together about the things of God, and their own experience. There is a *family worship*, which should be kept up: we ought to read the scripture, and pray in and with, and for our families; and there is also a personal, closet, *secret worship*, which should not be neglected: *When thou prayest, says Christ, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly*^d.

(4.) The path of duty, or the way of gospel conversation and holiness, is directed to by the word *behind us*. External holiness of life is what becomes the gospel of Christ, and ought to be followed by all the professors of it. The doctrine of the grace of God instructs them in it, and engages them to it: It teaches them how they should behave both in the world, and in the church; that they ought to *walk in wisdom towards them that are without, circumspectly, not as fools but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil*^e; and it directs them to *walk in love towards one another, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*^b.

III. I am now to shew you what is meant by *walking in this way* which is here exhorted to. Walking, as it respects Christ *the way*, designs believing in him; to *believe in the light, and to walk in the light*, are one and the same thing. Believing in Christ, and walking in Christ, are terms synonymous. It is by faith believers walk in Christ: *We walk by faith*, says the apostle, *not by sight*^f. Faith is the eye of the soul which looks to Christ, and is the foot by which it goes to him, and *walks in him*, as it has *received him*^g. Walking, as it respects the other ways of doctrine and duty, signifies an embracing of them, and obedience to them; for as there is faith, and wherever it is in truth, there is and will be *the obedience of faith*; such as receive Christ and his gospel truly, *obey from the heart the form of doctrine delivered to them*^h; and are desirous of *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless*^m. They make Christ the pattern and example, after whom they would copy, and would willingly *walk, even as he walked*ⁿ. Now walking in both these senses,

1. Suppose

^a Acts iv. 31, 32.^c Heb. x. 25.^e Matt. vi. 6.^b Coloss. iv. 5. Ephes. v. 15, 16.^d Ephes. v. 2. and iv. 2, 3.^f 2 Cor. v. 7.^g Coloss. ii. 7.^h Rom. vi. 17.^m Luke i. 6.ⁿ 1 John ii. 6.

1. Supposes life. A dead man cannot walk, nor even stand upon his feet. Men in a state of nature are *dead in trespasses and sins*°. Whoever *lives in pleasure*, in sinful lusts and pleasures, are *dead while they live*. There must be a principle of life implanted in them; the Spirit of life from Christ must enter into them; breath from the Almighty must come into them, as in the dry bones in *Ezekiel's* vision, ere they will stand upon their feet, walk in Christ and in his ways, believe in him, or obey him truly.

This supposes strength as well as life. There may be life where there is no strength to walk; but there can be no strength where there is no life. Men in a state of unregeneracy, as they are destitute of life, they are *without strength*². In this condition are God's elect, whilst unregenerate, and so they were when Christ died for them: Nor can they do any thing without him, though all things through him strengthening of them. In him are both *their righteousness and strength*; to him they look for both; and as they receive the one, so they do the other from him, whereby they are enabled to walk in him, and in his ways; and such only are capable thereof: *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the ways of them*³.

3. This requires wisdom and guidance as well as strength. It is said of the wicked, that *there is no judgment in their goings*⁴: they are like children that have no discretion; cannot conduct themselves; they are without a true guide, rule and direction; they *walk after the flesh*, the dictates of carnal reason: and, indeed *the way of man, even of a good man, is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*⁵; the Spirit of God is his guide and director; by him his *steps are ordered*; he holds him by his hand; he teaches him to go, and *guides him with his counsel*.

4. Walking denotes a progression, a going on, and forwards. It is not taking a step or two that can properly be called walking. There are some persons who take but, as it were, a step or two in religion; in the way of God: they are no sooner in, but they out again; this cannot be said to be walking in the way; nor are such who have *put their hand to the plough, and look back, sit for the kingdom of God*⁶. But true walkers in Christ are *not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe*, continue to believe, go on believing in Christ, walking in him, and in his truths and ordinances, *to the saving of the soul*; that is, until they receive *the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls*⁷.

IV. The last thing proposed, is to consider the advantages which arise to persons who walk in the way directed to; and which may be looked upon as fo many encouragements thereunto. And,

I. A

° Ephes. ii. 1. 1 Tim. v. 6.

² Rom. v. 6.

³ Psalm lxxxiv. 5.

⁴ Isai. lix. 8.

⁵ Jer. x. 23.

⁶ Luke ix. 62.

⁷ Heb. x. 39. 1 Peter i. 9.

1: A man that walks in this way may be sure he is right; he has a sure way to walk in, a sure guide that goes before him, and directs him, and a sure word of prophecy, to which he does well to take heed. And if at any time doubts concerning the way arise, he has nothing more to do, than to look up to the way-marks; to consult the scriptures, which are ready at hand, and to hearken to the voice behind him, when he is about to turn to the right hand or the left. As it is, on the one hand, very uncomfortable to travellers, when they know not whether they are in the right road or no; so on the other hand, it makes them go on more cheerfully, and their journey more easy and pleasant, when they are satisfied they are in the right way.

2. Such are well provided for that walk in the way the word directs unto; their *bread* is given them, and their *waters* are sure unto them. Though they pass through the valley of *Baca*, the valley of weeping, yet they find a well that supplies them with every thing necessary. Christ is a *sun* to warm, refresh, and comfort them, and a *shield* to protect them from all their enemies; he gives them *grace*, every needful supply of it by the way, and will, at last, give them *glory*; and in the mean while, *withholds no good thing from them that walk uprightly* in this way*.

3. Such may expect to be strengthened yet more and more; to *go from strength to strength*, from one degree of it to another; since God has promised that the *righteous shall hold on his way; and he that bath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger*; and, that *they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint**; yea, the way of the Lord itself is *strength unto the upright*†. What greater encouragement can there be to walk on in this way; and against those doubts and fears which are apt to possess the minds of poor weary travellers?

4. Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*. Christ himself, as the way, is pleasant to walk in, and so are all the lesser paths of doctrine and duty; none of his commandments are grievous, his yoke is easy, and his burden light; his tabernacles are amiable; a day in his courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. When he sheds abroad his love, how cheerfully do believers run the way of his commandments? When he puts his Spirit within them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, with what pleasure do they observe them? And when he lifts up the light of his countenance, and affords his gracious presence, and fills them with joy unspeakable and full of glory; this produces an inward, settled, and perfect peace.

5. The presence of God and Christ may be looked for by such, since it is said, *Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousnesses; those that remember*

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thee

* Psalm lxxiv. 6, 11.

† Job xvii. 9. Isaiah xl. 31.

‡ Prov. x. 29.

‡ Prov. iii. 17.

thee in thy ways^a. Where is God to be met with? Or, can it be expected that God should meet with us but in Christ the way? And where is the presence of Christ to be enjoyed, as in his house, his ordinances; and in those ways his word directs unto?

6. The Lord has promised to give walking places to such persons: *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by*^b; meaning either among the angels or saints, and that both in this world, and in that which is to come; for they have fellowship with both, in either state: and the same shall also *walk with Christ in white*^c, in the robe of his righteousness, and in the raiment of immortality; *for they are worthy*, not through their own, but the worthiness of Christ. In a word, *as many as walk in this way, and according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God*^d.

I have now finished what I proposed, in considering this passage of scripture; which our deceased friend, in her life-time, desired might be the subject of her funeral discourse, and whose character might now be expected from me. She was, I understand, averse to encomiums on such occasions; and, for my own part, I never had any great inclination to such service, and may be very well now excused, since the deceased was an entire stranger to me; and had I been never so well acquainted with her, it would be needless to give her character among you; who so well knew her manner of life and conversation, how she behaved as a wife, a parent, friend, and neighbour; and those of you who had the happiness of a christian conversation with her, knew what an experience she had of the grace of God; what were her faith in Christ, love to him, and zeal for his cause and interest, his honour and glory.

Imperfections and infirmities belong to human nature; *there is not a just man or woman that lives, and does good, and sinneth not*. If any thing of this kind has fallen under your observation, it ought to be buried in total silence, and in everlasting oblivion: and the uses you are to make of it, for yourselves, are humility, care, and caution. But, on the other hand, *whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things, and do them; and the God of peace shall be with you*^e.

^a Isai. lxiv. 5.
^e Phil. iv. 8, 9.

^b Zech. iii. 7.

^c Rev. iii. 4.

^d Gal. vi. 16.

S E R M O N XXVI.

Occasioned by the Death of Mrs ANN BRINE, late Wife of the Reverend
Mr JOHN BRINE. Preached August 11, 1745.

ROMANS VIII. 33, 34.

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

THE preceding chapter contains the believer's complaint of indwelling sin, and expresses the nature, prevalence and ill effects of it, and his grief of mind on that account; and this chapter declares his triumph of faith in a view of deliverance from it, and from all condemnation by it, through the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ: which triumph is founded upon things the most solid and substantial, delivered in the text and context; such as relate to the grace of the Father in predestination, in the mission of his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, in not sparing him, but delivering him up for us all; in the effectual vocation, justification, and glorification of his chosen ones; and which relate to the grace of Christ, in his assumption of human nature, in fulfilling the law both in its precept and penalty, in his sufferings and death, in his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession for his people; and which relate to the grace of the blessed Spirit, in quickening and renewing carnal minds, in leading men out of themselves to Christ; in *witnessing to their spirits that they are the children of God*, and in helping their infirmities, and making intercession for them according to the will of God; and particularly this triumph of faith is expressed in the fullest and strongest manner in the words before us, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? &c.*

The words are put by way of interrogation, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* or accuse them? or call them to an account? or enter an action against them in open court? It is a challenge, a bidding defiance to all and every one to do it; since *it is God that justifieth*, that is, his elect: he acquits and clears them from all charges exhibited against them; and therefore

whatever are laid against them are of no avail, and can never issue in their condemnation; *who is he that condemneth* the elect of God? that will censure or pass sentence upon them? and if any should, what will it signify, seeing *it is Christ that died for their sins, and rose again for their justification, and is at the right hand of God, as their advocate, and ever lives to make intercession for them.* Though these things are put by way of question, they may be reduced to absolute propositions: the sense of them is, that “there are none that can lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect to any purpose, but what will easily be set aside; nor can any justly bring them under a sentence of condemnation, and much less execute such a sentence on them.” The whole may be comprised in the two following propositions:

- I. That no charge shall be brought against, nor any condemnation brought upon, the elect of God.
- II. That the Father’s justification of them, the Son’s dying for them, his resurrection from the dead, session at the right hand of God, and intercession on their account, are a sufficient and full security to them from all charges and condemnation whatever.

I. That no charge of any avail shall, or can be laid against, or any sentence of condemnation executed upon the elect of God. These are without spot and fault before the throne of God; they are unblameable and unprovable in his sight, and there is no condemnation to them. For the further explanation of this doctrine, I shall,

First, Shew who the elect of God are.

Secondly, In what sense no charge and condemnation can be upon them.

First, Who are the elect of God. These are a select number of men, who are the objects of God’s love, whom he has chosen in Christ, unto eternal life and salvation before the foundation of the world, of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, by certain ways of his own appointing, so that they are peculiarly his. It will be proper to take this account into several parts, and briefly explain them.

1. The elect of God are *a select number of men, of Adam’s posterity; for elect angels are not here meant: they are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; not whole nations, churches, bodies, and communities of men, but particular persons; they are such who are separated and set apart from the rest of mankind, and are alone, and are not reckoned among the nations: as they are redeemed and called, so they are chosen out of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues; and though, considered by themselves, they are a great number,*

ber, which no man can number; yet, comparatively, they are but *few*, *many* be called, but *few* chosen, Matt. xx. 16.

2. They are the objects of the *love of God*, of his everlasting and unchangeable love; and because they are the beloved of the Lord, therefore they are chosen by him unto salvation: so the people of *Israel* were chosen as a nation to outward privileges above all nations, not because they were *more* than others, for they were *the fewest of all people*, but because the Lord loved them, *Deut.* vii. 7, 8. *Electio presupponit dilectionem*, "Election presupposes love." Love is the source and original of it: *whom God did foreknow, them he did predestinate*, as in the context; hence they are stiled *elect* according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, 1 Peter i. 2. which is to be understood not of the bare prescience of God, which reaches to all the sons of men, for then all would be the elect of God; but of such foreknowledge of them as includes in it the strongest love and affection for them; of which his choice of them to everlasting life, is a glaring instance and evidence.

3. They are *chosen in Christ*, as is expressly asserted in *Ephesians* i. 4. Christ himself, as mediator, is God's elect; he is so by way of eminency; he was first chosen and then the elect in him; he is the first-born of the election of grace; he was first conceived in the womb of election, and brought forth, and then the many brethren among whom he is the first-born; he was chosen as the head, and they as members in him: hence all grace was given to them *in him*, and they were *blessed with all spiritual blessings in him*; yea, hence it is, that they being sanctified, or set apart by God the Father in election, were *preserved in him*, notwithstanding the fall of *Adam*, and their own actual transgressions, in order to be called by grace, *Jude* 1.

4. The choice of them in Christ is *unto eternal life and salvation*; not unto external blessings and privileges, as the Israelites were, nor to any outward office, though ever so great, as that of apostleship, as *Judas* the son of perdition was; but to special grace here, and eternal glory hereafter: these are persons ordained to eternal life, vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; they are appointed *not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*; which he has been appointed to work out for them, has effected, and will put them into the possession of.

5. This choice of them was made before the foundation of the world, as is affirmed in *Ephesians* i. 4. The Thessalonians are said to be *chosen from the beginning*, 2 Thes. ii. 13. not from the beginning of the preaching of the gospel to them, nor from the beginning of their conversion, but from the beginning of time; or, in other words, from eternity; the phrase being the same with *from everlasting*, as appears from *Proverbs* viii. 23. This is an act, that does not commence in time, but bears date from eternity; it passed before the men-
who.

who are the objects of it, were born, and had done either good or evil, *Rom. ix. 11.*

6. It is owing to the sovereign good-will and pleasure of God, who *does all things after the counsel of his own will*: he predestinates to the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will; he *has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and is gracious to whom he will be gracious*; and his election of persons to everlasting life, is an election of grace, and is strongly denied to be of works, *Romans xi. 5, 6.* It is irrespective of faith, holiness, or good works, as causes, motives, and conditions of it; these all follow upon it, and are fruits, effects, and evidences of it.

7. This choice of men to happiness is through certain ways and means of God's own appointing; such as *sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth*, 2 Thes. ii. 13. which, as they are fixed in the decree of the means, have their sure and certain accomplishment. God chooses men, not because they were, or because he knew they would be, but that they might be holy; and this he secures for them; for by virtue, and in consequence of their being chosen, he sends the Spirit down into their hearts to sanctify them; and though the work of sanctification is at present imperfect, in pursuance of the divine purposes it shall be completed. So likewise belief of the truth, or faith in Christ, who is the truth, and in every doctrine of the word of truth, relating to him, is another mean ascertained in the decree of election, and is sure by it: *as many as are ordained unto eternal life, have believed, do believe, and shall believe*, in all ages of time; and none truly believe, but such; and therefore true faith is called *the faith of God's elect*, Titus i. 1. It springs from electing grace; it is the fruit of it, it is the gift of God's grace, and is insured by it; and because of it, as the work of faith is begun, it shall be performed with power. Hence,

8. Persons thus chosen are peculiarly his, the elect of God, yea, they are emphatically called *his own elect*, Luke xviii. 7. They are not only his by creation, as all mankind are, but they are the people of his choice, a peculiar one; they are *elect according to his foreknowledge*, they are set apart for himself, for his own use, service and glory; they are chosen by him for his peculiar treasure. But,

Secondly, I am next to show you in what sense no charge can be laid against, nor condemnation come to these persons.

First, No charge, no accusation of them, no crime to be alledged against them: But,

1. Is there nothing they are chargeable with? Are they in every sense clear of all crimes? Can nothing be objected to them, and laid against them? yes, many things. They are, as the descendents of *Adam*, chargeable with his sin: they were in him *seminally*, as the root and parent of mankind; they were in him

him federally, as their covenant-head and representative; in which he was the figure of Christ that was to come; and so they sinned in him, and were made and constituted sinners, through his disobedience; the guilt of which, is imputed to them, and they in themselves are liable to condemnation by it: they are chargeable with a corrupt nature, they bring into the world with them, being *conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity*; they are justly called *transgressors from the womb*; they are chargeable with the loss of original righteousness, and of the image of God, and with a want of conformity to the law of God; they are chargeable with a multitude of actual transgressions committed before conversion, and some with very grievous and notorious ones; not only as being *foolish, and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures*; but, as *living in malice, hateful, and hating one another*: so *Saul*, afterwards *Paul*, was guilty of injury, persecution and blasphemy; and the Corinthians are said to be *fornicators, idolaters, adulterers*, and every thing that is bad, *1 Cor. vi. 9—11*. And after conversion they are all chargeable, with many sins of thought, word, and deed; with sins of omission and commission; with daily infirmities and frequent backslidings; in many things they all offend; and their errors are so many, they cannot understand; and some of them are suffered to fall into very gross enormities, as *Noah, Lot, David, Peter*, and others. Wherefore,

2. Are there none that will rise, stand up and charge, these persons? yes, enow: their own hearts rise up against them, and charge them; their conscience which is as a thousand witnesses, does often accuse them: there is in every man a conscience, which excuses or accuses for good or bad things done, unless where it is seared as with a red-hot iron: but this is not the case of good men, their consciences are tender; and though they are sometimes tempted to extenuate their faults, yet, at other times, they are ready to aggravate them, and put them in the worst light; and write dismal, desperate, and bitter things against themselves: likewise, they are very apt to charge one another; they are sometimes too forward this way, too inquisitive after each other's weaknesses; bear too hard upon one another for them; and are too severe and censorious: indeed, they are *not to suffer sin upon one another*; charges may be very lawfully brought, whether in a private, or in a public way, as the nature of the case requires, provided the rules of God's word are observed, and they are exhibited in a kind and tender manner, with a view to the glory of God, and the good of the person or persons charged: moreover, the men of the world are full of charges against the people of God, and traduce them oftentimes very wrongfully, as the Jews did our Lord; and as *Tertullus* the orator, the apostle *Paul*; and it is the common lot of the saints to go through good report and bad report; but *no weapon formed against them shall prosper, and every*

every tongue that riseth up in judgment against them shall be condemn'd: they have real faults enough in them; and there is no need of false ones to be imputed to them; to which may be added, Satan is the adversary of believers, *αγχιςτης*, "a court adversary;" one that enters a suit at law, and brings in an action in open court against another, as the word signifies; he goes about the world, and observes the failures of the saints, takes all advantages, and every opportunity against them; picks up their faults, and aggravates them, and accuses them before the throne: whence he is called *the accuser of the brethren*, Rev. xii. 10. To say no more, the law accuses of the breaches and violations of it; one commandment says, Thou hast sinned against me; and another, Thou hast sinned against me; and the law is able to make good, and support its charges, and give evidence of them; and it proceeds to pronounce the whole world guilty before God, and so the elect of God among the rest. But then,

3. What will these charges signify? Of what avail will they be? and to what purpose are they laid? since God justifies and discharges from them all, who is superior to all, and from whose judgment there can be no appeal. Though the saints bring charges against themselves, and bring heavy ones against each other; and though the world, Satan, and the law, lay charges against them; yet none of the divine persons bring any, nor will they bring any against them. Not Jehovah the Father, as may be learnt from the text and context; he predestinates them to be *conformed to the image of his Son*; he calls, justifies, and glorifies them; he is on their side; he is for them, and it matters not who is against them; he has *not spared his own Son, but has delivered him up for them all, and gives all things freely with him*, ver. 29—32. and therefore he will lay nothing to their charge: nor will the Son of God; he is the surety for them; he has died for their sins, and has made an end of them, and brought in everlasting righteousness; and is an advocate for them; wherefore, he will exhibit no charge against them: nor will the holy Spirit; for though he convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; yet he brings near the righteousness of Christ unto them; works faith in them, to lay hold upon it, and pronounces them righteous on the account of it; he *takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to them*; he is the comforter of them, and the Spirit of adoption to them; and as Christ is an advocate for them, in the court of heaven, he is an intercessor for them in their own hearts.

2^dy, No condemnation can befall them; for if no charges can be laid against them with success, no condemnation can follow. *Who is he that condemneth?* that is, the elect of God: these are the persons that are understood, though not expressed. Others may be, and are condemned, even all mankind are in *Adam*; *through his offence judgment came upon all men to condemnation*, Rom. v. 18. And some being ungodly men, and such who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness,

ness, are righteously appointed unto eternal condemnation; yea, every one that believes not, and who lives and dies in impenitence and unbelief, is condemned already; and there is a world that will be condemned at the last day; but the elect of God, who shall condemn? They are indeed, with the rest of mankind under the sentence of condemnation as considered in *Adam*, in whom they sinned; and so the sentence of death passed upon them in him. They are by nature children of wrath, and deserving of it, and in their own persons commit things worthy of death; and when they are thoroughly convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, they have the sentence of death within themselves, and say, as the Egyptians did, when their first-born were killed, *we be all dead men*, Exod. xii. 33. Whatever vain opinion they entertained of themselves before the commandment came with power into their consciences, as it did in the apostle *Paul*; sin then revives, as it did in him, and they die, as to all hopes of attaining happiness by their works; they see themselves dead in law, dead in sin: and after conversion, their hearts often smite and condemn them for sin, though *God is greater than their hearts, and knows all things*; his own covenant-transactions and agreement with his Son; what his Son has done, and what satisfaction he has made to his law and justice, and therefore will not condemn them. They are too apt to condemn one another: hence that advice of our Lord's, *condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned*, Luke vi. 37. The men of the world are very forward to condemn them as hypocrites, as the worst of men, and not fit to live upon the earth; but the Lord stands at the right hand of the poor to save him from those that condemn his soul, Psalm cix. 31. The God of this world, as he accuses them, and stands at their right hand to resist them; so he seeks, and calls for judgment against, and upon them, but in vain. The law is a ministration of condemnation and death to them that are under it: indeed, the elect of God are redeemed from it, and from the curse and condemnation of it; *Christ being made a curse for them*; and be it so; that it should pass as many sentences of condemnation upon them, as there are sins committed by them; for every sin deserves a sentence, yet *οὐκ ἔστιν κατακρίσις*, "there is not one condemnation to them" that are in Christ Jesus, and redeemed by him; not one sentence can be executed upon them: and though these may all condemn, yet neither Father, Son, nor Spirit, will condemn them: not the Father, for he justifies them; not the Son, for he died for them; and is the Lord their righteousness: he came not into the world to condemn the world, but that it might be saved by him; nor the blessed Spirit, for these are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. To which may be subjoined, that these persons are loved by God with an everlasting love, which God has sworn shall never depart from them: they are predestinated to eternal life, and shall be glorified; they are in Christ, and to such there is no condemnation; they are brought to believe in Christ, and

such have passed from death to life, and shall not come into condemnation; they are justified by the blood of Christ, and shall be saved from wrath through him. I proceed to the other doctrinal proposition.

II. That the Father's justification of the elect, the Son's dying for them, his resurrection from the dead, his session at the right hand of God, and intercession for them, are a sufficient and full security of them from all charges and condemnation.

First, The Father's justification of them: *it is God that justifieth*; that is, his elect: which shews the eternity of this act; for if the elect of God, as such considered, are the objects of justification; and these were chosen in Christ before the world began, they must be justified as early; or otherwise it could not be always said with truth, *God justifieth the elect*: and also the specialty of this act of grace; it belonging only to *the chosen of God, and precious*: and likewise the continuance of it; it can never be made void; it is inseparable with glorification, and so is a security from all charges and condemnation; for,

1. Let it be considered whose act this is: it is God's act; it is he that justifies; he against whom these persons have sinned, whose law they have broken, whose justice they have affronted, whose legislative power and authority they have trampled upon; who is *the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy*: it is he that acquits; and if he discharges, who can lay any thing to their charge? Besides, he is just whilst he is the justifier of them: nor would he be just if he did not justify them; for his justice is intirely satisfied with the righteousness of his Son, on their account; and it would be unjust to take satisfaction of their surety for them, and yet bring charges against them: this the judge of all the earth will not do; he always does that which is right.

2. The nature of this act of justification: it is not teaching men the way of righteousness, or how sinners may be just with God, or instructing men in the doctrine of justification, shewing the method God takes in justifying a sinner: this is what the ministers of the gospel do, who are therefore said to justify many, *Dan. xii. 3.* or, as we render it, *turn many to righteousness*: nor is it an infusion of righteousness and holiness into the hearts of men, which is no other than sanctification, and is a quite different thing; a work of grace within, and which is imperfect, and is gradually carried on: but it is a forensic term; by this act a man is made *reTus in curia*: it is a pronouncing him righteous, as if he had never sinned; an acquitting him from all charges; and is opposed to condemnation, *Romans v. 18.* and so is a security from all such things.

3. That by which God justifies: which is not the obedience of man; nor any works of righteousness done by him: these are imperfect, and by them no man can be justified in the sight of God; these would not be a sufficient security
from

from charges and condemnation; for they themselves are as filthy rags, and need washing in the blood of Jesus: but it is the obedience and righteousness of Christ, by which God justifies; which is complete and perfect; which is answerable to all the demands of law and justice; by which the law is magnified, and made honourable, and with which God is well pleased; and this he imputes to his people, without any consideration of their works; and this secures them from all the charges of law and justice.

4. This act of justification is universal: it reaches to all things with which God's elect may be chargeable; and the righteousness of Christ justifies from all things, from which there can be no justification by the law of *Moses*: being clothed with this change of raiment, all their iniquities are caused to pass from them; sin is not imputed to them; *their iniquities are forgiven, and their sin is covered*; and when it is sought for, it shall not be found; they will never be charged with it, nor will it ever be brought against them to condemnation.

Secondly, The death of Christ for them: *it is Christ that died*. That Christ died is certain; and that he laid down his life for the sheep, for the elect of God, is as certain; and it is plain, from the scriptures, that he died for their sins, *to make atonement and reconciliation for them*; and this came to pass through his substitution in their room and stead, by having their sins imputed to him; and though his death was but once, it is of an eternal efficacy; and so a full security from all condemnation: for,

1. Sin, the cause of condemnation, is removed by it. Sin was the cause of the condemnation of the angels, and of the old world, and of all mankind in *Adam*. This is that for which the saints condemn themselves, and one another; and for which the world, Satan, and the law condemn: but this is done away by the death of Christ; he has removed the iniquity of his people in one day, even as far as the east is from the west; he has put it away by the sacrifice of himself; he hath abolished it, he has taken away its damning power from it; yea, he has finished, and made an utter end of it.

2. By dying, Christ bore the condemnation due to sin: not only the sentence of condemnation passed upon him, as he was the surety of his people; but it was executed on him: and he was not only condemned unanimously by the Jewish sanhedrim, and then by *Pontius Pilate* the Roman governor, but he was condemned by the justice of God: and God condemned sin in his flesh, finding it upon him, it being imputed to him: for as he was *made sin* by imputation *that the elect might be made the righteousness of God in him*; so he was *made a curse* for them, *that he might redeem them from the curse of the law*, which he has effectually done; and consequently there can be no condemnation to them.

3. Through the death of Christ, the law and justice of God are fully satisfied. The law requires holiness of nature, this it has in the human nature of Christ, which is without sin; and also perfect obedience, which it finds in Christ, who always did the things that pleased his Father; and in case of disobedience, it requires a penalty, and which Christ, as the surety of his people, has bore by his sufferings and death; and so the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled by him for them; which is a full satisfaction to the justice of God; and therefore there is none that can condemn them.

4. Hereby the pardon of sin is procured: *without shedding of blood there is no remission*; the blood of Christ has been shed for the remission of sins, and it is obtained by it: God, for Christ's sake, forgives all trespasses; and delivers from going down to the pit, having found a sufficient ransom-price in the blood of his Son: nay, since the blood of Christ has been shed for this purpose, it is a point of justice and faithfulness with God to forgive sin, and cleanse from all unrighteousness; and sin being pardoned, there can be no condemnation for it.

5. The compleat justification of God's people, is brought about by the death of Christ: justification is sometimes ascribed to the obedience of Christ; *by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous*, Rom. v. 19. and sometimes to the blood of Christ, *being now justified by his blood*, ver. 9. And both are concerned in justification: the one is what is commonly called his *active* obedience; the other his *passive* obedience; and both together, with the holiness of his nature, are imputed for justification: his righteousness intitles to life; and his blood, his sufferings, and death, secure from wrath to come; and, therefore, it may well be said, with a view to Christ's dying for his people, *who is he that condemneth?*

Thirdly, The resurrection of Christ from the dead, is another part of the security of God's elect, from all charges and condemnation, *yea, rather that is risen again*. That Christ is risen, the angels asserted; the apostles were witnesses of it; and so was the holy Ghost, being plentifully poured forth on the disciples as an evidence of that, and of his ascension to heaven. This is a fundamental article, which he that heartily and experimentally knows the power of, shall be saved, Rom. x. 9. and shall never enter into condemnation. For,

1. Christ rose as a conqueror over all his, and his people's enemies: by rising *he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light*; and shewed that he had *took away the sting of death, which is sin*; and had *destroyed him that has the power of death, which is the devil*; and had overcome the world, and now has in his hands the keys of hell and death; and therefore who shall condemn those for whom he died, and rose again?

2. He

2. He rose again as a surety, having satisfied justice: he engaged as a surety for his people from all eternity; God in strict justice; and according to his righteous law, dealt with him as such; he awoke the sword of justice against him; satisfaction was demanded of him, and it was given; and both law and justice being satisfied, Christ was set free: an angel is sent to roll away the stone from the sepulchre; he is discharged by a divine order; it was not possible he should be held by the cords of death, both because of the dignity of his person, and the performance of his suretyship engagements; and therefore being risen and discharged, as the surety of his people, law and justice, cannot condemn them, nor can any other.

3. He rose again as a common head and representative, and for the justification of God's elect: he stood charged with all their sins; these being laid upon him by his Father, with his own consent, he was condemned for them; and suffered death on account of them; and when he rose, he was justified in the Spirit; and acquitted from them all; and his people were all justified in him as their public head. Just as they were crucified with him, and buried with him; so they rose with him, and were justified together with him; he was *delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*, Rom. iv. 25.

4. A *rather* is put upon Christ's resurrection from the dead, as though it was a greater security from condemnation, than his death; and so indeed in some sense it is: Christ's death expiated sin, finished transgression, and made an end of it; but his resurrection has brought in the everlasting righteousness for his people: his dying, shewed that he was arrested and condemned; and that the sentence of condemnation was executed on him; but his resurrection, that he is discharged, and they in him: notwithstanding Christ's death, had he not rose again, they would have been in their sins; under the power and guilt of them, and so liable to condemnation, 1 Cor. xv. 17. But Christ being risen, he appears without sin, even sin imputed; and so they are freed from sin, and from condemnation by it in him.

Fourthly, The session of Christ at the right hand of God, adds to the security of the saints from charges and condemnation, *who is even at the right hand of God*.

1. This includes his ascension into heaven, and his entrance there; both which serve to strengthen this point: when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, or he triumphed over those who had led his people captive, sin, Satan, the law, and every enemy of theirs; and therefore since these are led captive, who shall condemn them? yea, he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious also; so that though they have been rebellious, they are graciously regarded, and shall not be condemned. When he entered into heaven, he entered as their forerunner, in their name, to take possession of it, and prepare it

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for them, and has promised to come again and take them to himself, that they may enjoy it: wherefore, it is not possible that they should be condemned with the world.

2. Christ being at the right hand of God, shews, that he has done his work he came about; that he has made atonement for sin, and obtained eternal redemption; and that he has done this to satisfaction; and therefore is highly exalted by, and at the right hand of God, where he has all power in heaven and in earth; where he is above all; angels, principalities, and powers, being subject to him; and where he must sit until all enemies are put under his feet: it therefore cannot be in the power of any to condemn those for whom he died: to which may be added, that these are not only raised together with him, but they are made to sit together in heavenly places in him; and must be secure from condemnation, *Ephesians* ii. 6.

Fifthly and lastly, The intercession of Christ for those whom the Father has chosen, and he has died for, is another branch of their security from charges and condemnation: if he rebukes those that bring charges against them, as he does, who dare bring them? and if he is an advocate with the Father for them, as he is, who can condemn them? this part of Christ's work which he performs in heaven, as a priest upon his throne, is done, not by making vocal prayer, as in the days of his flesh, which does not seem necessary; nor by supplicating God, as an angry judge, which is not consistent with his state of exaltation, nor with his having made peace, by the blood of his cross; nor by litigating, or controverting a point, in the court of heaven, though he is a counsellor and an advocate: but by the appearance of his person, for his people; by the presentation of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice for them, which speak for peace, pardon, and atonement; by offering up the prayers and praises of them unto God; by declaring it as his will, that such and such blessings be bestowed upon them; and by applying the benefits of his death unto them; and which abundantly secure them from condemnation. For,

1. It should be considered who he is that intercedes, and what an interest he has in him with whom he intercedes: he is the Son of God who makes intercession, who can engage his heart to approach unto him; and who from the relation he stands in to God, must have an interest in him, and so have the persons for whom he intercedes; for he is his God, and their God, his Father, and their Father; wherefore his intercession cannot fail: and, whereas the consideration of Christ, the great high priest, that is passed unto the heavens, being the Son of God, is an argument to hold fast a profession of faith, and to come with boldness to the throne of grace, *Heb.* iv. 14, 16. So it may be improved by faith, as a very strong one against all charges and condemnation taking place on those for whom Christ intercedes.

2. The intercession of Christ is constant; it always continues: though he was dead, he is alive, and lives for evermore; and he lives not for himself only but for others; he ever lives to make intercession: and because he is constantly employed in this work, therefore, as fast as charges are brought against his people, he removes them; by pleading for them, and shewing the falshood or injustice of such charges; or the reason why, though true, they are not to be received; and on any attempt to condemn them, he shews reason why there is, and should be, no condemnation to them.

3. His intercession is always prevalent: he, who is the redeemer of his people, is strong; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and he pleads their cause, and thoroughly pleads it; and always carries his point; for his pleas are founded upon his propitiatory sacrifice, which is of a sweet smelling savour to God, and gives a full satisfaction to his justice; so that it has nothing to object to those on whose account it was offered up, and the virtue of it is pleaded. Christ was ever heard, when here on earth, and so he is now in heaven: whatever he asks for he has; yea, whatever is asked for in his name, is given.

4. The application of salvation is owing to the intercession of Christ, though the impetration of it is by his death; and the apostle argues from the evidence of the one to the certainty of the other; *for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life*, Rom. v. 10. that is, by his interceding life: yea, the proof of Christ being able to save, is taken from his perpetual intercession; *wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them*, Heb. vii. 25. The influence therefore which the intercession of Christ must have on the security of the saints from condemnation, is very evident.

Thus have I endeavoured to improve this passage of scripture upon the mournful occasion of the death of Mrs ANN BRINE, late member of the church of Christ in this place*, and late wife of the pastor of it; at whose request I have preached from it to you; it having been of singular use to the deceased.

It may now be expected I should say something concerning her, which will be chiefly about the gracious experience she was favoured with. She was a daughter of Mr JOHN MOOR of *Northampton*; an eminent preacher of the gospel, a minister of the Baptist denomination, of considerable abilities and learning, whom I had the honour to have a personal knowledge of, and acquaintance with. But though she had a religious education, her conversion, her knowledge of Christ, and experimental acquaintance with divine things, were not owing to that, but to the efficacy of divine grace: by several papers of her own writing, put into my hands, it appears, how she came by the knowledge of salvation by Christ, and

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* Near Cripplegate.

the great doctrines of the gospel; which were the support of her soul, and the foundation of her joy. These express the sight and sense she had of sin; her abhorrence and detestation of it; the view she had of the loveliness of Christ; of the necessity and suitableness of salvation by him; and how she was enabled to cast her soul on him; and trust in him for eternal life and happiness: but, among the rest, I find one paper, written little more than a year ago, when she took a review of her experience; led thereunto upon a supposition, that there were yet some very great troubles to come upon the churches and servants of Christ, she once thought had been over; which put her upon considering, how it would fare with her in such a time of trial; and what evidence she had of her being a child of God: for which purpose she observed how it had been with her of late; what was her present frame of mind and thoughts of things, and how it had been with her heretofore, and whether her former experience was from nature, or from the Spirit of God. As to the first of these, how it had been of late, and how it was with her then, her words are these: "I have
 " often thought my spots are not the spots of God's children; I find so much
 " sin bubbling up in my heart; so many sins of omission and commission, daily
 " and hourly; I can say, that *in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing*;
 " and such an *evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God*. Sure it is
 " not with the saints as with me! at the same time I have some secret hope,
 " which I would not part with for all the world: at some times I have earnest
 " desires after a full conformity to Christ, and thirstings after him. O! that
 " I could love him more: O! that I could serve him better: O! that I
 " found more love in me to his ways, his ordinances, and his people: but, O!
 " *wretched creature that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of sin?* At
 " some times I think I can say with the apostle, *thanks be to God, through Jesus*
 " *Christ, who hath given me the victory*. Those three scriptures have of late,
 " upon various occasions, been sweet under a sense of sin, *If thou wilt, thou*
 " *canst make me clean*, Matt. viii. 2. *To whom shall I go, but unto thee? Thou*
 " *hast the words of eternal life*, John vi. 68. *The name of the Lord is a strong tower,*
 " *whither the righteous run, and are safe*, Prov. xviii. 10. Though I am a vile,
 " sinful, polluted creature, and, as I think, the most vile of all thy creatures;
 " yet, for such, for the very chief of sinners, thou didst suffer and die, and
 " who knows but for me? I know this, that if thou wilt, thou canst make
 " even me clean; and though I am thus sinful, to whom can I go, but to that
 " God against whom I have sinned? there is no help any where else; no other
 " name given, whereby any can be saved, but the name Christ Jesus." She
 next proceeds to inquire, how it had been with her formerly, when God first
 begun to work upon her soul, and she set out in the way of religion; concern-
 ing which, she thus expresses herself: "Have I not experienced some things
 " which

" which natural men are strangers to? O! sure I hope I have: upon a recol-
 " lection of several parts of my former experience, I was warmed, and asked
 " myself this question; Did this or that flow from nature? No; nature is
 " averſe to it. Did education produce it? No; for if that could have had
 " ſuch an effect, it might as well have produced it ſooner: for it was not any
 " particular care of my parents, at the time of my awakenings, that was a
 " means thereof; for ſome time before their care had been abated to what was
 " uſual; and my heart more averſe to God and good than ever: Did ſabbaths
 " ſeem before this time delightful? and was I before convicted, inſtructed,
 " edified, or comforted, by the word preached? No; I too well remember the
 " quite contrary of this; even when ſabbaths were burdensome inſtead of de-
 " lightful; when, if I was obliged to be preſent, I ſtrove to keep from giving
 " any attention to what was delivered. Had I love for the people of God?
 " No; I had an averſion to many of them; nor did I love any for the ſake of
 " their being ſaints. Had I a ſight and ſenſe of ſin; of its evil nature? No;
 " I thought myſelf as good as others that talk more: I did not know that I
 " was *poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked* then: Did I taſte a ſweetneſs in
 " the ſcriptures? No; I thought them to be only the inventions of ſome men,
 " done with a deſign to keep others in awe. Did I ever ſee the abſolute need
 " of a Saviour before? No; I thought my own works were to ſave me, and
 " reaſoned thus ſometimes: I have not been guilty of murder, ſtealing, &c.
 " and ſo am in as fair a way for a better world, if any ſuch there be, as others."
 Having put theſe queſtions, and reſolved them in the above manner, ſhe rightly
 draws the following concluſion. " Then ſure what I have met with and expe-
 " rienced, muſt be from the Spirit of God; as conviction of ſin, of its heinous
 " and aggravated nature; of original, as well as actual tranſgreſſion; the curſe
 " demerited by it; the ſenſe of my own inability to perform the thing that is
 " good; the diſcovery of my need of a Saviour; my ſeeing Chriſt to be a ſuit-
 " able, all-ſufficient, and able Saviour; my approving of him, and application
 " to him for my Saviour; my preſſing deſires towards him, as my alone and
 " complete Saviour; my admiration of the love of Father, Son and Spirit, ma-
 " niſteſted in the great concern of man's ſalvation; my diſcovering the harmony
 " and agreement; the ſublimity and ſweetneſs of the holy ſcriptures; and the
 " effects that many ſweet and precious promiſes ſet home to my ſoul have had
 " on me; my hungering and thiſtling after Chriſt, his grace, and manifeſtation
 " of his love and pardoning mercy; my abhorring myſelf for all that I have
 " done; eſpecially for thoſe ſins which I thought were committed againſt light
 " and love; my love to young converts; my longing for the return of ſabbaths;
 " the comfort I have received under the preaching of the goſpel, &c. Theſe

“ were things I was once an utter stranger to, and do believe the carnal mind
 “ is enmity against. Why then it must be from above; and if so, then *be that*
 “ *batb begun the good work, will carry it on to the day of Christ.* If the Lord had
 “ a mind to have destroyed me, he sure would not have shewn me such things
 “ as these; and if I am the Lord’s, then that promise stands firm, *with the*
 “ *righteous it shall go well,* Isaiah iii. 10. and what if troubles should arise?
 “ what if I should suffer, or even fall in the common calamity? if the Lord is
 “ pleased to support under, and give suffering grace, suffering faith, and suf-
 “ fering patience, with suffering trials,

“ *I can do all things, or can bear*

“ *All sufferings, if my Lord be there;*

“ *Sweet pleasure mingles with the pains,*

“ *Whilst his left hand my head sustains.*

“ I leave myself, my all, in his hands, and desire cheerfully to submit to his
 “ will in all things; and not be anxious about this, or the other trying dispen-
 “ sation of providence; knowing that he can make hard things easy, and crook-
 “ ed things straight; hoping that these things he will do for me, and not for-
 “ sake me.” This was the comfortable result of her thoughts, occasioned by
 a melancholy scene of troubles she had in view: but, she is got safe to her fa-
 ther’s house, and is secure from them. How soon they may come to pass, namely,
 the “giving the outward court to the Gentiles, to be trodden under foot; the
 “slaying of the witnesses; the leaving their dead bodies unburied for three
 “days and a half, or three years and a half; and their enemies rejoicing over
 “them;” things she was meditating upon, God only knows: may we be pre-
 pared for them, supported under them, and carried through them, should
 they be in our day, which is very probable.

She was a person attended with frequent disorders of body, and which often
 came upon her on Lord’s days; whereby she was prevented waiting upon the
 Lord in his word and ordinances, which were delightful to her; and in which
 she received much spiritual advantage: this gave her a great concern of mind,
 and she would sometimes say, “she chose, if it was the will of the Lord, that
 “she might have two days affliction, instead of one, on other days, could she be
 “free on the Lord’s day, that she might have the opportunity of hearing the
 “word which was so useful to her.”

Her last illness was very short, and it was not expected it would have issued
 in death. Under it she was very comfortable, resigned to the will of God, and
 trusting in Christ, and so *died in the Lord*: wherefore, you, my Brother, and
 the

the rest of the surviving relations, have no reason to mourn as those without hope, since *them that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him*, and her among the rest, when you will meet, and never part more, and be for ever with the Lord.

Let what has been the subject of discourse on this sorrowful occasion, be regarded by each of us; which may serve as a direction to us, where to go for relief under all charges brought against us, either by ourselves or others; and under a sense of deserved condemnation, and especially when harrassed with the accusations of Satan, and the condemnation of our own hearts: let us apply to Christ; let us take the shield of faith, that shield which faith lays hold on, and uses to good purposes when it weilds it aright; namely, the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ; his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession: let us hold up, and hold forth these things, as a full answer to every charge, and as a sufficient reason, why no condemnation can come to us.

This may lead us on to observe, how much we are beholden to Christ; and of what use he is to us, as dying, rising again, ascending on high, sitting at the right hand of God, and there interceding for us: how valuable he is, and how precious he should be to us; and, particularly, what a regard we should have for his righteousness, which of itself clears from all charges, and secures from condemnation; and, therefore, it should be our chief desire, and real concern to be found *in him, not having on our own righteousness*, but his. It becomes us, and is best for us, to look to him at all times; to place our confidence in him, and fetch all our comfort from him; for if there be any consolation, it is in him; and seeing we receive so much benefit by him, we are under obligation to glorify him, with our bodies and spirits, which are his.

S E R M O N XXVII.

Occasioned by the Death of Mr. EDWARD LUDLOW. Preached Jan. 1, 1749.

2 T H E S S. II. 16.

— *And good hope through grace.*

THREE things the apostle does in the context: he describes the happy state and condition of the persons he writes to; he exhorts them to stand fast in the faith, and hold fast the truth; and he prays for them.

First, He describes their happy state, in opposition to the followers of the man of sin, the son of perdition, who were given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned. First, by their character, as *Brethren*; of Christ, of the apostle, and of one another, in a spiritual relation; and as *beloved of the Lord*, or *of God*, as some versions; of God the Father, who had so loved them as to give his Son for them; of the Lord Jesus Christ; who had given himself for them; and of the Lord the Spirit, who had quickened and sanctified them: and he further describes them by their election of God, for which he thought himself bound to give thanks to God for them; the date of which is, *from the beginning*, or eternity; the means, *sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth*; the end, *salvation*; the evidence, the effectual *call* of them by the gospel to the enjoyment of that glory, which Christ is in the possession of, and is preparing for them.

Secondly, He exhorts them to stand fast in the faith of the gospel, and not be moved away from it; seeing they were so much in the favour of God, were chosen of him, and called by him: and to hold fast the traditions they had been instructed in, both by word of mouth and by letter: not the traditions of the Jewish elders; nor such like unwritten traditions the Papists plead for; but the truths and ordinances of the gospel; so called, because delivered by Christ to his apostles, and by them to the churches, either by speech, or by writing; and are the evangelical cabala, which ought to be held fast till Christ's second coming.

Thirdly, He prays for them, as being most affectionately concerned for their welfare; and therefore he follows his exhortations with petitions; well knowing this

this was the most effectual way to have them succeed. The objects addressed are, *our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father*; two divine persons in the godhead: and seeing our Lord Jesus Christ is equally prayed unto as God our Father; and the same things are asked of him as of the Father; and the same gifts and blessings of grace are ascribed to the one as to the other; yea, he is mentioned in the address before his Father; we may conclude his perfect equality with him, and so his true and proper deity; or prayer, which is such a considerable branch of worship, would not be made to him, nor would he be placed on an equal foot with his Father, and much less be set before him. The things prayed for are, that these divine persons would comfort their hearts; with fresh discoveries of their love to them; with renewed applications of pardoning grace and mercy; with the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel; by the word and ordinances of it; and by granting them fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit, in private and in public: and also, that they would *stablish* them *in every good word and work*; in every truth of the gospel, and in the practice of every duty. It is a good thing for a christian to have his heart established in the doctrines of grace; and it is his honour to be *stedfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*: and though the saints are in a firm and stable state, as being interested in everlasting love, secured in the covenant of grace, and safe in the arms of Christ; yet they have need of establishment in the present truths, that so they may *not be carried away with the error of the wicked*; and in the exercise of grace, that they may not fall from the steadfastness of their faith; and in the discharge of duty, that they be not drawn off from it. Now there is abundant reason to conclude that these petitions would be heard and answered,

1. From the characters of the persons addressed, *our Lord Jesus Christ himself; he who is our Lord*, not by creation only, as he is Lord of all; but by redemption, having bought us with his precious blood, and therefore are not our own, but his; and by virtue of a marriage-relation to us, he having espoused us to himself in righteousness, mercy, and loving-kindness; and therefore, is our Lord, and we should worship him: and moreover he is Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer, who has saved us from our Sins, and from wrath to come, with an everlasting salvation; and is the Christ of God, anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King; which offices he sustains and executes for us; and therefore may it not reasonably be concluded that whatsoever is asked of him and in his name, will be granted? The other person is *God even our Father*; not by creation merely, as he is of all men, who are his offspring, and the care of his providence; but by adoption, through Jesus Christ: he who is Christ's God is our God, and he who is Christ's Father is our Father; which relation is owing to his
free

free favour and love; and if earthly parents are ready and willing to give good gifts to their children to the utmost of their power; will not our heavenly Father give every good and needful thing to his children, so near and dear to him? and which may be further concluded,

2. From the love each person bore to those for whom the petitions are presented: *which hath loved us*; which relates both to God our Father, and to our Lord Jesus Christ, who have both loved us; such *who were by nature children of wrath, enemies in their minds by wicked works*; and were far from having any true love to God or Christ; so far from it, that they were enmity itself unto them, and yet loved by them. Matchless, unparalleled Grace! The Father loved them, and therefore appointed them not unto the wrath they deserved, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ; loved them, and therefore made a covenant with them in Christ, ordered in all things and sure, full of precious promises and spiritual blessings, suited to their cases and circumstances; loved them, and therefore made them the care and charge of his Son, put them into his hands, and laid up grace and glory for them; loved them, and therefore sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them; loved them, and therefore spared him not, but delivered him up into the hands of justice and death for them; loved them, and therefore begot them again to a lively hope, and quickened them when dead in trespasses and sins; loved them, and therefore justified them, pardoned them, and adopted them into his family, and made them heirs of himself, and joint-heirs with Christ. And our Lord Jesus Christ himself loved them with the same love his Father did, and as early; and therefore in eternity became their surety, and espoused their persons and cause; loved them, and therefore in time assumed their nature, bore their sorrows, took upon him their sins, and suffered for them; loved them, and therefore gave himself an offering unto God for them; loved them, and therefore shed his precious blood for the remission of their sins, and washed them from them in it; loved them, and therefore is gone to prepare heaven and happiness for them, and will come again and take them to himself, that *where he is, they may be also*. Now, from persons of so much love, and who have given such strong proofs of it, what may not be expected? And which may be still further concluded,

3. From the gifts of grace, bestowed as the fruits of such love: *and hath given us everlasting consolation*; God is the God of comfort, and all true comfort springs from him; Christ is the consolation of *Israel*, and if there is any real, solid comfort, it is in him, and comes by him, through his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and which is applied by the holy Spirit, through the word and ordinances, which are breasts of consolation; and by the ministers of the gospel, who are *Barnabases*, sons of comfort; and miserable comforters are all others

others that attempt to comfort in another way. And whatever comfort is had in this way, is a pure gift of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ; it is what men are undeserving of, and therefore the least measure of it should not be reckoned small; because those that share it are by nature children of wrath, as others: and though this, as to sensible enjoyment, does not always continue, but is interrupted through the prevalence of corruptions, the violence of Satan's temptations, and through divine desertions; yet the foundation of it is always, and is everlasting, as the everlasting love of God; and therefore the elect are not, and cannot be consumed; the everlasting covenant of grace, which yields the heirs of promise strong consolation; the everlasting righteousness of Christ, by which being justified, they have peace with God; and everlasting salvation by him, and therefore shall be saved from wrath to come; and both Christ and the holy Spirit, the other comforter, always abide, and are the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever: and besides, as the spiritual joy of believers is what no man can take away from them, so it eventually issues in everlasting consolation, without any interruption in the future state; when *the redeemed shall be come to Zion, they shall have everlasting joy on their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.* The other gift is *good hope through grace*; and since God and Christ have bestowed such high favours upon the saints, it may be reasonably thought, that they will go on to comfort their hearts, and establish them. And this clause in the text being what our deceased friend pointed at, and laid the emphasis upon, I shall a little more largely insist upon it, and do the following things.

First, I shall give some account of the nature of the grace of *hope*.

Secondly, Shew the original of it, that it is of God, and a gift of his.

Thirdly, Explain in what sense it is through grace.

Fourthly, Make it appear that such an hope is a good one.

First, I shall give some account of the nature of the grace of *hope*; and which may be learnt in a good measure from the things with which it is conversant. And,

1st, It is of things unseen. An object seen and enjoyed leaves no room for the exercise of hope about it; wherefore the apostle says, *hope that is seen is not hope**; that is, what is seen and enjoyed is not the object of hope; and hope can be no longer conversant with it, since it is in actual possession; concerning which the same inspired writer in the same place thus strongly reasons; *for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.* Christ is the object of our hope, and he is unseen by us, with our bodily eyes, is only seen by faith; he is gone to heaven, and

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* Rom. viii. 24, 25.

is at the Father's right hand, out of our sight; but we hope and believe that he will come again and receive us to himself; and therefore we expect him our Saviour from heaven, to raise our bodies, and change them, and make them like his own, and to re-unite them to our souls, and give us perfect happiness with him: the glories of the future state we are hoping for, are unseen realities; what eye has not seen, nor ear heard; eternal things we are looking at by Faith, and which are a support under present afflictions, are invisible; they are within the veil, into which faith enters, and gives a glimpse of; and hope follows, and waits for a clear sight and full enjoyment of.

2dly, It is of things future, things to come: present things are not the object of hope; for what are present with us, we no more hope about; we and hope ceases, which was exercised concerning them when at a distance: nor have them, are the things of this present life the only objects of hope; *for if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*^b. Our hope indeed has to do with future things in the present life; we hope for more communion with God and Christ in ordinances, and therefore wait patiently in them; we hope for further supplies of grace out of the fulness that is in Christ, and therefore wait upon him and for him; we gird up the loins of our minds, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Christ: our hope reaches beyond the grave, to a future state in another world; to the resurrection of our bodies; to our standing at the right hand of Christ; to our being justified before men and angels; to our receiving the crown of life and glory; to our admission into the everlasting kingdom; and to our being with Christ for evermore, and being *like him, and seeing him as he is*. The things we are hoping for are laid up for us to be enjoyed hereafter; we have here some pledges and foretastes now, but the main is yet to come; and therefore we keep looking for it: faith only gives those things we are hoping for a kind of subsistence, and realizes them to us; and therefore it is said to be *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*^c.

3dly, It is of things difficult to be obtained, as future salvation is; for though the righteous are certainly saved, yet *scarcely*^d, that is, with difficulty; by reason of the many corruptions, temptations, and snares in the way; and particularly by reason of afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions for Christ's sake: they come to the enjoyment of it through a strait gate and a narrow way, through many tribulations and sorrows; and these try and exercise hope. And yet,

4thly, It is of things possible; or otherwise there would be no room, nor reason for hope; nothing but black despair would ensue, and a resolution to lay aside

^b 1 Cor. xv. 19.

^c Heb. xi. 1.

^d 1 Peter iv. 12.

afide all thoughts about our happiness in another world, and to take the swing in carnal lusts and pleasures; saying, *there is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart*^e. But eternal glory and happiness being what God has prepared and promised, what is to be had through Christ, and that by sinners, even the chief of them, *there is hope in Israel concerning this thing*^f; and the least encouragement given to a sensible sinner, hope lays hold upon; and it improves every hint and circumstance to its own advantage; such a soul *putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope*^g; and as the possibility and probability of happiness appear to him, so in proportion his hope rises.

5thly, It is of things certain, which have a real being, and which are solid and substantial; and which not only faith is the substance of, but they are really laid up in heaven, are in the hands of Christ, and shall certainly be enjoyed; and of which the hoping christian has no reason to doubt: and there is not only a certainty in the object of hope, but there is such a firmness and stability in the grace itself, that the soul in the lively exercise of it rejoices in hope of the glory of God; and which is so sure unto him, that he is even said to be already *saved by hope*^h.

6thly, True *hope* is always attended with *faith*: these two graces go together; where the one is the other is; they are wrought by the same hand, and at the same time, in regeneration; and are more or less exercised together; though the one may be at some times more visible in its exercise than the other; and there may be hope when faith is scarcely discernible; yet faith is at the bottom, and *is the substance of things hoped for*; and without which there would be no hope; and some of the acts of these graces are so similar, so much like to one another, that they are scarcely to be discerned and distinguished from each other; and therefore are put for one another: So what is called *trusting in Christ*, Eph. i. 12. is in the Greek text *hoping in Christ*; and these two are joined together in Jer. xvii. 7. I proceed,

Secondly, To shew the original of this grace, that it is of God, and a gift of his; for this clause, *and good hope through grace*, is in connection with the words preceding, *and our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath given both everlasting comfort and good hope*. As faith, so hope, is *not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*; and what is said of the one is true of the other, *that all men have it not*ⁱ. Hope is not to be found naturally in men; nor is it in any natural man, in a man that is in a state of unregeneracy; such may express

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^e Jer. xviii. 12.^f Ezra x. 2.^g Lam. iii. 29.^h Rom. viii. 24.ⁱ Ephes. ii. 8. 2 Thess. iii. 2.

prefs it, but not experience it; it is too commonly and too profanely said, "As I hope to be saved;" when such who use the phrase know not what a good hope through grace is; it is the character of God's own people before conversion, that they are *without hope*, as well as *without God and Christ in the world*^k: This is a grace which is wrought in the soul in regeneration by the Spirit of God, and is one of his fruits; it is implanted by him, and grows up under his influence; it is through him believers wait for the hope of righteousness by faith; and it is through his power they abound in the exercise of it: No man has it till he is born again; for he is, of abounding grace, begotten to it: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*^l; by which it appears, as well as from our text, that God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ have a concern in the production of a good and lively hope; that it is owing to the abundant mercy of the one, and the resurrection of the other, who was raised and glorified that our *faith and hope might be in God*^m; and that it is not until a man is regenerated; whatever hope he has before, is not a lively one, and so not a good one: The gospel is the ordinary means by which it is ingenerated, and therefore may be called *the hope of the gospel*ⁿ; and certain it is, that the gospel being *good news*, and *glad tidings of good things*, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ, tends greatly to encourage and promote hope; its doctrines being doctrines of grace, and its promises being free, absolute, and unconditional, are calculated for this purpose, and greatly serve it; from these the heirs of promise have strong consolation, who flee to Christ and *lay hold on the hope set before them*; the promises they are heirs of, and which yield them comfort, encourage their hope in Christ, who is set before them, in the gospel, as the object of it; and, generally speaking, it is a word of promise which the holy Spirit brings home and applies to the Soul, which is the ground and foundation of its hope: Hence says *David, Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope*^o. Indeed whatsoever is written in the scriptures is written for our use, profit, and learning, *that we through comfort of them might have hope*^p; and there are many things which, under a divine blessing, serve to cultivate and increase this grace; as the consideration of the power and faithfulness of God in his promises; the free grace and mercy of God displayed in salvation by Christ; the sufferings, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ; and present experiences and a recollection of past ones; for *experience worketh hope*^q: But then the cause, means, motives and encouragements of it, all shew it to be of the grace of God, and a gift of his. And which may further appear, by,

Thirdly,

^k Ephes. ii. 12.

^o Psalm cxix. 49.

^l 1 Peter i. 3.

^p Rom. xv. 4.

^m Ibid. v. 20.

^q Rom. v. 4.

ⁿ Col. i. 23.

Thirdly, Explaining in what sense it is *through grace*. Grace is the spring and source of it; it comes to us from and through the grace of God; it is a part of that grace, which the God of all grace is the donor of; it is a part of the fulness of grace which is in Christ the Mediator, and is had of him; it is a part of that grace which the spirit of grace operates, and is the author of in conversion. Grace also is the object of it. The words may be literally rendered from the original text, *and good hope, εν χάριτι*, "in grace," and so the phrase is the same with *hoping in the mercy of God*: the mercy of God in Christ is the ground and foundation of hope; and is not only the motive and encouragement to it, *let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy*; but is the thing itself, which hope is conversant with: the sensible sinner, or hoping christian, hopes in the pardoning, justifying, and adopting grace of God, through Christ; he hopes that the good work of grace is begun in him; and he hopes and believes it *will be performed until the day of Christ*; he hopes for larger measures of grace from Christ, to enable him to do his will and work, to oppose his own corruptions, to withstand Satan's temptations, and to discharge his duty to God and man; he hopes the grace of Christ will be sufficient for him, or that a sufficient supply of it will be given him, to carry him through all the trials and difficulties of life; he hopes that his covenant-God and Father will supply all his need out of his riches in glory by Christ, and that God will give him persevering grace to hold on and out unto the end; he hopes for grace to be brought to him at the appearance of Christ; and he hopes for glory, which is the perfection of grace. Moreover, a good hope through grace is an hope that is exercised through the grace of God; that is to say, that a man hopes for such and such things, and that he shall have them; not through any merits of his own, or through works of righteousness done by him, but through the grace and mercy of God. Thus for instance,

1st, Let the thing hoped for be salvation, as *David* says, *Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation*: this the sensible soul knows is not by works, but by grace; and therefore he hopes for it, not through the one, but through the other: he is well assured that God saves and calls men, not according to their works; but according to his own purpose and grace; that it is *not by works of righteousness they have done they are saved, but according to the mercy of God through the blood of Christ, and washing of regeneration; and that they are saved by grace, and not merit, to prevent boasting in the creature; and therefore he hopes for it in this way, and in this only: and it is its being by grace which encourages him to hope for it; for were it by works, he should for ever despair of obtaining it. He observes, that it is freely wrought out by Christ, who came into the*

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world

* Psalm cxvii. 11.

* Psalm cxxx. 7.

* Psalm cxix. 166.

world having salvation, and is become the author of it; that it is already done, Christ on the cross said, *it is finished*^u, and now he is on the throne, he says, *it is done*^v, and so completely done, that nothing is wanting in it, nor can any thing be added to it; and therefore the man that is acquainted with all this, hopes for it through the grace of Christ, that has wrought it, without any works of his: he further observes, that Christ came to seek, and to save lost sinners; yea, that it is a truth to be depended on, and is worthy of his acceptation and the acceptation of others, that *Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners*; and that the worst and vilest have been *washed, cleansed, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God*; and therefore he hopes for salvation through the same grace and favour that has been shown to them, though he has been as bad as they, and may think himself worse; he takes notice that Christ is lifted up in the ministry of the word, as the brazen serpent was lifted up on the pole, that whoever looks to him and *believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life*; he is encouraged by the gospel-declaration that *whoever believes in him shall be saved*^x; and by the gospel instruction given to a sensible sinner in his case, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*^y; which he considers as wonderful displays of the grace of God in Christ, through which he is enabled to hope in him.

2dly, Let it be the pardon of sin he is hoping for: As sin is the first thing the Spirit of God convinces a man of, it is the pardon of it that he in the first place seeks after; and when he understands the right way in which it is to be had, he hopes for it; not through his tears, humiliations, and repentance, but through the grace of God streaming in the blood of Jesus: He finds that God only can forgive sin, against whom it is committed; that this is his sole prerogative, which he exercises in a free and sovereign manner; that he has promised, in covenant to his people, that he *will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will he remember no more*^z; that he has proclaimed his name in his gospel, *a God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin*^a; and that there is none like him on that account; and therefore he is greatly encouraged to turn to the Lord, who will abundantly pardon, and to hope in his mercy: He understands by the sacred writings, that God set forth his Son to be the propitiation for sin; and that he sent him forth in the fulness of time to shed his blood for the remission of it, there being no remission without shedding of blood; and that he has *exalted him at his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins*; and therefore he hopes for it through him, seeing *with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption*: And though he observes that forgiveness of sin is through the blood of Christ, yet

according

^u John xix. 30.^v Rev. xxi. 6.^x Mark xvi. 16.^y Acts xvi. 31.^z Heb. viii. 12.^a Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

according to the riches of divine grace, and comes through the tender mercy of our God; and therefore he hopes for it, not according to his own merit, but according to the multitude of God's tender mercies. The gospel declaration, that *whosoever believes in Christ, shall receive remission of sins*^b; and the many instances of pardoning grace and mercy, even such that have been great sinners, and whose sins were attended with aggravated circumstances; as *David*, who was guilty of murder and adultery; *Manasseh*, of most abominable crimes; *Peter*, of denying his Lord and Master; *Saul*, the persecutor, the blasphemer, and the injurious person; and the notorious sinner spoken of, who *loved much because much was forgiven her*; all these engage to the exercise of hope for pardon, through the free grace and mercy of God.

3dly, Let it be eternal life which is the thing hoped for, as that is; *in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lye, promised before the world began*, says the apostle^c; hence eternal glory and happiness being the object of hope, is called the *blessed hope*, and *the hope which is laid up in heaven*^d. Now, eternal life is *the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*; it is that kingdom which it is our heavenly Father's good pleasure to give unto his children; it is what he of his rich grace has prepared for them, and promised to them, calls them unto, makes them meet for, and bestows upon them: Not only the promise of eternal life, but that itself is put into Christ's hands for them; and he has power to give it to as many as the Father has given him; and to them he does give it, and they shall never perish: And since it is a gift of pure free grace, therefore do sensible sinners, seeking for glory, immortality, and eternal life, hope for it; which they could never expect upon any other foot: And they are the rather encouraged to hope for it, since God has declared it to be his will, that whoever sees the Son, and believes on him, shall have it; and because they find the holy Spirit of God is at work upon their hearts, has begun the good work, which he will finish, and is working them up for that self-same thing, eternal life and happiness; wherefore they reason as *Manoah's* wife did, that "if the Lord were pleased to destroy them, he would never have shewed them and told them such things as he has done, or wrought such things in them;" and hence for grace and through grace they hope for glory; seeing to whom God gives grace, he gives glory; these are inseparably connected together; whom he calls and justifies, them he also glorifies. And,

Fourthly, Such an hope is a good one. There is a bad hope and there is a good one. There is the hope of the worldly man, *who makes gold his hope, and says to the fine gold, thou art my confidence*^e; he puts his trust in it; and not only places his dependence on it for present and future good in this life, but hopes for eternal

^b Acts x. 43.^c Tit. i. 2.^d Tit. ii. 13. Col. i. 5.^e Job xxxi. 24.

nal life upon the account of it; imagining there is none the King of kings will delight to honour in the other world as himself, who enjoys so large a portion of this; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the man that is only upon principles in which he has been brought up; who hopes upon the faith of others, his natural descent, or being born of such and such parents, and his religious education; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the *moralist* and *legalist*; who hopes he shall inherit eternal life because of the good things he has done; because of his moral life and actions, and his works of righteousness in obedience to the law; whereas by these no man can be justified, and so not saved, or ever enter into the kingdom of heaven; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the hypocrite, who hopes for heaven because of his profession of religion and subjection to ordinances, and going through a round of duties in a formal manner, and with a mere outward show; this is a bad hope; it is like the spider's web, and will be as the giving up of the Ghost, and be of no avail; even though such may have gained a name among men to be holy and good, when God takes away their souls. And there is the hope of the profane sinner, for such have their hope; and they hope for salvation through the absolute mercy of God; they fancy if they have but time to say at last, "Lord have mercy on us," all will be well; this is a bad hope; for there is no mercy for sinners, but through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ. But the hope we have been treating of is a *good* one, and may be so called,

1st, Because it is laid upon a good foundation; not upon the absolute mercy of God; not upon the merit of the creature; not upon any outward acts of righteousness; not upon civility, morality, or an external profession of religion; all which are sandy foundations to build an hope of eternal happiness upon: but upon the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; upon the person of Christ, who is God over all blessed for ever, and is able to save to the uttermost, who is *the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof* in time of trouble, and *Christ our hope*, and *in us the hope of glory*; upon his blood, which cleanses from all sin, and was shed for the remission of it; upon his righteousness, which justifies from all sin, and gives a right and title to eternal life; and upon his sacrifice, by which sin is finished and made an end of, and reconciliation is made for it.

2^{dly}, Because not only the author of it is good, who from it is called *the God of hope*^f, but because the objects of it are good things; it is of good things to come, and the best things are reserved till last; now the saints have their evil things, their sorrows and afflictions, but hereafter they shall have their good things. Christ is come an high priest of good things to come unto his people; and these good things are laid up for them, and shall be enjoyed by them; and
hope

^f Rom. xv. 13.

hope is waiting for them : And the hoping christian knows them to be good by the foretastes and pledges he has had of them ; such as a sight of God in Christ ; communion with Father, Son, and Spirit ; fellowship with angels and glorified saints ; perfect knowledge, holiness, and pleasure.

3dly. Because it is in its nature and effects good : It is called a *lively hope*, or a *living one*^g ; because it has not only for its subject a living man in a spiritual sense ; and for its foundation, not dead works, but a living Christ ; and for its object, eternal life ; but because it is of a quickening, exhilarating, and cheering nature ; and because it is attended with living works of righteousness ; for *as faith without works is dead*, so is hope likewise ; and because it always continues, and is sometimes in lively exercise, when other graces are not so lively : It is also said to be of a purifying nature ; *every man that hath his hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure*^h ; and which it no other ways does than as it deals with the pure and spotless righteousness of Christ, and with his precious blood, which purges the conscience from dead works.

4thly, Because of its great usefulness : It is that to the soul an anchor is to a ship when becalmed, or in danger through rocks and shoals ; it preserves and keeps it steady ; and is therefore said to be *as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast*ⁱ : And it serves the same use and purpose as an helmet does to the head ; and therefore *the hope of salvation is said to be for an helmet*^k ; this grace preserves the head and heart of a christian from bad principles in perilous times ; for he can give into none that strike at the foundation of his hope ; it is an erecter of his head, and keeps it above water in times of trouble, inward and outward ; and it covers his head in the day of battle, between him and his spiritual enemies ; this he will never give up. This grace is of singular use under afflictive dispensations of providence ; the believer rejoices *in hope of the glory of God, even in tribulations ; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given unto us*^l : And it is of eminent service in the hour of death ; for when *the wicked is driven away in his wickedness*, like a beast to hell, *the righteous hath hope in his death*^m ; of rising again at the last day, and in the mean while of being in the arms of Jesus, and of being happy with him ; and therefore can look upon death and eternity with pleasure. Yea, this grace is of so much importance and usefulness, that even salvation is ascribed unto it, *we are saved by hope*ⁿ ; not by it, as the efficient cause of salvation, for there is no other author or efficient cause of salvation but Christ ; but by it as a means of coming to, and enjoying the salvation Christ has wrought out : As we are saved by Grace through faith, in like manner we are saved

^g Rom. xv. 13.

^h 1 Pet. i. 3.

ⁱ 1 John iii. 3.

^l Heb. vi. 19.

^k 1 Thes. v. 8.

^m Rom. v. 2—5.

ⁿ Prov. xiv. 32.

^o Rom. viii. 24.

saved through hope; being begotten unto it, we are kept through it, till we receive the end of it, the salvation of our souls; wherefore upon the whole, it must be *good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord* °.

There is a sort of people risen up among us of late, who sneer at this phrase, *a good hope through grace*, not considering that it is a scriptural one; and represent such who have attained to nothing higher, as in the lower form and class of christians, if they deserve that name; and suggest, that persons may have this and everlastingly perish: but let us not regard what these *flighty* people say; let us attend to what the scriptures say, to what our text says concerning it; which speaks of it as of God, as a gift of his; ascribes it to his grace; represents it as a fruit of the love of God and Christ; joins it with everlasting consolation; and mentions it as a blessing of grace, which the apostles themselves, whom God had set in the first place in the church, in the highest office in it, were possessed of, and were thankful for: Let us attend to what a *solid* saint on a dying bed says of *a good hope through grace*; what his sentiments, his notions of it are; and such an one, I mean a *solid* saint, was our deceased friend, whose death is the occasion of this discourse; as must be allowed by all that knew him, who are capable of judging of a spiritual man.

At my first visit to him after he had took to his bed, upon inquiring into the spiritual estate and frame of his soul, he told me, he had *a good hope through grace*; and added, if I may but go out of the world with *a good hope through grace*, it will be more to me than all the exultations and joys some persons speak of; that is enough, I am content, or words to this purpose; and subjoined, that if any thing should be said of him after his decease, meaning in this public way, he desired it might be from this passage of scripture, we have been considering. It pleased God to favour him with a religious education, to bless him with an early conversion, and to cast him betimes under a gospel ministry; by which means his judgment was formed, fixed, and established in gospel principles, in the doctrines of grace, of which he had a clear discerning: And as he had a retentive memory, he treasured up in it the quintessence and flower of gospel discourses, and the pithy sayings and sententious expressions he had heard or read in them; which, together with that large stock and fund of gracious experience of the love of God to his own soul, abundantly furnished him with rich materials for spiritual discourse; and which made his conversation very pleasant, profitable, and instructive; he being able to speak of divine things in very apt words, with great freedom, propriety, and pertinence. The frame of his soul was generally spiritual and heavenly, and so habituated he was to spiritual things, and so much given to the contemplation of them, and meditation upon them, that in the midst of worldly business, and even upon the Exchange,

when

when he met with a proper person, would at once enter into a christian conversation about such things, which lay warm upon his heart, he had been lately hearing or meditating upon; which shews the bias and bent of his mind. And as he was indulged with a large measure of grace, so he had great afflictions to try and exercise that grace; which afflictions he bore with uncommon patience, seldom making mention of them, especially in a way of complaint; and never murmuring at the dispensations of God; but taking all kindly at his hand, as coming from a loving Father, and designed and overruled for his spiritual good, profit, and advantage. He was remarkable for his humility, he was clothed with it, that *ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price*. His outward conversation in the world was exemplary, and as became the gospel of Christ, and was ornamental to it. He was many years a worshipper with us in this assembly; but became a member of this church but of late: We promised ourselves a great deal of usefulness from him in our church-state; but God has took him away, and he is joined to better company, and is employed in higher service: he was very comfortable in his soul, throughout his last illness; his faith was kept steady, ever looking to Jesus, in whom he knew all his salvation lay. He has left to you, his dear children, a shining example both in civil and religious life; may you tread in his steps; let it be your great concern to know your father's God, to worship, fear, and follow him; so he who has been his God, will shew himself to be yours, and be your God and guide even unto death. May we all learn something from this providence, and from this discourse occasioned by it; and it becomes us,

1. To inquire whether we have any hope of good things to come, and what that hope is; whether it be a good one or a bad one. If it is founded on any thing short of Christ, it is a bad one; if it is upon the creature and creature-acts, it will be of no avail; if it is through works, and not through grace, we hope for heaven and happiness, it will prove a vain hope: But if it is founded upon what Christ is unto us; what he has done for us; and what he is in us; it is a good one, and will answer some good purposes in life and death: And then if we are satisfied we have such an hope, it becomes us,

2. To bless God for it; since he is the donor and author of it: It is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; and we should ascribe it not to nature, not to the reasonings of our minds, the power and freedom of our wills, but to the grace of God: We might have been left to black despair, and to sink into hell under the weight of guilt; there might have been nothing but a *fearful looking for of wrath and fiery indignation*, which our sins deserved; but God has dealt graciously with us, he has given us *a good hope through grace*. Wherefore it becomes us,

3. To continue in the use of this grace; to pray for the holy Spirit of God to cause us to abound in it; and to enable us to hold fast the rejoicing of it firm unto the end; to gird up the loins of our minds, and hope for future grace and eternal glory; and to go on hoping, believing, loving, until hope is exchanged for fruition, faith for vision, and love is in its highest exercise.

S E R M O N XXVIII*.

Occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Mr AARON SPURRIER, late Pastor of a Church of CHRIST at *Limebouse*. Preached *Sept. 17, 1749.*

PHILIPPIANS I. 23.

—*Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.*

ABOUT two years ago I stood in this place, and delivered a discourse at the ordination of your late pastor, and now I am here at his dying request to preach his funeral sermon; a sudden change, a quick alteration this! He has soon done his work, run out his race, and finished his course, and is entered into the joy of his Lord; and what remains for you to do, is to take notice of the providence, and make a right use of it; and now to attend to the words read, the subject of the following discourse; which are part of an epistle sent to the church at *Philippi* by the apostle *Paul*, when he was a prisoner at *Rome*.

And after the inscription of it; and description of the church, its officers and members, and various expressions of respect unto them and petitions for them, the apostle gives an account of his bonds, and the usefulness of them for the spread of the gospel, and the encouragement of gospel-ministers: and though some did not preach Christ from right ends, and with right views, as others did, it was a pleasure to the apostle that he was however preached; and he was persuaded, that the ill designed him in their ministry would be for his good, and Christ would be magnified in him in life and death: that continuance in life would be for the glory of Christ, and the good of his interest, and his death also would be gain both to Christ and himself:

And this made it difficult with him which to chuse, life or death, since he could not well say in which way Christ would be most magnified in him, whether by his

* This Sermon was never before printed.

his life or by his death : and seeing that living in the flesh, and labouring in the ministry a little longer would be more necessary, useful, and profitable to the churches of Christ ; and so to be for the honour of his name ; and to die and be with the Lord, were better for himself ; this put him *in a strait* between life and death, a desire to live for public usefulness, and a desire to die for private and personal gain, as *David* was on another account, and which some think there is an allusion to here, *2 Sam. xxiv. 14.*

I have not read to you the former part of the text, *for I am in a strait betwixt two* ; because I observed, your pastor left it out, when he gave me the words read, and desired me to preach from them : for whatever difficulty he might have had in his mind, as doubtless he had, which to desire, life or death, whether to live longer, that he might be more useful to you, this church of Christ, and be more serviceable in the interest of religion, or to die and be with Jesus ; it was all over then, he saw his work was done, it was the will of the Lord to call him home, and he was desirous of going, that he might be with him.

In the passage before me, I observe,

- I. The phrase by which death is expressed, *to depart.*
- II. The desire the apostle had *to depart*, or die, *having a desire ;*
- III. The ground of that desire, what raised or moved it, *to be with Christ.*
- IV. The preferableness and superexcellency of what is desired, dying and being with Christ, *which is far better.*

I. I shall consider the phrase by which death is signified, *to depart* ; and I observe,

1st, The word used *ἀραιώσει*, has the signification of a dissolution or loosening, and is by some rendered, *to be dissolved, to be loosened, and to loose* ; and may be used by the apostle,

1. In reference to the solution, resolution, or analysis of a compound being, into its parts ; and such a being is man, he is composed of spirit and matter, of soul and body ; these are the two integral, essential, and constituent parts of man, and are very different in their original formation ; the body was first formed out of the dust of the earth, the soul was breathed into it by the Lord ; in their continual production, the body is by natural generation, is born of the flesh ; the soul is created by God, and infused into the body. Hence one of the epithets of Jehovah is, that *formeth the spirit of man within him* : in their nature, the body is material, and consists of flesh, blood and bones, of arteries, veins and sinews ; the soul is immaterial, and possesses such powers and faculties, we call

the understanding, will and affections; the body is mortal and dies, the soul is immortal and never dies.

Now between these two there is a nexus or bond of union by which they make one composition, one being, one individual person, which is denominated sometimes from one part and sometimes from another; when from the body, man is said to be of the earth, *earthly*; and when from the soul, he is said to be ψυχικός, an animal, a *souly* man; when from the former, he is called a *mortal* man; and when from the latter, a *rational* intelligent being; these two parts, though so widely different in their nature, are closely united together; of this union God is the author, and what he has joined together no man ought to put asunder; but what is the band of this union, what it is that ties and keeps body and soul together; what are the bands and ligaments by which they are fastened to each other, none can tell, nor account for it; how it is the spirit and matter should operate upon one another: and by the way, this may serve to abate the pride, vanity, and insolence of some objectors to mysteries in the gospel, and the mysterious union of the three persons in the Godhead, and to the mysterious union of the two natures, divine and human, in the Son of God: let them first sit down and try whether they can give an account of the union of their own souls and bodies, and tell us what that is that unites them together; and then let them go on to object to the above, and other mysteries of the christian religion. But to return;

Death now is the dissolution of this composition, a separation of soul and body, a disunion of these two parts, a loosening of the bond of union between them; hence the apostle *James* says, that *the body without the spirit*^b, ψεύς, separate from it, *is dead*; death is no other than an untying of the knot or band, a dissolving of the union that holds soul and body together, nor can it dissolve any other. As it could not dissolve the hypostatical or personal union of the two natures in Christ, divine and human, only the union that was between his soul and body; so it cannot dissolve the union between the person of a believer and God, Father, Son and Spirit; the bond of which is everlasting love: death cannot separate from the love of God, nor from the love of Christ, or disunite him and his people; for then when *they depart* they could not be with him, as the words of our text suggest, nor from the spirit who dwells in the mortal bodies of the saints, and by whom they will be quickened.

2. The word in the text may be used in allusion to the loosening of the stakes and cords of tabernacles or tents when taken down; with respect to which the apostle says, for we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved^c, καταλυθῆ, a word akin to that in the text. The body is compared to a tabernacle,

^b James ii. 26.

^c 2 Cor. v. 1.

nacle, the human nature of Christ is called a tabernacle: and the apostle ^d *Peter* speaks of his body under the same metaphor, and which is used by other authors^e; the reference may be to the tents or tabernacles of travellers and soldiers, who carry them with them, and pitch them, and take them down, as is convenient for them; and which is the case and condition of the people of God in this life, whose state is a pilgrimage and a warfare; and their bodies are the tents they dwell in, which are pitched for a while, and then taken down; so that this simile denotes the short continuance of the saints here; there is no abiding for them, *here they have no continuing city*; this is not their rest, it is polluted: now death is a dissolving of this tabernacle, a loosing of its *silver cord*, an unpinning its several parts, and a removing of it elsewhere; as *Hezekiah* the royal saint said, *mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherds tent*^f: and as *Peter* calls it, it is a *putting off this tabernacle*, as a man puts off his cloaths; and it may be observed, that the apostle *Paul* uses the simile of *unclothing*, at the same time he speaks of the dissolution of the tabernacle of the body, *2 Cor. v. 1, 4*.

3. The allusion may be as some^g think, to sailors loosing the ship, and departing from one port to another: so we read of loosing from one place, and sailing by another; and departing in a ship, *Acts* xiii. 13. and xxvii. 13, 21. and xxviii. 11. The port from whence we loose at death, and lanch into the ocean of eternity, is this world, which some leave with great reluctance, and others with great cheerfulness; as it is with sailors who have been long at a port, used to it and delighted with it, and the accommodations they find there, do not care to set sail and go from it; so it is with many who are glued to this world, and have their affections set on the things of it, who are taken and delighted with what is in it, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*; they do not chuse to quit it and go into an eternal world: but as others, who know it is their interest to be gone, make all necessary preparations for their voyage, and are in readiness to depart at a proper and convenient time, so such who are crucified to the world and that to them, and know that their true riches, pleasure, profit and honour, lie elsewhere, are willing to loose from hence, and go where it is most for their interest and happiness. The port or haven men are bound unto at death, and to which their course is steered and directed, is either heaven or hell, either they go to *Abraham's bosom* with *Lazarus*, and to paradise with the penitent thief, or to hell with the rich man, who, as soon as he died

^d 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.

^e Isai. xxxviii. 12.

^f Wisdom of Solomon ix. 17. Democrat. sentent. p. 13. Ed. Gale.
^g Illusione facta ad nautas qui quando e portu alio sui graturi sunt solvunt navim & simpliciter etiam *απαλυσται* dicuntur. Sic Chrysolomus, sic Syriacus, sic Beza & alii. Zanchius in loc. Perinde est sive per verbum solvendi, sive per verbum migrandi reddetur proprie tamen de navibus dicitur, quæ solutis ruentibus e portu navigant. Vorst. in loc.

elied, lift up his eyes there in flames of fire, in everlasting torment. Death is the ship or boat in which men are wafted over from the shore of this world to the banks of another; angels are the pilots to good men, who convey them over the swellings of *Jordan*, and bring them to their *desired haven*, to *Canaan's land*: devils are the pilots and convoy of others, who carry them over the black lake to regions of darkness. The heathens had some such like notions of death and of a future state, and expressed their ideas in such like language as this. Who is it almost that has not heard of the *Elysian fields*, which have their name from a word, of which this in our text is compounded ^k, the seat of the souls of good men after death? and of the *Stygian lake*, and of old *Charon* and his boat, the ferryman of hell?

2dly, The word here used also signifies to *return*; and so it is rendered in *Luke* xii. 36. and by the *Vulgate Latin* version here, and by others, and which agrees with the account the wise man gives of death; who says, *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it* ^h: the body, which was first formed out of the dust of the earth, at death returns to its original; whereby the divine sentence passed on fallen man is verified, *dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return* ^l: and the spirit or soul, which God is the father and maker of, returns to him who gave it; it being, by him, to be judged for the things done in its body, and to be sent by him to its proper place and state, either of eternal bliss or endless wo: death is the reversion, or returning of the parts of man, when separated by it, to their original from whence they came.

3dly, We render it to *depart*, as many others do; it was usual with the ^k Jews to express death by a *departure*; and the apostle uses the same way of speaking, in conformity to his countrymen: so our Lord's death is called a *departing out of the world*, and a *leaving of it* and going to the Father, *John* xiii. 1. and xvi. 28. And the apostle *Paul* calls the time of his death *the time of his departure*, *2 Tim.* iv. 7. which he speaks of with pleasure. Some go out of this world willingly and cheerfully, and are desirous of it, as the apostle was here; others are *chased out of it*, driven away in their wickedness, as a beast out of a pasture where it ought not to be, *Job* xviii. 18.

It is an usual way of speaking with us, when we would signify that any one is dead, to say he has *departed this life*; there is the life that now is, the life we live in the flesh, and there is the life to come; the present life is a transitory one, *it is*, as *James* says, *even a vapour that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisbeth*

^k Elysium est ubi piorum animæ habitant, post corporis animæque discretionem unde & interitus dicitur res inter animam & corpus veniens: ergo Elysium; & ἀπο της λυσιας, nam sic diffinitur mors ὑψυχης ἢ σωματικῆ λυσιας, Servius in Virgil. Æneid. l. 5. p. 973. ^h Eccles. xii. 7. ^l Gen. iii. 19.

^h See my notes on Job xiii. 1. and on Phil. i. 23.

nisheth away': death is a departing this life; and when a good man departs out of it, he enters into another, even into eternal life.

When a man dies, he departs from his relations, friends and acquaintance, and they see him no more; the place where he lived, and the men of it, know him no more; he returns no more to this present world, into this frail mortal state: his friends shall go to him, but he shall not return to them, as *David* said of his child; and at the resurrection-morn there will be a glorious meeting of the saints, when they shall come together, both living and raised ones, and shall never part more, but shall be together for ever with Christ.

Death is, as it were, no other with the saints, than a *departing or removing* from one house to another, *from the earthly house of this tabernacle*, the body, to the *house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*: from houses of clay which have their foundation in the dust, to everlasting habitations, to those mansions of joy and bliss, which are in Christ's Father's house.

Now all this may serve to make death easy and familiar to us, and take off from the terror which it naturally induceth; it is but like going from one house to another, and that a better, an house in heaven; from one city to another, and that a better, a *city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is the great God*; from one country to another, and that a better, even an heavenly one. So *Job* speaks of death in such language as this, and to such a purpose, to render it more agreeable to him; *if I wait, the grave is my house: I have made my bed in the darkness: I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister*, *Job* xvii. 13, 14.

And from this account of death, it may be observed, that it is not an annihilation of man; it is an analysis of human nature, a separation and disunion of its parts, soul and body, but neither of them cease to be; the soul exists in a separate state, either of happiness or misery; and the body is reduced to dust, yet not to nothing: though it is crumbled into ten thousand atoms and more, yet it is still in being; though it is, like a tabernacle, taken down, and its parts separated, yet these are carefully laid up to be put together in a more beautiful form and order; though man at death looses from one shore and port, he is presently at another; and though he goes out of one world, he is in another; though he is not here, he is elsewhere: it is said of some, that they *were not*, as *Enoch* and *Rachel's* children, *Gen. v. 24. Jer. xxxi. 15.* but the meaning is, not that they were not in being, but that they were not on earth; they were taken from thence, and were with God. I proceed,

II. To consider the *desire* the apostle had of departing or dying; *having a desire to depart*; which phrase, as a learned man observes^m, signifies, a vehement and perpetual

^l James iv. 14.

^m Zanchy in loc.

perpetual desire; it was not a mere velleity, that rose up in his mind, a cold and taint wish in his breast, but a strong impulse upon him, a passionate desire to be gone; nor was it a new desire, a sudden-start of mind, but what he had had a long time, and which grew stronger and stronger; nor was it carnal and sinful, but spiritual, not from nature but from grace; for,

1st, He did not desire simply to die, or desire dying for the sake of death, but for some other end here mentioned: to desire death, simply considered, is contrary to nature; contrary to a first principle in nature, self-preservation: all men naturally desire to live: *what man is he that desireth life*? every man does, he will do, or suffer, or part with any thing, to keep that: true it is, what Satan said, *skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life*: when human nature was innocent and sinless, nothing was more disagreeable to it than death; wherefore, to keep man in awe of his maker, and fix in him an attention to his will, and preserve him in his obedience to him, death was made the sanction of the law that was given him; therefore when our first parents were tempted to eat of the forbidden fruit, the greatest fence they had against the temptation, and the strongest objection to a compliance with it, was, *God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die*: and the devil had no other way of answering and removing this objection, than by asserting a downright falshood, and contradicting the express word of God, *saying, ye shall not surely die*. Even in the sinless human nature of Christ there was a desire of life, and an aversion to death: as such he prayed to be saved from the hour of death, and that its bitter cup might pass from him; it is true, his death was attended with such circumstances as made it terrible indeed; he had all the sins of his people on him, and suffered in their room and stead; and bore the wrath of God; and endured the whole curse of the law, and all the punishment due to their sins; and therefore it is no wonder that his human nature, left to itself, should shudder and shrink at it; yet it seems that death itself, as such, was disagreeable to it; though he corrects his desire of life, and submits his request to the divine will, *John xii. 27. Matt. xxvi. 39.*

Death is not in itself a real good, and therefore not to be desired in itself; yea, it is an evil, a penal evil; it was threatened in case of sin, and is inflicted as a punishment of it; *the wages of sin is death*: and on the other hand, life, and a continuance of it, long life, has been always esteemed a blessing; and is promised as an encouragement to obedience. Death is the fruit and effect of sin; it entered into the world by it, and has set up its empire through it: it reigns over men wit.. an uncontrollable power and authority; it is a king, and a *king of terrors*;

a ter-

• Psalm xxxiv. 12.

• Job ii. 4.

• Gen. ii. 17. & iii. 3, 4.

• Rom. vi. 23.

• Ephes. vi. 2, 3.

• Job xviii. 10.

a terrible one, very formidable to human nature, it is an enemy to it, and the last enemy, the stoutest of all, which holds out the longest, and is hard to be subdued and conquered; the *last enemy that shall be destroyed is death*¹. Death in itself is awful and shocking, and which nature seeks to flee from and avoid; there being pain and bitterness in it, and in its consequence, an awful judgment, a future state follow upon it, in which men must be happy or miserable: and even good men have sometimes been *all their life-time, through fear of death, subject to bondage*². When therefore the apostle desired to die, it must be something above nature that moved him to it. Nor,

2dly, Did he desire it in an unlawful or dishonourable way; not to take it away himself; for as to desire death is contrary to a principle of nature, so for a man to be the author of it himself, is contrary to a principle of grace: nor that any other man should take it from him; as *Saul* desired his armour-bearer to draw his sword, and thrust it through him; which he refusing, he fell upon his own sword and died, being unwilling to fall into the hands of the Philistines. Some, through the terrors of a guilty conscience, have desired death, and have even destroyed themselves, as *Judas* did; not being able to stand up under the weight of guilt they are pressed with; crying out with *Cain*, that their *punishment is greater than they can bear*³. This is a piece of shocking stupidity, that, in order to be out of a lesser hell they feel within them, they throw themselves into the greater, into an abyss of wo, into endless horror and misery; and to avoid the present gnawings of a natural conscience, plunge themselves into a state irretrievable and irrecoverable, *where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched*.

Others have desired death because not able to support themselves under a disappointment of what their pride and ambition have prompted unto; because they could not have their will complied with, and their lusts gratified: so *Abimelech*, because his counsel was not followed, and his ambitious views answered, in the pride of his heart sought death, and laid violent hands upon himself. It is reported of *Aristotle*, though some say he died a natural death, that not being able to find out the cause of the ebbing and flowing of the sea, at a place called *Euripus*, where it ebbed and flowed seven times a day, he threw himself into it and was drowned: and *Nazianzen*⁴ says, he died there; and *Justin Martyr*⁵ that he died there with grief: this is dying in a poor, mean, and dishonourable manner.

It has been an infirmity that has attended some good persons, who have wished for death in a pet or passion, because they could not have their wills, or were under some fore and pressing trouble: so *Rachel* said, *give me children, or else I*

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die;

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 26.² Heb. ii. 15.³ Gen. iv. 13.⁴ Orat. 3. adv. Julian. p. 79. vol. I.⁵ Ad Græcos Cohort. p. 34.

die; suggesting, that she could not live, nor desired to live, unless she had some; and that she had rather die, than live childless. So *Jonah*, when he had lost his gourd, and the sun beat vehemently on him, in a passionate fit wished to die, and said, *It is better for me to die than to live*: and when the Lord expostulated with him, saying, *dost thou well to be angry for the gourd?* He persists in his passion, and insists upon it, that he did *well to be angry even unto death*: but this was his weakness. So *Moses*, unable to bear the weight of the care and government of the children of *Israel*, desires the Lord would *kill him out of hand*, and let him not see his wretchedness^b: so *Elijah* the prophet, when threatened and persecuted by *Jezebel*, requested for himself that he might die^c: and this was what *Job* very vehemently wished for under his sore troubles and afflictions: but it is a much more noble and ingenuous spirit, which the saints show in the exercise of grace, when they desire, that neither their afflictions may be removed from them, nor they from them, until it is the will and pleasure of God; and when they request more grace and strength to support under them, and pray for more faith and patience to bear them, and wait the Lord's own time to deliver them out of them. But,

3dly, The apostle desired death upon right principles, and with right views; he desired it with submission to the divine will; he that would not determine upon a journey to visit any of the churches, or promise to take one, without saying, *if the Lord will*; would never think of a journey into the other world, or of a voyage from the shores of time, to those of eternity, without a special regard to the will of God: he did not desire to die sooner than it was the pleasure of God he should; his desire was bounded and limited, as that of his Lord and Master's was, saying, *not my will, but thine be done*^d: nor did he desire to die before he had done his work; the context shews the struggle he had between personal gain, and public usefulness; and of such a noble spirit he was, that he postponed his private advantage to the public service of the church, and inclined, upon this consideration, rather to live than die. Good men, in a right spirit, when they most vehemently desire death, desire it that they may be freed from sin, from the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this world; being burdened with a body of sin and death, they drag about with them, they groan and earnestly desire deliverance; being pressed with Satan's temptations, they long for that state where they shall be no more exposed to them; and, *their righteous souls being vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked*, as was *Lot*, and weary of their lives, because of the wickedness of the sons of men, as *Rebekah* was, because of the daughters of *Heth*; they breathe after that perfect state in which they will be completely holy, without sin and sinful company: and it was with such a view

as

^a Gen. xxx. 1.^b Jonah iii. 8, 9.^c Numb. xi. 15.^d 1. Kings xix. 4.^e Luke xiii. 42.

as this, no doubt, that the apostle desired to die; and certain it is, that he did not desire death of itself, but in connexion with something else, with *being with Christ*: and so every gracious soul desires to die, not for the sake of dying, not that they would be *unclothed*, stripped of the body, the tabernacle, but clothed upon with their *house* from heaven, that *mortality might be swallowed up of life*: not that they desired a mortal state, or to be under the power of death and the grave; but that they might enjoy eternal life: wherefore, seeing they reckon themselves *absent from the Lord, whilst they are at home in the body*; they chuse rather, and it is their earnest wish and desire, *to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*; which is the same thing as to *be with Christ*: for the sake of which, and perfect conformity to him, and uninterrupted communion with him, death is desired. Now before a person arrives to a settled, composed frame of soul, as to desire in good earnest to die upon such principles, and with such views as mentioned,

1. Such persons and things in this world, which were once near and dear to him must, be as nothing; he must be dead to the world, and that to him, or he will never truly desire death; so long as he hankers after any person or thing in it, he will be loth to die: which is frequently the case of the husband to the wife, the wife to the husband, and one friend to another; relations hang about them, and have a great share in their affections: the things of the world stick close to them, and they do not know how to part with either: one has a family of children, and he would be glad to see them brought up or better provided for; another, his circumstances in the world are good, and he chooseth to live a little longer, that he might enjoy what with great care and industry he has obtained, or what God in his providence has plentifully put into his hands; a third, his circumstances are bad, and he is very desirous of abiding in the flesh, in hopes he shall be able to retrieve himself, and make a better provision for his family, and not leave them distressed and incumbered; now that man must have his heart loosened from the world, and all things in it, ere he will be willing to die; and when this is the case, then he is for leaving all to be with Christ; then, father, mother, wife and children, brother, sister, houses and lands, are all nothing: God, Christ, heaven, glory, and eternal life, are all in all; the things of the world are light in comparison of the eternal weight of glory he is rejoicing in the hope of; and he can easily part with them, and leave all to be with Christ.

2. He has other views and notions of death, than what are common; he considers it not as an evil, but as a part of the inventory of the saints goods; *death is yours*; not as a penal evil, as the wages of sin, but as a blessed privilege;

not as having the sting of sin in it, and as armed with vengeance; but as having its sting taken away from it by Christ, and disarmed by him; and can say, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*^c He looks upon it, not as an enemy, but as a friend, as an outlet of his sorrows and troubles, and as an inlet of his joys and pleasures: it does not appear with that grim and ghastly look, and in that terrible form, it does to others. Wherefore,

3. He is without fear of it, or of him that has the power of it, or of any consequence following upon it: he is not afraid of the pangs of death; he knows his Lord can make it easy to him: the bitterness of it is past with him; nor is he afraid of Satan, and the whole posse of devils; the reason why wicked men, when they come to die, are afraid, is because they apprehend a band of infernal furies are about their bed, ready to carry their souls into eternal torments; but the believer has no such fears, he knows the angels are about him, ready to do their office, and carry his soul into *Abraham's bosom*, as soon as separated from his body: nor has he any dread of a future judgment; he knows things will go well with him then; the Judge will be his friend, and give him the crown of righteousness laid up for him; and if a man has any fears about either of these, he will never desire to die.

4. He must be satisfied of his spiritual state and condition; that God has loved him with an everlasting love; that he has chosen him in Christ to be holy and happy; that he has made a covenant with him in Christ, ordered in all things and sure; and is his covenant God and Father: must be persuaded that Christ has loved him and given himself for him, and is his Saviour and Redeemer; and then he will say, as old *Simeon* did, when he had the child Jesus in his arms, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation*^d: he must know that his iniquities are pardoned through the blood of Christ, and that he is justified by his righteousness, which will answer for him in a time to come; that "he is an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ, being begotten again to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance;" he must be satisfied that the Spirit of God has begun the good work of grace upon his soul, and is working him up for that self-same thing, eternal glory; that he has both a meetness for it, and a right unto it, through Christ; and that the everlasting doors shall be thrown open for him, and he shall have a rich and an abundant entrance into the kingdom and glory of his Lord.

5. He must know whither he is going, or he will never desire to depart hence; that he is going to heaven, to glory, to eternal happiness; who would choose to loose from one port; unless bound for another? and he knows where it is he is bound for? who would choose to remove out of one house, unless an-

other

^c 1 Cor. xv. 55.

^d Luke ii. 29, 30.

other is provided for him, and that a better, and he knows it to be so? who would be willing, with *Hobbes* the Atheist, to take a leap in the dark? or to be in the case of *Adrian* the emperor, who when dying said, *Animula, vagula, blandula, quo tu abilis?* "Ah, poor, little, wandring, fluttering soul, whither wilt thou go? where art thou going?" He knew not where. But a gracious soul, that is truly willing to die, knows where it is going, and to what company, to be with God, Father, Son, and Spirit, with angels and glorified saints; and therefore he desires to depart.

This was the happy case of the apostle *Paul*; he knew his interest in the unchangeable love of God; and was persuaded that nothing could separate him from it; he knew his interest in Christ, he knew in whom he had believed; who he was, and what he was to him; and that he was able to keep what he had committed to him against another day; he knew, that though he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious person, he had obtained mercy; and that the grace of God, in great abundance, was bestowed upon him; and that he was an heir of glory; and indeed it is no wonder that such a man should desire to die, who had such an assurance of the love of God and Christ unto him, and had been so long and eminently useful; had done so much service for Christ, and good to the souls of men; and was now *Paul*, the aged, far advanced in years; his race run out, his course finished, and the time of his departure at hand.

But that our deceased friend and brother should have a desire to die, may seem somewhat strange; a *man*, and desire to die, which is contrary to a principle in human nature; a *sinful man*, and desire to die; and therefore must know that his sins were pardoned, and his soul cleansed from the guilt and filth of them through the blood of Christ; a *young man*, and desire to die, and leave all the pleasures of this life, which the youthful age delights in, and to which long life is usually desireable; a *young minister* of the gospel, and desire to die, when just arrived to the highest post of honour in the church, having a large prospect of usefulness before him; just entering upon it, and blessed with much of it; beloved by the church, caressed by his friends; and yet willing to leave all, and depart hence; this must be owing, not to nature, but to grace, and to the faith and hope he had of *being with Christ*? Which brings me,

III. To consider the ground of this desire; what it was that raised, moved, encouraged, increased, and continued it; *to be with Christ*. To be with saints in a perfect, glorified state, is much; to be with the holy angels, more; but to be with Christ, is best of all; and which is to be understood, not to the exclusion of the Father and of the Spirit, for these three are one; and where the one is, the others are; and he that is with one, is with them all; and in the ultimate state.

state of glory, God, Father, Son, and Spirit, will be *all in all*; but Christ is only mentioned, as being in our nature, in heaven, and the medium of all glory and happiness there, as of all grace here; and as being dear to the apostle, and so to all the saints; having done and suffered so much for them, standing in such relations to them, and bearing and performing such offices for them; as well as by reason of the glory and loveliness of his person, and his exceeding great love to them.

There is a nearness between Christ and his people now; they are in him, and he is in them; they are chosen in him, and blessed in him with spiritual blessings; they are created in him unto good works; they are brought to believe in him, and are in him as branches in the vine, and bring forth fruit; and he is formed in their hearts, and lives in them: it is not so much they that live spiritually, as it is Christ that lives in them; he dwells in their hearts by faith, and they in him; and hence they have communion with him, both in a private, and in a public way; when they are alone in their closets, or in secret meditation and ejaculations of mind, when in their families, and in conversation with christians, and when hearing the word, and attending on ordinances: sometimes they are *with him* in his chamber above, where he brings them, and they remember his love; and sometimes in his banquetting-house, with other saints, where they sit under his shadow with great delight, tasting the sweetness of his precious fruits; and where he sits with them at his table; bids them welcome, and they enjoy his gracious presence and desirable company; but then he is but as a *wayfaring man*, who continues but for a short time; wherefore *being in the body*, though fellowship with Christ is sometimes had, is reckoned no other than *absence from the Lord*; but after death there is an immediate *being with Christ*; the separate soul is at once with him in paradise, where it remains until the resurrection-morn; and then, the glorified saint, in soul and body, being re-united, lives with Christ a thousand years on earth; and when the term is up, it reigns with him for ever and ever in heaven; and so *shall be for ever with the Lord*, enjoying uninterrupted communion with him.

Now this is what the apostle desired to die for, that he might be with the Lord in this sense; and this is the sum of Christ's prayers and intercessions for his people, that they *might be with him, and behold his glory*; and this is the design, the end and issue of his preparations for them, that *where he is, they may be also*; and herein lies the happiness of the saints, and great it is to be with such a glorious person as Christ, whose *glory is the glory of the only-begotten of the father; who is the brightness of his father's glory, and the express image of his person; is in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him; is possessed of all divine perfections, the fulness of the godhead dwelling bodily in him; and is King of kings, and Lord of lords.* To be with one that stands in such near relations

tions to them, as their everlasting father, that bears an everlasting love to them, takes an everlasting care of them, and makes everlasting provisions for them; their tender husband, who nourishes and cherishes them as his own flesh; their near kinsman; their brother, and *first-born among many brethren*; and who is their dearly-beloved friend, a friend that *loves at all times, and sticks closer than a brother*; to be with such a person must needs be desirable; to be with one that has sustained such offices for them, who is the only mediator between God and man; is their prophet, to teach and instruct them, as he does by his word and spirit; their priest, to atone for their sins, and make intercession for them; their king, to rule over them, defend and protect them, the head of the church and over all things to it, the Saviour of the body, and the Redeemer of their souls from destruction, is worth dying for: to be with one who has done and suffered so much for them, who became their surety in eternity, made a covenant with his Father on their account; assumed their nature in the fulness of time; was made under the law; obeyed its precept; and suffered its penalty; bore their sins, and was made sin and a curse for them; shed his blood, and washed them from their sins in it, and made them *kings and priests to God*; to see and be with such a person, and that for ever, must be esteemed an happiness indeed; and as such to be desired and even death, in order to it. If his gracious presence now is so desirable as to be preferred to all things in life, and as filling with a joy that creatures cannot give; how much more to be desired is the presence of Christ in heaven, *where are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore*? To be with Christ, is not only the believer's gain and profit, but it will be for his honour and glory; he will be where his Lord and Master is; he will appear in glory with him; he will walk with him in white apparel, being worthy through his worthiness; yea, he will sit down upon the same throne with him, and reign with him, and be glorified together. And this leads me,

IV. To observe the preferableness and superexcellency of this desired happiness; *which is far better*, by much the rather better, abundantly exceedingly much better¹; there is no comparison between *being in the flesh*, and *being with Christ*: it is not indeed better to die than to live; life is preferable to death; but it is better to die and be *with Christ*, than to live in this world; whilst the saints are in the world, they must expect trouble; God has appointed it, man is born to it; Christ has left it as a legacy to his people; and through it they must enter the kingdom: but at death there is an end put to all; and in the other state there will be no more sorrow, no more pain, nor trouble of any sort, inward or outward; and therefore preferable to this: the present state is a sinful one; there is not a just man that lives without sin; as long as the

saints

¹ πολλὰ μάλιστ' κρείσσον.

saints are in this tabernacle, they will be burdened with a body of sin and death, under which they groan; but after death there will be no more sinning, no more of the corruption of nature, or an evil heart of unbelief; but their souls will be among the spirits of just men made perfect, and *with Christ*, presented to himself without spot or wrinkle, and to his Father faultless: Now they are harrassed with the temptations of Satan; but then they will be out of the reach of his fiery darts: now they have only communion with Christ at certain times; but then it will be without any cessation or interruption; wherefore it must be much more eligible to a gracious soul *to die and be with Christ*, than to live in this sinful, troublefom world.

Moreover to depart hence, and be with Christ, is better than a well-spent life in the service of Christ, and to his glory; yea, than even labouring in the ministry; and that with success, and usefulness to the souls of men, and honour to the Redeemer; for though a minister of Christ may, as the apostle did, take the utmost pleasure and delight in the work of the ministry, and be very useful in it, as no man was more so than he; yet it is a work, and a toilfom and laborious one, and wearisom to the flesh; wherefore dying, and being with Christ, must be desirable, with proper limitations before observed; since then, the servant of Christ *rests from his labour, and his works follow him*: at least, it must be better for him, though not for others; and so the *Syriac* and *Arabic* versions add, by way of supplement, *for me*; for the apostle to live longer, might have been better, and more to the service of Christ, the glory of his name, and the good of his churches; but to leave the world, and be with Christ, was better for him; which made him incline to desire death.

From all which it appears, that there is a future state after death. Some think, when they die, there is an end of them; and therefore indulge themselves in all manner of sins; but such should know, that after death comes judgment; and that for all these things they shall be brought into it; and thus the soul exists in a separate state, and the body, though laid in the grave, will be raised again, to receive for the things done in it, of which an account must be given: besides, if this was the case, death would not be desirable; it is better to be, than not to be; to have a being, though attended with infirmity, imperfection, and trouble, is more eligible than to have none at all; especially it is much more desirable to a believer, because now at times, he has the presence of God, communion with Christ, the comfortable influences of the Spirit, and delightful conversation with the people of God; all which he would be deprived of, if at death he entered into a state of non-existence; wherefore the apostle, when he expresses his desire *to depart*, he signifies, it was that he might *be*, might exist somewhere else; and he tells us where and with whom, *with Christ, and where he is*. Hence it may be further observed,

That

That the only happy state after death, is *to be with Christ*: if a man is not with him, he is with devils and damned spirits, he is in hell, in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; he is *gone to his own place*, and is in everlasting punishment; but if he is *with Christ*, he is happy, he enjoys the beatific vision of God, he sees Christ as he is, in his glory, and is made like unto him, and is in fulness of joy: and this happy state is entered into at once, upon a departure out of this world; hence these two are closely joined together, *to depart, and to be with Christ*, the one immediately following the other; and so our Lord told the penitent thief on the cross, that that *day* he should *be with him in paradise**: and were it not so, was this happiness to be deferred longer, was there any future period fixed when it was to commence, as at the first resurrection, the beginning of the thousand years, and the last judgment, it would be much more desirable to live on earth until that time, than to die; since in the mean while some service might be done for Christ, and some enjoyment might be had of him; which would make living in the world, preferable to a state of uselessness and inactivity; wherefore from this desire of the apostle's, it may be concluded, that the soul does not sleep with the body, in the grave, until the resurrection-morn: had he known any thing of this, death would not have been so desirable to him, at least not so soon; it would have been better for him, and better for the churches of Christ, if he had continued to this day, and even to the end of the world, than to be in a sleepy, senseless, and inactive state and condition. Thus have I endeavoured to explain and improve the passage of scripture read to you, at the request of my deceased friend and brother, whose character will now be expected from me, and I shall only attend to that part of it which concerns him as a christian and a minister of the gospel.

Mr AARON SPURRIER was born of believing parents, and had the advantage of a religious education; his father was a Minister of the word, who died when he was young, and left him to the care of his religious mother, who brought him up *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*; and a blessing it is to be so brought up; for when a child is trained up in the way he should go, he will not easily and ordinarily depart from it: yet so it was, in the case of our brother, as he informed me, that notwithstanding the religious restraints that were upon him, he broke through them, and privately, and unknown to his friends, fell into the sins and vices of the age; which, when his conscience was awakened, and his mind illuminated by the spirit of God, lay with great weight upon him, and filled him with inexpressible horror and terror; under which he continued for some time, until it pleased God to bring and apply unto him, and set home with power upon him, these words of Christ to *Peter*, *I have prayed for thee;—and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*¹.

* Luke xxiii. 43.

¹ Luke xxii. 32.

Two things he concluded from hence, one was, that he had an interest in Christ, an interest in his heart's love, and in his powerful and prevalent mediation and intercession; which eased him of his burden, and gave him comfort: and the other was, that he saw it was the mind and will of God, that when he was converted, he should be a preacher of the gospel, and so be an instrument of comforting and strengthening others: wherefore when he came to a settled composure of mind, and to be satisfied about his spiritual and eternal estate, he gave himself up to the study of the scriptures, and of the doctrines of the gospel, to be learned from them, and to meditation and prayer, and to the reading of useful books, with a view to the work of the ministry; his qualifications for which, in process of time, being taken notice of, he was called to exercise his gift, by the church to which he belonged; what difficulties he met with in coming forth into the ministry, and the source of them, I shall not touch upon; they are well known to many of you: however, these in time, were happily got over, and he was comfortably settled as a pastor among you, this church of Christ; the good effects of which you soon felt in the increase of your audience, and in the addition of members to your society.

Few young ministers come forth with such seriousness and solidity, with such spirituality and experience, with such humility and modesty, with such fervency and affection, with such clearness of light and soundness of judgment, as he did, considering his years, and some disadvantages he laboured under; *he was a burning and a shining light*, and his light was more and more increasing, which promised a great deal of usefulness to the church of God; and *ye for a season rejoiced in his light*^m; and it was but for a season, and for a short season too; a great deal of work was done by him among you in a little time, in the conversion of sinners, in the instruction of your minds, and in the regulation of the discipline of the church: but the all-wise disposer of all things thought fit to lay his hand upon him, and to afflict him with a lingering illness, which laid him aside from his work for some time, and at last issued in death.

During his illness, he was for the most part very comfortable in his soul; at two several times that I visited him, I found his faith in Christ very strong and steady, built upon *the Rock of ages*, the sure foundation God has laid in *Zion*; there being no other Saviour, or better foundation, as he observed, to be proposed instead of him; to him he looked, on him he depended, in him he trusted; and could with pleasure reflect upon the doctrines he taught others, as yielding the most solid consolation to himself on a dying bed: but at my last visit, and when he sent for me, I perceived he had had a conflict with Satan; the enemy of souls came in upon him like a flood, putting him upon it to prove, that he ever

knew

^m John v. 35.

knew what growth in grace was; which he not being able to answer at once, he was tempted to question whether he had experienced any work of grace at all; which threw him into great concern and distress, until the Lord was pleased to relieve him by a powerful application of these words, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee*^a: which filled his soul brimful of comfort, with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory, and which continued with him to his last moments; when he sweetly and easily, without a sigh or a groan, fell asleep in Jesus. And now give me leave to close this service with a few words to you, the members of this church, to which he was a pastor: and,

1. To the *younger* members of it; you that were converted under our brother's ministry, and were the first-fruits of it, you have lost your spiritual father indeed, who would have had a watchful eye over you, and a tender regard for you; but consider, Christ your everlasting father still lives to care and provide for you, and supply all your wants; your prophet is gone, who, you might have expected, would have instructed you more largely in the truths of the gospel, and in what would have made for your peace and comfort; but remember, that though *the prophets do not live for ever*, yet the word of the Lord lives and abides for ever, to nourish you up to everlasting life; your under shepherd is no more to feed you, the lambs in Christ's flock: but the great and chief shepherd and bishop of souls is still with you, and he will *feed his flock like a shepherd, gather the lambs in his arms, carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young*^b: he does not *despise the day of small things*^c, nor will he *break the bruised reed*, nor *quench the smoking flax*^d; you may be confident of this, that the good work of grace begun in your hearts, shall be performed until the day of Christ: what one minister has been the instrument of planting, another will water. But a few words,

2. To the *elder* members of this church, and the *officers* of it, who have been of long standing in it: you have seen various changes and alterations in it, the several steps and methods of divine providence towards you, and his hand upon you in many respects: your ancient pastor^e, that was many years over you in the Lord, was sorely afflicted for a long time; frequently interrupted in his work, and at last wholly laid aside; though before that a young man^f of good abilities and promising usefulness was settled among you, and was soon snatched away from you by death; and now another young man in like manner; so that within these five or six years you have lost no less than three pastors! An awful dispensation this! It should put you upon search and inquiry what should be

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the

^a Jer. xxxi. 3.^b Isai. xl. 11.^c Zech. iv. 10.^d Isai. xlii. 3.^e The Rev. Mr David Rees.^f The Reverend Mr William Coombs.

the reason of the Lord's coming forth against you in such a manner, and of his controversy with you; and it might be reasonably thought you would be saying one to another, Is there not an *Acban* in our camp? and that every one would be putting the question that the disciples of Christ did in another case, *Is it I? Is it I?* Have you nothing to charge yourselves with? No disrespect to the doctrines of the gospel? No want of attendance on the ordinances of it? No negligence in the affairs of the church and the discipline of it? No unfuitable and unbecoming walk and conversation in any of you? No declensions and backslidings among you, not taken notice of; and the laws of Christ against delinquents not put in execution? Something of this latter kind I understand was matter of concern to your late pastor; who, as I am told, has left you his dying charge. May it be of use unto you to stir you up to be more active and diligent, to *be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*; and to recover backsliders, and bring them back to the fold, or put you upon doing your duty to them. And,

3. To the church in general, I close with a word or two: do not be discouraged in your melancholy circumstances; though the Lord has stripped you of one pastor after another, *the residue of the Spirit* is with him: who knows but that a double portion of it may fall upon some *Elisba* or another, that may be sent among you: our exalted Lord and King has received *gifts* for men, and he bestows them on them, to qualify them for pastors and teachers, that they may be useful in the work of the ministry, and for the edifying the body the church: and he has a sufficiency of these to give; pray to him for them: I understand you are a praying people, that there is a spirit of prayer of late among you; I rejoice to hear it; you may hope for a blessing and expect it: go on praying to him who has promised to *give pastors according to his own heart*, which shall *feed you with knowledge and with understanding*; and considering what a number of ministers have been removed by death, how few there are that are come forth in their room, how many churches are destitute of pastors; it becomes us all to lay it to heart, and earnestly and fervently to *pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest*, faithful, diligent, and useful ones.

* Jer. iii. 15.

* Matt. ix. 38.

S E R M O N XXIX.

Occasioned by the Death of the Reverend Mr SAMUEL WILSON.

Preached *October 14, 1750.*

ACTS XX. 38.

Sorrowing most of all for the word which he spake, that they should see his face no more..

BEING desired by you, the brethren and members of this church, to assist in your sorrow, on account of the death of your late dear pastor, in which I sincerely bear a part with you; and no passage of scripture being left by the deceased, nor any given me by his surviving relative, or by you, I considered with myself what would be most proper and suitable on such an occasion; I thought of one portion of scripture, and of another, but none hung upon my mind so much, and continued with me so long as the words I have read unto you; and therefore I determined, through divine assistance, to make them the subject of the following discourse.

The words manifestly refer to a single expression used by the apostle *Paul*, in a very moving and pathetic address, delivered by him to the elders of the church of *Ephesus* at *Miletus*, where he had convened them for that purpose; but before I enter into a particular consideration of them, I shall take leave to make some few remarks upon the address itself; and the rather, as it will not lead us out of sight of the text, but will open to us the true source of the sorrow expressed in it, and furnish us with reasons accounting for it. And,

1. The apostle observes what was his constant work and employment whilst he was in *Asia*, and his manner of performing it, *ver.* 18, 19. His work was, *serviſg the Lord*; not himself and his own belly; not seeking to gratify his sensual lusts, or to acquire riches and honour to himself, as the false teachers did; he was no time-server or man-pleaser, for then he would not have been the servant of Christ; but he served the Lord, *Jehovah* the Father, in the gospel of his Son, with all his heart and soul; and he served the Lord Christ by fully and faithfully preaching him; and in so doing, became the servant of the churches for Jesus' sake. His manner of performing this service was, *with all humility of mind*; for though he was favoured with extraordinary gifts, and was called to an extraordinary office, by which he was set not only above common
saints,

saints, but above ordinary ministers of the word, and was *not behind the chief of the apostles*; yet he was not lifted up with these things, but thought himself *less than the least of all saints*; being sensible of his own unworthiness to be employed in such service, and his insufficiency for it; and well knowing it was by the grace of God he was what he was, and did what he did, he therefore walked humbly before God, and in the sight of men; not assuming a dominion over the faith of any, or lording it over the heritage of God. And it was *with many tears* that he went through his work; he sowed the precious seed of the word in tears, and watered it with them; grieved he often was at the hardness, impenitence, and unbelief of many that heard him, and was greatly affected with the troubles of the saints, both inward and outward: who was offended or afflicted, and he burned not? and would frequently weep over the scandalous lives of carnal professors. And his service also was attended with *temptations* that beset him, not only from Satan, and his own heart, but from a wicked world, and especially *by the lying in wait of the Jews*, who sought to take away his life; and which were trials of his faith and patience, and of his courage and constancy in the service of his Lord: and now a minister so constant and laborious, so humble, so compassionate, and so self-denying, is it to be wondered at, that sorrow should be felt and expressed at parting with him?

2. The apostle goes on to take notice of the subject-matter of his ministry, or of what he chiefly insisted upon in it, *ver. 20, 21*. In general it was what *was profitable, suitable, and convenient* for them. He did not amuse his hearers with philosophical notions, or read lectures of mere morality to them, or deliver out speculative notions in divinity; but he taught them solid and substantial truths, the doctrines of the everlasting gospel, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus, such as men are nourished up with unto everlasting life; things *profitable for doctrine, and instruction in righteousness*; even such doctrines as relate to the knowledge of the divine Being, Father, Son, and Spirit, to the state and condition of man by nature, as a fallen creature; and to his recovery, both by redeeming and efficacious grace: and of these things he *kept back nothing*; he did not withhold them either in whole or in part; nor did he withdraw or *fetch back*, as the word* used may signify, what he had before said to them; but abode by it, and pronounced an anathema on such who preached any other gospel than what had been preached and received already; and this he *shewed* unto them, and made it clear, plain, and evident; and *taught* them it *publicly, and from house to house*; first publicly in the Jewish synagogue, then in the school of *Tyrannus*, chap. xix. 8—10. and in whatsoever public place of worship the people met together; and also privately in their own houses; which shews his diligence,

and

* ὑπιστάμεν. See Heb. x. 38, 39.

and industry, and concern for their spiritual welfare: and what he taught in the one place, and in the other, was uniform and all of a piece. In particular, the doctrines he chiefly insisted upon, or the whole of his ministry, were reducible to these two heads, *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus*. God, against whom man has sinned, is the object of the one; and Christ, who is the Redeemer and Saviour, is the object of the other: repentance must be toward God; it lies in a true sense of sin, and godly sorrow for it, in shame and blushing at it, and in owning and forsaking it, flowing from a view of the love of God, and of pardoning grace and mercy through Christ, attended with faith in him, and hope of salvation by him: faith has Christ for its object; and it is a believing in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; a looking to him, leaning on him, trusting in him, and expecting grace, life, and salvation from him. These two doctrines went together in Christ's ministry, and are what he ordered his disciples to teach, and which they did; endeavouring first to bring men to a sense of sin, and then encouraged them to believe in Christ: and this is the usual order in the Spirit's work upon the soul, through the ministry of the word, first to convince men of sin, then to work faith in their hearts, and take of the things of Christ, and shew and apply them to their souls for their peace and comfort: and those doctrines were taught by the apostle *without respect to persons*; he testified them *both to Jews and Greeks*; and now a minister who made it his business to deliver out such interesting truths, doctrines of such moment and importance to the souls of men, and was so faithful and diligent herein; is there not good reason that those to whom he had ministered should be filled with sorrow and trouble, and shew deep concern of mind at his departure from them?

3. The apostle declares the view he had of what sufferings he was to endure for the sake of the gospel, and which was not at all discouraging to him, *ver. 22—24*. He says, he was *going bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem*; not in his own spirit, as being bound in conscience to perform a piece of service he had undertaken to do to the poor saints there from the Gentile churches; and much less as if he was compressed, and straitened, and uneasy in his mind at what he was to suffer at *Jerusalem*, for this would be contrary to what he after says; but in and by the Spirit of God, by which he was moved to go up to *Jerusalem*, notwithstanding the persuasions of his friends to the contrary, and what he should endure there; by which he knew he should be put in bonds there; and by the revelation of the Spirit he saw it as clearly as if he was bound already. Yet *not knowing the things that should befall him there*: that is, other things beside bonds, which are after excepted; or whether those would issue in death there or elsewhere; as yet this was not made known unto him; *save that the holy*
Gboſt

Ghost witnessed in every city, that bonds and afflictions abode him, or waited for him. This he knew, not only from the common lot of Christ's ministers, and his own experience, but from the holy Ghost in the prophets, which were in every city where there was a church; who were all in this tone, having a spirit of prophecy in them, that he was going to endure great sufferings for the sake of Christ and the gospel; or the holy Ghost in himself testified beforehand to him of his sufferings, assuring him that in every city he came unto, and particularly in Jerusalem, persecution and affliction would attend him; and which, by the way, is no inconsiderable proof of the Deity of the blessed Spirit. But none of these things moved him from his intended journey to Jerusalem, which he was resolved upon; nor from preaching the gospel as he went along; nor did they disturb and distress his mind; neither did he count his life dear unto himself, than which nothing is dearer to men: Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath, will be give for his life^b. Yet this he made no account of; he did not value or regard it; he was willing to lay it down, so that he might but testify the gospel of the grace of God; or bear a testimony to it, which he was willing to do both by life and by death; even to that gospel, which is a declaration of the love, grace, and mercy of God, which asserts salvation to be all of grace, and is the means of conveying and implanting the grace of God in the hearts of men; and in so doing fulfil the ministry he had received of the Lord Jesus; and which he had, as also gifts for it, as well as a commission to enter upon it, and execute it; and by all which he would finish his course, the race of his life, and course of his ministry, with joy, as he did; for a little before his death he could say, I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day^c. Now who could forbear shedding tears at parting with such a brave and courageous minister of the gospel; so undaunted at sufferings, so willing to lay down his life for the sake of the gospel, and the dear interest of the Redeemer?

4. The next thing observable in this moving speech, is the apostle's solemn appeal to those to whom he addressed himself for his faithfulness in the ministration of the gospel to them, *ver. 25—27.* which is introduced after this manner; he tells them, that he *knew*, and was assured, and which therefore was not a mere conjecture of his, but he had it by revelation, that none of them *all*, meaning not only those before him, but all the christians in *Asia*, among whom he had gone preaching the kingdom of God; the kingdom of the Messiah, the kingdom of grace and glory, more especially the latter, and the things appertaining to it; as what is a man's meetness for it, regeneration by the Spirit of God; and what is his right unto it, the justifying righteousness of Christ; and

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^b Job ii. 5.

^c 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

what the glories of it, which are in some measure brought to light by the gospel; all such persons to whom he had preached these things in *Asia*, he affirms, should see his face no more; which was the cutting, wounding stroke, which touched them to the quick, pierced to the very heart, and set them a weeping and sorrowing as they did. And this is the word referred to in our text: upon which he calls them to bear witness that day, that he was *pure from the blood of all men*; he had acted the part of a faithful watchman, in giving warning from the mouth of the Lord; he had laid before men their state and danger; he had truly represented their condition to them; he had told them, that without repentance towards God, and faith in Christ, they would die in their sins; he had pointed out the only way of life and salvation by Christ unto them, so that they would not perish for want of knowledge and the means of it; nor was he any ways accessory to their ruin; their destruction was of themselves; their blood was upon their own heads; he had nothing to answer for, he had faithfully discharged his duty to them: *for*, says he, *I have not shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God*; not the secret purposes and decrees of God, those counsels of old which are faithfulness and truth, which are only known by prophecy, or by the dispensations of providence; but the gospel-revelation, and the whole scheme of it, which is the produce of divine wisdom; this he fully made known to all to whom he ministered, so that they, as well as *Timothy*^e, knew fully his doctrine as well as manner of life: he made use of no artful methods to conceal his principles, no ambiguous phrases, or words of double, or doubtful meaning; he renounced all such *bidden things of dishonesty*, and by *manifestation of the truth*, commended himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God: and now is it at all marvellous, that the persons to whom the apostle said these things, should have their hearts filled with sorrow, or that there should not be a dry eye among them, when a minister, so honest and ingenuous, so faithful and open-hearted, was taking his leave of them; and especially when they are told, that they should see his face no more?

5. Next follows the pressing exhortation of the apostle, *ver.* 28—31. to the elders of the church at *Ephesus*, to take heed to themselves; to their doctrine, that it be agreeable to the word of God; and to their conversation, that it was becoming the gospel of Christ: *and to all the flock*; the whole church of God, and every member of it, and watch over them, and preserve them from the error of the wicked: *over the which the holy Ghost had made them overseers*; by bestowing gifts upon them, qualifying of them for such an office, and inclining their hearts to take the oversight of them cheerfully; and which is an argument why they should be careful of them, *to feed the church of God*; with whole-

some food, with the substantial truths of the gospel, which hold forth Christ and his grace, as the bread of life, and water of life; and the rather they should look upon themselves under obligation so to do, since Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever, has purchased this flock or church, *not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with his own blood*; which is exceeding precious, and of great value and efficacy. And the reason why the apostle was so importunate, and so pressing in this matter, was, because he knew by divine revelation, that *after his departing* from hence, or by death, *grievous wolves*, false teachers, wolves in sheeps cloathing, fierce, ravenous, and greedy ones, would *enter in among them privily*; *not sparing the flock*; but fleecing and worrying it: yea, not only such should enter from without, but even of themselves, out of their own community, there should rise up *men speaking perverse things*; contrary to the scriptures, to the gospel, and things very pernicious to the souls of men, whereby they would *draw away the disciples after them*; make rents and schisms in the church, form new parties, and set up themselves at the head of them: now of this the apostle had warned them incessantly for the three years last past, in the most tender and pressing manner, even with tears, which he desires them carefully to remember. And can it be thought that such an affectionate servant of Christ could be parted with, without tears shed for him, who had so great a regard both to the present and future well-being of the church, to which these elders belonged?

6. In the most affecting manner he takes his farewell of them, *ver. 32.* commending them *to God*; to his grace to supply and support them, to his wisdom to direct them, and to his power to preserve and keep them; *and to the word of his grace*; either the written word, the same with the gospel of the grace of God, to make it the rule and subject of their ministrations; or Christ the essential Word, who is full of grace and truth; each of which, both God, and his word, were *able to build them up on their most holy faith*, and carry on and finish the work of grace upon their souls, and make them useful to build up others on the rock of ages; and when they had done their work, to give them *an inheritance among all them which are sanctified*; both a meetness for, and a right unto *the incorruptible and undefiled inheritance, that fades not away, and is reserved in the heavens*, and will be only enjoyed by sanctified persons; for it is an inheritance of the saints in light. And the whole speech is concluded with the apostle's declaration of his being free from the sin of covetousness; for the truth of which he appeals to the persons present, and exhorts them to imitate him, provide for themselves, and support others; to which he animates them by the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, *ver. 33—35.* and then closes all in prayer to God with them, and for them; upon which they all burst out into tears, and lift up their voice

voice and weep, and one after another fall upon the apostle's neck and kiss him, *ver.* 36, 37. A most moving scene this! It is hard to form just and adequate ideas of it, and still more difficult to express them in proper language; I cannot do it better than in the words of a very spiritual and affectionate commentator * on the place, who represents it in the following manner. "How can I part with this dear creature, this blessed *Paul*, faith one, in whom my life is in a manner bound up? Farewel, my dear friend, faith another, a thousand thanks to thee, and ten thousand to God for thee, and for all the pains thou hast taken with me for my good: And must we part? faith another, must I lose my spiritual father, nurse, and guide? What will become of us now, faith another, when we shall no more have him to apply to, and receive directions from? What shall I do, if the Lord *take away my master from my head? My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.*" And then follow the words I first read, *Sorrowing most of all for the word which he spake, that they should see his face no more.* There were several things in this farewell-discourse, which affected them, and filled their hearts with grief and trouble; as what the apostle was like to suffer for the sake of Christ and his gospel, and what sad havock false teachers would make in the church under their care hereafter; but what most of all afflicted them was, that they were now just going to part with the apostle, and should never see him more. What I shall further do with these words, will be,

- I. To consider what that is which chiefly and principally affects and afflicts a people at parting with a gospel-minister, which is, *that they shall see his face no more.*
- II. Shew the nature of that sorrow which is, and may be expressed on such an occasion.
- III. Observe some reasons which induce such a sorrow, and which will serve to justify it when it is within due bounds.
- IV. Offer some things to consideration, in order to abate it, on the above account, and to regulate it, and keep it within proper limits.

I. I shall consider what that is, which of all things does mostly affect and afflict a people at parting with a gospel-minister, which is, *that they shall see his face no more.* And let it be observed,

1. That there are many cases which affect, but not so much affect, as this: as for instance, to part with a minister for a while, for a few weeks or months, when his urgent affairs call him elsewhere, or his presence is necessary in another branch of Christ's interest, for the service of it; this is not grateful to a people

by whom he is beloved ; it is with some reluctance he departs from them for a season ; but then they hope for his return, and, with as much patience as they can, wait for it : had this been the case here, it would have been bearable. The saints at *Ephesus* had an experience of this before. When the apostle was first with them, his stay was short ; they would fain have had him continued longer with them, but he refused, which no doubt was grieving to them ; but he returned again, and abode with them for the space of two years, and then was obliged to leave them through an uproar, but not without expressions of their tender regard to him ; they *embraced* him in their arms, and no doubt wept over him : and now a third time he visits them, by sending for them at *Miletus*, and tells them, that they shall see his face no more ; had he given some hopes of visiting them again, though he should for the present depart, or signified his intentions to do so, if it was the will of God, this would have been tolerable ; but to assure them they should never see him again, this cut them to the heart.

Again, To part with a gospel-minister wholly, to have him removed from one part of a country to another, from one church to another, there to abide, and not return again ; this is more affecting and afflicting than the other case, but not like this in the text. This may be, and sometimes is the case, that a minister does, and lawfully may remove from one people to another ; as when errors and heresies obtain, and they cannot be rooted out ; or immorality prevails, and no reformation can be made, the discipline of Christ's house is neglected, and the people will not suffer his laws to be put in execution ; or when a due maintenance is not, or cannot be provided for him, but both he and religion are exposed to the reproach of the world ; or disaffection between him and the people rises so high, on one account or another, that peace and fellowship cannot be maintained, nor the ends of the ministration of the word, and administration of ordinances be answered : but then in such a case as this, as there may be some persons to whom he has been a spiritual father, or who have received comfort and edification by his ministry, and consequently must be greatly troubled and distressed at his removal from them ; so they may, if convenience will permit, go along with him ; or however they may hope to see his face, and hear his voice again one time or other.

Moreover, to have a gospel-minister drove away by the force of persecution, and removed into a corner, so that a people cannot behold their teacher in the place where they were wont to see him ; this must be very grieving and distressing, but not like this, seeing his face no more ; because in such times of persecution, they may both see and hear him in private houses, in cellars, and solitary places, in fields and woods, as our forefathers did. The witnesses prophesy,

phesy, though in sackcloth; and the church is fed and nourished with the word and ordinances, though in the wilderness: besides, hope may be entertained, that such a state of perfection will not last always; God will not suffer the rod of the wicked always to continue on the lot of the righteous; he gives his churches rest from adversity, and they walk in his fear, and in the comforts of his spirit, and are edified and multiplied.

For a gospel-minister to be ill treated, reviled, and persecuted, to be haled to prison, and laid in fetters and bonds, must be very grievous to such to whom he has been useful; but this is not like to that, of being in such a case as never to see his face more; because such, as they have compassion on him in his bonds, and sympathize with him, so they may visit him in prison, see his face, hear his voice, and be the more strengthened in their faith in Christ, and in the good ways of God, by his bonds. The case of the apostle *Paul* is a most affecting one, when he was stoned by his furious persecutors, and dragged out of the city, and left for dead, round about whose bruised and mangled body, and as supposed, dead, the disciples stood, no doubt sorrowing and weeping; and yet on a sudden he rose up alive and well, and they saw his face with pleasure^f.

When a minister of the gospel is indisposed, and through sickness cannot attend his charge and work, it greatly affects a people that love him, and to whom he has been serviceable; as the sickness of *Epaphroditus* was distressing to the *Philippians*, when they heard of it, which caused heaviness in him, who knew it would be so to them, though it was not unto death^g: whilst there is life there is hope of seeing him again; but when death has done its work, there is no more hope of seeing him again in his ministerial work; and this is the cutting thought. Wherefore,

2. What is the affecting case of all, is parting with a minister by death, when the eye that has seen him shall see him no more, in the place it formerly did; and that place in which he has been seen shall know him no more; death changes his countenance, alters his face, and the lineaments of it, so that it is not to be seen as it was before; and he is sent away, his *body returns to the dust, and the spirit to God that gave it*; so that his *person*, "his person," as the word also signifies, is not to be beheld any more. The phrase here used supposes, that they had seen his face, and that with pleasure; for it is used of beholding persons and things with rapture and joy^h; so a people may, and often do see the face of their minister in the time of life and health with pleasure, and especially when in his master's work, personating his Lord, and speaking in his name: they have sometimes seen his face as the Jews did *Stephen's*, as if it had been the face of an angel; and have received and embraced him as an angel

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^f Acts xiv. 19, 20.^g Phil. ii. 26, 27.^h *Θυσιον*. See John xvii. 24. Acts vii. 56.

of God, even as Jesus Christ¹; how beautiful are the feet, and much more the mouth and lips, of a messenger of peace, and publisher of the glad-tidings of salvation by Christ! But when a minister is dead, though his face may be seen before his interment, yet not without an alteration, and not with joy and pleasure.

But let it be observed, that when the apostle told the persons spoken of in the text, that they should see his face no more; and they believed him and therefore sorrowed, it is not to be understood as a contradiction to, or a denial of the resurrection of the dead: the apostle knew, and so did they, that though he would die, and never pay them another visit; yet he would rise again in power, in glory, in incorruption, and with a spiritual body; and so would they, and have the same eyes they had, and with them behold, as the God-man and mediator-Christ, or Christ in human nature, and that for themselves, and not another, so they should see each other, and that face to face; but the meaning is, that he would die, and should not rise again till the heavens be no more, till *the Lord shall descend from heaven with the voice of an archangel, when the dead in Christ will rise first; till the last trumpet sounds, and the dead rise incorruptible, and immortal.*

3. It may be very well thought, that there is in these words a figure which Rhetoricians call a *meiosis*, by which less is said than is understood, and more is designed than is expressed; and besides, the word here used not only signifies face or countenance, and also person, but all exterior, attending and surrounding circumstances; and so we may consider it as expressing the person of a gospel-minister in every view of him, and in every part of his office, who ceases to be viewed in it when death has done its own. And then,

His people see his face no more in his own house, to which they have at times resorted, to have their cases of conscience answered, their doubts resolved, or advice given them in matters of moment and difficulty. They see his face no more in their own houses; that is, they have no more of his friendly visits; no more his fervent prayers with them, and for them; no more his hearty counsel to them, and feel no more his sympathizing heart with them in their troubles, whether of a spiritual or temporal nature; the weak are no more supported, nor the feeble-minded comforted by his private instructions. They see his face no more at their church-meetings, there presiding over them, shewing the house to the house, the form and fashion of it, the goings-out and comings-in, and all the laws and ordinances of it; pointing who are to be admitted, and who to be rejected from the communion of the church; directing to every part of discipline, and to the rule of God's word for it; exhorting and reproofing with all long-suffering and doctrine, such sharply, who have erred, that they be found

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¹ Acts vi. 15. Gal. iv. 19.

in the faith, and such publicly who have sinned before all; laying on, and taking off censures, by the suffrage of the church; all which is no more to be seen as done by him. They see his face no more in the pulpit: they hear no more the silver trumpet blown by him, nor the joyful sound pronounced with delightful accents, nor the messages of peace, life, and salvation by Christ brought by him: they now remember how *his mouth spoke wisdom, and his tongue talked of judgment*; how their hearts have *burned within them, while he has been opening the scriptures to them*; how he has stirred up their minds by way of remembrance of gospel-truths, and endeavoured to establish them in them; in what a clear light he has placed them, and with what strength of argument he has defended them; and with what fervency, and in what a pressing manner he has exhorted them to love and good-works, and to *adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour*. But the cutting thought is, he is gone, and is no more seen, nor no more to be seen and heard. They see his face no more at the table of the Lord, there delivering out the memorials of his sufferings and death; setting forth so evidently before their eyes a crucified Christ, as if he was just then crucified and slain among them; pointing to his bleeding side and wounds, and directing to his pierced hands, and feet; explaining the divine emblems, as representing the body of Christ bruised and broken for their sins, and his precious blood shed for the remission of them; insensibly, and at an unawares, leading them at once into the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; engaging and encouraging their faith and hope in his blood and sacrifice; stirring up their love, and exciting them to thankfulness to him, and not forget his benefits; such as healing their diseases, and “forgiving their iniquities, redeeming their lives from destruction, and crowning them with loving kindness and tender mercies.” And the thought of this, that they shall see his face no more, or him concerned in such delightful services, makes their hearts to bleed within them. Bur,

II. I go on to shew the nature of that sorrow which is, or may be expressed on such an occasion. And,

1. When it is properly expressed, and kept within due bounds, it is not criminal, but lawful: it is not in the least suggested, that the persons in the text sinned in doing what they did, nor does the divine historian leave any censure upon them for it. Religion does not strip us of our affections, or destroy them, but regulates and directs to the proper use of them^k; it does not teach us, or form us into, a Stoical apathy, a stupid indolence, and brutal insensibility: it is neither unmanly nor unchristian to weep for deceased friends and relations, or for any

^k Quare non in eo sita est perfectio fidelium, ut affectus omnes exuant, sed ut eos ex iustis tantum causis suscipiant & moderentur. Calvin. in loc.

any good man, and especially for the loss of a gospel-minister. The God of nature has placed the affections in us for proper uses, and christianity leads unto them, and assists in them; it is not counter-acting the man, or the christian, to express a proper degree of sorrow on such an occasion: persons of the most brave and heroic spirits, of the greatest firmness and resolution of mind, have shown a tenderness of spirit, and have been melted into tears on a like account. The apostle *Paul*, that man of spirit, and greatness of soul, suggests, that had *Epaphroditus* died, he should have had sorrow upon sorrow; such a load of it, as would be scarcely bearable; devout men carried out *Stephen*, when dead, to his grave, and lamented over him; and even our Lord Jesus Christ, when he saw the Jews and *Mary* weeping at the grave of *Lazarus*, not only groaned in spirit, and was troubled, but wept over him himself.

2. Such sorrow is not worldly, but spiritual; there is the sorrow of the world, which worketh death, a sorrow which worldly men have, and for the loss of worldly things; as for loss of trade, and loss in trade, and for the loss of a man that is a good neighbour, and a good customer; but of this nature is not the sorrow expressed in our text; there was no worldly loss sustained by parting with the apostle; but there was a spiritual one, and on that account the sorrow was: and so when a gospel-minister is removed by death, the sorrow for him is of a spiritual nature; it is because he has been a spiritual father to some, and has been of use for the spiritual welfare of others: and a sorrow on this account is not blame-worthy, when it does not hinder the exercise of spiritual graces, as faith, hope, patience, resignation, and submission to the will of God.

3. This sorrow was universal; as they all wept, they all sorrowed; there was not a dry eye in the whole assembly; it was a general loss, a loss to them all, and it occasioned a general lamentation: so the loss of a gospel-minister is a general loss, a loss not only to his family, and to that particular church, and every member of it to whom he ministered, but to the whole interest of Christ: when a *great man is fallen in Israel*, all *Israel* will be concerned for it; when a prophet dies, there will be a general weeping for him; when *Samuel* the prophet died, all the Israelites gathered together, and lamented him¹.

4. This sorrow was very painful; the elders found great pain and uneasiness in their breasts, when they were told by the apostle they should see his face no more. The word, by which it is here expressed, is used to set forth that anguish of spirit, and distress of mind, which were in *Joseph* and *Mary*, when they had lost, and were seeking for the young child Jesus; yea, it is used of the most excruciating torments²: the sensation here felt, and the sorrow they were filled with, were like the pains and sorrow of a woman in travail; by which our Lord sets forth the sorrow of the disciples when he should be taken from them, and they

¹ 2 Sam. ii. 38. 1 Sam. xxv. 1.

² Ὀδυνηστος. See Luke ii. 48. and xvi. 24, 25.

they should not see his face for a while": and such like sorrow is occasioned by the death of a gospel-minister to his people; it is like separating the nearest relations, husband and wife, parents and children; it is like plucking the flesh from the bones, and sending one member from another; so exceeding afflicting and painful is it. But, I proceed,

III. To assign the reasons which induce a people to sorrow after this manner, upon the death of a gospel-minister; and which will serve to justify such sorrow when it is kept within due bounds. And,

1. The characters which a minister of the gospel bears, lay a foundation for such sorrow, and furnish out a reason for it: he is a *servant of the most high God*; not only by creation, as all men are, and by grace, as every saint is, but by his office as a minister; whose work and business it is to shew unto men the way of salvation: he is a *minister of Christ*; of his appointing and sending, of his calling and qualifying, and whom he owns and makes useful: he is a *steward of the mysteries of God*, and of his *manifold grace*; and if he is faithful, which is required of stewards, and also wise, and gives to every one their portion of meat in due season, as on that account he is highly esteemed and valued in the family, so his loss will be justly lamented. He is an *ambassador of Christ*; personates him, stands in his stead, and speaks in his name, bringing a message, being sent on an embassy of peace, from him: he is a *spiritual guide and governor* in the church, whose faith is to be followed, and the end of his conversation considered, *which is Christ, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*. And now in proportion to the characters he bears, is the loss of him, and in proportion to the loss of him, is sorrow for him; persons of figure and character, as in the state, so in the church, the death of them is to be lamented.

2. The relations which a gospel-minister stands in to his people, are another reason why they do, and why they may sorrow for him after a godly sort, and in moderation, when he is parted from them by death, and they cannot see his face any more: he stands in the relation of a father to them, of a spiritual father to some of them, as he has been the instrument of begetting them again to Christ by the gospel; so that he is not only an instructor of them, but a father to them; as he also is to the rest that are under his care, he having a paternal affection for them, and a fatherly regard to them: he lays up for them on week-days, as parents do for their children, and then he freely spends it on them on Lord's-days, and most gladly spends, and is spent, for them; though the more he loves, the less is he loved by them. And, O how does he exhort, comfort, and charge them, as a father does his children! and therefore when he is removed from them by death, who can blame them for weeping and crying out,

My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof! Likewise he stands in the relation of a shepherd to them; as he is their father, and they his family, he is their pastor, and they his flock, whom he has willingly took the oversight and charge of; and whom he feeds with knowledge and understanding, and watches over, and for their souls, that he may give an account of them with joy, and not with grief; and when therefore he is taken from them, can it be otherwise, but that they must be filled with grief and sorrow on account of it?

3. The work of a gospel-minister, from which he is taken off by death, is such, that when it is seriously considered, and thoroughly thought of, will justly occasion sorrow in those among whom he has laboured. His business is to deliver out the pure gospel of Christ, to publish salvation by him, to proclaim peace by his blood, to preach pardon and righteousness through him, and every other important truth; to state and defend the same, and to shew the influence they have, and the argument they carry in them, to engage to holiness of life and conversation: and as he is highly to be esteemed of for his work sake, and to be accounted worthy of double honour, especially if he *labours in the word and doctrine*; and if he is *a workman approved of God, and that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*; as he will not fail of meeting with respect and value from those who love the truth, as it is in Jesus; so when he comes to die, and has done his work, his death will be bewailed for the same reason, for which he was highly esteemed in life.

4. The usefulness of a gospel-minister is another reason of sorrow with those to whom his labours of love have been acceptable and serviceable. Such an one is made use of by the Lord to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; to convert sinners from the evil of their ways, whereby souls are saved from death, and a multitude of sins covered; he is a minister by whom others believe in Christ, and have peace and comfort; the word preached by him is the means by which faith comes, and the holy Spirit with his several graces is received. He is a *Boanerges*, a son of thunder, to some, to awaken and convince them of their sins, and of their dangerous state and condition by nature; and he is a *Barnabas*, a son of consolation, to others, through whose ministry their distressed minds are relieved, their disconsolate souls are comforted, their faith is increased, the joy of it furthered, and they are fed, nourished, refreshed, and edified: when therefore it is the pleasure of the Lord to call home such an useful servant of his, and take him off from his work and usefulness, and especially in the midst of it, it must be very afflictive and grieving, to such particularly, who have received much spiritual benefit and advantage by him.

5. It increases the sorrow, when at such a time as this, a gospel-minister is removed, in which there are not many of that character, and so small a prospect of more. The harvest is great, and faithful and painful labourers are few. There are scarce any that naturally care for the estate and souls of men, and are heartily concerned for their spiritual and eternal welfare; all *comparatively* seek their own things, their honour and applause from men, their ease, reputation, and riches; and none, or few, the things that are Jesus Christ's, or relate to his honour, glory, kingdom and interest in the world: and what adds to the sorrow is; that there are so few rising up to fill up the places of those that are removed; few that come forth with the same spirit, and are zealously attached to the truths of the everlasting gospel: blessed be God, there is here and there one that promises usefulness, or otherwise the sorrow and grief, at the loss of gospel-ministers, would be insupportable.

To all which may be added, that a faithful minister of the gospel can be very ill spared at this time of day, when errors and heresies of all kinds are rampant among us; it is the last day, and there are many antichrists in the world, many false prophets are gone forth into it; there are many saying, *lo here is Christ, and lo there*; to the great confusion and distraction of the weak and simple. These come not in privily, as they formerly did, bringing in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them; but openly spread their poison, and declare for their wretched schemes with fury and rancour, charitably scattering firebrands, arrows, and death; raging waves of the sea they are, foaming out their own shame; there is scarce an error or heresy that has appeared in the world from the first ages of christianity, but what is revived in this; and there is no truth of the gospel, but what is opposed and denied: and to lose an able and zealous defender of them, at such a time as this, is a double loss, and cannot fail of affecting the minds of such who heartily espouse the Redeemer's cause. But,

IV. Give me leave to offer some few things to prevent immoderate sorrow, to restrain grief, and keep it within due bounds and limits; though it is lawful, and there is cause for it, yet care should be taken that it is not exceeded, and even in this your particular case, who have so lately lost your dear pastor. And,

1. Let it be observed, that it is the will of God that so it should be, and you ought to acquiesce in it; the will of the Lord is done, and it cannot be undone: when the disciples had endeavoured to dissuade the apostle from going up to Jerusalem, and could not prevail, they ceased, saying, *The will of the Lord be done*: so you have been praying and intreating the Lord to spare the life of your pastor, but he has not thought fit to grant your request; and it now becomes you to cease, and be still, and not complain and murmur, since the will

of the Lord is done; who does all things not only after his own will, but after the counsel of it; he does all things well and wisely, for the best, for his own glory, and his people's good; and there is nothing in which you can more imitate Christ, and be like unto him, than by resigning your wills to the will of God, who said, *not my will, but thine be done*^p; you should remember that God is a sovereign, and must be submitted to: he "does according to his will in heaven above, and in the earth below, and none can stay his hand, nor ought any to say to him, what dost thou?" Good old *Eli* said, with respect to a case more afflicting, more distressing, and more severe than yours, *it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*^q; he has a right to do what he will with his own, and he does so without giving any account of his matters to the children of men: the Lord gave you your minister, and he gave him his gifts for the ministry, and all his usefulness was owing to him; and now he has taken him away; and you should be still, and know, own, and acknowledge that he is a sovereign God, and does as he pleases; and, with *David*, it becomes you to be dumb, and not open your mouth in a way of complaint against him, because he has done it^r.

2. Your minister's work was done, which was appointed for him to do. There is nothing that more manifestly falls under the decrees and determinations of heaven, than a minister's life and work; it is appointed of God where he shall minister, to whom, and how long; how many souls shall be converted by him, and what comforts shall be administered through his means, and to what length of time he must continue in his service. Now there was not one sinner more to be converted by your minister, nor any more comforts to be conveyed to you through his hands; all the work that was cut out for him was done by him: but this cannot be better expressed than in his own words; and because these will, in all probability, have a greater influence upon you, and more weight with you, than any thing I can say, give me leave to read a passage or two out of a discourse^s, published by him. "God, says he, never calls home an useful minister till his work is done, till every sinner is brought in, whom he was in any degree to be instrumental to awaken, convince, or direct to Jesus; and till every saint is so far instructed, edified, and comforted by him, as was settled and agreed in the divine counsels, when God was pleased to determine and appoint, that he should be called to labour in his vineyard.—And as all the names of the elect are particularly set down in the Lamb's book of life, so under shepherds are sent forth by the great Lord of the harvest, who, as he assigns them their work, so he has settled every circumstance relating to it; how long each shall be employed, and when he is to be removed to make way for a successor: how far he shall be owned, and succeeded; what temptations

^p Luke xxii. 42.^q 1 Sam. iii. 18.^r Psalm xlvi. 10. and xxxix. 9.^s The Blessing of a Gospel-ministry, &c. p. 30, 32—34.

“ tations and difficulties will attend him ; what discouragements he will meet
 “ with, and how he shall be supported and carried through it, in the midst of
 “ all-opposition, till his warfare is accomplished, and his work is finished.— We
 “ are ready to entertain hard thoughts of God, continues your dear Pastor, and
 “ to open our mouths against heaven, when he is pleased to take away a minister
 “ whom we valued, in the bloom or meridian of life, especially if he is called
 “ off when we think he was best furnished for, and had the greatest run of suc-
 “ cess in his work ; not considering that one reason why he was so very useful,
 “ whilst with us, was, because his work was to be cut short in righteousness,
 “ and his stay upon earth limited to a few years : it is not so material how long
 “ ministers are continued with us, as how useful they are to us, whilst that is
 “ our mercy. God can easily dispatch a great deal of work by his servants, in
 “ a little time ; and if he is then pleased to dismiss them, the advantage is
 “ theirs, by being taken the sooner to regions of everlasting rest and triumph.—
 “ This should serve then, adds he, to still our murmurings, and hush our com-
 “ plaints, even though we should lose a minister dearer to us than the apple of
 “ our eye : let us remember he had his particular work to do, that now his
 “ work is finished and completed ; and when this is the case, what can be
 “ more merciful than for a faithful servant to enter into the joy of his Lord ?”

3. *The residue of the Spirit is with the Lord* ; Christ your ascended Lord and King has received gifts for men, yea for rebellious ones ; and he has a fulness of them in his hands, which he can give, if he pleases, to others to fit them for the work of the ministry ; that they may be useful for the perfecting or gathering in of the saints, and for the edifying the body the church : instead therefore of mourning over the death of your pastor, especially in an immoderate way, be praying to the Lord of the harvest to send a faithful labourer into this part of his vineyard ; and who knows what a blessing is in reserve for you ? Your *Elijah* is gone ; it may be, a double portion of his spirit may fall upon some *Elisha* or another, who may be sent to you.

4. Remember that the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the church, lives, and will live for evermore, to protect, defend, and provide for you ; though your spiritual father is gone, your everlasting Father, on whose shoulders the government of the church is, continues ; though the under-shepherd is removed from you, the chief and great shepherd, and bishop of your souls, is still the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever ; an everlasting friend, that sticks closer than a brother. And moreover, though the fathers, where are they, and the prophets, do they live for ever ? No ; they do not, yet the word of God lives and abides for ever : the gospel is an everlasting gospel, and there will be men to preach it to the end of the world. Christ has promised his presence with his ministers

so long, which supposes that they will be continued to the end of all things. Christ has, and ever will have a standing ministry in the world, until all his elect are gathered in, and "these are come to the unity of the faith, to the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

5. It should be observed by you, that what is your loss, is your minister's gain; he is taken away, perhaps from evil to come; he is safe housed before the storm falls upon the churches and ministers of Christ, which seems to be gathering thick; and can you be sorry for that? could you have seen the saint when he entered into the joy of his Lord, clad with robes of immortality and bliss, how he was received into the Father's presence, embraced in the arms, and laid in the bosom of Jesus, and the Spirit of glory resting on him; could you now view him, as you have reason to believe he is, inheriting the throne of glory, with the crown of righteousness on him, encircled with the glorious forms of angels and fellow-saints made perfect, it would surely bid you wipe off your tears, and dry your eyes. To all which I would only add, that though you will see his face no more in this world, which is the cause of your present sorrowing, you will see it in another; he will rise again in the resurrection of the just, and you that believe in Christ will rise too, when the dead in Christ shall rise first; and then he and you will meet, and be with the Lord, be for ever with him; with which words you should comfort one another. Your minister will appear at the head of you, to whom he has been a spiritual father, and you will be then his joy and crown of rejoicing; he will look upon you with pleasure, and you will see his face to great advantage, which will then be as the face of an angel, and shine like the sun in the Father's kingdom; for *they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever*¹. Thus have I gone through what I proposed; and there is nothing remains now but to give you the character of my deceased brother, and your pastor, which I suppose is expected from me: and here I want the eloquence of the deceased to paint him out in his proper colours, and to describe him as the accomplished man, the real christian, and excellent minister. Something I shall attempt to do, and you that knew him most intimately, will supply the rest in your minds, from your own observation.

The Reverend Mr SAMUEL WILSON, descended from godly ministers of the denomination of Protestant Dissenters, both by father and mother's side. He was the son of the Reverend Mr EBENEZER WILSON, a worthy minister of Christ in this city; whose father also was an eminent preacher of the gospel, at *Hitchin* in

¹ Dan. xii. 3.

in *Hertfordshire*; and as he had a religious, so a liberal education. His grammar and classical learning, he received under some of the best masters of it^u, in this city: his academical studies he went through, under the direction of Dr *Ridgely* and Mr *Eames*, under whom he made great advances in polite and useful literature; with which being furnished, he shone out and made that figure in the church and world, he afterwards did.

His natural parts were very quick and strong; he had great vivacity of spirit, a lively fancy and imagination, a retentive memory, a penetrating mind, and a solid judgment; which, with the above advantages of human literature, and above all, having the grace of God bestowed upon him, and spiritual light and knowledge given him in the mysteries of the gospel, made him the great man he was.

He was favoured with many preservations and providential deliverances, in his infancy and younger years, when life was in danger: which he has remarked with his own hand^v, as expressive of the tender care of providence over him; and no doubt the Lord saved him, in order to call him by his grace, reveal his Son in him, and make him an able minister of the New Testament.

He received his first serious impressions, under the ministry of the late Rev. Mr *Daniel Wilcox*, an eminent minister of the Presbyterian denomination in this city; as he himself relates in a discourse^w he published on occasion of the death of that minister, upon the same words which I have been treating of: and that he was truly a partaker of the grace of God, was not only the judgment of the church to whom he first gave up himself, but will easily be admitted by all good men that have known him, heard him, or read him. And it was your happiness as a church, that you had such a minister, who himself *had tasted that the Lord was gracious*: an unregenerate ministry has been the bane of the Established church, and is like to be the ruin of the Protestant dissenting interest.

Though the father and grandfather of our deceased brother were both of the Baptist denomination, yet it was not this that determined him to become of the same persuasion himself; besides, his father dying when he was young, he was under another influence; and when he entered upon the inquiry about baptism, no one, he himself says, could enter into it with a more earnest desire, to find truth on the side of the common practice, all his conversation and prospects leaning strongly that way; but, upon taking the method which he did to *search the scriptures*, collect the whole evidence from them, and consider every part separately,

^u Dr Hay, an eminent clergyman, and Professor Ward of Gresham-College.

^v In a bloody-flux; when cut near the eye by a catlick; when swimming in a mill-pond — wading through a river once and again, &c. MS. penes me.

^w The Blessing of a Gospel-ministry, &c. p. 5.

separately, he found himself obliged to conclude the balance was greatly on the side of adult-baptism by immersion; and therefore determined to comply with his duty, and on the closest reflection never saw reason to repent of it¹: this inquiry; or which he calls a *scripture manual*, was published a little before his death, and is worthy the perusal of every serious inquirer into truth; and by which, and other printed performances of his, *though dead, he yet speaks*.

After he was fully satisfied in his mind about the point of baptism, he joined himself with the church then under the pastoral care of the Rev^d. Mr *Edward Wallin*; and when he had finished his studies, was called forth by that church to the work of the ministry, into which he came not only with the entire approbation of that church, but with great acceptance to the public: he was soon called to be an assistant to the Rev. Mr *John Noble*, in whose meeting place² a Lord's-day evening lecture was opened for him, where he preached to a crowded audience: he came forth even at first with clear evangelical light, with great warmth, zeal, and fervency of spirit; and, like another *Apollos*, with a torrent of eloquence, being *mighty in the scriptures*; all which recommended him to all sorts of people, and made him exceeding popular.

After some time, you, this church of Christ, being destitute of a pastor, called him to take the pastoral care of you, which he accepted of, and was solemnly invested with the office of a pastor, elder, or overseer, many ministers assisting in that service, who, all rest from their labours, excepting myself; this, I think, was about five or six and twenty years ago. His ministry among you has been greatly owned to the conversion of many sinners, and to the comfort and edification of you all present, as well as of many that are gone to glory before him. The low estate in which you were, when he came to this place, and the numbers of which you now consist, and the flourishing condition in which you now are, abundantly shew the success of his ministrations among you; notwithstanding the breaches, which by one providence or another, have been made upon you; his popularity continuing to the last.

Need I describe him as a preacher to you, who, at least many of you, have so long sat under his ministry; his mien and deportment in the pulpit was grave and venerable; his gesture graceful; his address very moving and pathetic; his language striking; his discourses spiritual, savoury, and evangelical; having a tendency to awaken the minds of sinners to a sense of sin and danger, and to relieve and comfort distressed minds: he was indeed an eloquent preacher, and a warm defender of the peculiar doctrines of the christian religion; and in one word, laborious, indefatigable, and successful; not a loiterer, but a labourer in the Lord's vineyard; as in his public work, so in the more private duties

of

¹ See his *Scripture Manual*, p. 3, 39.² Tallow-Chandlers Hall.

of his office, visiting the church and members of it, without respect of persons; fervent in his prayers for them, and with them; hearty in his advice unto them, and unwearied in doing any service for them he undertook. And let me not forget his conduct at your church-meetings, where he presided, becoming his character and office; what authority he used when necessary; what prudence in all things; what patience in bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and it may be sometimes the rudeness of some, and the invectives of others; what lenity to offenders; what compassion to backsliders; what reluctance to pass the awful sentence on the incorrigible, and with what tears in prayer he would weep over such unhappy professors!

His gift in prayer was very remarkable and extraordinary; with what fulness of matter, freedom of mind, and fervour of spirit, as well as pertinency of expression, and propriety of language, would he pour out his soul before God, and wrestle with him; what a compass would he fetch, and reach every case, both private and public; and not only express the sense of his own heart, but that of others that joined with him, in a better and fuller manner, than they could do it for themselves.

He was affable and courteous in his behaviour to all men, of a cheerful spirit, his conversation pleasant, profitable, entertaining, and useful: which made him generally beloved by all sorts of persons. In social life, he was the tender husband, the affectionate father, and the faithful friend.

In his last illness he was seized at first with such a stupor, as rendered him very little conversible during the whole time; so that nothing of his gracious experience could be taken from him, only some broken words and expressions now and then were dropped by him, which shewed him to be in a spiritual frame: but from a small manuscript, written by him in health, I shall give a few extracts, in which he not only expresses his sense of mercies, temporal and spiritual, but observes the gracious dealings of God with him, and his experience of his divine favour. "I have had, says he, many sweet visits of his love, especially in secret, and at his table. God, in Christ, adds he, I hope is my portion, his providence my defence, and his good Spirit my guide and comforter." And in another place, he expresses his sense of the corruption of his heart, the infirmities of his life, his faith and hope in a bleeding Saviour, and his desires after unspotted purity and holiness; he complains of "a polluted, proud, peevish heart, prone to atheism, folly, and every evil—and of a life tarnished with many blemishes, sad indiscretions, and heart-breaking ingratitude—surely, says he, God hath hardly done more for any, nor any left to do more against him!—then expresses an hope limited to a bleeding mediator—and concludes, blessed day that will bring perfect purity." Which:

day is come to him, and has brought it to him. A word or two more, and I have done.

To you, the mournful widow of the deceased, give me leave to say, your loss is indeed great; you have lost a kind and indulgent husband; but remember, Christ your spiritual husband lives; and from him, and his love, you can never be separated; put your trust in him, he will *never leave you nor forsake you*. To you his dear offspring, whom he most affectionately loved, you have lost one who has been, and still would have been, the guide of your youth, and constant monitor; follow his example, remember his instructions; shun the pleasures of sin, and the vanities of this world; flee youthful lusts; seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and serve your father's God, and things will be well with you. And to you, this church of Christ, among whom he has ministered many years, I would only say, abide by the truths he preached to you; imitate him in every thing praiseworthy, and of good report; you have lost your shepherd, keep close to one another, and do not scatter and stray from the fold; preserve the order and discipline of Christ's house; seek peace and pursue it, unite in your counsels, be frequent and fervent in prayer; and I doubt not but in due time, God will send you a pastor to feed you with knowledge, and with understanding.

S E R M O N X X X .

Occasioned by the Death of BENJAMIN SEWARD, Esq; Preached *April 8, 1753.*

P S A L. XXXVII. 37.

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.

THE occasion of my reading these words to you, at this time, is the decease of BENJAMIN SEWARD, Esq; late of *Bengworth in Worcestershire*. The last Lord's day he worshipped in public with saints below, was in this place; just five weeks ago. It is at the request of his surviving relations that I preach on this solemn occasion: no passage of scripture being left by the deceased:

ceased for this purpose, and none given me by his friends; but *this* being suggested to me by a relation; and no other more proper to the occasion, or more suitable to the character of the deceased, occurring to my mind; I determined to make use of it, and improve it in the best manner I can to your profit and edification.

The general view of the Psalmist in this psalm is to dissuade men truly good from envy, fretfulness, and impatience at the prosperity of the wicked; and to exhort them to be still and quiet; to wait patiently on the Lord, and trust in him; shewing the care God takes of such, and the good things he does, or will bestow upon them; and also the sure and sudden destruction of the wicked: a beautiful contrast between the righteous and the wicked may be observed throughout the whole psalm, and particularly in the text and context. *I have seen the wicked in great power*, says the Psalmist; having in his mind, it is highly probable, some particular person, as *Saul*, or *Doeg the Edomite*, or *Ahitophel*, or some such one, in great authority, in an exalted station of life, when he was in low circumstances: such an one *spreading himself like a green bay-tree*; in a very flourishing condition, in a seemingly settled state of outward felicity, and glorying in it, and striking terror into all around him: *yet he passed away, and he was not*; either his power, and riches, and honour, were suddenly taken from him; or he was taken by death from them, and was no more the man he had been; or was no more in the land of the living: *yea I sought him, but he could not be found*; in the place where he formerly was, that knowing him no more; he could not be found on earth, from whence he was taken; nor in heaven, where there is no place for such persons: he was gone to his own place, as is said of *Judas*, of whom *Jerom*, an antient writer, interprets the whole passage: but, on the other hand, *mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace*: observe the truly sincere and gracious man, in his character, principles, and practices; trace him throughout the whole of his conversation; view him in every light, in life, and at death; and you will find the issue of all to be solid peace, prosperity and happiness. In the words may be observed,

- I. The character of a real good man, described as *perfect* and *upright*.
- II. The regard which is to be had unto him, he is to be *marked* and observed, *beheld*, looked at, and attentively considered.
- III. The reason assigned for this, and which is expressive of his future happiness; *for the end of that man is peace*.

- I. The character of a truly good man, who is described,

First, As *perfect*^a: some such there have been in all ages. *Noah* was a just man, and *perfect* in his generation, and walked with God. *Job* was a *perfect* and *upright* man; both the characters met in him which are given of the good man here. The apostle *Paul* spake the wisdom of God among them that were *perfect*^b; but the question is, in what sense they may be said to be perfect. And they are so both with respect to sanctification and justification.

1st, With respect to sanctification. This is what the people of God are chosen to as an end, and chosen through as a means of eternal happiness: it is called the *sanctification of the spirit*^c, because he is the author and efficient cause of it; if any man is *sanctified*, it is *in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God*^d: it lies in an implantation of principles of grace and holiness in the heart, and in the exercise of them, and appears in the outward walk and conversation. It is of so much importance and consequence, and so absolutely requisite to eternal life, that *without it no man shall see the Lord*^e, even without perfect holiness; and yet no man is so perfect in it, in the present state, as to be entirely free from sin, compleat in grace, or in-deficient in the discharge of duty.

1. Not so perfect as to be entirely free from sin. A good man is indeed free from the governing power of sin, under which he was before conversion. Sin is a king, a tyrant which reigns unto death; and to whose laws, which are lusts, men in a state of nature are voluntarily subject; they readily *serve divers lusts and pleasures*: but in conversion the power and force of sin is broken, and men are delivered from its thralldom and tyranny; they are translated into another kingdom, and are under another influence; they are not *under* the power of sin as a *law*, but *under grace* as a governing principle; and therefore *sin shall not have dominion over them*^f: it is indeed still in them, and has great power and prevalence at times; it threatens the ascendant over them, and sometimes so far prevails as to *lead them captive*; when *with* their *flesh*, or corrupt part, they *serve the law of sin*, though *with the mind* or spiritual part the *law of God*^g: they are also free from the damning power of sin, both original and actual; though they sinned in *Adam*, and the sentence of death passed on them; *judgment came upon all men*, and so on them *to condemnation*^h; and by their actual sins and transgressions they become obnoxious to the curse and condemnation of

^a The Targum renders it, "נָטַר שְׁלִיכוּתָא keep perfection, and behold uprightnes." The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, "keep innocence, and behold uprightnes." The Syriac version, "keep perfection, and chuse uprightnes." The Arabic version, "keep meeknes, and thou shalt see uprightnes." The abstract is put for the concrete; perfection and uprightnes for the perfect and upright man.

^b Gen. vi. 9. Job i. 1. 8. 1 Cor. ii. 6.

^c 2 Thes. ii. 13.

^d 1 Cor. vi. 11.

^e Heb. xii. 14.

^f Rom. vi. 14.

^g Rom. vii. 23, 25.

^h Rom. v. 12, 18.

of the law; yet *there is*, *οὐκ κατακρίμα*, “not one condemnation to them that are in *Christ*!” were there as many sentences of condemnation as there are sins, not one of them can be executed on those that belong to Christ; the reason is, because sin is condemned in his flesh; he has bore the condemnation himself; it has been executed upon him, and therefore *who* or *what shall condemn?* *it is Christ that died*^x; and there is more virtue and efficacy in the blood and sacrifice of Christ to save, than there is in sin to damn. Moreover, upon the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ, God does not impute sin to his people; but he imputes the righteousness of his Son, by which they are justified from all their sins, and in that sense free from them; but then, no man, no not the best of men, are free from the being of sin in them. The apostle *Paul*, that holy man, than whom no mere man on earth was more holy, speaks of his indwelling sin; *it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*¹; it was an inmate of his; sin not only dwelled with him, but dwelled in him. *John*, the beloved disciple, says, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*^m; and the apostle *James* put this question, *Do ye think the scripture saith in vain, the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy*ⁿ? and not only by the mouth of three such witnesses is this truth established, but by the experience of all the saints in all ages: sin is like the spreading leprosy in the house, which could not be cleansed of it, without pulling down every stick and stone; sin will never be removed entirely from the saints, until this earthly house of their tabernacle is dissolved. Nor are they free from the actings of sin; sin that dwells in them is always present with them; when they would do good; and often hinders them in the performance of it, so that they cannot do what they would; and it puts them upon the doing of that which is evil. It is an observation made long ago, and it is to be remarked in all ages; that *there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not*^o.

Every man sins in thought, word, or deed, and is continually sinning, even every good man. He daily sins in thought; since the fall, *every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually*^p. What evil thoughts are in it may be learnt in some measure by what comes out of it, which are expressed by the lips, and in actions; and though when a man becomes a spiritual man, he becomes spiritually-minded, and thinks good thoughts, which he cannot do of himself, only under the influence of the grace of God, yet he is not always under that influence; and though he hates vain thoughts, yet these lodge within him, of which he complains; and there is no man that is capable of looking into his own heart, but must observe the vanity, folly, and impurity of his thoughts. He sins in word also, and very frequently: indeed, if *any man offend*

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¹ Rom. viii. 1.

^x Rom. viii. 3. 33.

¹ Rom. vii. 20.

^m 1 John i. 2.

ⁿ James iv. 5.

^o Eccles. vii. 20.

^p Gen. vi. 5.

not in word, the same is a perfect man^a; but where is the man to be found that does not offend God, his neighbour, and his own conscience, by his words, at one time or another? Let a man be as circumspect as he can; let him keep his mouth as with a bridle^b, as David did, and hold the reins ever so strait; let him be as wise as Solomon, some idle word, imprudent, unfavoury, and unbecoming expression or another will at times drop from him; and when provoked, let him be as patient as Job, and as meek as Moses, he will be tempted to speak unadvisedly with his lips^c: and as to deeds or actions, who can understand his errors^d, they are so many? in many things we all offend^e or fall; fall into sin, as the righteous man does, seven times a day; and he would fall oftener, did not the Lord uphold him: and the true reason why he does not fall totally and finally, is, because he is in the arms of everlasting love, secured in the covenant of grace, kept by the power of God, and is in the hands of Christ, who is able to keep him from falling.

That the best of men are not entirely free from sin, and the commission of it, in this life, is clear from their confessions of it; none are more frequent at confession of sin, or more free and ingenuous in it than they are; yea, even such who in a proper sense may be said to be perfect. Plain-hearted Jacob owns, that few and evil had been the days of the years of his pilgrimage^f. Job, that perfect and upright man, says, I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men^g? David, the man after God's own heart, was often at this work; I acknowledge my transgression, says he, and my sin is ever before me^h. The church in Isaiah's time confesses, we have sinned—and are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy ragsⁱ. Daniel, that man greatly beloved of God, we read of confessing his sins, and the sins of his people^j. And saints indeed find their account in so doing; for as it is promised, that if men confess their sins, God will be faithful and forgive them; so David attests it from his own experience; I acknowledged my sin unto thee—and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin^k. This is also evident from the continual war there is in good men; they find a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and indeed, there is nothing to be seen in the Sculamite, in the perfect one^l, as that word may be rendered, but as it were the company of two armies^m; flesh and spirit, sin and grace set in battle array against each other: likewise, the same appears from the groans and complaints of the saints; one says, There is no soundness in my flesh

^a James iii. 2.^b James iii. 2.^c Isai. lxiv. 6.^d From לשון, comperi, perfecti, Buxtorf.^e Psalm xxxix. 1.^f Gen. xlvii. 9.^g Dan. ix. 4. 5. 20.^h Psalm cvi. 33.ⁱ Job vii. 20.^j Psalm xxxii. 5.^k Psalm xix. 12.^l Psalm li. 3.^m Cant. vi. 19.

flesh—nor rest in my bones, because of my sin^e; another says, *we is me, I am undone; I am a man of unclean lips^f*; a third says, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death^g!* and all agree and join in this, *We that are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened^h* with the weight of sin and corruption; and so they do and will, as long as they are in the tabernacle of the body. Once more, this is plain and manifest from the prayers of good men, that God would cleanse them from secret faults; keep them back from presumptuous sins; pardon their iniquities, for they are great; blot them out, according to the multitude of his tender mercies; purge and wash them, that they might be whiter than snowⁱ. And our Lord, knowing that his disciples sinned, and would sin daily, taught them to ask for the forgiveness of their sins, for the application of pardoning grace to them, as often as they asked for their bread, even their daily bread^k; yea, it is easy to observe, that those very men, said to be perfect, were not without sin: and though it is not pleasing to rake into the sins of good men, yet since these stand on record, to teach us that there is no absolute perfection in the best of men, and to encourage us, notwithstanding our sins and imperfections, to hope for acceptance with God through Christ, as they had, it cannot be wrong to observe them. Thus *Noah*, who was a perfect man; was guilty of intemperance; *Job*, another perfect man, when convinced of his evil, abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes; and it may be remarked, that frequently good men fail in that very thing for which they have been most eminent: thus *Abraham* was famous for his faith, being the father of them that believe; and yet the principal failure recorded of him is, his unbelief and distrust of the care of divine providence over him, which put him on saying, *Sarah* was his sister. *Moses* was the meekest man on earth, and yet spoke very rashly and hastily; *ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock^l?* You have heard of the patience of *Job*, and how eminent he was for that; and yet, what great impatience was he guilty of when he cursed the day of his birth? *Solomon* was the wisest of men, and yet never man acted so foolish a part, to be drawn into such gross idolatry as he was by his wives.

2. Nor are any good men so perfect as to be compleat in the exercise of grace. All grace indeed is seminally in the heart at once; the Spirit of God, the author of it, is given at once; Christ formed in the heart, the subject-matter of it, is done at once; all grace is implanted at one and the same time: it is a seed which is cast into the heart, and there abides; where there is one grace, there is every grace; where there is faith, there is hope; and where there is hope, there is faith; and where there are both faith and hope, there is love: as there is a strict connection between vices, where there is

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^e Psalm xxxviii. 3.

^f Isai. vi. 5.

^g Rom. vii. 24.

^h 2 Cor. v. 4.

ⁱ Psalm xix. 12, 13, and xxv. 11. and li. 1, 7, 9.

^k Matt. vi. 11, 12.

^l Numb. xx. 10.

one, there are all; though they are not all in act in every one, yet the seeds of all sin are in every man; such a connection there is between the graces of the Spirit, where one is, all are. They may not indeed be in exercise together, at least to the same degree; a man can truly say he loves Christ, when he cannot say, *my beloved is mine, and I am his*^m; which is a strong expression of faith: there may be hope of eternal salvation by him, when a man is not able to say with *Job, I know that my Redeemer liveth*ⁿ: one grace may be more visible than another, as to exercise; repentance may be discoverable when faith is not, yet there is no true repentance without it: a man first looks to Christ by faith, and then mourns and repents in an evangelical manner; whence it has been said, that "repentance is a tear that drops from the eye of faith." Yet though they are all feminally cast into the heart at once, like seed they spring up, and arrive to maturity by degrees; grace is like seed, which first springs up in the stalk, and then appears in the ear, and at last in the full corn in the ear: it is with men in grace, as it is with them in nature, they are first children, then young men, and then fathers; and there is at first a perfection of parts, though not of degrees; as in a new-born infant, that has its proper shape, and all its members, it is perfect in all its parts; but not yet grown up to a perfect man; that is, by degrees: and so one born again is a new creature, and has all the parts of one, a new heart, and a new spirit, new eyes to see with, new ears to hear with, new hands to work with, new feet to walk with; but as yet not come to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ^o.

If we consider the several graces of the Spirit, it will appear that they are not in perfection as to exercise. Saving, spiritual and experimental knowledge of Christ, and divine things, is a considerable part of sanctification; and the apostle says, *in understanding be ye men, or be ye, τινδοι*, "perfect^p." There are means, such as reading, hearing, praying, and meditating, to be used, in order to a greater degree of it; and truly gracious souls will not stick or rest satisfied in the first measure of knowledge, but *leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, will go on unto perfection*^q; and yet come short of it in the present state. Some may have a greater degree of it than others, and be comparatively perfect; and in this sense we are to understand some passages^r, which speak of men as perfect: and they are such who have their spiritual senses exercised, being of *full age*^s; have a clearer sight of Christ; a quicker hearing of his voice, so as to distinguish it from the voice of a stranger; a better relish and taste of the grace of God, and more skill in handling the word of life; and yet those that know the most, *know but in part*, as even the apostle *Paul*, who knew so much of Christ, and him crucified; yet desired to know more, and did not think he had

^m Cant. ii. 16.ⁿ Job xix. 25.^o Ephes. iv. 13.^p 1 Cor. xiv. 20.^q Heb. vi. 1.^r 1 Cor. ii. 6. Phil. iii. 15.^s Heb. v. 14.

had already attained to a perfection of it, though he greatly desired it, and pressed after it; but this is reserved to another state, when we shall see no more *through a glass darkly*, but *face to face*, and *know* as we are *known*¹. Faith is another part of sanctification, and so considerable a one, that men are said to be *sanctified by it*². This, when unfeigned, true, and genuine, may be said to be *perfect*; and in that sense is opposed to an hypocritical faith, a mere profession of it; and which is but a bare assent to things, and but temporary; and in this sense it is said to be *made perfect by works*³; that is, to be declared true and genuine, by its working by love to God, Christ, and his people, and by being attended with works of righteousness done from right principles, and with right views: and in some it is to a greater degree than in others; for though all have like *precious faith*⁴, as to its nature, object, and use, yet not as to exercise; some are strong in faith, and others weak, but in none is it absolutely perfect; there are some, τα υρισηματα, deficiencies, or things *lacking* in it to be *perfected*⁵: even in *Abraham* himself it was not perfect, as appears by his acts of unbelief, before hinted at; nor in *Peter*, a man so famous for his faith in Christ, who is complained of by him at a certain time as *of little faith*⁶; and all the disciples saw reason to use such a petition, *Lord increase our faith*⁷: and in those who may arrive to a full assurance of faith, I greatly question whether it is always in full exercise; even in these may arise some doubts and hesitations, though they may continue but for a short time, which cause some perturbation and uneasiness in them. Hope, that *lively* grace, which is in exercise when others are not, yet sometimes is so reduced as that a man *puts his mouth in the dust*, if so be there may be hope; yea says, *my strength and my hope are perished from the Lord*⁸: and there is always need of the power of the holy Spirit to be afresh exerted, to cause a sinner to abound in the exercise of this grace. Love, which is sometimes very ardent and fervent, waxes cold; first love is left, though not lost; and though it may be *made perfect*⁹, that is, declared to be true and genuine, yet is not absolutely perfect, but has its allays. The same may be observed of patience, humility, and self-denial, and every other grace.

That believers are not completely perfect in grace, is evident from their standing in need of fresh supplies of it: as they are poor and needy, and find themselves so, there is a *throne of grace* provided for them continually to come unto for grace, *to help them in time of need*; and they are encouraged to expect it from the promise of God, that he will *give more grace to the humble*, and *supply all the need of his people, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ*¹⁰. More-

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¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12. Phil. iii. 10—14.² Acts xxvi. 18.³ James ii. 22.⁴ 2 Pet. i. 1. ⁵ 1 Thess. iii. 10.⁶ Matt. xiv. 31.⁷ Luke xvii. 5.⁸ Lam. iii. 18. ⁹ 1 John iv. 17.¹⁰ Heb. iv. 16. James iv. 7. Phil. iv. 19.

over, this is still more evident from the saints disclaiming perfection in the present state; and even such who in some sense are said to be perfect; as *Job*, who expresses himself thus, *if I say I am perfect, it (my mouth) shall prove me perverse*^c. *David* says, he had seen an end of all perfection^e; which he judged unattainable by him, because of the largeness and spirituality of the law. And the apostle *Paul*, who had as large a measure of grace as ever any mere man had, yet says, *not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect*^f; and which may be further confirmed from the eager desires and earnest endeavours of the saints after it.

3. Nor are they so perfect as to be indeficient in the performance of duty: how backward are they oftentimes unto it? none stir up themselves to diligence in it, but make idle excuses to free them from an attendance on it; saying as the church, *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them*^g? What, sleepiness and drowsiness attend them in it! as in the disciples, who could not watch one hour with Christ; *the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak*^h: when duties are performed in the best manner, there are such defects in them, as that saints are ashamed of them; and so far from concluding any merit in them, that they judge themselves *unprofitable servants*^k on account of them: there is the *iniquity* of their *holiness*; sins in their most solemn and religious performances; for the atonement of which, provision is made in Christ, their antitypical *Aaron*, who has bore them, and satisfied for them: in a word, though they are desirous of *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*^l, they come short of it.

Upon the whole, it may be seen by all this, in what sense the saints are perfect as to their sanctification, and in what sense not; they may be said to be perfect, as they are sincere, and their grace true and genuine, which is the frequent sense of the word here used. It is said of *Jacob*, that he was a *plain man*, where is the same word^m as here; he was an honest, plain-hearted, sincere man, and in such sense perfect; as all those are, who have received the grace of God in truth; who have the *root of the matter* in them; whose faith is unfeigned, whose hope is without hypocrisy, and whose love is without dissimulation. They are not absolutely, but comparatively perfect; in comparison of what they were themselves before conversion; in comparison of what others are who are walking in the vanity of their minds; in comparison of hypocrites, and formal professors; in comparison of such who are only outwardly righteous before men; and some are so in comparison of other real christians, having a larger degree of knowledge, faith and experience. They are perfect, not in themselves, but in Christ, *in whom they are sanctified*; and who is made unto them *sanctification*,

^a Job ix. 20.

^f Psal. cxix. 96.

^e Phil. iii. 12.

^h Cant. v. 3.

^l Matt. xxvi. 41.

^k Luke xvii. 10.

^g 2 Cor. vii. 1.

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tion^a, as well as other things; who has the whole stock and fund of grace and holiness in him for them, from whence they receive grace for grace^b: so that though they are at present imperfectly sanctified, the *God of peace* will *sanctify them wholly*; the Spirit of God from Christ will finish his work of grace and holiness on them at the hour of death, and make them perfectly meet for the enjoyment of the divine presence.

2dly, They may be said to be perfect with respect to their justification. We read of *perfect men in Christ*, and of the saints being *complete* in him, the head of all principality and power, and of their being *perfected* by him^c; all which respects their justification through his righteousness. He has perfectly redeemed them from all sin, and from the curse and condemnation of the law: he is a *rock*, and this *work* of his is *perfect*^d; it is finished, and an *eternal redemption*^e it is; the efficacy and fruits of it will always continue, and it needs nothing to be added to it. Christ has made full atonement for the sins of his people; he has bore them all, and took them away; he has *put them away by the sacrifice of himself*; he has *finished, and made an end*^f of them, that they are no more; he has procured an entire pardon of them; God, for Christ's sake, forgives all trespasses; he heals all diseases, and forgives all iniquities; the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin; he has fulfilled the whole law in the room and stead of his people; that requires and demands perfect obedience, and nothing short of that will it allow to be a righteousness; but curses such who continue not in all things to do them. Now what the law could not, or men could not do in obedience to the law, through the weakness of the flesh, God has sent his own Son, made under the law, to fulfil it, in the room and stead of his people, that so it might be fulfilled in them; and accordingly he has fulfilled it, and is the fulfilling *end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believes*: and thus having brought in a perfect and everlasting righteousness, which is commensurate to the demands of law and justice; whereby justice is satisfied, the law magnified and made honourable, and this accepted of God, and imputed to his people; they are completely justified from all sin, and secure from all wrath and condemnation. They are in this sense so perfect, that no sin is to be seen in them, or found upon them, for they are covered with Christ's righteousness, out of the sight of avenging justice. Though God sees all sin in his omniscience, and chastizes and corrects for it in his providence; yet in the business of justification he sees *no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel*^g: when the sins of these are sought for, they shall not be found, because they are pardoned; they are covered with the blood and righteousness of Christ; they are removed from them to him, and from him,

^a 1 Cor. i. 2, 30.^b Deut. xxxii. 4.^c Numb. xxiii. 21.^d 1 Thes. v. 23.^e Heb. ix. 14.^f Coloss. i. 28. and ii. 10. Heb. x. 14.^g Heb. ix. 26. Dan. ix. 24.

by his satisfaction for them, as far as the east is from the west; they are cast by the Lord behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, never more to be brought against them to their condemnation: in this sense they are perfect, or without blemish, as a word of the same root signifies, and is sometimes so rendered*: they are the undefiled in the way, unblameable and irreproveable in the sight of God, without fault before the throne. As to their sanctification, they are like the moon, which has its spots; but with respect to their justification, they are *clear as the sun*†; being clothed with the sun of righteousness, and so without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; they are all fair, and there is no spot in them; they are a perfection of beauty, made perfectly comely through that comeliness which Christ has put upon them; and so will be presented to himself, and to his divine Father another day, and at present are acceptable in his sight.

Secondly, Another character of truly good men is that of *upright*. As I have been so large upon the former, I shall say the less to this, and the rather, as there is a very great agreement between them; for an *upright* man is one that has the uprightness or righteousness of Christ shewn unto him, and put upon him: *if there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness*‡; not the uprightness of the man himself, at least not his own external righteousness; but either the strict justice of God requiring satisfaction for sin; or rather the satisfactory righteousness of Christ, the messenger and interpreter, one among a thousand. This is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, and is brought near, and shewn unto a sensible sinner, by the blessed Spirit, who works faith in him to receive it, and to walk in this uprightness. Again, an upright man is one that is *upright in heart*§; who has a right spirit renewed in him; is an Israelite indeed; is right at heart; deals uprightly and sincerely with God and men; draws nigh to God with a true heart, and whose heart agrees with his mouth, and his actions with both: he is one that *walks uprightly*¶; that walks by faith in Christ, as he has received him, and as he has him, also, for an example; he walks according to the rule of the word, and *has respect to all the commandments, and walks in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless*. If there is any difference between these two words, *perfect* and *upright*; the one may design the inward disposition of the soul, the sincerity:

* תמי, αμμο, Sept. in Lev. i. 3.

† Cant. vi. 10.

‡ Job xxxiii. 23.

§ Ad officium Christi propheticum pertinet, ut indicet homini, per verbum externe, per spiritum interne, ישׂר, rectitudinem suam: quod intelligi potest, vel de rectitudine Dei exigentis satisfactionem pro peccatis, & calligantis etiam electos suos propter ea: vel de rectitudine ipsius Christi, id est, justitia sua satisfactoria, quæ unica salutis nostræ meritoria causa est: vel denique de rectitudine hominis, id est, praxi fidei & respicientiæ. Nihil horum omnium est, quod suos Christus non doceat. Vitiusus de Oeconomia Fœderum, l. 4. c. 3. §. 33. p. 464.

¶ Psal. xi. 2.

¶ Psal. lxxiv. 11.

sincerity of the heart, and the truth of grace there; and the other, the outward behaviour and conversation agreeable thereunto. I proceed to consider,

II. The regard that is to be had to such a man: He is to be *marked*, and observed, *beheld*, looked at, and attentively considered. Mark and observe how this man came to be *perfect* and *upright*; since, though God made man so, he sinned, and lost his perfection and uprightness: seeing that man now is a corrupt and depraved creature, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; *there is none righteous and good, no not one; all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* Let it be observed and remarked then, that the perfect and upright man comes to be so by the grace of God, by which alone he is what he is; and by receiving grace out of the fulness which is in Christ, and by the Spirit of God and his grace; for all this is not by might or power of man, but by the spirit and grace of God. Mark and observe such men, and look upon them with wonder and admiration; they are so many instances of the marvellous loving-kindness of God, of his amazing grace, and wondrous power; they are like *Isaiab* and his children, or rather like Christ and his; they are *for signs and wonders*; and as *Joshua* and his fellows, who were men wondered at^b. It is astonishing that sinful creatures, so sadly corrupted, should be made perfect and upright. Mark and observe such with great esteem and affection; for if you love God and Christ, you will love those that are begotten of them, and bear their image and likeness as these do: these are the precious sons of *Zion*; these are the excellent in the earth, in whom should be all your delight; and the more attentively you view them, the more you will love them. Mark and observe them as rare and uncommon persons, which are seldom to be found, and only here and there. *Noab* was perfect in the age in which he lived, but were there any other? we read of no more. *Job* was *perfect and upright*; but then there was *none like him* in all the earth, and therefore the Lord would have him considered. There are but few, in all ages, whose persons and garments are undefiled, or who are such perfect and upright men. Mark and observe them, so as to imitate them; be followers of them, so far as they are followers of Christ; walk as they do, and as you have them for an example: we should be followers and imitators of them, *who through faith and patience have inherited the promises*. Observe their conversation, how becoming the gospel of Christ it is; how by it they adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour; how by the grace of God they have had it in the world; consider the end of their conversation, which issues in Christ, and in the glory of his name, and is to the honour of his interest. Take notice of their death, and the issue of it, and their end: this is not so generally considered as it should be; *the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth*
it:

Isai. viii. 18. Zech. iii. 8.

^b Isai. lvii. 1.

Psaln xii. 1.

it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come^c; that it is for their good they are removed, and that there are evil times coming on, they are taken from; it is to their profit and advantage, but to the loss of those who survive; who, as they live to see troublesome times, want their presence, counsel and assistance: hence such a complaint from one that marked these things; *Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men*^d: the happy exit of such may deserve special regard and attention; which leads me to consider,

III. The reason assigned why such should be marked and observed, and which is expressive of their future happiness; *for the end of that man is peace*; or *there is an end to the man of peace*: and many versions render it, *the man of peace*, or *peaceable man*^e; particularly the Syriac version, *there is a good end to men of peace*; and so it carries on the description of the good man as a peaceable man. He is a man of peace, who enjoys much peace; the kingdom of God within him is peace and joy in the holy Ghost; he is filled with peace through believing in Christ; he has much peace with God through him, arising from a view of justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice; yea, *he is kept in perfect peace, having his mind stayed on the Lord, and his heart trusting in him*; he enjoys a peace which passeth all understanding, which he has in Christ, and from him, and amidst all the tribulations that attend him in this world; and which the world neither gives, nor takes away. He finds much peace of mind in waiting upon God, and worshipping him in the several duties of religion, both in private and public; in all the ways of Christ, which are *ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace*: he partakes of those joys and pleasures which a carnal man is a stranger to, and intermeddles not with. And he likewise follows after peace with all men, and after those things which make for it; he endeavours to cultivate it every where, in the church, and in the world; and as much as in him lies, and if possible, would live peaceably with all mankind; peace rules in his heart, and is the temper and disposition of his mind.

But the better reading of the words, and what gives the best sense of them, is, that the good man's *end is peace*; his *latter end*, as the word is sometimes rendered; the latter part of his life, as *Job's* was. *Bildad* told him, that were he pure and upright, his *latter end should greatly increase*; and as he was, so it did, *the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning*; in both which places the same word^f is used, as here: and sometimes the last days of a good man

^c Isaiah lvii. 1.

^d Psalm xii. 1.

^e לְאִישׁ שָׁלוֹם homini pacis, vel pacifico, Sept. Vulg. Lat. Arab.

^f אַחֲרֵית Job viii. 7. and xlii. 12.

man are more peaceable, prosperous, and happy than the first part of his life is: but however, if this is not the case, if his tribulations continue to the end of his days, and through many he enters into the kingdom of heaven, peace is the issue of all; he goes away in peace, as old *Simeon* desired he might; and if not in a transport of joy, in a triumph over death and the grave, saying, *O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*^a; yet he goes off in serenity and tranquillity of mind, trusting in the Redeemer, and desirous of being with him. And as soon as he is departed, he enters into peace, into the joy of his Lord; into his presence, *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.* There will be nothing then to disturb his peace; no *pricking brier*, nor *grieving thorn*^b, in all the heavenly country he is gone into; no more sin and corruption in his own heart to distress him; no more any of Satan's temptations to annoy him; no more of the reproach, rage, and persecutions of wicked men to molest him; *there the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest*^c: there is every thing that contributes to peace; there is the God of peace, that will be with him for ever; there is the Prince of peace, that has made peace for him by his blood; there is the holy Spirit, whose fruit is peace; there are the angels of peace, who at Christ's incarnation sung *glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will unto men*^d; and there are the saints, the sons of peace, with whom he shall live for ever: and there will be every thing that can come under the notion of peace and happiness; there will be perfect health of body and soul, and length of days, for ever and ever; no more pain, sickness, sorrow, and death; there will be riches and honour; riches of glory, an eternal weight of glory, a crown and throne of glory, an everlasting kingdom, prepared from the foundation of the world; a paradise of pleasure, bliss, and joy, inconceivable and inexpressible. This is the end of the perfect and upright man.

Now if any man may be said to be *perfect* and *upright*, in the sense in which I have explained these characters, as I doubt not there are many, the person whose death has occasioned this discourse may be said to be the man; and who was an ornament to the *Dissenting interest* in general, and to the *Baptist denomination* in particular, of which denomination he was.

I fear I shall not be able to do justice to the character of this worthy gentleman, for want of sufficient knowledge of him; for though I have had the honour to be acquainted with him for some years past; yet by reason of distance of habitation, and having but seldom an opportunity of conversation with him,

I am

^a 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

^b Ezek. xxviii. 24.

^c Job iii. 17.

^d Luke ii. 14.

I am not so well qualified to give you his true portrait, as a gentleman and a christian; however, what from my own observation, and the information of others, I will give you the best account of him I can.

MR SEWARD was a gentleman of fine natural parts and good sense; he had a peculiar sweetness of temper, scarce ever known to be ruffled, discomposed, fretful and impatient, upon any occasion; which singular good nature, as it is commonly called, adorned with the grace of God, set him in a most amiable light, and caused him to shine in a most pleasing manner to all that knew him. He had the advantage of a liberal education, first begun in *Westminster* school, and then carried on in the University of *Cambridge*; where, as I am informed, he took a degree, and was designed for service in the Established Church, in which he was brought up; but this was frustrated by a call in Providence from thence to another employment in life.

When it pleased God effectually to call him by his grace, through consulting the sacred scriptures, and his own experience, as well as the writings of learned and godly men, he embraced and professed a set of principles, glorious in themselves, calculated to secure and increase spiritual peace and comfort, and to promote true and undefiled religion, and powerful godliness; and upon the same plan he received the doctrine of adult baptism, and submitted to the ordinance of it, an ordinance greatly despised by men; in which he acted the self-denying part, as well as in joining himself in the communion of a small society of christians, of the Baptist denomination, mean and despicable in the eyes of men; and this he publicly did before the whole world, as not being ashamed of Christ, his gospel, ordinances and people; *esteeming reproach for Christ's sake greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt.*

Humility, that truly christian grace, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which so much adorns the believer, was eminently conspicuous in him; he was affable and courteous to the meanest person; would condescend to men of low estate, and submit to those that were inferior to him, *esteeming others better than himself*; not elated either with the affluence of life he was possessed of, or with his natural or acquired abilities, or his spiritual gifts; knowing from whom he received them; and therefore would not glory as though he had received them not.

As he was blessed with plenty of this world's good things, and so capable of relieving the distressed; his ears were open to the cries and requests of the poor; his heart sympathized with them in their troubles; his hand was ready to distribute to their necessities; he was a chearful giver, and took delight in every opportunity to do good; which he did to all, without respect to parties, having an heart benevolent to all mankind; which gained him the universal esteem of all that had knowledge of him.

In his last illness he was calm and sedate, still and quiet, patient, and perfectly submissive and resigned to the will of God; not at all reluctant to death, or in any fear of it; entirely dependent on Christ as his Saviour, and wholly looking to him for eternal life and salvation. In a visit I paid him, upon asking him how his faith stood, he replied, "his only view was to Jesus, and his trust was in him, knowing there was no other way to life and happiness; but added, "that believing in Christ was a thing sometimes not so clear and manifest;" to which I replied, "it might be known, for to them that believe, Christ is precious; and as he is precious to every one that believes, so to whomsoever he is precious, that man does believe, or has true faith in Christ." He observed, that this was an argument which he himself had made use of, to persuade some fearful christians that they did believe; and seemed greatly affected with it. I added, I hoped he would make use of the argument in his own favour. To a Reverend Minister¹ that afterwards visited him, he declared, "that could he enjoy health and honour, and all the grandeur and good things of this world, they would be all nothing to him in comparison of a well-grounded hope of eternal glory and happiness." As he had no immediate apprehensions of death, till he was at once seized by it, nothing dropped from him concerning that,—the last words he was heard to utter in a broken and almost inarticulate manner, were, "*Dear Jesus,—Come—Come.*" Thus, without any violent struggle of nature, or any shew of concern and uneasiness at death, this precious servant of Christ fell asleep in Jesus.

The loss of him is great indeed! A loss to his surviving relative, to whom he was a most indulgent husband, a most delightful companion, and a sympathizing partner in her afflictions; may the Lord sanctify it to her, and support her under it! A loss to his dear children, to whom he was a tender and affectionate parent; who, by his bright example, hearty counsel, and wise directions and instructions, might have been of still greater advantage to them, had it pleased God to have continued him longer with them: May they tread in his steps, and copy after him! A loss to his poor neighbours and others, both in the church and in the world, to whom he was a cheerful benefactor. A loss to the whole interest of Christ, of which he was an ornament and support! He himself indeed is the gainer, and so is the church triumphant; which hereby has one more added to its shining number, which make that *general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven.*

To conclude: Let it be inquired whether these characters of *perfect* and *upright* belong to you, that have been hearing this discourse: are you partakers of the true grace of God? Have you a genuine faith in Jesus Christ, a good hope through grace of salvation by him, and a sincere love unto him? Have you rea-

¹ The Rev. Mr Joseph Stennett, senior.

son to believe that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to you, and you have interest in it, and are acceptable to God through it? Have you had clean hearts created, and right spirits renewed in you? And have you been enabled in any good measure to walk uprightly? And is it the desire of your souls, and the business of your lives to *exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and men*? Then, notwithstanding the imperfection that otherwise attends you, you are in a gospel-sense perfect and upright; and which you should ascribe to the grace of God, and be thankful for it.

Have you considered the men that bear these characters, as you should? When you behold them, do you find an affection for them, and does it create in you an esteem of them? Are you desirous of, and in some measure helped to imitate them, in whatsoever is praise-worthy in them? Have you observed the end of their conversation, and the issue of their holy lives, which is peace? Then may you hope that this also will be your end; which cannot but be a desirable one. Even *Balaam desired to die the death of the righteous*, and wished his *last end might be like his*^m: Such who truly believe in Christ, and look to him for righteousness and life, shall receive *the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls*ⁿ.

^m Numb. xxiii. 10.

ⁿ 1 Peter i. 9.

S E R M O N XXXL

CHRIST, *the Ransom Found.*

Occasioned by the Death of Mr JOHN DAVENPORT. Preached Oct. 13, 1754.

JOB XXXIII. 24.

Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.

THE occasion of my reading these words to you at this time, is the decease of Mr JOHN DAVENPORT, late member and deacon of this church; which by some circumstances were thought to be much upon his mind of late, and of singular use to him; and therefore were judged proper to be the subject of a funeral discourse.

The

The words are in strict connection with those that immediately go before; *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand; to shew unto man his uprightness; then he is gracious, &c.* that is, if there be a messenger with God; or with the sick man; who is described in the preceding verses, 19—22. by the strong pain he is chastened with on his bed, with which all his bones are affected; by his nausea and abhorrence of food, even the most delicious and dainty; by the consumption of his flesh, being reduced to skin and bone, and so emaciated, that scarce any flesh is to be seen upon him; and his bones, which were covered with it, now stick out, and may easily be told; and by his near approach to the grave, and to the *destroyers*: not the destroying angels^a; rather, destroying diseases; so *Broughton* renders it, “killing maladies;” or it may be the worms^b, which in the grave destroy the flesh that remains, see chap. xix. 26. or else *deaths*, the first and second, and the horrors and terrors of them^c. Now in such a case, and at such a season, if there be a proper, useful, assisting person at hand, it is well for the sick man; *if there be a messenger, or an angel*, as the word signifies: and some^d understand it of an angel by nature; one of those thousands, and ten thousands, that stand before God and minister unto him; one of those *ministering spirits that are sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation*; who, as they perform good offices to them in life and health, so in sickness, and at the hour of death; when it is certain they are present with them, to take care of the separate spirit, and convoy it to heaven; and may be of use to suggest things comfortable to the mind of the sick person, and direct him what is right for him in such circumstances. This sense the Popish interpreters greedily catch at; though, should it be admitted, it would not follow, that because that angels may be of some use on sick-beds, and death-beds, that therefore they are to be invoked, prayed unto, and made use of as mediators between God and man; but I think this sense is to be rejected: and rather by the *messenger, &c.* is meant a minister of the word^e, who is by office an angel; hence we read of *the angels of the seven churches*^f, which are no other than the pastors of them; who have their mission and commission from God, to preach the gospel: and such an one is an *interpreter* of the scriptures, which he studies rightly to divide and explain; and of the mind and will of God in them, which he is favoured with, and enlightened into: and a spiritual, evangelical and faithful dispenser of the word is *one among a thousand*, scarce and rare; there are but few such, especially in times of declension, and in such places where the word of the Lord is precious or rare; and very probably

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^a Aben Ezra, Althech, R. Simeon Bar Tzemach in loc.^b BolJuc. in loc.^c Vid. Schultens in loc. The Targum renders the word מיתרות “death.”^d Targum, Grotius, Mercerus, & alii.^e Munster, Clarius, CoJureus, BolJucius, Junius & Tremellius, Caryll, and others.^f Rev. i. 20.

bably there were but few in those countries where *Job* and his friends lived, see *Eccles.* vii. 28. Now the business of such a one is to shew unto man, to any man, and particularly האדם "the sick man," his uprightness, or rectitude, or righteousness; either the righteousness of God in this dispensation of his providence; to inform him, that as God is righteous in all his ways and works, so in this; that it is in very faithfulness he has afflicted him, and therefore should not think hardly of God, or that he is hardly used by him; should not murmur and repine, but patiently submit to the will of God: or else the righteousness of the God-man and mediator Jesus Christ; that everlasting righteousness he has wrought out, and which is revealed in the gospel, and is a principal article of it; and therefore a proper part of a minister's work to shew it unto men; hence they are said to turn many to righteousness, or to justify many^c; that is, by pointing out and directing them to the righteousness of Christ, as the alone justifying one; and which, as it is the solid foundation of peace, joy, and comfort in life and health, it is most proper to be observed to the sick man drawing nigh to the gates of death; which is a righteousness that will answer for him in a time to come. Moreover, it is the business of a minister at such a time to shew the sick man what is right for him to do: if the sick man is stupid and insensible of his state and condition by nature; then he is to inform him that God made man upright, but he by sinning lost his uprightness; and this is not now to be found in men, but must be had in another: he is to labour to convince him of the sin of his nature, and the sinfulness of his life and actions; and to shew him the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the just demerit of it, eternal death and damnation, and the absolute necessity of repentance for it. If the sick man is a sensible man, and is depressed under a sense of sin, and the guilt of it, and under fearful apprehensions of wrath and ruin; the minister is to set before him Christ, and him crucified; he is to tell him of his blood, righteousness and sacrifice, and the efficacy of them to take away sin; and to direct and encourage him to believe in Christ; assuring him, that whoever believes in him shall be saved. Add to this, if the sick man is a good man, a truly gracious man, and yet has doubts and fears of his uprightness, and the truth of grace in him; then, the minister observing that this is the fruit of unbelief, and of Satan's temptations, is to do all he can to clear up this point to him, that he is truly a regenerated and converted man; that he has truth in the inner part, and that the work of grace is begun, which will be performed in him: and this, as^b one rightly observes, is the hardest work that the ministers of the gospel have, to make men understand and see their own uprightness: all this being done, then he is gracious; the minister is gracious, has pity and compassion on the sick man, and speaks of the grace of God to him, and makes a gracious supplication

for

^c מצדיק Dan. xii. 3.^b Caryl in loc.

for him; (so some ^l render the words) and prays in the following manner; "O Lord God, deliver this sick man from going down to the pit, redeem his life from destruction; for I find in the everlasting gospel, there is a ransom or atonement for sin provided for such persons."

But after all; I rather think, with others ^k, that the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, is meant by the *messenger* or *angel*; who is the *angel* that went before the Israelites in the wilderness, in whom the name of the Lord was, who could, though he would not, pardon their iniquities; *the angel of God's presence*, who always appears before him, and introduces men into his presence, and through whom they enjoy it; and the *angel or messenger of the covenant*, who has confirmed it by his blood, and has revealed it more clearly in the gospel: who also is an *interpreter* of his Father's mind and will, with which he is thoroughly acquainted, lying in his bosom; or an *orator*, the essential Word of God that spake for his people in council and covenant; their advocate with the Father, and the antitypical *Aaron*, that can speak well; having as man and mediator the tongue of the learned given him to speak a word in season: and he is *one among a thousand*; the chiefest among ten thousand, angels or men; he has obtained a more excellent name, and is of a superior nature to angels, being their creator, Lord, and head; and is higher than the kings of the earth; there is none like unto him among all the creatures in heaven or earth; and to a believer he is all in all. And his office as a prophet is to shew unto men the uprightness or righteousness of God; the strictness of his justice, what that requires, even perfect conformity to his law, and which is sufficiently declared by his propitiatory sacrifice; and also his own uprightness, or righteousness he has wrought out; and which he, by his spirit, convinces men of their need of, and brings it near to them, and clothes them with it, as well as shews it unto God for them as their advocate; and he also shews to them what is right and good for them to do, even *to love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with God*: and then upon all this God is gracious; he manifests his grace and love, and orders deliverance from ruin and destruction, even upon the foot of a ransom found and given; and seeing there is with him such a divine person in office in favour of the sick man: for the particle *if* ^l does not denote any thing doubtful and uncertain, but is expressive of something certain, and infers it from it. In the words may be observed,

I. The

^l Junius & Codurcus. ^k Coccejus, Schmid, Joh. Henr. Michael & Schultens in loc. Vid. Witfii Oeconom. Fæderum, l. 2. c. 3. §. 3. p. 112. & l. 4. c. 3. §. 30—37. p. 463—465.

^l *Non si*, non incertam nunc, sed contra certam & necessariam infertur conditionem; sine qua peccator iratum numen experiens, & jam morti primæ ac secundæ proximus, a pernicie liberari nequit; ergo non doctor intenditur, non angelus, sed Goel. Schultens in loc.

- I. The great blessing of the text, *a ransom found*.
- II. The happy effect and consequence of it, *deliverance from going down to the pit*.
- III. The grace of God displayed herein, both in finding the ransom, and delivering from the pit upon it; *he is gracious; and faith*.

I. The great blessing of the text, *a ransom found*. Two things I shall consider under this head; 1st, Who or what this ransom is; 2^{dly}, The act of finding it, and to whom it is to be ascribed.

1st, Who or what this ransom is. A ransom is a price paid for the redemption of captives, or some satisfaction given upon which they are released. In such a state and condition by nature are the elect of God, and ransomed of the Lord; they are the prey of Satan, and are led and detained captives by him at his will; they are brought into bondage by their sins and corruptions, and are held under the same; and they are shut up under the law, and liable to its condemnation and curse; now Christ is the ransom of them from all this. This will appear by a passage or two out of the New Testament, which will serve greatly to illustrate the text; for there is the same gospel in one Testament as in the other, only it is in the Old more covertly, and in the New more clear and express; and the one serves to open and explain the other. Our Lord, speaking of the Son of man, by whom he means himself, says, *he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister*; not to be waited upon, as a nobleman, prince or potentate; but to be a servant to others, and particularly *to give his life a ransom for many*; so that it is the life of Christ that is the ransom-price of men. Again, the apostle Paul says of the man Christ Jesus, the mediator, that he *gave himself a ransom for all*; *ἀνταγορῆν*, "a ransom-price" in the room and stead of all his people, Jews and Gentiles, *to be testified in due time*; as it has been most clearly through the ministration of the gospel; whence it is manifest that not riches, nor righteousness, nor repentance, nor prayers, nor alms-deeds, are the ransom of men, but Christ himself. Not riches: The Israelites indeed, when they were numbered, gave every one an half shekel for the ransom of their souls, which was called *atonement-money*; but then this was not a real, but a typical ransom; typical of the ransom of Jesus Christ; which is expressly denied to be by *corruptible things, as silver and gold*, but by his *precious blood*. Had a man ever so great riches, the riches of the Indies, or of the whole world, he would not be able to redeem himself or his brother, or *give to God a ransom for either*; for if once wrath goes forth from the Lord, and he *takes away with the stroke* of it, a great ransom, even a king's ransom cannot deliver from it; for

^m Matt. xx. 28.

ⁿ 1 Tim. ii. 6.

^o Exod. xxx. 12—16.

^p 1 Peter i. 18, 19.

for will be esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength: nor is a man's own righteousness, or his good works, a ransom for him; these are what God has a prior right unto before the performance of them, and therefore men cannot expect a recompence for them, or a ransom by them; for *who hath first given to him* (the Lord,) *and it shall be recompensed to him again*? These are debts they owe to God, and when performed ever so well, they do but their duty; and therefore can never pay off the old scores of sin by them, or thereby make atonement for them; these are not profitable to God, whatever they may be to men, and cannot merit any thing at his hand; and besides are exceeding imperfect and unacceptable to God of themselves; they are thrown out of man's acceptance with God, justification before him, and eternal salvation; and if there is no acceptance, justification and salvation by them, as we are sure from the word of God there is not, then they cannot be the ransom-price for the souls of men, or atone for their sins: nor is the ransom, repentance, tears and humiliation; for what satisfaction do these give to an offended Being, to injured and inexorable justice, and to the righteous law of God? which those that sin against die without mercy, unless it is fulfilled, magnified, and made honourable: could men bring instead of *ten thousands of rivers of oil*, such a quantity of brinish tears, they would not wash away sin, or atone for it; still it would remain *marked* before God. Vain, stupid man! to imagine that his own tears will do what a Saviour's could not; for though *in the days of his flesh be offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears*; yet not these, but his *blood* was the ransom of souls. Nor are prayers and alms-deeds a ransom, though ever so well performed; these may *come up before God for a memorial*, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, but not for a ransom or atonement, when done in faith, and from a principle of love, and to the glory of God; but for many of the prayers of men, they do but *receive the greater damnation*, as the Pharisees of old did; and a man may *bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and yet not have charity*, or the true grace of love, and be lost and perish; and if he had that grace, and did what he did from such a principle, it would not atone for his sins, or be the ransom of his soul; no, this is in Christ, and him only. The word here used comes from a root which signifies to *cover*, and is much the same in sound as our English word, which seems to come from it: the mercy-seat is called by this name, and indeed it was no other than a *lid* or *covering* to the ark, in which the law was, and exactly of the same measure with it; and was typical of Christ, who by his blood and righteousness covers

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¹ Psal. xlix. 6, 7. Job xxxvi. 18, 19.

² Rom. xi. 35.

³ Heb. v. 7.

⁴ Ex his de homine, & de Deo peccati condonatori quod suum est, conferente, exemplis eodem verbo utriusque actum experimentibus apparet, רצון optime reddi per tegere & tegendo illiniendoque inducere ac delere. Guffet. Comment. Ebr. p. 398.

all the sins of his people, their transgressions of the law of God; and by his sacrifice expiates them, or makes atonement for them, and so is the ransom of them. For the further illustration of this precious truth, I shall briefly shew you what that is which Christ has given as a ransom, which is sufficient; and for whom it is given.

1. What that is which Christ has given for the ransom of men: and from scripture it appears that it was his precious blood; for as redemption is always ascribed to the blood of Christ, as the procuring cause of it, that must be the redemption or ransom-price; and the apostle *Peter* is express for it; he says, *ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold—but with the precious blood of Christ**; a price sufficient to purchase the whole church of God, to expiate all their sins, and ransom their souls from ruin; and therefore may well be called *precious blood*; blood of great price and value: hence under the law so much regard was had to blood; it was to be covered with dust, and was not to be eaten, because it made atonement for the soul, though but in a typical way; for not the blood of bulls and goats, but the blood of Christ is our real atonement and ransom-price. Again, from a text before-mentioned it is clear, that it is the life of Christ that was given for a ransom; he came *to give his life a ransom for many*†: life, than which nothing is more dear and valuable, and especially such a life as Christ's was; a life entirely at his own dispose; which another man's is not, and which he laid down, and took up again of himself; it was not forfeited by any act of his own, or forced from him by another; it was what he freely laid down, and voluntarily gave into the hands of men, justice and death, in the room and stead of his people; and as a ransom-price for them; his life for theirs: moreover, it is said to be himself that is this ransom; *who gave himself a ransom for all*‡; and so it is often expressed, that *he loved us and gave himself for us*, that he might redeem us; and *gave himself*, an offering and a sacrifice, and *offered himself* without spot unto God, even his soul and body, his whole human nature; and this as in union with his divine person; which union ceased not when he became the ransom-price. And what is contained in this word *himself*, who can tell? this we may be sure of, it was a sufficient ransom, whereby the law was fulfilled, and justice satisfied. This is a full ransom or redemption from sin, from all sins original and actual, from all the demerit of them; and in consequence of this men are freed from the dominion and power of sin, under which they were held captives, and will be from the being of it; for Christ has by his atoning sacrifice finished and made an end of sin, and put it away for ever, and perfected them that are sanctified: it is a complete ransom of them out of the hands of Satan: *the Lord hath ransomed Jacob*
out

* 1 Peter i. 18, 19.

† Matt. xx. 28.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 6.

† Titus ii. 14. Ephes. v. 2. Heb. ix. 14.

out of the hand of him that was stronger than he^a; by virtue of this ransom the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered; and even captivity itself, or he that led others captive, is himself led captive by the Saviour and Redeemer of sinners. This is a plenary ransom from the law, its curse and condemnation; Christ has redeemed his that were under it from it, being made a curse for them, and suffering its sentence of condemnation to be executed on himself; and therefore there is none to them that are in him; and they may boldly say, *who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died^b*; and by dying he gave his life a ransom for them, and so secured them from the curse and condemnation of the law. In a word, it is a full ransom from hell, and wrath, and the second death, to which men are liable through sin; Christ has even ransomed his people from the power of the grave, as a punishment for sin, and so as that they shall not be always detained in it; as well as has redeemed them from the second death, by which they shall never be hurt, and which shall never have any power over them; he has delivered them from wrath to come, and from going down to hell, or the pit of corruption. But I proceed to shew,

2. For whom this ransom is given. It is said to be given for many; even for as many as are ordained to eternal life; for as many as the Father has given to Christ; for those many for whom his blood has been shed for the remission of their sins; for those many whom he justifies by his knowledge, or by faith in his righteousness; for those many sons, he, the captain of their salvation, brings to glory; and these are a great number, which no man can number; and on account of which, as well as many other things, this ransom or redemption by Christ is called^c a *plenteous* one, and lays a good foundation for hope in him: but then it is not for all men, or for every individual of mankind; for though he is said to give himself a ransom for all, it is not expressed for all men, or for every man; but the sense is, that he gave himself for all the *chosen*, or for men of all sorts, ranks and degrees, high and low, rich and poor; and for all sorts of sinners, for Gentiles as well as Jews, as the context shews^d: those that are ransomed and redeemed, are ransomed from among men, and are redeemed unto God by the blood of Christ, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; and cannot be all men, every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, or every individual of them^e: the ransomed ones are represented as a *peculiar* people, and have such characters ascribed to them as do not agree to all men; they are the church of God, *the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven*, which are purchased by the blood of Christ; and they are his sheep, he has laid down his life, and given it as a ransom for: moreover, *the ransomed of the Lord come to Zion with songs of everlasting joy*, sooner or later; either

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TO

^a Jer. xxxi. 11. ^b Rom. viii. 3, 34. ^c Psalm cxxx. 7. ^d 1 Tim. ii. 6. i. e. 2.

^e Rev. xiv. 4. and v. 9.

to the church below, or to heaven above; to neither of which do all mankind come. Add to all this, that if the ransom-price is paid for all, all would be ransomed, and so eternally saved, which is not true; or else the ransom-price is paid in vain, which surely will not be said; it reflecting so much dishonour on the justice of God, and the blood of Christ. The typical ransom-price under the law, the half-shekel, was paid for the ransom of the souls of Israelites only, and so is the real one; though not for all *Israel* in a literal sense, because all were not *Israel* who were of *Israel*; only a remnant according to the election of grace; it is the spiritual and mystical *Israel* of God whom he has chosen for his own peculiar people; the whole *Israel* of God, or all his elect, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, that Christ is become a ransom-price for; and who, in consequence of it, through his spirit and grace, are *Israelites* indeed, in whom there is no guile. God so loved the world of the Gentiles, as to set and send forth his own Son to be the propitiation or expiatory sacrifice for their sins; and Christ is become the propitiation, not for the sins of the Jews only, or his elect among them; but for the sins of the whole world; or for the sins of all his people throughout the whole world, even for the sins of all the children of God that are scattered abroad. This ransom-price, as the typical one, is given for the ransom of the soul; it is that which has sinned, and is liable to death, the second death, or an eternal one; it is for that most excellent part of man, and therefore to be most regarded; and hence it requires so great a price: the redemption of the soul is precious; and nothing can ransom it but the blood of Christ; and therefore it is so great a blessing as it is to be ransomed, because it is no other than the redemption of the life or soul of man from destruction: and this ransom-price, like the typical one, is paid equally for all alike; every Israelite gave an half-shekel; the rich did not give more, nor the poor less; the same price of Christ's blood is paid for one as for another; for though some sins be greater than others, and some are greater sinners than others are, and are redeemed from more sins than others be, yet there is but one price paid for all; for every sin being objectively infinite, requires an infinite price to be paid to make satisfaction and atonement for it, and which has been given; hence all obtain the same precious faith, are justified by the same righteousness, and share in the same common salvation. And, to add no more, this price is paid for them into the hands of God; for it is against him that sin is committed, and who only can pardon it, and does upon the foot of satisfaction made: he is the law-giver, whose law is broken by sin, and must be fulfilled; the judge of all the earth, whose justice must be satisfied, or he will not clear the guilty; and the creditor to whom men owe more than ten thousand talents, and have nothing to pay; and therefore the price, by

^a Acts xx. 28. John x. 15. Isai. xxxv. 10.

^b John iii. 16. and xi. 51, 52. John ii. 2.

^c Psalm xlix. 8.

^d Exod. xxx. 15.

the surety, must be given into his hand to clear off the debt, and ransom from prison; and accordingly Christ *has given himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God, and has given to him a ransom for his people, and has redeemed them unto him by his blood*¹; and hence they shall certainly be saved by him, and in him, with an everlasting salvation. But I hasten to consider,

2dly, The act of *finding* this ransom, and to whom it is to be ascribed. If it respects the original scheme of it in eternity, as it seems to do, it was found out by God the Father; who *laid help upon one that is mighty, exalted one chosen out of the people; found David his servant, and anointed him with his holy oil*²; that is, he found his own Son to be the most proper person to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; one that was mighty, almighty, and so equal to the work of redemption; and of all the individuals of human nature he designed to bring into being, which came into his vast and infinite mind, he chose out of them all one single individual of human nature, to be united to his own Son in due time; and so he invested him with the office of mediator; and thus a ransom was found for men: and this is not the invention of angels, nor of men, but of God only; not of angels, for they knew nothing of the matter but by revelation; so far were they from having any concern in the finding it out, that when it was found, they were strangers to it until it was made known unto them; and whatever hint might be given them of it immediately from God himself, whose invention this is, previous to the fall of man, as some have thought; which occasioned a great part of them to leave their first estate, and become apostates, rather than be subject to Christ in human nature; yet it seems as if great part, at least, of their knowledge of this affair, is attained to by them through the church of God, and the ministry of the word in it; since it is said, *to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known* (that is made known) *by the church, the manifold wisdom of God*³; that wonderful wisdom of God in finding out a ransom for men: yea, it looks as if their knowledge of it was not yet perfect; or however, that they have not fully satisfied themselves with it, but take fresh pleasure in the contemplation of it; for it is said, *which things the angels desire to look into*⁴, even yet more and more; they bow their heads, as it were⁵, they stoop, they look down, and curiously pry into the mysteries of grace: the allusion is thought to be to the *cherubim* over the mercy-seat, which looked to one another, and both to the mercy-seat, the type of Christ, the propitiation, and ransom of his people. Nor is this the invention of men; could all mankind have been summoned together, and had ever so long a time allowed them to have found out a proper ransom for them, it would ever have remained a puzzling question to them, *how should man be just with God*⁶?

3. x 2

or

¹ Ephes. v. 2. Rev. v. 9.² Psalm lxxxix. 19, 20.³ Ephes. iii. 10;⁴ 1 Peter ii. 12.⁵ Πάγκυνψαι.⁶ Job ix. 2.

or who will be a propitiation or ransom for him? for they could never have thought of the Son of God as a ransom; it could never have entered into their hearts to conceive it; for if *the world by wisdom knew not God*, it could never, with all its wisdom, find out a way of reconciling themselves unto God: and we see what fooleries the heathens have gone into, being left to the dim light of nature, and without a revelation, in order to make the Deity propitious to them: and even when this scheme of redemption and salvation by Christ is declared, it is treated by carnal men with contempt and ridicule; *we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness*¹; and therefore this can never be an invention of man's: no, it is the invention of God himself; *all things are of him*, and especially in a way of grace, and particularly our reconciliation, and the scheme of it. *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself*²; drawing the scheme of their reconciliation, ransom, and redemption: this flows from his divine counsels, *who does all things after the counsel of his will*; as there was a consultation held about the formation of man, no doubt there was one about his ransom and recovery; and which, with great propriety, may be called the *council of peace*, that was held between the eternal three on this special affair: this is the fruit and effect of his infinite wisdom, which shines in all his works, but abounds in the ransom and redemption of men, and the contrivance of it; this is *the manifold wisdom of God, the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, ordained before the world for our glory*; this is the result of an eternal purpose he purposed in Christ, of a resolution and determination he came into to have mercy on his people, and save them by the Lord their God; whom he set forth in his decrees and purposes to be the propitiation for their sins, and fore-ordained before the foundation of the world to ransom them with his precious blood. This is owing to a covenant of grace, which he made with Christ, in which he called and appointed him *to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel*: and in consideration of his making his soul an offering for sin, and giving himself a ransom for his chosen, he promised him a numerous seed, length of days for ever and ever, and the utmost prosperity and glory as man and mediator; to all which he agreed, and said, *Lo I come to do thy will*³; which was no other than to give his life a ransom for many. And now it was with the utmost pleasure, and to his great satisfaction, that he found such a ransom; and which seems to be expressed in the language of the text, *I have found a ransom*; Christ, as such, was the object of his delight and joy when he was set up as mediator by him from everlasting. But this must be understood of God the Father, not to the exclusion of the Son⁴, since *the council of peace*

was

¹ 1 Cor. i. 23.

² 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

³ Isai. xlix. 5, 6. and liii. 10—12. Psal. xl. 7.

⁴ Verum recte de utroque, patre & filio, id dicitur, tanquam veris auctoribus consilii de nostra redemptione. Joh. Henr. Michaelis notæ uberiores in loc.

was *between them both*¹; and Christ is, as the *Septuagint* version of *Isai.* ix. 6. calls him, *the Angel of the great council*; and he is the *Wisdom of God*, that dwells *with prudence, and finds out the knowledge of witty inventions*²; of which this of the ransom and redemption of men is not the least. And especially if the finding a ransom respects the impetration of redemption³; this peculiarly belongs to Christ; of him it is said, *having obtained*, or as it is in the original text, *having found eternal redemption for us*⁴; he is the ransomer, and the ransom-price; he is *the man the peace*, and *who has made peace by the blood of his cross*, and reconciled men to God by his sufferings and death, and is become the author of eternal salvation. But I go on to consider,

II. The happy effect and consequence of the ransom found, which is an order for deliverance from going down to the pit. And here I shall inquire what pit this is, a deliverance from going down to which is here ordered; and then by whom this order is given, and to whom directed.

1. By the *pit* is commonly understood the *grave*, and which in this book, and elsewhere, is so called; the word signifies *corruption*, and it has this name from hence, because in it the bodies of men putrify and corrupt: but the grave is what all men go down into; it is *the house appointed for all living*; it is man's long home, to which he is going, and where he must lodge till the resurrection: all men by divine appointment, die, and are brought to the grave, and there laid; good men as well as bad men, such as are ransomed by Christ, as well as others. It is true indeed that saints are delivered from it as a punishment; death is abolished, and the grave destroyed, as penal evils; but then they are not delivered from death itself, and from going down into the grave; they may have a reprieve for a time, and be spared a while longer; the sick man may *recover strength before he goes hence and is no more*; he may not be given over to death, though sorely chastened; this sickness he labours under may not be unto death; he may be restored and return, when he has been brought to the gates of it: but then such an ordinary event as the recovery of a sick man, seems to be too small a matter be founded upon such an extraordinary and marvellous affair as the ransom of Christ, and does not answer the grand design of it; rather therefore by this *pit* is meant the bottomless pit, the pit of destruction, which the wicked go into, even *hell*, eternal wrath and ruin⁵; and which, though the elect of God are deserving of as others, yet, being ransomed by Christ, they are delivered from it. I proceed to inquire,

2. By

¹ Zech. vi. 13.

² Prov. viii. 12.

³ So Cocceius interprets it.

⁴ *Eugenius*, Heb. ix. 12.

⁵ Ne descendat in foveam, infernalem ac æternam perniciem. Michael. not. in loc.

2. By whom, and to whom is this order given. Those who think the grave is intended by the pit, suppose these words, *deliver him from going down to it*, are addressed either to the disease itself the sick man is afflicted with; so Mr *Broughton* renders the words, "Spare him, O killing malady, from descending into the pit;" diseases are the servants of God, they come when he bids them, and they depart when he orders them so to do: he sometimes says to them, as he did to the destroying angel, *It is enough*; the ends are answered for which the malady was sent, and it must be continued no longer; often so it is, that upon the sick man's prayers, or those of his friends, he is raised up from his sick-bed, and delivered from the grave: or else the address is to the minister, as others think, that attends the sick man, assists him, and prays for him; who is sent to tell him that he shall not die but live, as *Nathan* was sent to *David*, and *Isaiab* to *Hezekiab*, which is declaratively, though not authoritatively, delivering from the grave: but the words are rather an address of God the Father to his Son, the angel and interpreter with him, lying in his bosom; upon finding the ransom, upon the contrivance of the scheme of redemption, after the agreement and covenant made; sending him forth in the fulness of time, to give himself a ransom for his people, and redeem and save them from destruction, since such a way was found out and agreed upon; for the words may be rendered, "redeem him from going down to the pit," as the word signifies; and to whom can this be so properly said as to Christ the redeemer? or else this is the address of the Father to law and justice, upon the ransom being found, or the redemption obtained by Christ; since that is done, justice, let this man go free; law, set open thy prison doors, and no longer detain this captive; hell and death, give up your claim to him, seeing the ransom-price is paid for him. Or these words may be considered as the words of the Son to the Father, the angel, the messenger and interpreter with God, the advocate with him; who appears in the presence of God for his people, and pleads his propitiatory sacrifice for them, urges on their behalf the atonement he has made, and the ransom he has given for them, and insists upon their deliverance from wrath and ruin; and declares it to his heavenly Father as his will, that they be saved from hell, and *be with him* in heaven, *where he is, and behold his glory*. I come now to the last general head,

III. To observe the grace of God displayed in all this; *then he is gracious, and faithful*; not the minister that assists the sick person, and has pity on him, and prays

† So the Dutch annotators, and Caryl in loc.

* פָּרַע is the same with פָּדָה, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe. *Utrumque consignat redemptionem, vel liberationem captivi, quæ fit soluto pretio, vel & substituta anima loco animæ, vita loco vitæ.*

† John xvii. 24.

prays for him; but either the angel, the messenger, the interpreter, one among a thousand, the Word that is with God, the advocate with the Father, who is gracious and merciful to his ransomed ones; and has in a very wonderful manner shewn his grace and love in becoming surety for them; engaging to be their Saviour and Redeemer; promising to pay their debts for them, and to be their ransom, and give himself a ransom-price for them: the grace of Christ is well known, and clearly seen in his assumption of human nature, taking part of the same flesh and blood with his children; appearing in the form of a servant, who was Lord of all; and becoming poor, who was rich, even God over all, blessed for ever: and greater love than this could never be expressed by men, than to lay down his life for a friend; but such is the grace of Christ, that he has laid down his life for his enemies, and died for men while they were sinners; and had no love for him; and his grace is further displayed in his wonderful and prevalent intercession for them; for their conversion; for the application of pardoning grace to them; for the preservation of them from all evil; for their final perseverance; for their deliverance from hell and death; and for their eternal glorification. Or rather, the *He* here is God the Father^b, who is said to be *gracious*, and is so; he has *proclaimed his name* in Christ, *a God gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth; pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin*^c; he is the God of all grace, and has in various ways manifested his grace unto the sons of men, and especially in the affair of their ransom, redemption and salvation. His grace appears in finding Christ: the ransom; for though this was the invention of wisdom, it was grace set wisdom at work to contrive the amazing scheme; it was because God loved his people with an everlasting love, and as an instance of that love, chose them to be holy and happy, and resolved upon their eternal salvation, that he cast about in his infinite mind to find out and pursue the best ways and means of effecting it; it was wondrous grace in him to send his Son to be the ransom and ransom-price, when Wisdom could find none so fit and proper for this purpose as he; it was marvellous grace to agree to part with him, and in the fulness of time to send him to redeem lost sinners from sin, Satan, law, death and hell: herein he shewed forth his grace, yea the riches, the fulness of his grace, even the exceeding riches of it in this instance of kindness; sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sacrifice for sin, to make atonement for it, and be the ransom of his people: herein his love was manifested to the highest degree, and he gave the greatest commendation of it that could be; for a greater person could not be sent, or a greater gift bestowed: if it was an instance of the love of God to his people the Jews,

that

^b המקום "the place," he who fills up all space and place, so Jarchi and Aben Ezra.

^c Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

that he gave Egypt for their ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for them, men for them, and people for their life^d; how much greater proof of his love has he given, by not sparing his own Son, but delivering him up for us all? Had he given all the angels in heaven, and all the rest of mankind on earth, a ransom for his chosen, it would not have been such an evidence of his love as the gift of his Son. And then, when Christ had given his life a ransom, it was grace to accept of this ransom-price in the room and stead of his people; for though it was a full and sufficient one, which law and justice could not object unto, and with which they must be both pleased and satisfied; yet God was not obliged to accept of it in the room and stead of sinful men, had he not voluntarily agreed in the covenant of grace to accept of it as a vicarious sacrifice and proper atonement for them; otherwise he might have insisted upon satisfaction from the sinner himself; but such was his grace, that he accepts the ransom of his Son in his room. Moreover, the grace of God is greatly displayed in what he has done upon the score of this ransom-price paid, and redemption obtained, in the justification of the persons, and in the pardon of the sins of those for whom it is given: justification proceeds upon, and is through the redemption which is in Christ; and this is an act of God's free grace; so says the apostle, *being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*^e; it is with a view to the righteousness of Christ, and to his life and blood being given as a ransom for his people, and to the redemption thereby procured, that God justifies any, and this is by his grace; and as if to say so was not enough to express the riches of it, it is said to be *freely by his grace*; not only the righteousness of God, his strict justice is declared, in this method of justifying sinners, whereby he appears to be just, strictly just, whilst he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; but the free grace of God is abundantly manifest in it, in accepting the righteousness of Christ, in the imputation of it to his people without works, and in the application of it by his Spirit: hence it is called the free gift, the gift of grace, and an abundance of grace^f: so likewise forgiveness of sin is a branch of redemption obtained by the ransom-price; hence, says the apostle, *in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*^g; though pardon of sin is through the blood of Christ shed for it, and with respect to that is an act of justice, yet notwithstanding it is according to grace, and the riches of it; though it is upon the foot of satisfaction and atonement, yet it was grace that provided Christ the lamb for the burnt-offering; it was grace that sent him to make reconciliation for sin, and to shed his blood for the remission of it; and it was grace that accepted the expiatory sacrifice, and declares the sinner forgiven on account of it; and which makes application of the blood of Christ

^d Isai. xliii. 3. 4.^e Rom. iii. 24.^f Rom. v. 15—17.^g Ephes. i. 7.

Christ to the sinner's conscience for that purpose; and who becomes very sensible of the freeness of the grace of God, and of the multitude of his tender mercies in the forgiveness of his sins. In short, the whole of salvation, which flows from the ransom given, and is no other than a deliverance from going down to the pit, or from hell, wrath, and ruin, is entirely of *grace*, and not of *works*. God, in saving men, does not proceed according to their works, but according to his own grace; it is *not by works of righteousness which they have done*, even the best, *but by his abundant mercy and rich grace*, that he saves them, through the blood and righteousness of his Son, and the regeneration of the blessed Spirit; and to this it will be ascribed by all the saints throughout an endless eternity, when the constant acclamation will be, *Grace, grace unto it*.

And thus have I endeavoured to open and improve this passage of scripture on this solemn occasion, as time would allow me. It may be expected I should now say something concerning our deceased friend and brother. I am very sensible that he himself was very averse to encomiums of the dead at such seasons, and for my own part I have no inclination to them; I shall therefore say nothing of him in his civil and moral character; how he behaved in his family as a parent and master, you that are of it know full well; and how he behaved as a neighbour, you that were his neighbours can bear witness; I shall only say a few things as to his spiritual and eternal concerns. It pleased God to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him, in his younger days; and as he knew it was his duty *with the mouth to make confession unto salvation*, as well as *with the heart to believe unto righteousness*, he very early gave up himself to this church of Christ, of which he was a member upwards of twenty-six years; and, allowing for the common infirmities of life, his conversation, so far as known by us, was agreeable to the profession he made. I doubt not but that he had that true faith which works by love to Christ and his people; a crucified Christ was precious to him; his blood, his righteousness, and all that belong to him; he loved him, his people, his gospel, and his ordinances; he was an humble christian; tender and compassionate to the poor, to whom he behaved very respectfully both by words and deeds; he had a very mean opinion of himself, being very sensible of the corruption of his nature, and the plague of his heart, and of his deficiencies and imperfections in life: to this was owing the great reluctance with which he accepted the office of a deacon, as many of you well know, and for the same reason chose to officiate in it only when pure necessity obliged him to it. In a visit to him in his late illness, which issued in death, he told me he had had some delightful views of eternal things, and his interest in them; and added, that he should be very ungrateful if he did not believe that Christ shed his blood for him: that passage of scripture being mentioned in conversa-

tion, *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help*^h; he observed, that these words had been of wonderful use to him at a certain time, and had yielded him abundance of spiritual consolation and strength; as indeed in a few words are expressed the destruction and salvation, the ruin and recovery of men. And though his disorder increasing rendered him afterwards very little conversible, yet by broken expressions, and various tokens and circumstances, he was judged to die comfortably; and no doubt but he is fallen asleep in Jesus, and will be one of those that he will bring with him. May you, his children that survive him, tread in his steps, and imitate him in every thing praise-worthy, civil, moral and religious; attend the means of grace, and may the Lord call you by it in his due time, that you may fear and serve your father's God, and fill up his place in the world and church. I shall close with a word or two by way of reflection on what has been said.

Since there is a ransom found and given, and God is gracious upon it, and has displayed his grace in such a wonderful manner, this may be an encouragement to sensible sinners, who are depressed with the guilt of sin, to hope in him; *Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy*ⁱ, *and with him is plenteous redemption*: this being the case, there is no room nor reason for despair: *behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world*^k; look to a sin-bearing and sin-atoning Saviour; his blood cleanses, and his righteousness justifies from all sin, and his sacrifice expiates all iniquity; and God for his sake forgives all trespasses. Hence true believers in Christ have great reason to rejoice and be glad, who know the ransom-price is given for them, and they are delivered upon it from deserved wrath and ruin: these ransomed ones may come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; and when faith is in exercise, and they have a comfortable view of their interest in the redeemer; may say as the apostle did, *we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement*^l: such have reason to adore and admire distinguishing grace, and to call upon their souls, and all within them, to bless the name of the Lord, for the forgiveness of their sins, the ransom of their souls, and the redemption of their lives from destruction; and the grace displayed in all this, should teach and influence them to *live soberly, righteously and godly, in this evil world*.

^h Hosea xiii. 9.ⁱ Psalm cxxx. 7.^k John v. 29.^l Rom. v. 11.

S E R M O N XXXII.

The Mutual Gain of Christ and Christians in their Life and Death.

Occasioned by the Death of the Reverend JOSEPH STENNETT, D.D.

Preached February 26, 1758.

PHILIPPIANS I. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is Gain.

THIS epistle, of which the words of my text are a part, was written by the apostle *Paul*, when a prisoner at *Rome*, to the church of Christ at *Philippi*. *Philippi* was a chief city of a part of *Macedonia*; or rather, a city of the first part of *Macedonia*^a, and a colony of the Romans, at the time of the writing of this epistle. Hither the gospel was brought in a very wonderful and extraordinary manner. The apostle *Paul*, and those with him, intended to have gone elsewhere, but were over-ruled and directed by divine providence, to steer their course to this place; where their ministry was succeeded to the conversion of *Lydia* and her household, and of the jailor and his; which two families, in all probability, laid the foundation of a gospel-church-state in this city; on account of which it became more famous, than for its being rebuilt by *Philip* king of *Macedon*, father of *Alexander* the Great, from whence it had its name of *Philippi*; or for the battle fought near it, between *Augustus Cesar* and *Mark Anthony* on one side, and *Brutus* and *Cassius* on the other, when the latter were beaten by the former; or for the fountains of water, or the veins and mines of gold, with which it abounded, which formerly gave it the names of *Crenides* and *Darbos*, and since *Cbrysepolis*; by which name, or as vulgarly *Grixopolis*, it seems it is now called^b. The church here was a well-regulated one; it was in good order, and had its proper officers, *bishops* and *deacons*; one to take care of

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^a So the words in Acts xvi. 12. may be rendered, as they are by Castalio, if instead of $\sigma\upsilon\delta\omega\tau\eta$ $\tau\alpha\iota$ we read $\sigma\epsilon\lambda\omega\tau\eta\varsigma$, and which version agrees with the history of the place: for according to Livy, l. 45. c. 29. Macedonia, when conquered by Paulus Æmilius, was divided into four parts, and the first part was between Strymon and Nessus; where Pomponius Mela, l. 2. c. 9. places *Philippi*: and Jerom, De loc. Hebr. fol. 95. G. expressly says, "Philippi is a city in the first part of Macedonia;" and it was not the chief city of that part, but Amphipolis, according to Livy in the place referred to; nor was it the first city the apostle and his friends came to, but Neapolis, as appears from ver. 11. though Photius, Ep. 247. says, "Philippi was the metropolis of the province of Macedonia;" as perhaps it might be in his time. See Pierce's Synopf. Ep. Philip. p. 2, 3.

^b Vid. Zanchii Prolegomena in Epist. ad Philip.

its spiritual, and the other of its temporal affairs. The members of it are described as *saints in Christ; Jesus*; they were *in Christ*, being chosen in him to be holy as well as happy; and who, being converted, had an open being in him; they were called with an holy calling, had principles of grace and holiness wrought in their hearts, and lived holy lives and conversations. The apostle had a very great regard for them; he remembered them in his prayers, in which he gave thanks to God for their constant fellowship in the gospel. He expresses his strong confidence of the work of grace being begun in them, and of the performance of it *until the day of Christ*; believing, in a judgment of charity, that they were partakers of the same grace with himself. He declares the most strong and affectionate love to them, for the truth of which he appeals to God; and as an evidence of it prays for them, that they might increase in love, in spiritual knowledge, judgment, and sense: that they might be able to discern things that differ, and approve the most excellent; and that they might be upright and inoffensive in their conversation, abounding in the fruits of righteousness through Christ, to the glory of God. And whereas he was now in prison, he gives them an account of his bonds, and the usefulness of them; as that they were the means of spreading the gospel in many places, and even in *Cesar's court*, and of emboldening the ministers of it to preach it without the fear of man; though this they did from different principles, and with different views; some of *envy, strife, and contention*, and insincerely, thinking to add to the apostle's afflictions; others of *good-will* and of love to him, to the truth, and to the souls of men; knowing that he was set *for the defence of the gospel*. However, whatever were their views, the apostle declares it was, and ever would be, matter of joy to him, that Christ was preached; yea, he was persuaded, that the ill designed to him by some, would be over-ruled for his good, through the prayers of the saints, and the supply of the Spirit; for he had a well-grounded hope, that Christ would be magnified in his body, living and dying; seeing he knew, that should he live longer, it would be for the glory of Christ, and the advancement of his interest in the world; and should he die quickly, his death would be gain, both to Christ and himself; since he should die for his sake, in the faith of him, and the profession of it, and should be for ever with him; *for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*. These words may be considered,

- I. As one proposition, and be read, *for Christ is gain to me in life and in death*; as they are in the margin of our Bible, and by some interpreters of great note. According to this version of the words, *Christ is the subject* with

³ Ego autem Christum in utroque membro orationis facio subjectum, ut tam in vita, quam in morte, lucrum esse predicetur, Calvin in loc. Sic Beza & Gomarus.

with respect to both parts, and the *attribute* is *gain*; and this he was applied to the apostle, both living and dying.

II. As two propositions, the subjects of which are *life* and *death*; and the respective predicates *Christ* and *gain*; and which partition of them is more agreeable to our version; I shall consider them in each view.

I. The words may be considered as expressive of the *gain* that Christ was, or would be to the apostle, both living and dying; and this is not to be limited and restrained to him as an apostle, who as such received his commission from Christ; had gifts and grace from him, qualifying him for that office; and by whom he was made successful in it, and profitable to the souls of men; and whereby he gained much credit and reputation among the churches of Christ; but is to be understood of him as a believer in Christ, in common with others; and it is true even of the meanest saint, that Christ is his *gain* in life and in death. I use the words, *believer* and *saint*; for Christ is not *gain* to graceless persons, nor is he esteemed as such by them; they see no excellency in him, to distinguish him from another beloved; nor any comeliness in him, wherefore he should be desired by them; nor can they imagine that any profit or advantage will arise unto them by professing and serving him; or that any gain will accrue to them by attending his word, worship, and ordinances; but, on the contrary, that they would be losers in their character or substance; and therefore, like the Gergesenes, desire he would depart from them: especially it cannot be thought that Christ should be gainful to those that strip him of his proper deity; count his blood as common, or no other than that of a common man; despise and reject his righteousness, and deny his sacrifice, satisfaction and atonement; and are self-sufficient to be their own saviours: but he is gain to them that believe in him, and is so accounted by them; for to them he is *precious*: he is so to them who have a special and spiritual knowledge of him; who have an *understanding* given them, or *the eyes of their understandings are opened and enlightened by the Spirit of God, to know him that is true*; that he is the true God, truly and properly God, and *in whom is eternal life*; and that *they are in him that is true*; are interested in him, and share in all the blessings of grace by him; who have such knowledge of him, of the glories of his person, and the riches of his grace, as that it is the beginning, pledge, and earnest of eternal life; and which knowledge, and the object known, are preferred by them to every thing else, and *all things are reckoned but loss* in comparison thereof; and therefore are desirous of knowing more of him, of his person, office and grace; being willing to suffer the *loss of all things*, that they may *win* or gain him, and a greater degree of knowledge

* 1 John v. 20.

† Phil. iii. 8, 10.

knowledge of him. Christ is gain, and reckoned gain to such who see him, and believe in him; who see the worth and value of him; the fulness of grace in him; the suitability of him to lost sinners; and who, as poor perishing creatures without him, go to him, and venture their souls on him, trusting in him, who lay hold upon him by faith as the Lord their righteousness, their only Redeemer and Saviour; who lean and rely upon him alone for salvation; commit their all into his hands, and expect all from him, grace here, and glory hereafter; and who not only have an interest in him, but are satisfied of it, that he is theirs, and they are his; their Lord and their God, who has loved them, and given himself for them; to such as these Christ must be gain, and he is so esteemed by them.

First, Christ is their gain in life: he is their *all*, every thing to them, "their all in all;" he is every thing to them they want, and all they need they find in him. He is their *wisdom*, *righteousness*, *sanctification*, and *redemption*; their *wisdom*, to guide and direct them; their *righteousness*, to justify them, and render them acceptable to God; their *sanctification*, to make them meet for eternal glory and happiness; and their *redemption*, to deliver and save them from all their enemies, sin, Satan, and the world. He is their *life*, to quicken them, and to enable them to perform all the acts of spiritual life, and to entitle them to an eternal one; he is their *light* to enlighten them, and in whose light they view with pleasure all divine objects; he is their *food* they live upon, and by which they are nourished to everlasting life; and he is their raiment with which they are clothed; he is the source and spring of all their solid joy, peace, and comfort; and through an interest in him they have a right to all things pertaining to life and godliness; all are theirs, Christ being theirs; and therefore they must be great gainers by him. And how great their gain is, will appear by the following particulars.

1. He himself, his person, being theirs, he must be gain, and gain enough unto them; there being none among the sons of God in heaven to be compared to him, nor any among the mighty men on earth to be desired besides him. He is *the chiefest among ten thousand*; among ten thousand angels, or among ten thousand saints; being "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" he is the one and only Mediator between God and man, through whom they have access unto God, and in whom they have acceptance with him; he is their prophet, to teach and instruct them in all divine things; their priest, to make atonement for their sins, and intercession for their souls; their king, to rule and govern, protect and defend them: he stands in, and fills up all relations to them; is their indulgent father, loving husband, kind brother,

* 1 Cor. i. 30.

† Cant. v. 10.

brother, and faithful friend; in all these he is gain unto them. He is *the pearl of great price*, on whom no price can be set; he is *more precious than rubies*; and all the things that can be thought, spoken of, or desired, are not to be mentioned with him; the *merchandise* of him, the wisdom of God, is *better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold*^a.

2. Not only Christ himself, but all other things of any value and importance, are theirs: Christ is *the unspeakable gift of God* unto them; and he is nor given alone; God *with him freely gives all things*^b appertaining to their spiritual and everlasting life; they are blessed with *all spiritual blessings*^c in him; as with peace, pardon, righteousness, adoption, and eternal life; with all the sure mercies of *David*, the blessings of an everlasting and well ordered covenant; with all the stores of grace, and rich provisions of good things laid up in it; all the *fulnes of grace* it has pleased the Father should dwell in him, is for their use; and out of it do they receive continually *grace for grace*^d; or a large abundance of it, as they want it; and every need of theirs is supplied by their covenant-God and Father, *according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus*^e.

3. All the promises of the covenant of grace, and which are transcribed into the everlasting gospel, are theirs: *godliness*, true, real, powerful godliness, and those who are possessed of it, have *promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*^f; both as to things temporal and spiritual, and with respect to grace and glory; and these are all *in Christ, yea, and amen*^g; and those that believe in him, are *heirs* of them; have a right unto them, and claim upon them, and enjoy what is contained in them: and these are exceeding *great and precious*; they are *like apples of gold in pictures of silver*, and are *more to be desired than thousands of gold and silver*; and such that know the worth and value of them, will rejoice at them when they find them, and when they are applied unto them, as they that *find a great spoil*^h; being suitable to their case, free and gracious, absolute and unconditional; and what give them immediate comfort and relief, and are of service to them in future times of difficulty and distress.

4. Christ must needs be gain to those that know him, and believe in him, since high honours are conferred on them by him. Though they may, by embracing and professing him, lose their name, credit, and reputation among men, and be reckoned *the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things*ⁱ; yet they are *made by Christ kings and priests unto God and his Father*^j; these two high and honourable characters are united in them; they are a *royal priesthood*^k. They are kings, not titular ones: they have now a kingdom of grace, which is within

^a Prov. iii. 14, 15.

^b Rom. viii. 32.

^c Ephes. i. 3.

^d Col. i. 19.

John i. 16.

^e Phil. iv. 19.

^f 1 Tim. iv. 8.

^g 2 Cor. i. 20.

^h 2 Peter i. 4.

Prov. xxv. 11.

Psal. cxix. 72, 162.

ⁱ 1 Cor. iv. 13.

^j Rev. i. 5.

^k 1 Peter ii. 9.

them, where grace reigns through righteousness over sin, Satan, and the world; and which lies in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost; and they are heirs of an everlasting one: they have a crown of life, righteousness, and glory laid up for them, and a throne of glory prepared and set up for them; even the same on which their Lord and Head, their Redeemer and Saviour sits, and they will sit with him on it: they fare like kings; they sit at the king's table, and partake of royal dainties: they are clothed like such; being related to Christ the King of kings; they are his queen, and stand at his right hand in gold of Ophir; their clothing is wrought gold, and raiment of needle-work: and they have the attendance of kings; angels are their life-guards; those *ministering spirits minister to them who are heirs of salvation*. And they are priests; they have easy and ready access to God their Father, through Christ the Mediator, under the influence of one Spirit; and they have access with freedom and boldness; they can come to God through the blood of Christ with intrepidity, and *with full assurance of faith*; they can come without fear to God, and offer up their spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and present themselves, souls and bodies, a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice to him. *This honour have all the saints*’.

5. They are possessed of abundance of riches from Christ; every thing in Christ is gain to them, even his very poverty; for *through his poverty they are made rich*; and how enriching then must his riches be! for all his riches are theirs; his riches, as the creator and governor of the world; *the earth is his, and the fulness thereof*, and all this belongs to his people; the world is theirs, he being theirs; they are heirs of it, as *Abraham* was; they have a rightful claim unto it, and possess as much of it as is for their good, and enjoy it in a manner others do not: the riches of grace, and the riches of glory, are theirs; *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, which can never be traced out, nor told over; the true, solid, and substantial riches, even *durable riches*, which will last for ever, and can never be lost; and though believers in Christ may for his sake suffer the spoiling of their goods, and lose their worldly substance, yet in the issue they are no losers; they gain by their losses; for what they leave and lose for Christ's sake, they *receive an hundred-fold now in this world, and in the world to come eternal life*’.

6. They obtain with Christ, and receive from him a glorious justifying righteousness; though they part with their own, they get a better; they are indeed obliged, upon their becoming the disciples of Christ, to deny *righteous self*, as well as *sinful and civil self*, for his sake: being convinced by the Spirit of God of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, to justify them in his sight; they drop it, they disclaim and renounce it, in point of dependence; they desire to be found not in their own righteousness, by which they see they cannot be justified

^a Psalm cxlix. 9.

^t 2 Cor. viii. 9.

^m Psalm xxiv. 1.

ⁿ Mark x. 30.

tified before God; they perceive it is a garment too narrow to wrap themselves in, and therefore lay it aside as their robe of righteousness; but what do they lose thereby? Only rags, and these filthy ones; which are of no more use to cover naked souls, and shelter them from the wrath of God, and avenging justice, than the aprons of fig-leaves were to our first parents, when they had sinned: and in the room of it they gain a better righteousness; not only a righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the hypocritical scribes and pharisees; but even that exceeds the real holiness of saints, that new man which is created in righteousness and true holiness; yea, that exceeds the righteousness of the angels in heaven, and of Adam in a state of innocence; for it is not the righteousness of a creature, but the *righteousness of God, which is unto and upon all them that believe**; it is a righteousness as broad as the commandment is; it is every way commensurate to the righteous law of God, by which that is magnified and made honourable; by which justice is satisfied, and with which God is well pleased; it is an everlasting one, and will answer for the saints in a time to come; it acquits them now, and will hereafter; it secures from all condemnation and wrath, and entitles to eternal life.

7. All that believe in Christ gain much by his blood and sacrifice: they have redemption through his blood, from all their iniquities; from the law, and all its curses; from Satan and his principalities and powers; from the world, and all their enemies; from hell, wrath, ruin, and destruction: and this they have, not through corruptible things, as silver and gold, but through the precious blood of Christ. By this likewise full remission of sins is obtained, peace is made with God, and reconciliation for sin; this being also sprinkled on the conscience, speaks peace there, and purges it from dead works, and cleanses from all sin: by the sacrifice of Christ, sin is finished and made an end of; it is put away for ever; and those that are sanctified, are perfected by it; which lays a foundation for solid joy, in all that have received the atonement; whose gain hereby is exceeding great.

8. All that believe in Christ are, and shall be saved, *with an everlasting salvation*. Christ, as their surety, engaged to be the Saviour of them; he came into this world in their nature for that purpose; and by his obedience, sufferings, and death, has obtained eternal salvation for them. This is in him, and in no other; nor is there any other person, or name, or thing under heaven, whereby any can be saved; it is in vain to expect it from hills and mountains; from any works of men, be they ever so numerous; but in Christ alone is *the salvation of Israel*†: and they that believe in him, believe in him to the saving of the soul; and do at last receive the end of their faith, *even the salvation of their souls*; the redemption of which

* Rom. iii. 22.

† Jer. iii. 23.

is precious, as being of more worth than a world, and requires a price: a creature cannot give: so that as on the one hand, it will be no *profit* or advantage to a man, should he *gain the whole world, and lose his own soul*^a; on the other hand, he, whose soul is saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, and by him, must be thereby an infinite gainer.

9. Once more let it be observed, that every thing that belongs to Christ, or has any connection with him, is gain to the believer in him. The ministers of Christ are theirs, whether *Paul*, or *Apollos*, or *Cephas*^b, or whoever they be; they have a right to their ministrations, and they receive profit by them, for they speak unto them for exhortation, consolation, and edification; though they have not *dominion over their faith*, they are *helpers of their joy*^c; they are instruments of encouraging their faith and hope in God, and of increasing their spiritual knowledge and joy in the Lord. The gospel of Christ, when mixed with faith by them that hear it, becomes profitable; when it is found and eat by faith, it is the rejoicing of the heart; it is soul-strengthening and comforting food to faith; and is esteemed by the believer more than the necessary food of his body. The ordinances of Christ are *breasts of consolation*^d, and afford much spiritual refreshment, when the presence of Christ is enjoyed in them: and the people of Christ are very beneficial one to another, by praying together, and building up one another on their most holy faith; by sympathizing with each other, conversing together, and relating their experiences to one another; all which makes their company delightful and profitable: to say no more under this head.

10. The worst things of Christ, if any of his may be called bad, are gain to the saints, and are so esteemed by them; as *reproaches* for the sake of Christ and his gospel, and their profession of it; even these are reckoned by them *greater riches than the treasures of Egypt*^e: there are no afflictions befall the people of God, but they are gainers by them; their consolation abounds by Christ, as the sufferings of Christ abound in them; all their trials and exercises serve but to brighten their graces, particularly their faith, and make it to appear *much more precious than gold that perisheth*^f; their various afflictions work together for their good, either temporal or spiritual; and even work for them an *exceeding and eternal weight of glory*^g: and if these are so gainful and profitable to them, what must Christ's best things be! earthly kingdoms, crowns, thrones and scepters, are toys and trifles, in comparison of them. Thus Christ is the believer's gain in life.

Secondly,

^a Matt. xvi. 26.

^b 1 Cor. iii. 22.

^c 2 Cor. i. 24.

Isai. lxvii. 11.

^d Heb. xi. 26.

^e 1 Peter i. 7.

^f Rom. viii. 28. ^g 2 Cor. iv. 17.

Secondly, Christ is the gain of believer's in death, at it, and after it. When they die, they die in Christ: they have a secret being in Christ, as they are chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and they have an open manifest being in him, when they are converted and made new creatures; they live in him as the branches do in the vine; and they continue in him, and through abiding in him, bring forth fruit as long as they live; and when they die, they are found in Christ, interested in him; and *blessed are the dead that die in Lord^a*; they are happy with him, enjoying everlasting peace and rest; falling asleep by death, they sleep in the arms of Jesus, and he will bring them with him at his second coming: the righteous, when they die, have hope in their death of enjoying eternal life and happiness; and this hope is founded on the person, blood and righteousness of Christ: he is in them *the hope of glory^b*; the *anchor* of hope being cast on him, on such good ground, on so sure a foundation, is in itself *sure and stedfast^c*, and enters within the veil where Jesus is; it is a hope that makes not ashamed, or disappoints; salvation follows upon it. These also die in the faith of Christ; and as in life, the triumph of that grace arises from what Christ is to his people, and has done and suffered for them, from his death, resurrection ascension to heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, and intercession for them; so when they come to die, what gives them reason to sing and say, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?* is, that Christ has took away *the sting of death, sin*, and has fulfilled and satisfied *the law, the strength of sin^d*; so that there is nothing lies against them to their condemnation. Moreover, their expectation in their dying moments is to be with Christ, and with whom they are desirous to be; and chuse to be *absent from the body*, that they might be *present with the Lord^e*; and they are immediately with him, as soon as soul and body are separated: and this is their comfort, both in life and at death, that they shall be for ever with him; and when they are departed, their happiness at and after death lies in communion with Christ, in conformity to him, and in the everlasting vision of him. Communion with Christ is a most delightful and desirable thing; the believer reckons it great gain to him, when he can say, *truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ^f*; which yet is imperfect, and but for a season; what gain will that be which will be for ever and uninterrupted, that is entered upon at death! Now the saints are like to Christ, but it is but in part; they are gradually *changed into his image from glory to glory^g*; but at death, and as soon as in glory, this image will be perfect and complete; and in the resurrection, it will be so both in soul and body. In the present state of things, we see but in part, and *through a glass darkly^h*; but, in the other state,

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when

^c Rev. xiv. 13.

^b Col. i. 27.

^d Heb. vi. 19.

^e 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

^f 2 Cor. v. 8.

^g 1 John i. 7.

^h 2 Cor. iii. 18.

ⁱ 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12.

when death has done its office, we shall see Christ as he is, as well as be like him. A principal part of the saints happiness, will lie in beholding his glory, and gazing at it, and feeding the eyes of the mind upon it with unutterable pleasure; which to enjoy, is the ultimate end of our Lord's sufferings here, and of his preparations and intercession in heaven. But,

II. I shall now proceed to consider these words as consisting of two propositions: first, that *to live is Christ*, or life is Christ; it is to and for him: secondly, that *death is gain* both to him and to his saints.

First, That *to live is Christ*, or that the tendency of the apostle's life, which is the design of the expression, was to the service, honour, and glory of Christ; for not *Christ*, but *life*, or *to live*, is the subject of this proposition; *Christ* is the predicate. Wherefore,

1st, The sense is not, that life is owing to Christ, or that he is the cause and author of it; though this is true; for as he is the creator of men, *in him* was life, and that *life was the light of men*⁹; he it is that gives life and breath to all in a natural sense; as all have their being from him, they are preserved and upheld in it by him; they *live, move, and have their being* in him. Saints have their spiritual life from Christ; he quickens the dead in sin, even whom he pleases; he is *the resurrection and the life*¹⁰, or the author of the resurrection from the death of sin, to a life of grace; he speaks life into dead sinners, and implants in them a principle of it, and maintains it: he is also the procurer and giver of eternal life; he has given *his flesh*, his human nature, *for the life*, the eternal life of the world¹¹, of his chosen ones; and he has power to give it to as many as the Father has given him; and to them he does give it, and they *shall never perish*: he is *the way, the truth, and the life*¹²; the true way to eternal life, yea he is eternal life itself; it will consist in the everlasting enjoyment of him; but this is not the meaning of the expression here. Nor,

2^{dly}, Is it the sense of the phrase, that Christ is the object of spiritual life; though this also is true: a believer lives by faith on Christ; on his person for acceptance; on his blood for pardon; and on his righteousness for justification: he lives upon him as the bread of life, and lives by him; his spiritual life is supported and maintained through feeding on him by faith; and as it was the desire of our apostle, so it is of every believer, that *the life* he lives *in the flesh* should be *by the faith in the Son of God*¹³. But,

3^{dly}, The meaning is, that Christ was the end of the apostle's life, the scope and aim of it; his main view, whilst he lived, was to serve and glorify him, and

⁹ To *esse*, *Xristus*, vivere, Christus. Articulus, nota subjecti, ut mox iterum. Quicquid vivo, (vita naturali) Christum vivo. Beagelius in loc. ¹⁰ John i. 4. ¹¹ John xi. 25.

¹² John vi. 51.

¹³ John xvii. 2. and x. 28. and xiv. 6.

¹⁴ Gal. ii. 20.

and promote his honour and interest. This had been his constant care and study for time past; and it was his resolution still, should he be continued longer, *to live to Christ*; and it was his firm persuasion, that this would be the issue of his future toil and labour in his ministry, or of his sufferings; he was well assured Christ would be magnified hereby, as it was his hearty desire that he should; and it becomes every good man, whether a minister of the word, or a private christian, to seek the glory of Christ throughout the whole of his life, and make this the end of his living, that *whether we live, we live unto the Lord*^a; and the *love of Christ*, in assuming our nature, in suffering and dying in our room and stead, and thereby obtaining eternal redemption for us, should *constrain* and engage us *not to live unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us, and rose again*^b: particularly a minister of the gospel may be said *to live to Christ*, or to have his life devoted to his service and interest, when,

1. He preaches Christ, and him only, at least principally; when he is the subject-matter of his ministry; and when all things in it tend to this one point, and center in it, or have a-connection with it; when the drift of all his discourses is to magnify Christ; to set off the glories of his person, and the riches of his grace: and this was the way of preaching the apostles of Christ, and first ministers of the word, universally gave into; *we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord*^c: and for this our apostle was remarkably eminent and famous; *I determined, says he, not to know, that is, not to make known, any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified*^d; and this resolution he pursued, and by this determination he abode, notwithstanding the clamours and cavils of the Jewish doctors against it, and the sneers of the wise philosophers of the age at it; *we preach, says he, Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness*^e: and this is done when he is declared to be *God over all blessed for ever*; and that all divine perfections are in him; that *the fulness of the Godhead dwells in him*; that he is *in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him*^f; having the same nature and attributes; the same glorious names and titles; the same works being done by him, and the same worship and homage given to him. When he is set forth in all his offices, as the surety that engaged to take upon him the nature of his people, to pay their debts, and satisfy for their sins, and save their souls; as the Saviour and Redeemer of them from all their sins, and the sad effects of them; as their only Mediator, who transacts all affairs for them, between God and them; as their prophet, to whose instructions, relating to doctrine and worship, they are to attend; as their priest, who has *offered himself without spot to God* for them, *appears in the presence of God* on their account, and *ever lives to make intercession for them*; and

^a Rom. xiv. 8.^b 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.^c 2 Cor. iv. 5.^d 1 Cor. ii. 2.^e 1 Cor. i. 23.^f Rom. ix. 5. Coloss. ii. 9. Phil. ii. 6.

and as their king, to whom they recommend subjection as such, and obedience to all his commands and ordinances. When also they preach up the benefits and blessings of grace which come by him; as that the acceptance of men with God is not on the account of any works of righteousness done by them, but in Christ his beloved Son, and on account of what he has done and suffered for them; and that justification is not by the works of the law, moral or ceremonial, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed, without works; or by faith in that righteousness, without the works of the law; that pardon of sin is not through the tears, repentance, and humiliations of men, but by the blood of Christ; *for without shedding of blood, be there what will else, there is no remission*^e; that adoption, which is from the good-will and pleasure of God, is founded on relation to the person of Christ, and comes through the redemption that is in him; and that the power, privilege, and authority to claim that blessing, is a gift of his to those that believe in him; and that *eternal life* itself; is *the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord*^d.

2. Then is the life of a minister devoted to the service and glory of Christ, when he studies carefully and constantly to preach the whole gospel of Christ, and nothing else; as our apostle did, who *kept back nothing that was profitable to the souls of men, and shunned not to declare all the counsel of God*^e; even that gospel which has Christ for its author as a divine person, and Christ for its subject as the God-man and Mediator, and which was preached by him in the days of his flesh, as it never was by any before or since; and all the doctrines of it, relating to his person, offices, and grace; such as the election of persons in him; of redemption by him; of justification by his imputed righteousness; of pardon by his blood; of atonement by his sacrifice; of regeneration and sanctification by his Spirit and grace; and of perseverance through him in faith and holiness. And then is the life of Christ's faithful ministers spent in his service, and makes for his glory; when they constantly, openly, and without reserve, affirm these things, and continue in them; when they make it the business of their lives to diffuse the favour of the knowledge of them wherever they come; as this our apostle did, who from *Jerusalem, round about to Illyricum, fully preached the gospel of Christ*^f: and when they, according to the utmost of their abilities, both from the pulpit and the press, defend the important truths of it; and contribute all they can to the spread of them far and near; by their exhortations to fellow-ministers, by their influence and example, and every other way they are capable of. As well as when they are useful to the churches and congregations where they are placed, for their edification and comfort; for the improvement of them in spiritual knowledge; and for the furtherance of faith, and the joy of it; as the apostle

^e Heb. ix. 22.^d Rom. vi. 23.^e Acts xx. 20, 27.^f Rom. xv. 19.

apostle here was persuaded would be his case with respect to the *Philippians*; see ver. 24—26.

3. Then is a minister's life directed to the honour and glory of Christ; when his conversation in the world, and in the church, is *as becomes the gospel of Christ*, he professes and preaches; when he walks uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and the rule of the divine word; when he walks as he has Christ for his pattern and example; and so behaves as to be himself *an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*²; in short, when he discharges the duties of his office faithfully, both with respect to God and man; and when all the reproaches and persecutions of men do not deter him from it; when *none of these things move him, neither does he count his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry he has received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God*³; nay, so far from it, that he rejoices that he is *counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ*¹: and thus *on his part Christ is glorified*; though *on the part of others he is evil spoken of*⁴: so that upon the whole, such an active and suffering life is *Christ*; or what makes for his glory, and the promotion of his cause and interest in the world.

Secondly, The other proposition is, that *to die is gain*; but to whom? both to Christ, and to all good men, whether ministers or private christians, that believe in him: this is not expressed, but is to be understood.

1st, The death of good men, particularly ministers of the gospel, is gain to Christ: which sense of the words best agrees with the persuasion of the apostle, that Christ would be *magnified in his body, whether by life or by death*, ver. 20. seeing, should he live longer, his busy and laborious life would be for the glory of Christ; and should he die, even soon, that would also turn to the honour of him, and so be his gain; for which reason with others, *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*¹; whether it is in the way of martyrdom, or in the common way. In the former way it was that the apostle's death was gain to Christ; for in this way he died, and thereby Christ was magnified; as he was by *Peter*, who died in a like manner; as Christ suggested he should, when he signified to him *by what death he should glorify God*²: and O how is God glorified, and Christ magnified, by his suffering servants, and his honour and interest in the world promoted thereby! as it was in the primitive times, under the persecutions of the Roman emperors, when the apostles and many others, were called to seal the doctrines of Christ with their blood; which was a great confirmation of the truth of them, and of their unfeigned faith in them; and served greatly to establish the minds of weak believers, and animate others to suffer

¹ 1 Tim iv. 12.

² 1 Peter iv. 14.

³ Acts xx. 24.

⁴ Psal. cxvi. 15.

¹ Acts v. 41.

² John xxi. 19.

suffer in the same manner; and was indeed an ordinance for the conversion of many; who seeing their zeal for Christ; their undauntedness and intrepidity; their courage and resolution; their constant profession of Christ unto death; were won over to him, and so were *his gain*: additions were made hereby to his churches; his interest was increased; his kingdom promoted and enlarged; “the blood of the martyrs being, as it was usually said, the seed of the church;” and as it was then, so it has been in some ages since, particularly at the Reformation.

Moreover, the death of the saints in the common way of dying, especially of gospel-ministers, is *gain* to Christ, and brings him honour and glory; when they continue in, and abide by his doctrines, even unto death; when they declare in their dying moments, that what they have preached to others are their only support, and continue to recommend them to them; when they speak of the sweetness they find in them; and the comfort they have from them; relate the choice experiences of divine love and grace they are favoured with; and express their strong and well-grounded hope of heaven and happiness, upon that foundation they have directed others to; and rejoice in this hope of the glory of God: as all this tends to establish and confirm those that survive, so it makes greatly for the Redeemer’s glory, which is his gain.

2dly, The death of the saints, particularly of faithful ministers of the word, is gain to themselves: and so the *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* versions, by way of explanation, add, *to me*; rendering the words, *to die*, or *if I die*, *it is or will be gain to me*. What is death! or what is there in death that can be gainful! it is a departure out of this world, as may be learnt from the context; a taking a long journey; a going to a man’s long home, never to return here again, to his house, his family, and friends; or to be in the same station and situation he now is. It is a dissolution of *the earthly house of this tabernacle*; an unpinning it, and a taking it to pieces; a disunion of the soul and body; a parting those two near and intimate companions, that have dwelt long together; *for the body without the spirit is dead*”. Death changes a man’s countenance; breaks the frame of nature; deprives of all sense and motion; and renders all the active members of the body useless; and turns comeliness into corruption, and the whole mass and bulk into rottenness, dust, and worms; and what gain can there be in all this? yea, there is much a man loses by death, and yet it is said to be *his gain* °: he parts with his dearest relations and friends; he leaves them behind; he loses all relation to them, and connection with them; he is no more the husband, father, brother, &c. he loses all knowledge of the affairs of this world; he knows
nothing

° James ii. 26. ° Το ἀποθάνειν, κερδὲς. Mori, lucrum. Quamvis moriens videar omnium rerum *jaSuram* facere. Bengelius in loc.

nothing what is done below after death; what befalls his family or his friends; whether to their advantage or disadvantage; as *Job* says, *his sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them*¹: he loses all his grandeur, in which he lived among men; all his titles of honour, and all his glory; these *shall not descend after him*² to the grave: he loses all his worldly estates, his substance, wealth, and riches; he carries nothing away with him; when *his soul is required of him*, and the question is, *whose shall these things be*³ he has enjoyed? the answer must be, whoseever they are, they are no more his; he has lost his property in them, and his possession of them: yea, dying he has lost his life, his animal life, than which nothing is dearer to a man; *skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will be give for his life*⁴: now what is that at a good man's death, that can counter-balance all this loss, or rather over-balance it, to make it gain to him? and that it is gain, notwithstanding all this loss, will appear by considering the following things:

1. What a good man, whether in a public or private capacity, is then rid of and freed from: he is at death freed from sin, and the riddance of that is gain unto him; he is now freed from obligation to punishment for it by the death of Christ; and he is clear of the guilt of it before God, and on his own conscience, by the blood of sprinkling; and he is delivered from the dominion of it by the power and grace of God, but not from the being of it; *he groans, being burdened with it*; it causes a continual conflict and war in him; and he is sometimes carried captive by it, which makes him cry out, *O wretched man that I am*⁵: but when a saint dies, he is immediately among *the spirits of just men made perfect*, and is as they; those sins and corruptions, which like the old Canaanites to *Israel*, were thorns in his side, and pricks in his eyes, are no more; the Canaanite is no more in the land, nor any pricking brier, nor grievous thorn of this sort; all are gone; and therefore death must be gain unto him. Likewise he is freed from the temptations of Satan: now though he is redeemed from him by the death of Christ, and taken out of his hands by powerful and efficacious grace; yet he is subject to his temptations, as the best of men are: he solicits them to evil; suggests bad things to them; throws in his fiery darts; is always going about to seek an advantage against them, and accuse them before God; and though he cannot devour, he studies to distress and terrify; and sometimes he does it by injecting fears of death, which keep some in bondage all their days: but when once they are removed from hence, got over *Jordan's* river, are safe landed on the shores of eternity, and are in *Abraham's* bosom, and in the arms of Jesus, they are out of his reach; he is fallen from heaven, and will never regain his place there any more; there is no tempter in

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¹ Job xiv. 21.² Psalm xlix. 17.³ Luke xii. 20.⁴ Job ii. 5.⁵ Rom. vii. 24.

the heavenly paradise. This is another branch of the believer's gain at death. Likewise, then he will no more walk in darkness, or be liable to divine desertions, and the trouble that arises from thence; nor be attended with doubts and fears, as he often is now; lest God should not be his God, and Jesus his Redeemer; lest the good work of grace should not be begun in him, or he should fall short of heaven and eternal happiness: nor will he be any more afflicted with an evil heart of unbelief, or distressed with that sin which so easily besets him; all sorrow and sighing on every occasion shall flee away, and everlasting joy be upon him: he will be no more troubled with diseases and pains of body; with outward calamities and afflictions; with reproaches and persecutions; with toil and labour of any sort, but be in perfect ease and rest; so that it may be truly said, *happy are the dead which are already dead, more than the living that are yet alive*. Yea, the body by dying will be a gainer; for at the resurrection-morn, though it has been vile, base, and contemptible, it will be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ; and though it is sown in the grave in weakness, in dishonour, in corruption, and a natural body; it will be raised in power, in glory, in incorruption, and a spiritual body; *this mortal will put on immortality*, and this corruption incorruption; so that the gain will be very great. This will be further manifest, if we consider,

2. What the believer, whether a minister of the word or a private christian, enjoys at death, and upon it: he is immediately in better company than what he leaves behind; he is at once with angels and glorified saints; and joins with them in their acts of devotion, service, and worship, in celebrating the perfections of God, and singing Hallelujahs to the Lamb: he enters directly into the presence of God; beholds the face of God, and the glory of Christ, and has fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit; and God, in all his persons, is all in all to him, and is his portion, inheritance, and *exceeding great reward*. He then is possessed of perfect knowledge, which before he had only in part; perfect knowledge of God; of Christ; of the covenant; of the mysteries of grace; of the wonders of providence; of things which his eye had never seen, nor his ear heard, nor had it entered into his heart to conceive of; and what he had seen but darkly, and known imperfectly, now he has full, clear, and distinct ideas of. Moreover, he is now arrived to complete holiness; before he was black in himself, and full of spots, but now *without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*; before he was only in part sanctified, now throughout, in every power and faculty of his soul; the work is now completely finished; and there are not the least remains of sin and corruption in him. He is now in fulness of joy, and partaking of pleasures that will never end; he had only some tastes before of joy unspeakable,

speaking, and full of glory, but now he drinks large draughts, even to satiety, of the river of divine pleasures; and where he bathes himself with unutterable delight, and with a satisfaction not to be expressed. In short, he is now received into everlasting habitations, 'into the mansions of bliss and glory in Christ's Father's house; and enters upon the *inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away*; and enjoys the *kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world*; has the crown of righteousness laid up for him, given him; and is set down with Christ upon his throne, possessed of honour, glory, immortality, and eternal life.

All this is true, and may be said of our deceased Friend and Brother, whose death has occasioned this discourse. His life, whilst it was continued, was *to Christ*; to the glory of his name, and the good of his interest; and, had it been continued longer, would doubtless have been for the service of the Redeemer's cause in general, and for the advantage of this church of Christ in particular; and for the benefit of the poor ministers of Christ, to many of whom he was greatly serviceable; and of the poor members of Christ in various places, who were assisted by him when in distressed circumstances, or injured and oppressed by their fellow-creatures; who will very sensibly feel the loss of him. But *to die* is his *gain*; who now enjoys all the above advantages of dying in the Lord; and in whose death Christ has been glorified, in supporting him in the views of it, and in carrying him so comfortably and cheerfully through the pains and agonies of it; so that Christ has been magnified in his body, both in life and in death; an account of whom I am now to give; a task, I fear, I am not equal to, so as to do justice to the memory of so great a man.

Dr JOSEPH STENNETT was the eldest son of that eminent and learned divine, Mr *Joseph Stennett*, whose character has been drawn by an able hand*; and is otherwise so well known from his excellent writings, as will preserve his memory in high esteem to late posterity. His father also, Mr *Edward Stennett*, was a faithful and laborious minister of the Baptist denomination, at *Wallingford in Berkshire*; and suffered much for nonconformity in persecuting times.

The Doctor was born in *London*, Nov. 6, 1692; and received his instructions in grammar and classical learning, from two of the ablest grammarians this age has produced; Mr *Ainsworth*, author of the *Latin Dictionary*; and Dr *Ward*, Professor of Rhetoric in *Gresham-College*. The other parts of literature, which more immediately related to his sacred profession, he cultivated under the care and direction of his learned and pious father; whom I find, on his dying-bed, giving him advice with respect to the management of his studies, and the conduct

* See the Account of his Life, prefixed to his works.

duct of his future life *. His fine natural parts, acquired knowledge, and above all the grace of God, and the eminent gifts of it bestowed upon him, and fitting him for public service, all contributed to form his character; in whom the gentleman, the scholar, the christian, and the divine, were so happily united.

When he was about fifteen years of age, he made a profession of religion, and submitted to the ordinance of baptism. And those who have either heard his pious discourses, and fervent prayers; or read his excellent sermons, which are printed; can have no doubt left upon their minds, of his having received the grace of God in truth; which is so absolutely necessary to a minister of the gospel.

In the year 1714, Providence called him into *Wales*, where he first entered upon his public ministry, and spent about four years at *Abergavenny* in *Monmouthshire*; from whence, having declined the pressing invitations of two congregations in this city, he removed to *Exeter*, not long after the dispute arose in that country concerning the doctrine of the Trinity, and while it was hot there: letters having been sent hither for advice, in the year 1719, occasioned great disturbances and animosities among Protestant-dissenting ministers of all denominations in this city. In the mean time our young divine, as he then was, exerted himself with an uncommon and distinguished zeal at *Exeter*; made a noble stand for the proper divinity of our Lord, and appeared with great lustre and brightness in the defence of it. Here he continued about sixteen years, faithfully discharging his ministerial trust, and adorning his office with a becoming life and conversation. In 1737, he was called to the pastoral care of this church, and was invested with that office *September 15th* the same year, being twenty years ago and upwards: so that he continued in the sacred work of the ministry about forty years.

In the year 1754 he received a diploma creating him Doctor in Divinity, from the University of *St Andrews* in *Scotland*, at the instance and recommendation of his Royal Highness their Chancellor; who was pleased to send it to him in a very obliging manner by his Secretary.

The Doctor's ministerial abilities and qualifications are so well known, as to want no description or commendation of them. His mein and deportment in the pulpit were graceful; his voice low, but soft and pleasant; and his language accurate and correct. He had a large compass of thought, freedom of expression, and fervency of soul, as well in preaching as prayer; and would often treat his subject in a very comprehensive view, to the great delight, as well as profit, of his hearers.

As to his religious principles, besides those concerning baptism and the sabbath, wherein he differed from many; there were others of greater importance, the doctrines of our first reformers, which he imbibed in his younger years, and abode

* See the Account of his Life, prefixed to his works, p. 34.

abode by them throughout his ministrations to the end of his life. I meet with an instance of this in a letter sent by him to the members of this church, about two months before his decease, wherein are the following expressions: "It is my great comfort in the views of eternity, that I have been led in these changeable sad times, steadily and constantly to maintain those doctrines, which I find are able to support me at such a season as this. I call my dear charge at *Exeter*, where I spent the first part of my ministry (and the Lord knows in great weakness) to testify this concerning me. I always thought, the great design of the gospel was to lay the creature in the dust, and to exalt the great redeemer of the church. I always taught both them and you to love Jesus Christ; to live upon him; and to expect your justification from him alone, his blood, his righteousness imputed, and his intercession."

With regard to his political character, he was a warm assertor and defender of the liberties of mankind; most zealously attached to the interest of his Majesty King GEORGE, and his royal house; heartily loved his friends, and all whom his Majesty esteemed as such; and was greatly offended with those, who gave into an unreasonable opposition to his ministry. His talents for public service in civil affairs, were discerned by some persons of the first rank and eminency, who were pleased to honour him with their friendship and acquaintance. And the easy access which this gave him to those in power, rendered him capable of performing many good and kind offices to multitudes of persons; which he attended to with great cheerfulness and assiduity, and frequently with happy success. So that his death is a public loss to mankind; particularly to the whole Dissenting-interest, and especially with respect to its civil and political affairs.

The disorder, which issued in his death, was a mortification in his foot, under which he laboured near six months. During which time, though it appeared very frightful and terrible to those about him; yet it was not at all startling and surprising to himself. When he was first made acquainted with it, and it was intimated to him, that he might be carried off by it in a few days; he received the summons with an amazing composure of mind. And through the whole of his affliction, he shewed such christian heroism, as astonished some who were strangers to the inward power of christianity, and obliged them to acknowledge its divine influence. His patience under those excruciating pains with which he was attended, was almost inimitable; not one murmuring or repining word being heard to drop from his lips amidst all of them. And when he had any intervals from pain, it is thought, he never so much enjoyed himself, his family, and his friends about him, in any period of his life, as he then did. This serenity and cheerfulness continued with scarce any interruption. And though

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he had not those raptures, which some have experienced on their dying beds, and in their last moments; yet his faith continued unshaken, and his hope firm and steadfast to the end. Thus your dear and faithful pastor finished his course, and fell asleep in Jesus, on the 7th instant; leaving behind him a very disconsolate widow and mournful family, all deeply affected with their great and irreparable loss.

During his illness, though at such a distance, he was not unmindful of this church, his more peculiar charge and care; as appears by his letter to you, in which he says: "Sometimes, I think, I could rejoice to talk to you once more of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and what he has done for my soul; and to recommend that dear Jesus, with all the blessings of his salvation, to your precious souls, which I have often sincerely, though poorly, done in the course of my ministry." And now, in your present circumstances, permit me to remind you of your duty, how you should behave under them. And this I shall choose to do, not in my own words, but those of your late pastor, in his letter above-mentioned; which may, I would hope, make greater and more lasting impressions on you, than any thing I am capable of saying: "My dear brethren, says he, let your love abound one towards another; *forbearing one another, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* Exercise your charity to all men, in the manner in which the gospel recommends it.—Brethren, as you would have your souls prosper, labour to maintain holy discipline in the church; attend early and constantly on the public worship of God; and cultivate the duties of religion in your families and your closets. See that the generous spirit, that has long prevailed among you for the support and encouragement of the interest of our Lord Jesus Christ, may not decay; be exemplary in your conversation; and use your kind endeavours to restore such as are departed from the truth, or by an unholy walk have brought themselves under the censure of the church." My friends, frequently read over these instructions and exhortations; and though your pastor is now dead, you will perceive that he *yet speaks* to you, with the most tender regard, for your truest and best interest.

To you, the dear relations of the deceased, his mourning widow and forrow-
ing children, and other relations and friends, what shall I say? The stroke upon you is heavy; the providence is very afflicting. The loss of such an indulgent husband, tender father, kind brother, amiable relation, and loving friend, is a great one indeed! but *sorrow not* in an extravagant and unbecoming manner, as those *without hope* of a future state, and a glorious resurrection. Remember what is your loss is his gain; and that you will see your husband, your father,
your

your brother, your relation and friend again, to greater advantage than ever you saw or enjoyed him here; for if we believe that *Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him*.*

* 1 Thes. iv. 14.

S E R M O N XXXIII.

The Superior Happiness of the Righteous Dead, to that of Living Saints.

Occasioned by the Death of the Reverend Mr JAMES FALL, of Watford,
in the County of Hertford. Preached March 25, 1763.

ECCLES. IV. 2.

Wherefore I praised the dead, which are already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive.

THE particle *wherefore* shews that these words have a connection with, and are an inference or conclusion from, those that go before, *so I returned, &c.* The meaning according to some^a, is, that the wise man, whose words these are, returned from his former thought and sentiment, expressed in the last verse of the preceding chapter, *that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works*; that is, as he explains it in the following chapter, that he should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of his labour with moderation and cheerfulness; but this he now revoked and called in, having observed the violence and oppressions that were in the world, so that a man could not enjoy the fruit of his labours with pleasure; but since *Solomon* afterwards repeats this sentiment again, it does not appear to be his sense; but rather it is, that he had returned to his former subject, the abuse of civil power and authority, observed in chap. iii. 16. *I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there; and having made a short digression from thence, he here re-assumed his former argument, and enlarged and improved upon it, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; all that occurred unto him, all that were within the compass of his knowledge, or*

* Aben Ezra in loc.

that he had got any hint of by any kind of information, by tradition, or by reading the history and annals of former times, of his own or other nations; as of the oppressions of subjects by tyrannical princes; of the widow, fatherless and stranger by unjust judges; of the poor by the rich; and of servants by cruel masters; and perhaps he may have respect to the oppressions of the children of *Israel* in *Egypt*, and in the times of the *judges*; or he saw by the Holy Ghost, as a Jewish writer^b paraphrases it, and being now under divine inspiration, he might foresee by a spirit of prophecy, the oppressions that would be in after-times, of the Jews in the captivity of *Babylon*, and in the times of the *Maccabees*; and the persecutions of the churches of Christ in gospel-times, by *Rome*, pagan and papal; and all the injuries that have been or will be done to them by anti-christ, by the man of sin and son of perdition; *the man of the earth*, who ere long will no more oppress^c: it is truly observed by the wise man, that all those oppressions were done under the sun; for there are none done above it, none in heaven, none beyond the grave; *there the wicked cease from troubling^d, and there the weary be at rest*: the wise man goes on with his observations, and beheld the tears of such as were oppressed; which poured forth from their eyes, and ran down their cheeks in great plenty, because of their oppressions; which were all they could do, since they had no helper. The word is in the singular number, *the tear^e*, as if one continued stream flowed from their eyes like a torrent, or as if the source of nature was exhausted, and the fountain of tears dried up through excessive weeping, so that scarce another tear could drop, or that it was as much as could be, that another should fall: *and they had no comforter*; none to speak a comfortable word to them under their oppressions, to do any thing for them to alleviate their sorrow, or to help them out of their trouble: that is, they had no human comforter, that either could or durst relieve or release them; which is a very deplorable case, and was the case of the Messiah, as personated by *David^f*, and of the church, as described, by *Jeremiah^g*: the people of God indeed, under the oppressions of sin, Satan and the world, have God to be their comforter; he is *the God of all comfort* to them, who comforts them in all their tribulation: one of the names of Christ is the *consolation* of *Israel*, whom good old *Simeon* was waiting for; the holy Spirit is another comforter, sent by the Father and Son; and it is the will of God that the ministers of the gospel should speak comfortably to the saints, by assuring them that their sins are pardoned, full satisfaction is made for them, and their warfare accomplished; otherwise they have no human comforters, at least at times; or they are such who are like *Job's* comforters, miserable ones: and it is further observed, that on the side of the

oppressors

^b Jarchi in loc.

^c Psalm x. 18.

^d Job iii. 17.

^e רחמת Lachryma, Montanus, Cocceius, Rambachius.

^f Psalm lxxix. 20.

^g Lam. i. 9.

oppressors there was power; to crush them and keep them under, and hinder and deter others from helping and relieving them. Such wicked men *David* had observed in *great power*, and *spreading themselves like a green bay tree*^b; when on a sudden they came to nothing, having abused their power to the hurt of others, and in the issue to their own hurt: and it is here added, *but they had no comforter*; that is, not the oppressors, but the oppressed; which is repeated, to observe the aggravated affliction of the oppressed, and the cruelty of their oppressors; and not so much for the confirmation of the assertion, as to excite attention and to raise pity and commiseration in the breasts of others.

Now from all this the royal preacher deduces the inference or conclusion in the text, *wherefore I praised the dead*, &c. not that he composed panegyrics upon them, and raised encomiums upon their persons, characters, actions, virtues and merits; but he pronounced the dead happier than the living; he judged in his own mind, and concluded within himself, and declared it to others, as his real sentiment, that the state of the dead was preferable to the state of the living, and that the one was more eligible than the other; because the one was free from oppression, and the other under it: and this subject I have chosen to treat of, for the relief of your minds under this mournful providence which has brought us together, and which I shall attempt to do in the following method;

- I. Inquire who are meant by the *dead* and *living*, here opposed to each other, and of whom the wise man forms a comparative judgment.
- II. Observe the preferableness of the one to the other, that is, of the dead to the living.
- III. Shew more particularly in what the preferableness, or superiority of the one to the other lies.

I. I shall inquire who are meant by the *dead* and *living*: by the *dead* are meant not such who are so in a figurative and improper sense, but literally and properly; our Lord uses the word *dead* in both senses. in one passage^c; to a certain person, who proposed to be a follower of him, but first desired leave to bury his father, he said, *follow me*, pursue the resolution made, and attend to the service included in it; *let the dead bury their dead*: that is, let the dead, in a figurative sense, the dead in sin, bury those that are corporally dead: and some are dead in a moral sense while they live corporally; he or she *that liveth in pleasures*, in sinful lusts and pleasures, whose whole life is a continued series of sin, are *dead* while they *live*^d; and this is the case of all unregenerate men, and of the Lord's people before conversion, even until they are quickened by the spirit and grace

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of

^a Psalm xxxvii. 35.^b Matt. viii. 22.^c 1 Tim. v. 6.

of God; *you hath been quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins*¹; now though those who are dead in sin, many of them, be more happy than living saints as to outward things; *they are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men; — their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish: these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world, who increase in riches*²; yet the wise man would never commend such persons or pronounce them happy, and prefer them and their state to godly persons with all their troubles. Some are dead in a religious sense, while alive, are dead to a profession of religion they have made; they have had *a name to live*, professed themselves to be spiritually alive, made so fair a shew, and gave such proof and evidence of a spiritual life, that they were judged by others, even by churches, to be living christians, and became famous for the *life of godliness*, when they had only the *form*, and denied the *power* of it; now such as these after a time drop their profession of religion, depart from the faith, and become apostates, and so are *twice dead*, as the apostle *Jude* expresses it³; first dead in sin, as other unregenerate men be, and then dead to the profession they have made of religion: and now though these also, as to their outward circumstances, may be more happy than those who are truly alive in a spiritual sense; since, by their apostacy, they may escape the troubles and persecutions, they that live godly in Christ Jesus are liable to; yet *Solomon* would never give such apostates the preference to real saints.

There are some that are dead in a civil sense, with respect to calamities, distresses and afflictions which attend them in this life; and which may be called, and are called, *death*, and they represented as dead. The captivity of the Jews in *Babylon* is called a death⁴, in which God had no pleasure; rather, it was agreeable to him, that they should *turn* from their idolatries, and reform from their sins, and *live* comfortably in their own land again. The sore and severe afflictions and persecutions endured by the apostles and followers of Christ, go by the name of *so great a death*; and the apostle *Paul*, is particularly said to be *in deaths oft*⁵; that is, he was frequently in danger of his life, and exposed to death, had the sentence of it in him, and despaired of life; but now such as these, are *the living* in our text; the unhappy persons, to whom the dead are opposed and preferred. It remains that by *the dead*, must be meant such that are so in a literal and corporeal sense, whose souls and bodies are really separated from each other; in which separation of soul and body death lies: *The body without the spirit is dead*⁶; and in this sense all men must die and do die; and such are intended here, such that have been dead some time past, are laid in their graves, of whom there is a certainty that they are dead; not merely given

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¹ Ephes. ii. 1.² Psalm lxxiii. 5, 7, 12.³ Ver. 12.⁴ Esai. xviii. 32.⁵ 2. Cor. i. 9, 10. and xi. 23.⁶ James ii. 26.

up for dead, as *Isaac* was by *Abram*, from the time he was ordered to offer him; and who *from the dead received him in a figure*; nor supposed to be dead as the apostle *Paul*, when stoned at *Lystra*, but rose up alive in the midst of the disciples; but who are truly, thoroughly and certainly dead, in a literal and proper sense; which seems to be the meaning of this unusual phrase, *already dead*.

But here we must distinguish between persons, and persons that are dead; the wicked dead cannot be meant; they die as other men, nor can *wickedness deliver those that are given unto it*: Notwithstanding their daring insolence and impiety, they are obliged to submit to death, to which they are appointed; such that say, *we have made a covenant with death, and with hell are at agreement*; and so promise themselves they shall escape the one and the other; their *covenant with death shall be disannulled, and their agreement with hell shall not stand*; though they live ever so long, they die at last, and die unhappy creatures; *the sinner being an hundred years old*, that is, at his death, shall be *accursed*; and therefore these cannot be the men commended for happiness in our text: the wicked when they die are cast into hell; *the rich man* in the parable, as soon as dead, *in hell lift up his eyes being in torments*, in everlasting burnings, the smoke of which torments ascend for ever and ever; *their worm dies not, their fire is not quenched*; their state is fixed and unalterable; there is an impassable gulph between them and the righteous, among whom they never will have a place, and therefore cannot be the happy men here designed; but the righteous dead, whose death *Balaam* desired to die, well knowing that such are happy in death: These die as well as the wicked; there is, says *Solomon*, *a just man that perishes in his righteousness*, not eternally, but corporally; *the righteous perishes*, that is, dies, *and no man layeth it to heart*; or is concerned at it. Good men, even the best of men, die; those whose lives are most desirable, and are the most useful. *Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?* They do not, they die as other men; but are happier at death; *blest are the dead*, not the dead in common; but that *die in the Lord*.

By *the living that are yet alive*, we are to understand, such that are alive when others are dead, and who are attended with various afflictions, distresses and troubles; and particularly under the oppression of wicked men in power; of whom it is as much as can be said that they are alive, they are just alive, and that is all; which seems to be the meaning of this uncommon expression. And this is more especially true of living saints, who live spiritually, live godly in Christ Jesus, and suffer persecution in some shape or another for his name-sake: these may be said to *die daily*, and be in continual jeopardy of their lives; and

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* Eccles. viii. 8.

* Isai. xxviii. 15, 18.

* Isai. lxx. 20.

* Eccles. viii. 15.

* Isai. lvii. 1.

* Rev. xiv. 13.

were it not for the good hope, through grace, they have of happiness in another world, would be *of all men most miserable*¹. See at large the description of them, in 2 Cor. iv. 8—12. and to these the righteous dead are preferred: which is the next thing to be considered; namely, to observe,

II. The preference of the dead to the living: *I praised the dead*, &c. The righteous dead, who, after death, are much more happy than living saints. These words indeed are generally understood, as spoken according to human sense and judgment, without any regard to the glory and happiness of the future state; as that the dead must be preferred to the living, when the rest and quiet of the one, and the miseries and troubles of the other, are observed; and which seems to be confirmed by the following verse; but I chuse to improve the words in the former sense. Death itself, and simply considered, is no happiness; and if it was, it could not be special and peculiar happiness to some, because it is common to all; high and low, rich and poor, wise and foolish, good and bad, all die; *the grave is the house appointed for all living*²; besides, it is the fruit and effect of sin, *sin entered into the world, and death by sin*³: Sin opened the door at which death came in; it was threatened in case of sin, and as a punishment for it, and is the wages and just demerit of it; and therefore can never be an happiness in itself; add to this, that it is a dissolution of a man, a dissolving the earthly house of his tabernacle, an unpinning and taking of it down, a breaking of the whole frame of nature, a disuniting the constituent parts of it, soul and body; and though it is not an annihilation of man, a bringing him to nothing, yet it is a reduction of him to his original dust: man was made of the dust of the earth, and at death he returns to it again, which is an humbling and a mortifying consideration to him; he cannot well brook it. Self-preservation is a principle implanted in all living creatures, and so in man; human nature is reluctant to death, and is not agreeable to it. Satan most truly said, *Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life*⁴: it is the last thing he chooses to part with; he is willing rather to part with any thing than that; *what man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good*⁵? Every man desires life, and a long life, especially to live in health, prosperity, and success; even the human nature of Christ was reluctant to death; the thought of it was disagreeable, and he prayed for deliverance from it; *Father, save me from this hour*⁶: indeed his death was an uncommon one, it was in the room and stead of others, of sinful men, and was attended with the wrath of God, and curses of the law for their sins he bore; so, that it is no wonder, that his human nature should shudder at it, when left to itself, and he should say,

¹ 2. Cor. xv. 19.

² Job xxx. 23.

³ Romi. v. 12.

⁴ Job ii. 4.

⁵ Psalm xxxiv. 12.

John. xii. 27.

say, *O! my Father; if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*^e; nevertheless it shews, that even sinless human nature is reluctant to death; and therefore death, simply considered, must be much more disagreeable to sinful, human nature. There must be something more than is in nature to make death agreeable, or desirable, or to cause a man to look at it with pleasure, and to carry him through it without fear; even that of being with Christ for evermore, which is better, and is judged to be better by a believer, than to be in this sinful world: death therefore, relatively considered, or as it refers to good men, is only an happiness; death to them is no penal evil, death, as a punishment, being endured by Christ for them; the curse is taken away from death, Christ being made a curse for them; the sting of it, which is sin, is taken away by him, and death is become a blessing to the saints; it is reckoned in the inventory of their good things, *death is yours*^f; and they are pronounced blessed persons: *blessed are the dead that die in the Lord*, that die in union with him; there is a secret union to him that took place in eternity, when the elect were *chosen in Christ*, even before the foundation of the world; and there is an open union to Christ in conversion, which is the manifestation of the former; the bond of which is the everlasting love of Christ, which can never be dissolved; death cannot separate from his love, it dissolves the union between soul and body, but not the union between Christ and his people; and hence they shall live with him soul and body to all eternity, and therefore must be happy; as all are that die in the exercise of grace on him: the death of such is in a remarkable and distinguished manner a blessing; *these all died in faith*^g, it is said of some; so died David; his last words, his dying words were, *be hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my salvation*^h. And so died the apostle Paul; *The time of my departure, says he, is at hand*^k; *henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day*. This is dying comfortably and happily, to die in the faith of covenant-interest and of eternal glory: and so it is to die in hope of it; the hope of the profane, of the hypocrite, and self-righteous man, is as the giving up of the ghost; it is cut off like a spider's web; and if it lives so long as they do, it dies with them, and is of no use at death unto them; but *the righteous hath hope in his death*^l; whose hope is fixed on Christ and his righteousness, by which he is justified and denominated a righteous man: this is exercised by him in his dying moments, and is of use to him then; and he rejoices in hope of the glory of God. They that die saints and righteous persons are the only happy at death, or to whom death is an happiness; *precious in the sight of the Lord is the*

^e Matt. xxvi. 39.^l 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.^f 1 Cor. iii. 22.^g 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.^h Heb. xi. 13.^k Prov. xiv. 32.

the death of his saints^m; whom God has sanctified or set apart for himself in election, whom Christ has sanctified or made atonement for by his blood and sacrifice, and whom the holy Spirit has sanctified by his grace: and though there is something in death which is disagreeable, and makes the nearest relatives of the deceased, and who have the greatest affection for them, willing to bury them out of their sight, as *Abraham* did his beloved *Sarah*; yet there is that in the death of saints which is *precious* to the Lord, which he takes pleasure in; as a man that takes a walk in his garden; and spying a beautiful full-blown flower, he crops it, and puts it into his bosom; so the Lord takes his walks in his gardens, the churches, and gathers his lilies; souls, fully ripe for glory, and with delight takes them to himself. It is the death of the righteous man that is an happiness; *Let me die the death of the righteous*, says *Balaam*: it is always well with them in time, and to all eternity; it is well with them at death; *they are taken away*, not only from present evil, but *from evil to come*, and are immediately possessed of everlasting good; for the *righteous go into life eternal*ⁿ. The end of such is different from that of others; and therefore the above wicked person said, *let my last end be like his*, the righteous man's; *the end* of such a man is *peace*^p; he goes out of the world with peace, serenity and tranquility of mind, and enters into eternal peace; he receives *the end* of his faith, what his *faith* has been looking and waiting for, *the salvation of his soul*^q; he has his *fruit unto holiness* now, and his *end, everlasting life*^r hereafter. But I proceed,

III. To shew more particularly, wherein lies the preferableness and superior happiness of the righteous dead to living saints.

First, It lies in what the righteous dead are delivered from; and this is what the wise man has chiefly respect unto; he had considered the oppressions, tears and uncomfortable condition of many in the present state of life, and observed the dead were free from all this, and therefore pronounced them the more happy persons. And,

1st, The righteous dead are entirely free from sin, the source of all trouble and distress in life; and when that is no more, there will be no more sorrow. What the apostle says of those, who in a spiritual sense are said to be dead to sin, is true of the righteous dead in a natural sense; he *that is dead is freed from sin*^s, even from the very being of it; they are not only delivered from the guilt, and any return of it, but from that itself: living saints are delivered from the guilt of sin through Christ bearing sin for them; and from sensible guilt in their consciences, through the application of the blood of Christ, which purges their consciences from dead works, the load and guilt of them, and their hearts from

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^m Psalm cxvi. 15.

ⁿ Numb. xxiii. 10.

^p Matt. xxv. 46.

^q Psalm xxxvii. 37.

^r 1 Peter i. 9.

^s Rom. vi. 22.

^t Rom. vi. 7.

an evil conscience sprinkled with his blood; which speaks peace and pardon, and so better things than the blood of *Abel*; but then as fresh sins are committed, new guilt is contracted, which requires a repeated application of the blood of sprinkling; but this is not the case of the righteous dead, they sin no more, and have no more renewed guilt, and need no more renewed discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy. They are also not only free from the dominion of sin, but from any attempt made upon them to regain it; it is promised, and it is true of living saints, men regenerated by the spirit and grace of God, that *sin shall not have dominion over them*, and it has not; because they are not under the law, the law of sin and death, exercising its authority over them, but they are under grace, as a governing principle in them, which *reigns through righteousness unto eternal life*¹; yet notwithstanding, such at times is the power and prevalence of indwelling sin, that it brings them *into captivity to the law of sin*²: but it has no such power over the righteous dead, for it has not so much as a place in them; they are *the spirits of just men made perfect*, not only perfectly righteous through Christ's righteousness, but perfectly holy in themselves; they are without the spot or wrinkle of sin, or any thing like it; there is not a Canaanite in the land, not a single lust and corruption in their hearts: but not so is it with living saints; they are not free from sin in such sense; they are far from a sinless perfection in themselves; this has always been disclaimed by saints on earth in all ages, as by *Job*, *David*, *Solomon*, the apostle *Paul*, and others; and, says the beloved disciple, *if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*³: their complaints, confessions and prayers, abundantly confirm the same; *they groan being burdened* with the weight of indwelling sin, and will, as long as they are in *this tabernacle*⁴; the breakings forth of indwelling sin in them, their actual transgressions and iniquities, are *as an heavy burden, too heavy* for them⁵: but saints in heaven are rid of such incumbrances; those burdens are fallen off from them, and they will feel them no more; now sins of heart and life; are like the Canaanites to the Israelites, pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides, which give great pain and distress. Perhaps it was something of this kind: the apostle *Paul* felt when he complains of *a thorn in the flesh*⁶: but in the heavenly state there will be no *pricking briar*, nor *grieving thorn to all the house of Israel*⁷, or family of God there: sin breaks the peace of the people of God now, so that they have *no rest* in their bones because of it; yea, their bones are broken by it, and the *joys of salvation* taken away through it; and though it cannot dissolve the union between God and them, it interrupts their sensible communion with him, and causes him to withdraw his gracious presence from them; *your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from*

¹ Rom. vi. 14. and v. 21.² Rom. vii. 23.³ 1 John i. 8.⁴ 2 Cor. v. 4.⁵ Psalm xxxviii. 2, 3.⁶ 2 Cor. xii. 7.⁷ Ezek. xxviii. 24.

from you, that he will not bear^b. Sin makes this world a weary land to faints, and all their solace and comfort is, that *Christ is as the shadow of a great rock to them in it*; and speaks a word in season to their weary souls, inviting and encouraging them to come to him for spiritual rest, where they find it: their inbred corruptions are to them like the daughters of *Heth to Isaac and Rebekah*, make them weary of their lives; but the righteous dead are no more harassed with them, but are entered where the weary are at rest, even into that rest, or sabbatific, which remains for the people of God. Sin now causes a war within them, where there are, as it were, a company of two armies, *the law in the members, and the law in the mind*, warring against each other; the flesh and spirit, sin and grace, lusting the one against the other, so that they cannot do the things they would; but with the righteous dead this warfare is accomplished, and they serve the Lord without any interruption, and do his will as it is done by the angels in heaven.

2dly, The righteous dead are delivered from the temptations of Satan: living faints, as well as they, are redeemed out of his hands by Christ, who has taken the prey from the mighty, and delivered the lawful captive, and has led captivity captive, Satan and his principalities and powers, who led his people captive at their will: and they are taken out of his hands at conversion; when the strong man armed is dispossessed of his palace by him that is stronger than he, his armour taken away, and his spoils divided; and they are turned from the power of Satan unto God, and translated into the kingdom of Christ; but then they are not freed from his temptations, even the greatest faint and strongest believer; the apostle *Peter*, was sifted by him as wheat is sifted, and the apostle *Paul* had a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him; yea, Christ, the Son of God, in our nature here on earth, *was tempted in all things, like unto his people, excepting sin*. Satan solicits good men to sin; he provoked *David* to number *Israel*, contrary to the mind and will of God; he finds something in them to work upon, the corruption of their nature, which he could not find in Christ; he knows what sin is most prevalent in them, and they are inclined unto, and he baits his hook, or frames his temptations agreeable thereunto; these are some of his crafty wiles, and cunning devices and stratagems, faints are not altogether ignorant of: he has great power and influence on the spirits of men; he not only works in the children of disobedience, and puts it into the heart of *Judas* to betray his Lord, and into the hearts of *Ananias and Sapphira* to lie against the holy Ghost, but he can suggest things blasphemous and atheistical into the minds of good men; as to call in question the being of a God, and the authority of the scriptures, the truth of christianity, and the like; which are

Some

^b *Isai*, lix. 2.

some of those fiery darts he casts at them, and into them, which give them great pain and uneasiness, and sorely grieve them: he disturbs them in religious exercises, not only in private, but in public; he comes among the sons of God when they present themselves before the Lord to wait upon him, and worship him; and he not only catches away the word preached from a careless and ignorant hearer, but diverts the minds of good men to other objects, from a close application to the word, and hinders their profit and edification; and therefore they have need to pray that they enter not into temptation, as not to be able to watch in divine service with Christ one hour: he goes about to and fro in the earth, and observes the sins and failings of God's people, picks up all he can against them, and then accuses them before God; as he did *Jeshua* the high-priest, who had fallen into sin, though Satan met with a severe reprimand for it from Christ, the advocate and intercessor, and *Jeshua* was acquitted and discharged: he often possesses the minds of saints with fears; he sifts them, being suffered, as wheat is sifted, and throws the chaff of corruption uppermost, that they cannot discern the true seed of grace in them; and so fear the work of God was never begun upon them, and that they are hypocrites, and have only the form of godliness, and not the power of it; and that they shall one day perish through their own sins and Satan's temptations; and many of them, by his suggestions, *are through fear of death all their life-time subject to bondage*. But this is not the case of the righteous dead; they are free from all the temptations, solicitations and suggestions of this enemy of souls; they are out of his reach, he is under their feet, and bruised there; he is cast out of heaven, and will never be admitted there any more. There was a tempter and a subtil one in the garden of *Eden*; but there is none in the garden of God, in the paradise above. Satan indeed, as soon as he fell, was cast out of heaven, and laid in chains, though suffered to walk about in them on our earth to tempt the children of men; but ere long he will not only be bound by the mighty angel, and cast into the bottomless pit, and there be shut up for a thousand years, and then for a time let loose once more to deceive the nations; but he will be laid hold upon again, and cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, to be tormented for ever and ever; he will never regain his place in heaven more: so that the saints will be clear of him, and every annoyance from him to all eternity.

3dly, The righteous dead are delivered from all darkness and desertions the living saints are liable to, and therefore are preferable to them. Now good men are not only, like *Heman* the *Ezrahite*, laid in darkness, and in the deeps of afflictive providences, but are often in darkness of soul; walk in darkness, and see no light; have no clear evidence of their interest in the love of God, and in the covenant of his grace, nor of their interest in Christ, his blood, righ-

æourfulness and sacrifice; nor sight of the spirit of grace in their hearts; are without the light of spiritual peace and joy, without sensible communion with God and the light of his countenance: he hides himself from them, and they cannot see him; their beloved withdraws himself from them, and is gone, and they seek him in the word and ordinances, and cannot find him. But now the saints that are dead and gone to heaven, they see the face of God, and have unclouded views of him; they see him *face to face* in the clearest manner they possibly can; they see him *as he is*, so far as finite creatures are capable of; their *sun no more goes down*, neither does their *moon withdraw itself*; for the Lord is their *everlasting light*, and the *days of their mourning are ended*.

4thly, The righteous dead are delivered from all doubts and fears, misgivings of heart and unbelief, to which living saints are subject in the present state; they have their fears lest God should not be their God, or that he has forsaken them, and will return no more, or that they have not the true work of grace upon them, and shall come short of eternal glory and happiness at last: the language of their unbelieving hearts sometimes is, *Will the Lord cast off for ever? Will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* Unbelief reads all this in the affirmative, which causes great distress and trouble; but in heaven there is not the least doubt of the love of God, no fear of being cast off by him, nor any disbelief of interest in him, or the least jealousy of change of state and condition for evermore.

5thly, The righteous dead are free from all toil and labour, trials and afflictions of whatsoever kind, which are endured in this life, in which their superior happiness lies; *blessed are the dead which die in the Lord—they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them*: they rest from toil and labour of body, are not obliged to get their bread with the sweat of their brow, as living saints do; and from toil and labour of the mind, by frequent reading, deep meditation and constant study, the employment of such who labour in the word and doctrine, which at death is at an end; and from all diseases and disorders living saints labour under. In the other state there are no more pain, no more sickness, no more sorrow, and also no more penury and want, to which good men are here sometimes subject; no more tribulations of any kind which saints have in the world, and through which they pass till they enter the kingdom, and then they leave them; no more reproaches and persecutions, which they that live godly in Christ Jesus here must expect, and do share in. In the heavenly state, where the righteous dead are, neither *the sun* nor *beat of perfection* light upon

* Rev. xii. 4. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 John iii. 2. Isai. lx. 20.

4 Psalm lxxvii. 7-9.

6 Rev. xiv. 13.

upon them, for the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes^f.

Secondly, The superior happiness of the righteous dead to that of living saints lies in what they enjoy there; the best things are reserved unto the last; saints have, as Lazarus had, their evil things here, but their good things hereafter, such as eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of; they are beyond conception and expression: it cannot be said, how great is that goodness which God has laid up, and is in reserve for them that fear him and trust in him, and which they enjoy in another world.

1st, The saints in heaven have better company than the saints on earth; the righteous are immediately with Christ, which is far better than to be in this world; their spirits, as soon as separated from their bodies, are with him in paradise; and where they are for ever with him, beholding his glory; and enjoying uninterrupted communion with him, and with his Father and the blessed Spirit. Indeed the living saints on earth have sometimes the presence of Christ with them; and it is known by themselves, and perceived by others, that they have been with Jesus: but then they complain that he is as a wayfaring man, that tarryeth but for a night; he soon withdraws himself, and is gone, and their souls faint within them. They have fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, but then it is of a short duration. Whereas the saints in heaven are always in the presence of God, and behold his face for evermore. They also there enjoy the company and conversation of angels; here indeed the saints come to an innumerable company of them, who wait upon them, are guards about them, and convoy their spirits at death to Abraham's bosom. But in the blissful state they are always with them, and join in the same divine service of praising God and glorifying him. The righteous dead are immediately with perfect saints, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; with patriarchs, prophets and apostles, and with all good men who have departed this life from the beginning of the world. Here living saints, like righteous Lot, are vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; as were David when he sojourned in Mesbec, and the prophet Isaiah when he dwelt among a people of unclean lips; and good men, even in the churches, have such in fellowship with them as are often a grief unto them, by reason of their unhappy tempers and disagreeable conversation; of whom the apostle says, *I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ*^g. But in heaven there is none to disturb by their words or actions; *The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*^h.

^f Rev. vii. 16, 17.^g Phil. iii. 18.^h Psalm i. 5.

2dly, The employment of the righteous after death is superior to that which living saints are engaged in, even to that which is most sacred and spiritual. Prayer is the work of saints on earth, and is both pleasant and profitable; but it supposes want, implies imperfection, and is attended sometimes *with groanings which cannot be uttered*: but prayer ceases in heaven; there is no need of it there: the preaching and hearing the word, administration of, and attendance on ordinances, are a principal part of the business of the people of God here; but in the future state there is no need of the *sun and moon* of gospel-ordinances, for *the glory of the Lord lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*. The work of the saints in heaven is praise; their constant employment is singing the songs of electing, redeeming, sanctifying and persevering grace.

3dly, The joys of the righteous dead vastly exceed the joys of the living; saints now have joy in the holy Ghost, and peace in believing: they can at times rejoice in Christ, and in hope of the glory of God; but these joys are often interrupted by indwelling-sin, the temptations of Satan, divine desertions, and the troubles of the world. But at death a saint enters into the joy of his Lord, and his joy is full, and always continues; *everlasting joy is on his head: and sorrow and sighing flee away*; he is immediately in the presence of God, *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore*: so that upon the whole, the state of the dead in Christ is better than the state of living believers in this world; death is a gain to them, and better is the day of their death to them, than the day of their birth, since the one is the outlet of those troubles, which the other is an inlet into; and however desirable the lives of saints, and particularly of ministers of the gospel, may be to their fellow-Christians, it is more to their advantage to be removed hence: you may think, that it was more needful for you, that your late pastor should abide in the flesh, for your furtherance and joy of faith; but it is better for him to be where he is; he has done all that work which it was the pleasure of God he should do among you, and it is your duty to submit to the will of God concerning him; of whom something may be expected to be said.

The Reverend Mr JAMES FALL was one of the fruits of my ministry, under which it pleased God to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him; he was baptized upon a profession of his faith, and received a member of the church under my care, in *January 1730*, upwards of thirty-three years ago. After some time it was thought he had a gift fitting him for the public ministry of the word; and it was accordingly tried, judged and approved of by the church, and he was regularly sent forth as a minister of the gospel; and in a little time after, this church being without a pastor, sent for him to minister to them, and approving of

of his ministrations, gave him a call to take the pastoral care of them; in which office he was ordained, July 11th, 1735. So that he hath been almost twenty-eight years pastor of this church; what work God has done by him among you, in the conversion of sinners, and in the edification of your souls, you are the best judges; this however must be said of him, that he abode by the truths of the gospel he first received and preached; and that his conversation, has been becoming his character, as a christian and a minister, being holy, harmless and inoffensive; he had a good report both of them that are without, and of them that are within. The disorder[†] which issued in his death, was of such a nature as rendered speaking difficult to him, and in a good measure unintelligible; but he was often heard to say, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; and declared he had no fear of death, and of what follows, but of the pangs of death; and some of his last words were, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief*; and at the same time, expressed his full satisfaction as to his eternal state. Thus died your pastor, and now sleeps in the arms of Jesus. And let me exhort you, this church of Christ, to keep together, and keep up the worship and service of God among you; consult together and unite in your counsels for mutual good; be frequent and fervent in prayer, that God would give you a pastor in due time, to feed you with knowledge and understanding; let brotherly love be cultivated and continued with you; live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. And as for you his dear offspring, for whom your parent had the most tender concern, for your temporal, spiritual and eternal welfare; remember the counsel and advice he frequently gave you for your good, walk as you had him for an example; tread in his steps, and serve your father's God, and it will be well with you. And what has been said upon the subject treated of, on this occasion, may serve to make death familiar to every believer here, and take off the dread and terror of it, which often possess the minds of real christians; for if the dead are more happy than the living, why should we be afraid to die, since it will be greatly to our advantage, and give us a preference to those that survive us? this may serve to cause us to breathe after that heavenly state, and choose rather to be *absent from the body, that we might be present with the Lord*, and even to rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and it should be our great concern, that *whether we live any longer space of time in this world, we live unto the Lord*, to his honour and glory; or *whether we die in a short time, having done our work, we die unto the Lord*, to live with him to all eternity.

[†] A Quinsey.

S E R M O N XXXIV.

The Saints Desire after Heaven and a future State of Happiness.*

Occasioned by the Death of Mrs. ELIZABETH GILL. Preached Oct. 21, 1764.

H E B R E W S XI. 16.

But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.

THE apostle begins this chapter, with a definition of faith, which he describes, as *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*: and illustrates this definition, by instances and examples, in the patriarchs, both before and after the flood; and he first instances in *Abel*, the immediate offspring of the first man, who by faith offered up a more excellent sacrifice, than his brother *Cain*: he then proceeds to *Enoch*, who by faith, was translated, that he should not see death; and received a testimony from God, that he pleased him by his faith, he next goes on to *Noah*, the heir and preacher of the righteousness of faith: who being warned of God, of unseen things, by faith prepared an ark, for the saving of himself and family, from a flood threatened to drown the whole world. *Abraham* and his posterity are next taken notice of, on which instance, the apostle enlarges, and observes, that God called this good man from his native country, to go to another, he was afterwards to possess; and that he by faith obeyed and went forth, not knowing whither he went; and that he, with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, dwelt in tabernacles in it, and confessed themselves pilgrims and strangers; and though they had an opportunity of returning to the country from whence they came, were unmindful of it. *Abraham* never returned to it; and when he sent his servant to take from thence a wife for his son *Isaac*, he charged him not to lay himself under any obligation to bring his son thither, for both he and they had another and better country in view; *but now they desire a better country, &c.* which refers, not to the time of the apostle's writing; for then they were in heaven,

* This Sermon was preached by the Doctor, the first time of his appearing in public, after the decease of his beloved wife, Mrs. ELIZABETH GILL, who departed this Life, October 10, 1764, in the 68th Year of her Age.

heaven, in this better country, but to the time when they dwelt in tabernacles in a strange land; when they confessed themselves strangers and pilgrims there, and shewed no regard to the country they came out of, their hearts being intent upon another and better country.

All this may be applied to any and every believer, in any and every period of time; they, as *Abraham*, are called from their native country, out of the world, and from the men of it, among whom they were born, and had their conversation in time past, and are bid to be separate from them, and have no fellowship with them; are exhorted and encouraged to forsake their own people, and their father's house; and under the influence of divine grace, do leave all, and follow Christ, as the apostles did. And as the patriarchs dwelt in tabernacles on earth, so they dwell in bodies, called *houses of clay*, which *have their foundation in the dust; earthly houses of this tabernacle*; which are easily unpinned, and soon taken down and dissolved. The apostle *Peter* makes use of this metaphor, with respect to his own body: *I think it meet*, says he, *as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle*; 2 Peter i. 13, 14. and as the patriarchs confessed themselves strangers and pilgrims on earth, so do those who are effectually called by the grace of God. They own themselves to be strangers and sojourners here as all their fathers were; that their state on earth is a state of pilgrimage, and their time in it, a time of sojourning, which they pass in fear: and hence the apostle *Peter* addresses such, and exhorts them, *as pilgrims and strangers, to abstain from fleshly lusts*, 1 Peter ii. 11. And these, though they have an opportunity of returning to their former state and manner of life; nor are temptations to it wanting from their carnal and unbelieving hearts, like the Israelites, who in a fit of unbelief, were for making themselves a captain, and returning to *Egypt*, and their carnal appetites, hankering after the provisions there; and from Satan, who endeavours to draw them back, by the snares and allurements of the world; yet notwithstanding such are the impressions and influences of divine grace upon them, that they mind and favour spiritual and heavenly things, and are unmindful of their former country, and earthly things; and such is the power of divine grace, by which they are kept, that they *are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul*, Heb. x. 39. but they desire, seek after, and look for, a better, even an heavenly country; this world is not their home, their place of rest; here they have no continuing city, but they seek one to come, their citizenship is in heaven, and their hearts are there.

What I shall further do with these words, will be to observe the following things.

- I. The fairs future state of happiness, as described by *a country, a better country, a heavenly one*, and by *a city prepared for them*.
- II. Their particular regard unto it, they desire it, seek after it, and look for it; all which are expressed in the text and context.
- III. The notice God takes of such persons, and what is said of him with respect to them; he is *not ashamed to be called their God*; and that for this reason, because *he has prepared for them a city*.

I. The fairs future happiness, is described by *a country, a better country, an heavenly one*, and by *a city prepared*. And on this I shall chiefly dwell, only say some few things to the other two observations.

1. The fairs future happiness is described by *a country*, for so it is expressed without an epithet, in *ver. 14. they that say such things, declare plainly, that they seek a country*. And so it may be called, both with respect to a country in general, and to the country and land of *Canaan* in particular.

(1.) To a country in general, which is large, ample, and spacious. It is indeed sometimes only called *an house, which is eternal in the heavens*, 2 Cor. v. 1. But then it is such an house, which consists of divers apartments, of *many mansions*, or dwelling-places, *John xiv. 2.* Now, for the many that are ordained to eternal life; for the many Christ came to give his life a ransom for; for the many for the remission of whose sins his blood was shed; for the many that are justified by his righteousness; and for the many sons that are adopted into the family of God, and are brought to glory. It is also called *a city*, as in the text, and in *ver. 10.* which is an assemblage of houses, and which are fit for men of business, and of figure, and of fashion, and worth and dignity to dwell in; and such the fairs are. And at other times, it is called *a country*, as here and in *ver. 14.* And frequently *a kingdom*, as being large and capacious, sufficient to contain all the fairs that have been from the beginning of the world, and will be to the end of it. It is sometimes represented as *a far country*; *a certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and return*, Luke xix. 12. the nobleman is Christ, the *far country* he went into, is heaven; his going thither respects his ascension to heaven; his end in going, was to receive his mediatorial kingdom, more visibly and gloriously; for at his ascension he was made and declared Lord and Christ. And his return, designs his second coming, when he will call his servants to an account for the talents he has entrusted them with in his absence. Now heaven is called *a far country*; not only with respect to wicked men, to whom indeed, it is, and ever will be a far country; *the rich man lift up his eyes in hell, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom*, Luke xvi. 23 but it is so, with respect to the fairs, in their present state, which is a state of distance, and absence, and with respect to the views and prospects,

pects, which they have of this country here, and which are very distant ones: *shine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off*, Isai. xxxiii. 17. But they will not always be in a state of distance from it, they will be brought nearer it, and it is what they desire to be led into. *Thy spirit is good*, says David; good in his nature, person and offices, and a good guide; and therefore he adds, *lead me into the land of uprightness*, Psal. cxliii. 10. So called because none but upright persons dwell there, such who are upright in heart and life, and have the uprightness of Christ, even his righteousness imputed to them. *So in the new heavens and in the new earth, dwelleth righteousness*, or righteous persons; and none but they; as no defiled persons shall enter into the new Jerusalem: *so neither shall the unrighteous inherit the kingdom of God*, the ultimate glory: see 2 Peter iii. 13. Rev. xxi. 27. 1 Cor. vi. 9.

(2.) The future happiness of the saints, may be called a country, with respect to the land of Canaan, which was a type of it, that was a land of promise, as in ver. 9. being promised to Abraham, and to his seed. And so eternal life is the promise of God; and it is spoken of as if it was the only promise, being the grand and principal one; *this is the promise that he hath promised us, eternal life*, 1 John ii. 25. see James i. 12. And a very ancient promise it is; it was very early on the heart of God to bestow it, and he made promise of it as early, *in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised, before the world began*, Titus i. 2. The land of Canaan, was a land of rest, it is sometimes called, *the Lord's rest*, because he gave it; and sometimes the rest of the children of Israel, because they enjoyed it, Heb. iii. 11, 18. Deut. xii. 11. A rest from their travels in the wilderness, and from all their enemies about them, when entered into, and possessed by them; and *there remains a rest for the people of God*; a sabbatism, a spiritual rest here, and an eternal one hereafter; a rest from all toil and labours, sin and sorrow, diseases, distresses, afflictions and troubles of whatsoever sort. The land of Canaan, is said to be a good land, abounding with good things; *a land flowing with milk and honey*, a pleasant and desirable one, Exod. iii. 8: Deut. iii. 25. Psalm cvi. 4. Heaven is a country where great goodness is laid up, nor to be expressed; such good things that *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of*; where there is plenty and satiety, no hunger nor thirst, neither in a literal or spiritual sense; where there are *fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore*. The land of Canaan was ready prepared for the Israelites, was furnished with the accommodations and conveniences of life, without any pains, labour, or industry of theirs; *cities they built not, houses they filled not, wells they dug not, and vineyards and olive trees they planted not*, Deut. vi. 10, 11. Heaven is replete with all good things, and ready prepared for the saints, without any toil and labour of theirs; it is

not obtained and possessed, by any *works of righteousness* done by them; nor they that are of the *law* are heirs of this heavenly country: It is by *promise* and of *grace*; eternal life, is the free gift of God through Christ.

Once more, the land of *Canaan*, was divided by lot to the children of *Israel*, which was done by *Josue*, when subdued by him, according to the commandment of God; and so is the heavenly inheritance; *in whom*, that is, in Christ, says the apostle, *we have obtained an inheritance by lot*, as the word used signifies, *Ephes. i. 11.* Not that the heavenly inheritance is casual, uncertain and precarious, who shall enjoy it; for the elect of God, are most certainly predestinated to it, and shall possess it: nor that it is divided into certain parts and portions; for the whole inheritance lies among *the saints in light*, and is enjoyed by them all; but the sense is, that it is not at their option, or according to any merit of theirs, but according to the election of God, and his free, rich, sovereign grace in Christ.

2dly, The saints state of future happiness, is described, by a *better country*; better than *Mesopotamia*, or *Chaldea*, from whence *Abraham* came; better than the land of *Canaan*, promised to him and his seed; and better than any country on the globe of the earth, or than the whole world itself.

(1.) The goodness of a country lies much in its salubrious air, and temperate climate; in heaven, the *better country*, no noxious pestilential vapours arise to infect the air; no hurtful lusts, that endanger and destroy the souls of men; no evil communications which corrupt good manners; no filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor any corrupt communications, proceed out of the mouths of the inhabitants of this better country; no filthy conversation of the wicked, to vex the souls of the righteous; every thing here breathes unspotted purity, and perfect holiness. No mists, nor fogs, nor clouds darkening the air, to interrupt the sight of pleasing objects, are here. Saints in their present state, it is sometimes with them a dark and cloudy day, the evidences of the truth of grace in them, and of their hope of eternal life and happiness, are much obscured; such mists arise, which intercept the sight of their beloved; he is withdrawn and is gone; they can neither see his face, nor hear his voice; clouds of sin interpose, and separate between God and them: with respect to sensible communion, they walk in darkness, and see no light: but so it is not in the *better country*; it is all pure æther, an unobscured sky, it is as the morning, when the sun riseth; a *morning without clouds*; as clear shining after rain; the sun goes no more down by day, nor does the moon withdraw itself; the Lord is their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning are ended; no more darkness, but one bright, clear, perfect and everlasting day: no storms, no blustering winds, no hurricanes are heard or known in this better country: In the present life, Saints are tossed with tempests, and not comforted. Christ is indeed

indeed *an abiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the storm* of divine wrath and vengeance; he is a rock, on which their souls are built; so that when rains descend, floods come, and winds blow, and beat upon them, they stand safe and secure, because built upon the rock of ages; but though they are safe, yet those beating waves, and bellowing winds, of sin's rage, and Satan's temptations, and the world's persecutions, with other afflictions, give them great disturbance and distress: but in the *better country* all is smooth, serene and calm; no excessive heat, or pinching cold, are here, as in some climates, where the air is extremely hot, or severely cold; but here no pain is felt from the influence of a fiery law, working wrath, nor from the fiery darts of Satan, nor from the flaming sword of justice. The sun of persecution looks not on the saints here, they serve the Lord day and night without molestation, and neither sun nor heat smite them; but they are led continually by the pure cooling springs of grace, and purling streams of love, and *all tears are wiped from their eyes*. Here no damps arise, from the prevalence of sin, nor from the cares of life, nor from too great a regard to earthly and worldly things, to chill their affections and devotions; no such thing is known here as coldness, lukewarmness and indifference in religious worship. Love, that abiding and permanent grace, glows with a divine warmth in every breast, and is at its height, in its vigour and full perfection.

(2.) The goodness of a country lies, as in the salubrity of its air, so in the fruitfulness of its soil: the *better country* is all a garden, a perfect paradise, it is called for 2 Cor. xii. 4. and vastly exceeds the earthly paradise, or *Eden's garden*, that was undoubtedly a most fertile and delightful spot, set all around with fruit-trees, and odoriferous plants; there were no thorns nor briars in it; these are the fruit of sin, and the effect of the curse pronounced on the earth for *Adam's transgression*; *curst is the ground for thy sake, thorns, and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee*, Gen. iii. 17, 18. Nor are there any thorns and briars, in a figurative sense, in the heavenly paradise, in the *better country*; there is *no pricking briar, nor grieving thorn* to the saints, in all that land of glory, Ezek. xxviii. 24. whether by these are meant, profane sinners, children of *Belial*, who are like thorns and briars, useless and unprofitable, noxious and hurtful, and only fit fuel for everlasting burnings; or carnal professors, hypocrites in *Zion*; neither the one nor the other of these *shall stand in judgment*, nor have a place in *the congregation of the righteous*, to give them any annoyance; or whether *inter-medial corruptions*, which are like the *Canaanites*, left in the land to be pricks in the eyes and thorns in the sides of the *Israelites*, these are not in that land; or the temptations of *Satan*, since *the thorn in the flesh*, and a *messenger of Satan*, are put together. Neither he, nor these, have any place in the heavenly country;

that, as before observed, is all a paradise, where nothing grows that is hurtful and pernicious; if the church below is an *orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits, xampbire with spikenard, spikenard and saffron, salamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrb and aloes, with all the chief spices*, Cant. iv. 13, 14. with what fruit-bearing trees, and aromatic plants, must the heavenly paradise be filled, *in the midst of which, we are assured, stands the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, and yielding its fruit every month?* Rev. ii. 7. and chap. xxii. 2.

(3.) The goodness of a country lies in its riches, and, generally speaking, when a country is fruitful, it is rich; the fruitfulness of its soil makes the inhabitants of it rich; as we read of riches of Grace, so of riches of Glory; which far surpasses all earthly riches; the riches of this world are uncertain riches, here to-day, and gone to-morrow, they make themselves wings and flee away; but the riches of the *better country* are certain and sure, solid and substantial, lasting and durable; a treasure which moth cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal away; they are unsearchable riches, it cannot be said how much and how great they are; however, saints know in themselves that they have in heaven a *better, and a more enduring substance* than what can be enjoyed on earth, Heb. x. 34.

(4.) What gives the heavenly country the preference to all others is, the peaceableness of it; *God makes peace in his high places*, in the highest heavens, where his saints and angels dwell, *John xxv. 2.* which may, with great propriety, be called *the land of peace*, as the phrase is in *Jer. xii. 5.* In this world there is seldom peace long, war is commonly in one part of it or another; and as soon as peace is made, we quickly hear of rumours of war again; and with respect to the state of men on earth, in a moral and spiritual sense, this life is a warfare: *Is there not a warfare to man on earth?* as the words may be rendered in *Job vii. 1.* There is, and especially to the saints, and people of God; they have many enemies to war with, the world, the flesh and the devil: *without are fightings and within are fears*, 2 Cor. vii. 5. yea, they have fightings both within and without; without, with the world and the devil; and within with the corruptions of their nature, their worst enemies; there is nothing to be seen in the Shulamite, the most perfect, and the most peaceable believer, as the word may signify, but *as it were the company of two armies*, set in battle array, and combating each other, *Cant. vi. 13. even the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh*; the law in the members, warring against the law in the mind; but when this life is ended, the warfare is accomplished; no more war, all peace; the end of the perfect and upright man is peace; he enters into peace, eternal peace, which will never be interrupted.

(5.) Another

(5.) Another superior excellency of this heavenly country, and which makes it better than any other, is the safety of it; there is *nothing hurts nor destroys in all this holy mountain*, this holy land; there is no danger from any quarter, not from thieves and robbers, nor from beasts of prey; there is no insidious serpent, nor roaring lion here; there was a serpent in *Eden's* garden, and a subtil one, which seduced our first parents to their ruin; and by whom the saints in this life are in danger of being beguiled, when permitted; and by whom the nations of the world are deceived; but he has no place in the *better country*; the *Old Serpent the devil* is cast out of heaven, and fell like lightning from thence; and his place will be found no more there; on the earth he *goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*; he is permitted to take his walks to and fro, in the world below, but he is not admitted to take any in that above; *no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there*, *Isai. xxxv. 9.* that is, shall walk in the greatest safety, having nothing to fear from any quarter whatever.

(6.) What infinitely adds to the preference of this country to all others is, the better company in it; here are not only *the spirits of just men made perfect*, who converse with each other in the most heavenly and spiritual manner, and join in songs of praise, and hallelujahs to the Lamb, and *an innumerable company of angels*, those shining forms, attending and waiting on them, and joining with them, in social acts of worship; but what is ten thousand times more than all the rest, there is had an uninterrupted communion with God, Father, Son and Spirit; here God is *all and in all*; here saints behold God in Christ as he is; behold his glory, appear in glory with him, see him as he is, become like him, and are for ever with him.

3. The saints future state of happiness, is described by its being a country; which is explained an *heavenly one*, a country which lies in heaven; as we say of such a country, it is in *Europe*; of another, that it is in *Asia*; and of a third, that it is in *Africa*; and so of a fourth, that it is in *America*; but of this country, it must be said, that it is *in heaven*; when it is spoken of as *an house*, it is an *house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, *2 Cor. v. 11.* when as a *city*, a city in heaven; *our citizenship is in heaven*, *Phil. iii. 20.* and so of course the city we are citizens of must be there; when said to be an *inheritance*, it is an *inheritance reserved in heaven*, *1 Peter i. 4.* when it goes by the name of a *country*, or a *kingdom*, it is called *the kingdom of heaven*, *Matt. v. 20.* and indeed this country is no other than heaven itself, and in which all desirable persons and things are; here is our covenant-God and Father, whom we are directed to address; saying, *Our father which art in heaven*; and of whom it may be truly said, with the Psalmist, *whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire*

desire besides thee, Psal. lxxiii. 25. here also JESUS is at the right hand of his divine Father, our head, and husband, brother, friend, redeemer and saviour: Here is our treasure, portion and inheritance, and where our hearts should be; and no wonder it is, that this *better country* should be desired, and especially, since it is of an heavenly nature, and so suited to heaven-born souls; as is the heavenly, so are they that are heavenly; and they are such, that are *barn again*, or *born from above*, as the phrase may be rendered in *John* iii. 3. they are partakers of the divine nature, that is, of an heavenly one, that bears some resemblance to the nature of God in heaven; they are partakers of the heavenly calling, and are called to enjoy *an heavenly country*, which is agreeable to their nature, as spiritual; an earthly country is not, they cannot breath in it, at least not freely.

4. The happiness of the saints in another world, is described by *a city*, both in this verse and in verse 10. where it is said to be *a city which hath foundations*; it is expressed in the plural number, for it seems it has more foundations than one; there is the everlasting love of God, the source and spring both of grace and glory, and the electing grace of God in Christ, the foundation of God, which stands sure, sealed with this seal, *The Lord knows them that are his*; and the covenant of grace, which is *ordered in all things, and sure*; and there is Christ, the *sure foundation* of God's laying; and who is also *the foundation of the apostles and prophets*; of their laying ministerially; wherefore the new *Jerusalem* is said to have twelve foundations, because Christ, the one and only foundation, is laid by his twelve apostles. The plural expressed in the text referred to, is opposed to tents and tabernacles, which had no foundations, but were easily taken down, and moved from place to place; and denotes the firmness and stability of *this continuing city*, Heb. xiii. 14. And let it not be thought that this is a diminutive and lowering expression; that after the apostle had called the future state of the saints happiness *a country*, a *better*, and an *heavenly* one, that he calls it *a city*; for as in every kingdom and country there is a chief city, the metropolis of the country, the residence of the king of it, where he has his palace, keeps his court, and his nobles dwell: such is this city, not only *whose builder and maker is God*, who built all things; and is made, not with the hands of men, but of God himself; but also *the city of the great King*, and is fit for kings and princes to dwell in, as all the saints are. What the Assyrian monarch boastingly said, *Are not my princes altogether kings?* Isa. x. 8. is true of all Jehovah's princes, his saints, they are all made kings, as well as priests unto God, by Christ; and so have a city prepared for them to dwell in, according to their high birth, quality and dignity; and what a city that is, may be learnt, in some measure, from the grand description given of the new *Jerusalem*, by its being, even the streets of it, of pure gold; and by its walls and gates of pearl; and yet these brilliant views fall abundantly short of setting forth the real grandeur of it,

Rev. xxi. 10. Thus I have gone through the description of the saints future happiness; I shall only say a few things to the other two remaining observations, as I proposed.

II. They regard the saints in their present state have to their future happiness; they now *desire* it, *seek* after it, and *look* for it.

1. They *desire* it, which supposes they have some knowledge of it, for there is no desire after what is unknown; and a person may have some knowledge of a country he has never been in, by the relations of persons that have been there, by seeing it described in a map, and by having some of the produce and fruits of it brought unto him; by which he can in some measure form a judgment of it; so the Israelites knew before they entered into the land of *Canaan*, what sort of a country it was, partly by the description God had given of it, as *a land flowing with milk and honey*; and partly, by the report of the spies that went to view it, as well as by the cluster of grapes, figs and pomegranates, they brought with them from thence; thus the people of God know somewhat of the *heavenly* country, not only by the ministry of the word, and by the description of it in the map of the scriptures, but by their own experience, by the foretastes they have of the fruit of that land, and by the prospects, though distant ones, they have of it; their hope entering within the veil, and their faith looking to and being *the evidence of things not seen*. Hence they have ardent desires after it; the word here used, signifies a very vehement desire, such an one as that they are willing to be *absent from the body, that they may be present with the Lord* in this country; they choose rather to depart out of this world, the country they now dwell in, that they may be with Christ in the better country.

2. They *seek* after this country, so it is expressed in ver. 14. *they that say such things, declare plainly, that they seek a country*; and so in chap. xiii. 14. *we seek one to come*, a continuing city; they seek for it, in the first place, as soon as ever they are called and converted; and they seek it earnestly, diligently, and with all their hearts: and they seek it in a right way; not to obtain it by *works of righteousness* done by them; such as seek it in this way find it not. The Jews sought, but did not obtain, because they sought not by faith, but, as it were, by *the works of the law*: for except a man's *righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and pharisees, he shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven*, or that better country, the heavenly one: those that seek right, seek not only the kingdom of God in the first place, but *his righteousness* also; or seek for the kingdom of God, the heavenly glory, in and by the righteousness of Christ, which only entitles to it. Such as are justified freely through the grace of God, by the righteousness of Christ, become heirs, according to the hope of eternal life, *Matt. v. 20. Titus iii. 7.*

3. The

3. The saints look for this better country and heavenly city, as *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* did, ver. 10. they looked for it by faith. Faith is often expressed by *looking*, not only when it has Christ for its object, but also eternal happiness, then it is called, looking for a city which hath foundations, looking for the blessed hope, and looking for the mercy of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, unto eternal life. Saints not only believe there is such a state of happiness, but that it is for them; and therefore they expect it, and wait for it: *we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith*, Gal. v. 5.

III. The notice God takes of such persons, that desire, seek, and look for a future state of happiness, *He is not ashamed to be called their God*: For God to be called the God of his people, is the great blessing of the covenant; which runs thus, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*, Jer. xxxii. 38. and happy are the people that are in such a relation to God, their happiness is not to be expressed; other persons may be happy in a temporal sense, who enjoy much of the things of this world, but thrice happy, infinitely so, are they whose God is the Lord. I shall not enter into the consideration of this wonderful blessing of grace; this would open a large field of discourse. I shall only take notice of the phrase used of God, that he is not ashamed to be called the God of his people; it is a very remarkable and unusual one; it stands between two clauses in the text, and has an aspect upon, and is in connection with them both, with the words that go before, *but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God*, &c. because the patriarchs spoken of were so very desirous of, so earnestly seeking after, and so wishfully looking for a state of happiness in another world; therefore God was not ashamed to own them, even in so near a relation to him as they to be his people, and he to be their God: had they been the grovelings of this world, had they minded only earth, and earthly things, and sought for and desired nothing else but the land of *Canaan*, and the temporal blessings of it; God, speaking after the manner of men, would have been ashamed to be called *the God* of such persons; he would not have owned, but have disclaimed the relation; but now, since their heaven-born souls were breathing after a future state of immortality and bliss, and aspiring to the heavenly regions, where they hoped to enjoy God to all eternity; therefore he was not ashamed to be called *their God*; but calls himself so, as to *Moses*, at the bush; *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, Exod. iii. 6. A like phrase is used of Christ in this epistle, chap. ii. 11. *For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one*: of one nature, in one covenant, partakers of the same grace, though not to the same degree; and particularly, the one being the sanctifier, and the other the sanctified, and though both, holy: *For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren*,

thren, as it is intimated he would be, had they not been one with him, and sanctified by him. In like manner, though God is the high and lofty One, whose throne is in the heaven, and the earth his footstool, yet he disdaineth not to look unto, and to dwell with, *the holy, humble, and contrite soul*, *Isai. lvii. 15.* and chap. *lxvi. 1, 2.* moreover these words stand in connection with the following; *for he hath prepared for them a city*; which is a reason proving, that he is not ashamed to be called their God; and it is suggested, had he not done this, humanly speaking, he should have been ashamed of being called, and accounted their God; as particularly, the God of *Abraham*. This good man God called out of his native country, and his father's house, to go and dwell in a strange land, and as a pilgrim and a traveller in it: it is true, indeed, he promised to give it to him, and his posterity, for an inheritance; but to him, personally, he did not give so much as a foot of ground in it, as *Stephen* says, *Acts vii. 5.* Now if God had made no better provision for *Abraham* than this, he would have been ashamed to have been called his God; but he prepared a city, and provided a better country than *Canaan* for him: and this *Abraham* knew, believed, looked for, and expected, and died in the faith of; and therefore God was not ashamed to be called his God; and how many poor saints are there, whom God has called effectually by his grace from among the men of the world, who have scarce clothes to cover their naked bodies, scanty provisions of food, and that mean and coarse, to satisfy their craving appetites, and mean habitations to dwell in: now if God made no better provision for these persons, whom he thus calls, he would, speaking after the manner of men, be ashamed to be called their God: but lo! though they are the *poor of this world*, yet they are *rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom*: for these poor ragged saints, that fare hard, and dwell in lowly cottages here, he has prepared a city, fit for kings and princes to dwell in, with plenty of all things, grand and pleasing, suitable thereunto: He takes these beggars from the dunghil, and sets them among princes, and causes them to inherit the throne of glory; and therefore he is not ashamed to be called their God: but on the contrary exults, rejoices, glories in it, that he is their God; and shows himself to be glorious as their covenant-God, by making such a munificent preparation and provision for his covenant-people: for the words are what *Rhetoricians* call a *Mimesis*, by which less is expressed than is designed. The city prepared, is the same with the better country, as before explained, even the future happiness of the saints in heaven; and this is of God's preparing, and of his only, and is given to none but those, *for whom*, says Christ, *it is prepared of my Father*. And it is a kingdom prepared by him in his eternal purposes and decrees, *from the foundation of the world*; see *Matt. xx. 23.* and chap. *xxv. 34.* And the chosen vessels of mercy are afore prepared for this glory; and in time are made meet and ready for it, through the righteousness of Christ

put upon them, and by his Spirit and grace in them; and Christ he is gone to prepare a place in this city, in this better country, by his presence and prevalent intercession, for every one of his people, and will come again and take them to himself, *that where he is, they may be also*, John xiv. 2, 3.

I shall close all with a word or two: what has been said may serve to wean us from this world, and draw off our hearts from it, and cause us to sit loose unto it, and all things in it; since this is not our rest, our house, our home, our native place; that is in *another country*: and this may be of use to quicken our desires after another world, to seek a better country, and look for it; and this may also point out to us the happiness of those that are gone before us, they are in this better country, and are in better company. — But I forbear saying any more — *.

S E R M O N

* The following character was wrote by the Doctor and found among his papers, though not delivered from the pulpit.

It pleased God to call her by his grace in the early time of life, and in a place of great darkness and ignorance; where there were scarce any, or very few professors of religion; so that when she took up a profession of it, she appeared very singular, and became the object of the scoffs and jeers of her neighbours and former acquaintance; but this did not deter her from pursuing the good ways of God she had entered into, and from persisting in them. She soon drank in the doctrines of the free grace of God in the salvation of men by Christ, of which she had a comfortable experience.

In the after-time of her life, her afflictions and troubles were many, but under all she was favoured with divine supports, and was frequently indulged with gracious words of promise on different occasions, and yet often doubting and fearing: for none could have meaner and more humble thoughts of themselves than she always had, looking upon herself as *less than the least of all saints*.

Lord's days were usually delightful to her; she often met with refreshings from the presence of God in them; which made her earnestly desire the return of them; and when the day drew nigh, longed until the morning was, and the time came to attend public worship. The loss of these precious opportunities, through her long confinement, was greatly lamented by her.

She was one that truly feared God, and was ever desirous of having a conscience void of offence both towards God and man, and of doing her duty to both; careful as much as in her lay to give no offence by word or deed, to the world or to the church of God; studying the things which make for peace among all with whom she was concerned; as her whole deportment, for the space of between forty and fifty years, has abundantly shewn, of which many here are witnesses.

Her last affliction, though long, tedious and painful, was bore with the greatest patience; that passage of scripture was truly verified in her, *Tribulation works patience*; and though she was not *carried out*, as her expression was, which she observed some were on their dying beds, in raptures of joy and strong expressions of faith, yet it pleased God to drop comforts into her soul at certain times; and sometimes she would be longing to be at home in her Father's house, saying, "Let me go, O let me go to my Father's house:" repeating it over and over again.

The scripture which has now been discoursed on, was expressed by her as it had been at times before, with great pleasure and delight; and also those words, *them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*. In a view of her own soul-affairs, and those of her family, those words appeared to be of considerable use, and were quieting and comfortable to her, *casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you*.

But a few Lord's days ago, as her surviving relative was taking his leave of her, coming hither to preach, she expressed the following words with strong application to herself, *having made peace*
through

S E R M O N XXXV.

The Free Grace of God exalted in the Character of the Apostle Paul.

Preached at St Albans, Hertfordshire, May 26, 1765.

1 COR. XV. 10.

But by the grace of God, I am what I am.

THE apostle is treating in the context of the important doctrine of the resurrection of Christ from the dead: he asserts, *that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures*, which foretold he should rise, and as in fact he did; of this he produces ocular testimonies, as that "he was seen after his resurrection of *Cephas*, that is, *Peter*, and then of the twelve apostles; next "of above five hundred brethren at once; after that of *James*, then of all the "apostles; and last of all he was seen by himself." And it seems by his own account, that he was seen by him more than once; as at his conversion, when a light shone around him, and he not only heard the voice of Christ, but he *appeared* to him, and made him a minister and witness of what he saw and heard, and of what should hereafter be made known unto him; nor was he, as he says, *disobedient to the heavenly vision*; when he was "caught up into the third heaven, and heard and saw things unspeakable, and not lawful to be uttered;" which might be at the time of his conversion also: he doubtless had a sight of Christ

4 E 2 .

through the blood of his cross: and with the greatest vehemency and eagerness added, AND FOR ME TOO; and repeated it, AND FOR ME TOO.

One morning, being asked how she did, she declared she had much comfort that night in her meditations on the sufferings of Christ for her, in comparison of which her afflictions, though heavy, were but light.—At another time, those words were very flaying, supporting and satisfying to her, *nevertheless the foundation of God stands sure*; and very often declared she had comfort, but had not strength to express it; and indeed the enemy of souls was kept off from her through the whole, and was not suffered, as far as could be discerned, to disturb and distress her in the least; the last words of any moment that were heard from her, were, when asked whether she had comfort, she said, she had, but not always alike, and added, *the covenant is sure*; quickly after this she grew delirious, and slept much, till death seized her; of which she seemed to be sensible by the motions of lifting up her hands, and by the words she uttered, which were *Lord, Lord!*—When something followed not understood by those that stood by, and then drawing her breath quicker, immediately, without a sigh or groan, fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.

Christ in his human nature, as risen and ascended to heaven; and after all this, when he was come to *Jerusalem* again, and was praying in the temple, he fell into a trance; and, says he, *I saw him*^b, meaning Christ, as well as heard the commission, instructions, and directions, he gave him; when he was *as one born out of due time*; which is not to be understood of him literally and in a natural sense, as if he was born before his time, of which we have no where any intimation, but figuratively: and the allusion is either, as some think, to a posthumous birth, the birth of one after the death of his father, to which there was something similar in the apostle's case. The rest of the apostles were called unto and invested with the office of an apostle whilst Christ, their everlasting Father, was here on earth; but the apostle was invested with it after his death, and resurrection from the dead: or rather, the allusion is to an abortive or untimely birth, which has never seen the sun, nor known any thing; and is not known, has no name, and is of no account: this figurative phrase is explained by what follows, *for I am the least of the apostles*; and it is no wonder that he should call himself the least of the apostles, when he elsewhere says, that he was *less than the least of all saints*^c; for if less than the least of all saints, he must be the least of the apostles; though, when he was traduced by the false teachers, and his character impeached, and the gospel and interest of Christ were like to suffer by those means, he exerted himself and magnified his office; and asserted, that *he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles*^d; though he here adds, *that am not meet to be called an apostle*; as indeed no one was; none are meet or deserving of themselves to be members of gospel-churches, to have a *place and a name there better than that of sons and daughters*; nor to be ordinary ministers of the word, and still less to be the apostles of Jesus Christ. The reason given why he entertained such low and mean thoughts of himself, is, *because*, says he, *I persecuted the church of God*; of which much notice is taken by the divine historian, that the grace of God in the conversion of the apostle, might be set off with a greater foil; it is observed that "the clothes of those that stoned Stephen" were laid at his feet to be kept by him; that he was consenting to the death "of Stephen; that he made havock of the church, haling men and women to prison; that he breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ, and desired and took letters of the high priest, empowering him to take up any at *Damascus* he found in the christian way, and to bring them to *Jerusalem*"^e; and, according to his own account, he gave his voice against them, when put to death, punished them in every synagogue; compelled them to blaspheme, and persecuted them to strange cities, being *exceeding mad against them*.

^b Acts xxii. 17, 18.^c Ephes. iii. 8.^d 2 Cor. xi. 5. and xii. 11.^e Acts vii. 58. and viii. 1, 3. and ix. 1, 2.

them^f. Now the sense of all this evil dwelt upon his mind, remained with him, and kept him humble all his days, amidst all his grace, gifts, attainments and usefulness. So every saint has something or other to keep him humble, indwelling sin, or Satan's temptations, or afflictions in the world; and then follow the words first read, *but by the grace of God I am what I am*; be I what I am, greater or lesser, as a man, a saint, a minister, and an apostle, I am just such an one as it is the will of God I should be; *by his grace I am what I am*. Two things I observe from hence:

I. That the apostle was *something*, not a mere non-entity, he had a being, and was in some circumstances; which is supposed and implied in the phrase, *I am what I am*.

II. That be that something he was, what it may, *that he was by the grace of God*.

I. That the apostle was *something*; he had an existence and was in circumstances, on many accounts, not mean and despicable. There is a sense indeed in which he was *nothing*, and which he himself observes, *though I be nothing*^g; not absolutely, he was a man, had the integral parts of a man, a body and a soul; a body consisting of flesh, blood and bones; and though of the earth earthly, sprung out of the dust, and would return to dust again, yet was something, and would be even in that state; for dust is something: and besides he had a rational soul, possessed of intellectual powers and faculties; a spirit immaterial and immortal, and of more worth than a world; *for what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* or *what shall a man give in exchange for his soul*^h? But in a comparative sense he was nothing, that is, when compared with God, the everlasting I AM, the fountain of being, the Being of beings: so some things in comparison of others that are greatly more excellent, are represented at non-entities; thus earthly riches, when compared with the durable, solid and substantial riches of grace and glory, are said to be *that which is not*ⁱ; in like manner, the duration of a creature, in comparison of the eternity of God, is nothing. *Mine age, says David, is as nothing before thee*^k; not to be mentioned with his days and years, which are throughout all generations and without beginning; men of the greatest name and figure are not to be spoken of with him; and not only single individuals, but even *all nations before him are as nothing*; and could there be any thing less than nothing, they would be that; *they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity*^l.

Moreover

^f Acts xxvi. 10. 11.

^g 2 Cor. xii. 11.

^h Matt. xvi. 16.

ⁱ Prov. xxiii. 6.

^k Psalm xxxix. 5.

^l Eccl. xl. 17.

Moreover the apostle was nothing, of no account and esteem with the men of the world, particularly with the false teachers; with respect to whom he says, what has been before referred to, *though I be nothing*; that is, in the opinion of the false teachers, who vilified him, and endeavoured to make him contemptible in the eyes of others; and which is not to be wondered at, since Christ himself was despised and rejected of men, or ceased from being a man, from being reckoned in the class of men, *a worm, and no man*, in their esteem; and so all his followers are accounted as *the filth of the world, and the effscouring of all things*. Add to this, that the apostle was nothing in his own eyes; he reckoned himself *the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints*; and, generally speaking, those that have the most grace and the greatest gifts, and are of the greatest usefulness, are the most humble, and think the most meanly of themselves. So those boughs and branches of trees, that are most richly laden with fruit, bend downwards, and hang lowest.

But notwithstanding all this, the apostle was *something, I am what I am*; not as the false teachers, and vain boasters of their knowledge and gifts, who, thought they were something when they were nothing; and fancied they knew something, when they knew nothing as they ought to know; not like *Simon Magus*, who gave out that *himself was some great one*^m; had great knowledge of things, had great power, and could do great and wonderful feats, when he was nothing; nothing in grace, for notwithstanding his profession of faith, he was *in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity*; nothing in knowledge of divine things, he knew nothing spiritually and experimentally; nor in gifts, and therefore offered money that he might be possessed of the gifts of the Spirit, and of power to confer them on others: but our apostle was *something* in grace; there was a principle of grace and holiness in him, and an abundance of grace bestowed on him; there was *some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel*; the root of the matter was in him; he was no *sounding brass, nor tinkling cymbal*. He was something in knowledge, divine, spiritual, and evangelical; he knew much of the person, offices and grace of Christ; of the mysteries of grace, and doctrines of the gospel; perhaps more than any mere man besides himself ever did: *ye may understand*, says he, *my knowledge in the mystery of Christ*ⁿ; and, which was very great: he was *something* in gifts; he was endued with extraordinary gifts; *in nothing*, in no gift was he *behind the very chiefest apostles*; *truly the signs of an apostle were wrought* by him every where, *in wonders and mighty deeds*^o; and was of more extensive usefulness in preaching the Gospel, converting sinners, and planting churches, than any other whatever. *I will not dare*, says he, *to speak of any of these things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gen-*

tiles

^m Acts viii. 9.

ⁿ Ephes. ii. 4.

^o 2 Cor. xii. 11, 12.

*tiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God*². He was also *something*, and very high indeed, in the esteem and account of God and Christ; he was a *chosen vessel to bear his name before the Gentiles*³: and so all Christ's faithful ministers, on whom he has bestowed gifts and grace, and makes more or less useful, are something in his account; they are held *as stars* in his right hand: and indeed all his people are precious in his sight; his *Hepzibab* in whom he delights, his *Beulah* to whom he is married, his jewels, his peculiar treasure, *his portion, and the lot of his inheritance*.

II. Let that *something* the apostle was be what it may, *that he was by the grace of God*; that is, by the good-will and favour of God; in which sense this phrase is often to be understood, both in the Old and in the New Testament: when *Noah* is said to find *grace in the eyes of the Lord*⁴; the meaning is, that he enjoyed the free favour and good-will of God, and was well-pleasing and acceptable in his sight; and whatever distinguishing blessing he had, he had it through the grace and good-will of God, and not through any merits of his own: and so in the New Testament, whenever salvation, and the several parts of it, are ascribed to the grace of God, as, *by grace ye are saved*⁵, and the like, it is always to be understood of the unmerited favour and sovereign will and good pleasure of God; and in this sense are we to understand it here. And for the farther illustration of it, I shall endeavour to shew that what the apostle was, and so what any other man is, as a man, as a minister, and as a saint, *that they are by the grace and favour of God*.

First, What the apostle was as a man, was owing to the good-will and pleasure of God. And so is what any man is as such. God gives life and breath and being to all his creatures; *thou hast granted me life and favour*⁶, says *Job*; to have life and being in this world, is owing to a grant from God; and that grant is a favour, owing to the good-will and pleasure of God: *the spirit of God has made me*, says one of *Job's* friends, *and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*⁷; life, in the first spring of it, is a gift of God; and the continuance of it depends on his will and pleasure: his visitation preserves the spirits of men; he upholds their souls in life; *in him they live, move, and have their being*; and whether their continuance in life is longer or shorter, it is just as his sovereign will and pleasure is; it is through his good hand upon them, that they remain in being in this world so long as they do. All the mercies of life are from God; hence he is called, *the father of mercies*⁸: and these are many and various, and are continually repeated; they are new every morning, and continue all the day.

² Rom. xv. 18, 19.

³ Acts ix. 15.

⁴ Gen. vi. 8.

⁵ Ephes. ii. 8.

⁶ Job x. 12.

⁷ Job xxxiii. 4.

⁸ 2 Cor. i. 3.

day, and are renewed every day; and having food and raiment, we should not only be therewith content, but be thankful for them; since, as good old *Jacob* says, we are *not worthy of the least of all the mercies shewed us*; nor of the least morsel of bread we eat, nor of the clothes we wear: and how sensible of the divine goodness was that patriarch to the last; and how thankful for it? *The God that fed me all my life long until this day—bless the lads*^a. Some have a greater affluence of the good things of this life than others; more they have than they can make use of themselves, and which are given them for the relief of others; these are wisdom's left-hand-blessings. When *David* and his princes offered so largely and so willingly towards the building of the temple, he acknowledges it was all of God, both the ability and the willing mind; *Riches and benour come of thee—Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort! For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee*^b! Riches are the property of God, he gives and takes them away at his pleasure, and this he does to shew his sovereignty; he made *Job* the greatest man in all the east for wealth and worldly substance, and in one day stripped him of it all; *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*^c; it is all according to his good pleasure. All the endowments of the mind, the natural parts and abilities of men, their intellectual and reasoning powers and faculties, are of God; *There is a spirit in man*, a rational spirit, and that is of God, a gift of his to men: *The inspiration of the almighty, giveth them understanding*^d; which distinguishes men from brutes, and gives them the pre-eminence to them; for God is he, *who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven*^e. Now whatever the apostle had of this kind, as well as of other things, it was through the favour and good-will of God: as he certainly was a man of great natural abilities, of strong reasoning powers, his enemies themselves being witnesses; *his letters, say they, are mighty and powerful*^f; written in a masculine style, and full of strong nervous reasonings and arguments, they were not able to answer.

Secondly, What he was as a minister and an apostle, was through the favour and good-will of God; he did not become one of himself, through his own attainments, or by any merits of his; for he before says, he was *not meet to be called an Apostle*; nor was he made a minister of the gospel, or an apostle, by man; this he disavows: *Paul an apostle, not of man, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father*; the commission and qualifications he had as such, were not of men, but of God; the gospel he preached, the doctrines of it he delivered, and the instructions he had for that purpose, were not *after men*, neither

^a Gen xxvii 10.

^b 1 Chron. xxix 13, 14.

^c Job i. 3, 21.

^d Job xxxii. 8.

^e Job xxv. 11.

^f 2 Cor. x. 10.

neither received he them of men, nor was he taught them but by the revelation of Jesus Christ^d: it was not owing to his education, to his being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed in all the learning of those times, which qualified him for a minister of the word; this served only to make him a keener adversary, and a more bitter enemy to Christ and his gospel. Whenever he speaks of his being put into the ministry, he attributes it to the grace and favour of God; making mention of the gospel, he adds, *whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto ME, by the effectual working of his power: unto ME, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given; that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ^e*: and that he was an extraordinary minister, an apostle of Christ, he ascribes to the grace of God; *by whom we have received grace and apostleship^f*; that is, grace to make us apostles, and to qualify for that office: and ordinary ministers of the word become such through gifts, which Christ, their ascended Lord and King, has received for men, and gives to men; and which gifts are of grace and free favour dispensed to whomsoever he pleases; to some more, and others less, but all of grace: *having gifts differing according to the grace that is given us; whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith^g*: and again, *as every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God^h*; so that whatever any one is as a minister of the word, he is so by the gift of grace, by the free grace and favour of God.

Thirdly, What the apostle was as a saint, he was by the grace of God, as every saint is; what distinguishes a saint from a sinner, or one man from another, is entirely owing to the grace and free favour of God.

1. Was the apostle a chosen vessel, not only to preach the gospel, but chosen to grace here and glory hereafter, as he undoubtedly was; he often puts himself among the chosen ones; thus, speaking of the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, he adds, by way of explanation, *even us whom he hath calledⁱ*; and in another place, *according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love^k*: this he was by the grace of God, as all the chosen ones be; for they are chosen, not for any good works done by them, or foreseen to be done by them; for the act of election passed before any were done by them, and without respect to any; *for the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth^l*: besides good works are the fruits and effects of election, and therefore cannot be the cause of it; *we are his workmanship, created in Christ*

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^d Gal. i. 1, 11, 12.^e Ephes. iii. 7, 8.^f Rom. i. 5.^g Rom. xii. 6.^h 1 Pet. iv. 10.ⁱ Rom. ix. 24.^k Ephes. i. 4.^l Rom. ix. 11.

Jefus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them^m: to which add, that they are the evidences of election unto others; hence that exhortation of the apostle, *give diligence to make your calling and election sure*ⁿ; not election by calling, though the latter is an evidence of the former, since both are to be made sure; and therefore must be by some third thing, and that is good works; by which these are made not sure in themselves; nor sure to the faints, but to the world; which give to them a certain evidence that the faints are, what they profess to be, the *chosen* and *called* of God; and is the best evidence they are capable of giving to the world of those things, and of their receiving from them.

Nor is it owing to the holiness of men, either internal or external, that any are chosen to eternal life. Men are chosen, not because they are holy, but that they *should be holy and without blame*; they are chosen not for, but *through sanctification of the spirit*^o; they are chosen to it as an end, and through it as a mean, and it is insured by election. And so far is this doctrine from being a licentious one, as it is ignorantly traduced by some, that it is the source and spring of all real holiness that has been in the world since the fall of *Adam*; had not God reserved to himself a remnant according to the election of grace, the whole world had been as *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, both for sin and for punishment; there would have been no such thing as holiness among the sons of *Adam*. Nor is the choice of men owing to their faith; they are chosen not for their belief, but through *the belief of the truth*, through faith in Christ, *the Way, the Truth and the Life*: faith is the fruit and effect of election, and is secured and ascertained by it; *as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed*^p; hence faith is called *the faith of God's elect*^q, because it is a consequent of their election, and is peculiar to them. It remains that men are what they are, as chosen ones, not by any thing of theirs, but by the grace, favour, and good-will of God; hence this act of God is called *the election of grace*, on which the apostle argues in this strong and nervous manner; *if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace*: — for grace is not grace, unless it is altogether free; *but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work*^r; to blend and confound them together, is to destroy the nature and use of both.

2. Was the apostle an adopted son of God? this he was by the grace of God; which is the next spiritual blessing that follows election, in that famous *first* chapter of the epistle to the *Ephesians*; and where the apostle ranks himself among those that are predestinated to the adoption of children, and which he ascribes to the good-will and pleasure of God; *having predestinated us unto the adoption*

^m Ephes. ii. 10.ⁿ Act. xiii. 48.^o 2 Peter i. 10.^p Titus i. 1.^q Ephes. i. 4. 2 Thes. ii. 13.^r Rom. xi. 5, 6.

adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will^a. None are the children of God through any merits of their own, for they are by nature children of wrath, as others^b; there is no reason or motive in them that should move the Lord to put them among the children; it need not be wondered at to hear him say, *how shall I put thee among the children*, so unlovely, so unworthy! but it is amazing what follows, *thou shalt call me my Father, and not turn away from me*^c. In civil adoption there is commonly something in the adopted, or relative to it, that induces the adopter to take the step he does; there are but two instances of this kind in scripture, I think, and they both suggest something of this nature; the one is the adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter, of whom it is said, that he was a goodly child, exceeding fair and lovely to look upon, which attracted the affections of the princess, as well as its ease and circumstances moved her compassion; the other is the adoption of Esther by Mordecai, of whom it is remarked, that *the maid was fair and beautiful*, and besides was a relation of Mordecai; but in the case of divine adoption, there is nothing lovely and amiable in the adopted, but all the reverse, like the wretched infant cast out in the open field to the lothing of its person in the day it was born^d; wherefore the apostle John breaks forth in this pathetic manner, in the view of this amazing blessing; *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God*^e! it is by the unmerited love, free favour and good-will of God, that saints are what they are in this sense; by the grace of God in predestination to this blessing, which, as before observed, is according to the good pleasure of his will; by the grace of God in the covenant, which is a covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, full of all spiritual blessings, called *the sure mercies of David*, because they flow from the grace, mercy, and favour of God in Christ; in which this blessing of grace, adoption, is provided and secured; and which runs thus, without any condition required; *I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*^f: it is also by and through the grace of Christ, who has redeemed his that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of children^g, as a free-grace-gift; and to as many as receive him, that is, believe in him, he gives power, right and privilege, to become the sons of God^h; and it is by the grace of the Spirit that this blessing is manifested, applied, and bore witness to, who is therefore called *the Spirit of adoption*ⁱ.

3. Was the apostle redeemed by Christ? as without doubt he was, and he had the faith of assurance of interest in this blessing of redemption; which stands next in order to election and adoption, in the abovementioned chapter, and

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^a Ephes. i. 5.

^b Ezek. xvi. 5.

^c Gal. iv. 5.

^d Ephes. ii. 3.

^e 1 John iii. 1.

^f John i. 12.

^g Jer. iii. 19.

^h 2 Cor. vi. 18.

ⁱ Rom. viii. 15.

where the apostle puts himself among the redeemed ones, *in whom we have redemption through his blood*^c; this he was by the grace of God; for though redemption is by the blood of Christ, it is according to the riches of God's grace; though it cost Christ dear, his blood and life, it is free to the redeemed; it is without money and without price to them; it was the free grace of God that provided Christ to be the Redeemer and Saviour, called him to this work, appointed him to do it, and promised him as such; it was owing to the grace of God that he was sent in the fulness of time to redeem men; at his incarnation, the first step to it, the angels sung, *peace on earth, good-will to men*^d; the love, grace, favour and good-will of God, are in a most wonderful manner displayed in the mission of Christ to obtain redemption for men. *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son*, that is, to be the Saviour of men; *in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him; herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*^e; it is owing to the grace, favour and good-will of God to men, that Christ was delivered up for them, into the hands of justice and death; it was *by the grace of God he tasted death for every man*^f; that is, suffered death for every one of the sons he brings to glory, for every one of the brethren he is not ashamed to own, for every one of the children given unto him, as appears from the context. As *Abraham* shewed his love to God in not withholding his son, his only son, his beloved son; so God has shewn his love, favour and good-will to men, in not sparing, but sending and giving his own, his only begotten son, his well-beloved son, to suffer and die for them, in order to redeem them: and to be a redeemed one, is an instance of distinguishing grace; for they that are redeemed, are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation; so that by the grace of God they are what they are.

4. Was the apostle a justified person? as he certainly was; he was so by the grace of God; not by any works or merits of his: these he disclaims; *for I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified*^g; though he was not conscious of any unfaithfulness in his ministry, yet this was not the matter of his justification before God; nay had he been unconscious of any sin then in him, or done by him, he knew he could not be justified thereby from former sins committed by him; and therefore he desired to be *found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith*^h; the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed of God, and received by faith: if men, *Abraham*, or any other, were justified by works, they would have whereof to glory; but boasting is excluded in the article of justification, not by the law

of

^c Ephes. i. 7.

^d Luke ii. 14.

^e John. iii. 16. 1 John iv. 9, 10.

^f Heb. ii. 9.

^g 1 Cor. iv. 4.

^h Phil. iii. 9.

of works, but by the doctrine of faith. Justification cannot be by works, because they are imperfect; and if a justifying righteousness was by them, the death of Christ would be in vain, and the grace of God frustrated; but it is safest to conclude with the apostle, *that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law*¹; and who always ascribes justification to the free grace of God. In one place he says, *being justified by his grace*; and as if it was not strongly enough expressed, he elsewhere says, *being justified freely by his grace*²; grace moved God to send his Son to bring in everlasting righteousness, and Christ to work it out; God of his grace imputes it to his people, without works; and faith by which they receive it, is a free-grace-gift of his; and they that receive the gift of righteousness, receive abundance of grace in it and with it.

5. Was the apostle a pardoned sinner? of which there can be no question; this he was, not through any merit of his, but by the grace of God; *I obtained mercy*, says he, that is, pardoning grace and mercy, even though he had been *a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious*; and he expresses the abundance of grace displayed herein, *the grace of our Lord*, adds he, *was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is Christ Jesus*³: pardon of sin, though through the blood of Christ which was shed for it, yet is according to the riches of grace; all that are pardoned, are pardoned, not through any desertings of theirs, for all alike have sinned, and all the world is become guilty before God; and the law pronounces condemnation and death without mercy; if any are pardoned it is by the grace of God through the blood and sacrifice of Christ: not even for their repentance and humiliation; truly gracious souls do repent of sin, and are humble for it; but this is not the cause of their pardon; what of this kind is most genuine and evangelical, flows from a sense of pardon applied; first, souls look to Christ by faith for pardon through his blood, and then they mourn for sins pardoned; and never do they mourn better and more kindly, or are more ashamed and confounded because of their sins, than when they are most satisfied that God is pacified towards them for all that they have done: nor is it owing to their confession of sin, and departure from it, that any are pardoned. Such who have received the grace of God in truth, will confess their sins and depart from them, and such receive mercy, but not as the cause of it; but pardoning mercy with God is used as a motive to forsake sin, *Isai. lv. 7*. And though when men confess their sins, God is just and faithful to forgive them their sins, yet it is not on account of their confession, but on account of the blood of his Son, that his justice and faithfulness appear in the forgiveness of it. Forgiveness of sin is always attributed to the multitude of mercy in God, to the tender mercy of our God, to the riches of his grace, and to the covenant of his grace, in which this blessing is provided^m.

6. Was

¹ Rom. iii. 28.² Titus iii. 7. Rom. iii. 24.³ 1 Tim. i. 13, 14.

Heb. viii. 12. See Psal. li. 1. Luke i. 78. Ephes. i. 7.

6. Was the apostle regenerated, called, converted, sanctified? it was all by the grace of God; and so the regeneration, vocation, conversion and sanctification of every one. Regeneration is necessary to salvation; it is in this way God saves his people, and without it none can see nor enter into the kingdom of heaven; and this is *not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God*; of the will, power, and grace of God, who of his own will, of his sovereign good-will and pleasure, *begets men with the word of truth*^m: effectual vocation is of grace; the apostle ascribes his calling to grace, *when it pleased God—who called me by his grace*ⁿ; and whoever are called, are called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his (God's) purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began^o. Conversion is not by might or power of men, but by the Spirit of the Lord, by his mighty and efficacious grace; they are turned when he turns them, and not before. Sanctification is by the Spirit of God, and not by the will of men: if any are partakers of sanctification, and of the several parts of it, it is by the grace of God: have any repentance unto life unto salvation, which needeth not to be repented of, it is a grant from God, a gift of Christ, who is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel^p. God may give men space to repent, but if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will. No means whatever are sufficient of themselves; not the greatest mercies; if any thing, one would think, the goodness of God would lead men to repentance, but it does not; nor the severest judgments, as famine, pestilence, the sword, &c. For notwithstanding these, men return not to the Lord^q. The most awakening ministry, such as that of John the Baptist, who preached the doctrine of repentance, will not be effectual of itself, as facts shew; and indeed, unless God, by his powerful and efficacious grace, takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh, no man will repent of his sins: faith in Christ is the gift of God, and not of a man's self; it is given to men to believe; nor can any come to Christ, that is, believe in him, unless it is given him of the Father; and hope, when it is a good one, firm and sure and well founded, it is given, and given through grace^r; and the same may be said of every grace of the Spirit, and of every part and branch of sanctification, which is begun in grace, and is completed by it.

7. Did the apostle conduct his life, conversation, and walk, becoming the character he bore as an apostle, a minister, and a saint? this was by the grace of God, and to it he ascribes it; *our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards*^s; and

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^m John i. 13. James i. 18.ⁿ Gal. i. 15.^o 2 Tim. i. 9.^p Acts xi. 18. and v. 31.^q See Amos iv. 6—11.^r Ephes. ii. 8. 2 Thess. ii. 16.^s 2 Cor. i. 12.

it is *the grace of God* that teaches and enables the saints to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts*, and to *live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*¹; and if men persevere in faith and holiness unto the end, it is to be ascribed to the grace and power of God, by which *they are kept through faith unto salvation*. In a word, it is by the grace of God saints are what they are; by the grace of God they have what they have; and by the grace of God they do what they do. Wherefore,

1. Let us give the glory of all we have, are, and do, to the grace of God: the end God has in all he does, in things spiritual, and relative to our salvation, is *the glory of his grace*¹; and our concern should be, as much as in us lies, that this end be answered; and therefore not unto ourselves, to any works, merits, and deserts of ours, but to the grace of God, be all the glory.

2. Let us endeavour to hold fast the doctrines of grace, whereby the glory of the grace of God is maintained; for men may *fail of the grace of God*², that is, of the doctrines of grace; may come short of them, drop and deny them; for whoever seek for justification and salvation by the works of the law, are *fallen from grace*³, that is, from the doctrine of grace; for from the love and favour of God in his heart, and from the grace of God implanted in the hearts of his people, there can be no falling.

3. Let us take care that the *grace of God* is not received *in vain*⁴; that is, the gospel of the grace of God, which may be received and professed in vain, when the professors of it are not careful to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour, by a becoming life and conversation; and when they turn the grace of God, the doctrines of it into lasciviousness, and abuse it to wicked purposes.

4. Let us, such who are truly partakers of the grace of God, be encouraged to expect glory; for to whomsoever God gives grace he gives glory; these are inseparably connected together; *whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified*⁵: what we now are, we are by the grace of God; but *it doth not yet appear what we shall be*; but we should be looking, waiting for, and expecting the appearance of Christ, when *we shall be like him, and see him as he is*⁶.

S E R M O N

¹ Tit. ii. 11, 12.² Ephes. i. 6.³ Heb. xii. 15.⁴ Gal. v. 4.⁵ 2 Cor. vi. 1.⁶ Rom. viii. 30.⁷ 1 John iii. 2.

* The reason why this Sermon is placed among the Funeral Discourses, is, that it was first preached on account of the death of the Reverend Mr JOHN BRINE. But as he had left directions not to have any Funeral Sermon preached for him, the character then given of this great and good man was obliged to be but short: The following is the substance of what was then delivered:—I am debarred from saying so much of him, as otherwise I could do, we both having been
born:

S E R M O N XXXVI.

The faithful Minister of Christ crowned.

Occasioned by the Death of the Reverend Mr WILLIAM ANDERSON.

Preached September 20, 1767.

2 TIMOTHY IV. 6, 7.

I have fought a (or the) good fight, I have finished my (the) course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

THESE words are read unto you on account of the death of Mr WILLIAM ANDERSON, late minister of the gospel. It was the latter of these two verses the deceased took notice of on his death-bed, and repeated with a singular appropriation to himself, *henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, &c.* for which reason it is judged a proper subject of a funeral discourse. I have read both verses, because there is a close connection between them, and they depend one on another; and the sense of the one cannot be understood so fully and clearly without the other; and the beauty of the passage would otherwise be greatly lost. The apostle, in the preceding part of the chapter, gives a strict charge to *Timothy*, in a very solemn manner, before God and his son Jesus Christ, whom he describes as *judge of quick and dead*: the charge is, to perform

born in the same place, and myse'f some years o'der than him, and from his being among the first-fruits of my Ministry.—I might take notice of his natural and acquired abilities, his great understanding, clear light, and sound judgment in the doctrines of the gospel, and the great and deep things of God:—Of his zeal, skill and courage in vindicating important truths, published by him to the world, by which *he, being dead, yet speaketh*. In fine, I might observe to you, that his walk and conversation in the world, was honourable and ornamental to the profession which he made, and suitable to the character he sustained, as a Minister of Jesus Christ, all which endeared him to his friends —But I am forbid to speak any thing more.

form diligently the several parts of his ministerial office, the particulars of which you may read at your leisure; and to urge him the more strongly to attend to this charge, he suggests to him, that it was delivered by him as a dying man; and that this was the last time he might expect to have any charge, counsel, directions, and instructions from him; *for, says he, I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand*; phrases very significant, and very expressive of his death: the former of them represents his death as a sacrifice, *I am ready to be offered*, or to be poured forth as a libation or drink-offering; not by way of sacrifice, to make atonement for sin, either his own or others, this he knew was made by the sacrifice of Christ; but by way of martyrdom, as a victim to the cause of truth, for the sake of the gospel, and the confirmation of it: and if laying down his life would be of any service to the interest of Christ and his people, he was ready to do it with all cheerfulness and pleasure; as he elsewhere says^a, *yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all*. The latter phrase, *the time of my departure is at hand*; is an expression of death in a very familiar manner; a way of speaking used by our Lord, and by our apostle in another place^b; signifying, that death is not the annihilation of men, there is a state of existence after it; it is only a *departing* elsewhere: it is indeed a dissolution of the union between soul and body, an *analysis*, as the word in the text is, or a resolution of the body into its original principles; a *departure* out of one world into another; a removing, as it were, from one house to another, from an *earthly house of this tabernacle, to an house not made with bands, eternal in the heavens*; for which there is a *time* fixed, beyond which life cannot pass: and this the apostle, with respect to himself, knew was *at hand*; and which he might conclude, either from his years, or rather from the state and situation in which he was, being in bonds for the gospel, and having been brought before *Nero* a second time; and perhaps the sentence of death was passed upon him by that Emperor, and the dead warrant was come for his execution, or at least he soon expected it; or he might know his death was near, by an impulse upon his mind, and a particular revelation from God; and in the cheerful view of it he expresses the words first read. In which may be observed,

- I. A pleasing reflection on his past conduct, or on what through the grace of God he had been enabled to do. *First*, He had *fought a good fight*. *Secondly*, Had *finished his course*. *Thirdly* Had *kept the faith*.
- II. A delightful and comfortable prospect, and the firm belief he had of future happiness; which happiness is, *First*, Expressed by a *crown*, by

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a crown

^a Phil. ii. 17.^b John xiii. 1. Phil. i. 23.

a crown of *righteousness*, by a crown *laid up*, and that in particular for him. *Secondly*, Of which happiness he was assured, that it would be given him; and by whom, *the Lord, the righteous Judge*; and in what manner, by way of *gift*; and at what time, *at that day*. And, *Thirdly*, For the encouragement of common saints and believers in Christ to expect the same, he adds, *and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing*; the appearing of Christ. The apostle looked backward to what was past, and forward to what was to come. Here is,

I. A pleasing reflection on his past conduct, or on what through the grace of God he had been enabled to perform; this he could not do before, but now he could: a minister of Christ, whilst he is fighting with enemies, running his race, and discharging his trust, cannot stop, and is not at leisure to make such a reflection, nor can he with propriety do it; but when all is over, when the battle is fought, and the victory got, when the race is ended, and he is come to the goal, is in sight of the prize, and just stretching out his hand to receive the crown; and when he has faithfully discharged his trust, and is delivering it up; then he can, and not till then, with pleasure express himself in the following manner the apostle does.

First, That he had fought a good fight; or rather, *the good fight*, as in 1 Tim. vi. 12. or *the fight, that good fight*^c; for the article is doubled, which makes it the more emphatical. The present state of life is a state of warfare, in which every man is engaged: *is there not a warfare to man on earth?* as the words may be rendered, Job vii. 1. there is; especially for a christian man, whose warfare is as good as accomplished, as it most certainly will be; and more especially for a minister of the gospel, who is in peculiar circumstances, and is directed by peculiar means to *war a good warfare*, for which he has weapons peculiarly fitted and adapted: *the weapons of our warfare*, of us ministers, *are not carnal, but mighty through God*^d, to answer particular purposes; for the demolition of Satan's kingdom, and the spread and enlargement of the kingdom of Christ: every christian is a soldier; all the Lord's people are volunteers in Christ's service; *thy people shall be willing*, or volunteers, *in the day of thy power*, or in the day of thine army^e, when that is collected together and mustered; but a minister of the gospel is particularly called to endure, and he ought to *endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*^f. Ministers of the word are meant by the *valiant men of Israel*; who guard the *bed of Solomon*, the church, and are well accounted for that service; having *their loins girt with the girdle of truth*; *their feet shod*
with

^c Τοις αμαρτιας τοις καλον ηρωισματι.

^d 1 Tim. i. 18. ^e 2 Cor. x. 4.

^e Psalm cx. 3.

^f 2 Tim. ii. 3.

with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and every man his sword on his thigh^a; the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: and being thus armed, their business is to fight the battles of the Lord; to play the men for their God, and the cities of their God; for Christ, and for his interest: and, as they have enemies in common with other Christians, and by whom they are more especially assaulted, they fight with them.

1. With the corruptions of their own hearts, those *fleshy lusts which war against the soul*; striving against sin^b, or acting the part of an antagonist with it, even indwelling sin: and the great apostle Paul, though so holy a man, was not exempt from this combat. He found a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind^c: he found himself under a necessity of keeping under his body, the body of sin, and not to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts of it; but to keep a strict eye and hand over it, and to use a kind of severe discipline with it, lest whilst he preached to others, he himself should be cast away^d: but now the conflict was over; and he, being on the shores of eternity, saw those spiritual enemies, the Egyptians who had distressed him, all slain and dead, and found himself a triumphant conqueror over them.

2. With Satan, and his principalities and powers. None of the saints in this life are free from Satan's temptations; nay, generally speaking, the most eminent, fruitful, and useful of them, are most furiously assaulted by him. Joseph was a fruitful bough by a well; and the archers shot at him, and sorely grieved him, though his bow abode in strength^e. At those who are the most eminent for grace and usefulness, he lets fly his fiery darts thick and fast: the apostle Paul did not escape his buffetings; a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him^f; he had many combats with him: we wrestle, I and other ministers, as well as the rest of saints, against principalities, against powers^g, even the powers of darkness, Satan and his angels; and ministers have their peculiar temptations, with which they are assaulted by him; many are the difficulties, obstructions and impediments, he throws in their way; our apostle was not clear of them: we would have come to you, says he, writing to the Thessalonians (even I Paul) once and again, but Satan hindered us^h; but now the battle with him was over, and Satan was bruised under his feet.

3. With the world, the reproaches and persecutions of it, and a great fight of afflictions in it: and particularly ministers have to do with false teachers in it, who resist the truth, as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses. Some think such as these were the beasts at Ephesus the apostle fought with; men, comparable to beasts, wolves in sheeps clothing, which entered the flock, and did damage to it by their pernicious doctrines; with whom the apostle had disputes in the

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school

^a Cant. iii. 7, 8.^b Heb. xii. 4.^c Rom. vii. 23.^d 1 Cor. ix. 27.^e Gen. xlix. 22—24.^f 2 Cor. xii. 7.^g Ephes. vi. 12.^h 1 Thess. ii. 18.

school of *Tyrannus*, whilst he resided in those parts; though I see no reason to depart from the literal sense of the words: yet however it is certain, the apostle met with such men of corrupt minds, more or less, wherever he came; to whom he gave place, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with the churches; but now his contests and sharp disputes with them were at an end.

This fight is called a *good fight*, and elsewhere *the good fight of faith*: the fight of *faith*, because faith, as a doctrine, is what is fought for; the Philippians are exhorted by the apostle to *stand fast in one spirit, striving together*, with him and with one another, *for the faith of the gospel*^p; and, as *Jude's* phrase is, *contend earnestly*, even to an agony, *for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*^q; and faith, as a grace, is the weapon saints fight with, especially with Satan, *whom resist, stedfast in the faith*^r: and it is called a *good fight*, because it is in a good cause, the cause of God and truth; fought under a good captain, Christ, the captain of our salvation; under the banner of him, the Lord of hosts; and with good weapons, the whole armour of God, armour of proof, than which none is better, and which always issues well, it ends in victory. It is said of *Camillus*, that he fought many and *good fights*^s; that is, many famous battles; but none so famous as this, fought by our apostle and others; in which the christian combatants are always *conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Christ, who has loved them*.

Secondly, The apostle with pleasure observes, that he *finished his course*; which is what he had wished for, and cared not what he met with, so that he could but *finish it with joy*^t; and now it was done: by which may be meant, either the course of his life, of his days; *the time of his departure* was near; he was just *going the way of all the earth*, as *Josbua* expresses it; his *age was departed*, as *Hezekiah* says; his *days were extinct*, and the *grave was ready* for him, as *Job* thought was his case; his last sands were now dropping: or else his christian race, called a *course*, in allusion to the Grecian games, in which men ran races, and to which the apostle frequently alludes, particularly in *1 Cor. ix. 24.* &c. and in *Phil. iii. 13, 14. know ye not that they which run in a race, run all—so run, that ye may obtain*: the *stadium*, or race-plot, which reaches from the place of starting to the goal, in which the christian racer runs, is this world; what answers to the *white line* between the two terms, within which the racers were to run, and according to which they steered their course, that they might not go in and out, but move straight forward, is Christ; and who is the mark that is always to be kept in sight; and the prize run for, is *the bigb calling of God in Christ*, or the heavenly glory: or rather, by his *course* may be meant the course of his ministry; thus *John's* ministry is called his *course*, which he fulfilled; and

so

^p Phil. i. 27.^q Jude 3.^r 1 Peter v. 9.^s Πολλὰς ἔκ καλῶς ἀγωνίας ἠγωνίστατο,

Plutarch, in Vita Camilli, p. 129. a phrase similar to this in the text.

^t Act. xx. 24.

so the apostle calls his, *that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus**, and now it was just finishing; he was come to the end of his line, to Rome, where he was to bear his last testimony for Christ: all these three may be taken into the sense of the passage, the course of his life, his christian race, and the course of his ministry; for they were all finished together.

Thirdly, The apostle observes, with like pleasure, that he had *kept the faith*: meaning, not the grace of faith; for though that is an abiding grace, and cannot be lost; is much more precious than gold; because that may perish, but this cannot; yet it is not in any man's own keeping; it is preserved and supported by Christ, through his powerful mediation and intercession; who, as he prayed for Peter, so he prays for all his ministers, and all his saints, that their *faith fail not*; he is the *author*, and he is the *finisher* of it: nor is a profession of faith meant; for though believers ought, and they are encouraged to hold fast the profession of their faith, from the priesthood of Christ, and the promises of God; yet this is what formal professors may do, and the foolish virgins did; they took their lamps of profession, and trimmed them too, so that they looked bright and splendid as to outward show; and they held and kept them likewise until the coming of the bridegroom: rather the doctrine of faith is intended, the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to the trust of the apostle; a sacred depositum lodged in his hands, which he was careful to keep, and had kept; what he exhorted Titus and Timothy to do, he had done himself, namely, to *hold fast the faithful word*; to *hold fast the form of sound words*, and *keep the good thing committed to them*†; this he had done, and had not suffered the gospel to be wrenched out of his hands, neither through the force of furious persecutors, nor through the art and sophistry of false teachers: unless it can be thought his *fidelity* is meant; God, when he put him into the ministry, counted him *faithful*, having made him so; and through the grace of God, he maintained his integrity, kept his fidelity; which appeared in declaring the whole counsel of God, and in keeping back nothing that was profitable to the saints; and he continued *faithful unto death*; and now, *henceforth* λησπον, *it remained*, and nothing else remained for him to do, but to receive the *crown of life and righteousness*. Which brings me to consider,

II. The delightful and comfortable prospect, and firm belief the apostle had of his future happiness; which,

First, Is described by a *crown*, by a crown of *righteousness*, by a crown laid up, and that for *him* in particular.

1. It.

* Acts xiii. 25. and xx. 24.

† Acts xxiii. 11.

‡ Luke xxii. 32. Heb. xiii. 2.

‡ Titus i. 9. 2 Tim. i. 13, 14.

1. It is described by a *crown*; either, (1.) In allusion to royal crowns, such as are wore by kings and princes; and that partly for the glory of it, nothing being more glorious, more grand, and more august than a crown: and this is called a *crown of glory*, or a glorious crown; and indeed it excels all others in glory: crowns of gold are weighty things, but do not endure always; but the heavenly happiness is an *eternal weight of glory**: this will consist of a glory put upon the saints; upon their bodies, which, though sown in dishonour, will be raised in glory, and fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; and upon their souls, which will be possessed of perfect knowledge, purity and holiness: and of a glory that will be revealed in them, and that will be revealed to them, and beheld by them, even the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ; with whom they will appear in glory, and be for ever with him to behold his glory. And partly the heavenly happiness may be described by such a crown as suitable to the character of saints, who are made kings, as well as priests unto God by Christ; and who shall reign as such on earth, and that for the space of a thousand years, and then reign with him for ever in heaven†. Nor are they mere titular kings; they have not only the title of kings, but they have a kingdom, a kingdom of grace now, which cannot be moved, and which lies in *righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*: and they are heirs of another kingdom; the kingdom of glory, prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and though they were in their nature state beggars upon the dunghil, they are raised from thence to inherit the throne of glory; and thrones will be placed for them to sit upon; yea, every overcomer will sit down with Christ on his throne: and so likewise crowns are prepared for them; thus the four and twenty elders, the representatives of gospel-churches, and the members of them, are said to have *on their heads crowns of gold*‡. Or rather,

(2.) The future happiness is described by a crown, in allusion to crowns given to conquerors in the Grecian exercises; one of which was running of races, as well as fighting, wrestling, &c. to which the apostle manifestly alludes in 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25. *Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize: so run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.* The apostle justly observes, that in those races men strove for mastery; and indeed for that only, for victory; merely for the honour and glory of being conquerors: as for the crowns that were given them, they were nothing worth, being only garlands made of the branches or leaves of laurel, or of olive, or of pines, and sometimes of parsley-leaves, things of no intrinsic value; nor was it for the sake of those they ran, but for the honour annexed to them, of being crowned with them. But the crown which the christian

* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

† Rev. i. 6. and v. 10. and xx. 6. and xxii. 5.

‡ Rev. iv. 4.

tian racer, being a conqueror, obtains, is of real worth and value; sometimes expressed by the true riches, real and substantial; by an house, not made with hands; by an inheritance of the saints in light; by a city which has foundations; and by a kingdom and glory. The crown run for in the Grecian games was a *corruptible* one: the Corinthians knew full well what the apostle meant by a *corruptible crown*; for the *Isthmian* races were ran in their neighbourhood, and the presidents and judges ^γ were of their city; and they must be sensible of the propriety of this epithet *corruptible*, since the crowns given to the conquerors in those races, were made of nothing but parsley ^δ; some say, dried: hence we read of persons being ornamented and honoured with Corinthian parsleys ^ε, or parsley-crowns; whereas the heavenly happiness is an *incorruptible* crown: so when it is spoken of as an inheritance, it is said to be an *incorruptible* one ^ς; it cannot be corrupted itself; it lies where moth and rust corrupt not: nor can it be enjoyed by corrupt persons; *corruption* cannot *inherit incorruption*; in order to enjoy it, the dead will be *raised incorruptible*, and *this corruptible must put on incorruption* ^ζ, and be clear of every corruption, natural and sinful. Again, the crown the racers in the above exercises ran for, was a withering and fading one, as even those made of green and living parsley used in the Nemean exercises were ^δ; but the crown of eternal glory and happiness, is a *crown of glory that fadeth not away*; an *amarantbine* crown, as the word ^ς is, alluding to such crowns as were made of the herb *amarantbus*, which is immarcescible, and never fades, as its name imports ^ς; and of which crowns were made in the winter season: so when this happiness is signified by an inheritance, it is called an *inheritance that fadeth not away*; it is durable and lasting, yea, everlasting; and therefore expressed by everlasting habitations; by an house eternal; by an eternal inheritance; and by the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ: and for the same reason it is sometimes called the *crown of life* ^ς, because it is a crown for life, as all crowns are not, even for an eternal life; yea, is eternal life itself, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

2. The happiness the apostle had a view of, and faith in, is further described as a *crown of righteousness*; still alluding to the crowns given to conquerors in the Grecian exercises, such as were obtained in a lawful manner, and legally adjudged to them; for, as the apostle says elsewhere, alluding to the same custom, *if a man strive for masteries*, who shall have the honour of being declared the conqueror,

^γ Pausan. Corinth. five l. 2. p. 88.

^δ Diodor. Sicul. l. 16. p. 470. Plutarch. Sympof. l. 5.

problem 3. p. 676. & Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Diet. l. 5. c. 8.

^ε Οαλληνοι Κορινθιοις σελισιοις, Pindar. Nemean. ode 4.4. Vid. Olymp. ode 13.2. & Isthmion. ode 2.1. & ode 8.6.

^ς 1 Pet. i. 4.

^ζ 1 Cor xv. 50, 52, 53.

^ς Pausan. Arcad. five l. 8. p. 532. Flin. l. 19. c. 8. Tertulian.

de Corona, c. 7.

^ς Το αμαραντινον της δεξας τριφασου, 1 Pet. v. 4.

^ς Summa ejus natura in nomine est appellato, quoniam non marcescat, Flin. Nat. Hist. l. 21. c. 8.

^ς James i. 12. Rev. ii. 10.

conqueror, *yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully*⁵; if he used any illicit methods to obtain the prize, when detected, even after the prize was declared for him, he was disgraced, and the true and right conqueror, even though he might be dead, had the crown adjudged to him⁶; such strict justice was observed in those exercises; hence the crowns thus distributed were called *σφαιροειδεις*⁷, “crowns wreathed or platted by justice:” in allusion to which, the apostle calls the heavenly happiness *a crown of righteousness*; it is what the saint comes at in a legal manner, what he has a just right unto; it is a kingdom his heavenly Father has bequeathed unto him; it is an inheritance he is born heir apparent to, and for which he has a meetness through the grace of God; and his title to it lies in the righteousness of Christ: no unrighteous man can inherit this crown and kingdom; and he must have a better righteousness than his own, or he will never be put into the possession of it; wherefore our apostle desired to be found in Christ, *not having on his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ*⁸; by which being justified, such become heirs of eternal life, are intitled to it, and shall most surely possess it. Moreover, though this crown is not given for the fidelity and integrity of those that fight and run, and keep the faith; yet it is the consequence thereof, and follows thereon, according to the divine promise, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life*⁹. Besides, this epithet of *righteousness*, may express the state and condition of the happy crowned ones; that it is a state of purity, holiness and righteousness; a state in which none but *righteousness dwells*, or righteous persons, who are made righteousness itself in the Lord; and so is called the *crown of righteousness*, just as it is the *hope of righteousness*¹⁰; that is, a state of righteousness which is hoped and waited for.

3. This happiness is further described as *laid up*; laid up in the covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things, and sure; where all grace and all spiritual blessings are secured for the saints, and their glory also; it cannot be said how great that goodness is, which is there laid up for them: this crown is also laid up in the hands of Christ the mediator; in whose hands the saints themselves are, and are safe; and where all fulness of grace is treasured up for them, and their life of glory is hid and preserved: it is also laid up in heaven, and is the same with the *hope laid up in heaven*¹¹, that is, the heavenly glory hoped for; and the *inheritance reserved in heaven*¹²: things that are laid up, are hid and out of sight; the glories of another world are invisible; they are *things that are not seen and hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*¹³ and

⁵ 2 Tim. ii. 5.

⁶ Instances of which may be seen in Pausan, Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 520.

⁷ Πικρα σφαιροειδεις αμα λατοιδα σφαιροις. Pindar. Nemeon. ode 9. 11.

⁸ Phil. iii. 9.

¹ Rev. ii. 10.

^m Gal. v. 5.

ⁿ Col. i. 5.

^o 1 Peter i. 4.

^p 2 Cor. iv. 18. Rom. viii. 24, 25.

and they are also safe. Crowns are generally laid up in places of great strength and safety; the crown of *England* is secured in the tower of *London*; though as strong a place, and as well guarded as that is, the crown was near being stolen and carried off in the last age: but the crown of life and glory is laid up *where thieves do not break through, nor steal*⁹: and this crown is laid up for particular persons; *for me*; and me, and me; for all the vessels of mercy afore prepared for glory; for all chosen in Christ to holiness and happiness, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus; for all that love him, and love his appearing.

Secondly, The assurance the apostle had of his enjoying this happiness thus described; from whom he expected it would be bestowed upon him; in what way and manner, and at what time.

1. The person who, he was well assured, would give it to him, is Christ, who is described by *the Lord, the righteous Judge*; he is *Lord* of all, Lord of lords, and King of kings; who sets them up, and puts them down at his pleasure: and he who has the disposal of kingdoms, crowns and scepters, the apostle believed would give to him a crown of life and immortality: he who upon his ascension was made or declared Lord and Christ, and constituted head over all things to the church, and fills all in all; fills all the members of it with gifts and grace, and crowns them with loving-kindness and tender mercies; he had in his hands a crown of glory to bestow on him: he whom *David* could call *my Lord*, and *Thomas*, *my Lord and my God*, the apostle knew he had an interest in as such; and therefore *counted all things but loss*, says he, *for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*¹: and from this his interest in him, no doubt he concluded he should receive the crown from him; whom he also considered, for his further encouragement to believe it, as a *righteous Judge*: this character best agrees with Christ; *for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*²; he has appointed him to be *Judge of quick and dead*³; which office he will execute at his appearing, when the crown will be given, ver. 1. and for which office he is abundantly qualified, being God omniscient and omnipotent: he is omniscient; he knows all persons and things; he is the living Word, before whom all things are naked and open, with whom we have to do, or to whom we must give an account; he has no need that any man should testify of men to him, for he knows what is in men; and therefore can bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, and judge the secrets of all men: and he is the Almighty, the Lord God omnipotent that reigns, and so is able by his power to raise the dead at his coming; to summon all nations before him; to separate one sort of men from another; to pass the decisive sentence on them, and execute it: and he is a righteous Judge; *Jesus Christ the righteous*⁴, the Judge of the whole earth, who will do right; who will judge

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⁹ Matt. vi. 20.² Phil. iii. 8.³ John v. 22.⁴ Acts x. 42.¹ John i. 1.

the world in righteousness, and the people with equity: as in the execution of all his offices, so in this, *righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins* *. Now from the purity, justice and integrity of Christ as a Judge, the apostle had no doubt of the crown of righteousness being given him by him; and here also the apostle alludes to the Grecian exercises, in which crowns were given to the conquerors in strict justice †: at first they had only one judge of them, afterwards the number was increased; but always care was taken that men of strict justice and uprightness were chosen into that office, who would pass a righteous sentence, and give the crown to whom it of right belonged; and if any were found tardy in this matter, and gave it wrong, by an appeal to an higher court of judicature, if found guilty, they were severely mulcted ‡; it was always from the judges § the conqueror received the crown.

2. The manner in which the apostle expected to have the crown; by way of gift; *which the righteous Judge shall give me*: not by way of merit; he knew his best works were not meritorious of eternal life; that what he did was not in his own strength, but by the grace of God; that there is no proportion between works of righteousness done by the best of men, and the crown of life; that the purest services of the saints, which are their sufferings for Christ, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in them; he knew that though he fought and ran, *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy* †: the crown of life is promised as a gift, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life* ‡; the heavenly kingdom is what it is the Father's good pleasure to give; and eternal life is the free gift of God through Christ; Christ gives grace, and he gives glory; he has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him; and he does give it to all his sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him. Some translate the words of our text, *which the righteous judge shall render unto me* §; and so they may be translated without any contradiction to the crown being a free gift; for that will be rendered, not as the reward of mens works, or according to their deserts, but as the fruit of Christ's righteousness, satisfaction, and atonement; so our salvation, and all the parts of it, are both in a way of grace, and in a way of justice: God is a just God, and a Saviour; just, and yet the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; and just and faithful to forgive sin, and cleanse from all unrighteousness; justification, though by the free grace of God, yet being through the righteousness of Christ, is according to the strict justice of God; and pardon of sin, though according to the riches of grace, is an act of justice; mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, meet together in the salvation of sinners,

* Isai. xi. 5. † Hence the sentence of those judges is called *κρίσις*, Pindar. Olymp. ode 3. 2. ‡ Vid. Schmid. Prolegomena in Olympion. p. 12, 13. § Called *ἀλλοτριότητα*. Vid. Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 9. c. 31. † Rom. ix. 16. ‡ Rev. ii. 10. § *Ἀποδοσιν*, reddet, Grotius.

sinners, in their grace and in their glory : with respect to them, it is of grace ; with respect to Christ, and to his satisfaction and righteousness, it is of justice ; and so it is given and rendered according to both.

3. The time when the apostle expected the crown, *at that day* ; a phrase used by him in other places in this epistle, as in chap. i. 12, 18. that famous day, that well-known day, looked for by all the saints ; even the day of Christ's appearing to take his kingdom, and to judge the dead ; which is the day of his second coming, as is clear from *ver. 1.* then he, in his whole person, soul and body, he believed, should enjoy the everlasting happiness, signified by the crown of righteousness.

Thirdly, The apostle adds, by way of encouragement to all believers in Christ, and lovers of him in common, that this crown was laid up for, and would be given to, *not him only*, and such as he, eminent for gifts and usefulness, but *all them also who love his appearing* ; the appearing of Christ. In this there is a difference between the crown given to the runner in the Grecian races, the apostle has a respect unto ; that crown was given to one only, this to many ; of which the apostle thus speaks, *Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all ; but one receiveth the prize ?* but they which run in the christian race, every runner therein, every one that is tried and endures temptation, every one that is faithful unto death, every one that endures to the end, every persevering saint, every overcomer, receives the crown of life ; every one that loves the appearing of Christ, be their gifts, their grace, their usefulness, what they may. It will be proper to inquire,

1st, What is meant by the *appearing* of Christ ; his second appearance is intended : he *appeared once in the end of the world* ; in the end of the Jewish world, their state, civil and ecclesiastic, when he became incarnate, *to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself* ; which having done, he is gone to heaven again ; where he indeed *appears in the presence of God* for his people, as their advocate and intercessor ; but *to them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation* : and this is the appearing which is here meant, when he will come to *judge the quick and dead* ; which will be *at his appearing and his kingdom*, as says the apostle in *ver. 1.* of this chapter ; then the dead in Christ will arise, and their bodies be united to their souls, Christ will bring with him : and the living saints will be changed ; and both will be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and this will be a virtual judgment of them, and a declaring them to be the happy persons to whom the crown belongs : as there will be also a judging of the wicked then found alive, who will perish in the general conflagration, when the earth, and all therein, shall be burnt up ; and when Christ will enter upon his personal reign and kingdom, which will continue a thousand years ; at the close of which all the wicked will be raised, and

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stand, small and great, before the judgment-seat, and will be adjudged to the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. This appearance of Christ will be a glorious one; his first appearance was mean; he had no form nor comeliness desirable by men; he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in the form of a servant: but his second appearance will be without sin, and any sinless infirmities; it will be a glorious one: he will come *in his own glory*; in the glory of his divine nature, the perfections of which will be gloriously displayed; and in the glory of his human nature, being in it crowned with glory and honour; and in the glory of his office, as mediator: and *in his Father's glory*; the same with his own, as a divine person, as the only begotten of the Father; and clothed as a Judge, with authority and power by him, to judge the quick and dead; and *in the glory of his holy angels*^c, as attendants on him, and ready to obey his commands: this appearance of Christ will be personal; he himself in person shall descend from heaven; not by another, by a deputy, or by the effusion of the Spirit, but he himself in person; in like manner as he went up to heaven at his ascension, will he come down from thence at his second coming: and this appearance will be visible; he will be seen in the air by all the risen and living saints; and he will be seen in the clouds of heaven; *every eye shall see him*^e, even all the kindreds of the earth.

2dly, This appearance of Christ is to be loved, and is loved by some: to some indeed it will be the great and dreadful day of the Lord; which will burn like an oven, and consume the wicked root and branch; on sight of him, and even of the sign of the Son of man in heaven, all the tribes of the earth will mourn; and persons of the highest rank and class will flee to rocks and mountains, to hide them from his face, the great day of his wrath being come, and at which also the devils will tremble; but he shall appear to the joy of saints, when others will be ashamed and confounded.

Now such may be said to love his appearing, who pray for his appearing and kingdom, or that his kingdom may come, and he appear in his glory; who look earnestly and wisely for the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who long for it, and hasten in their affections, desires, and petitions for it; and say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly;" as it shews love to a man and his presence, when one most pressingly desires it, and most earnestly and ardently wishes and longs for it: and there are many reasons to be given, why the appearance of Christ should be loved by his saints.

1. Because then they shall see the person whom they love, in all his beauty, glory and excellencies; now *wobom having not seen, they love*^b; they have not seen him with their bodily eyes, and yet having heard and known much of him, their affections are towards him; but then they shall see him in the flesh, and with their eyes behold him, and not another: now sometimes they lose sight of him

^c Luke ix. 26.^e Rev. i. 7.^b 1 Peter i. 8.

him in a spiritual sense; he withdraws himself from them, and they know not where he is, and they go in quest of him, saying to one and another, *saw ye him whom my soul loveth*¹? but now he will be always in view, and they will see him, of whom they have often said, *whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee*²!

2. Because they will then see him who has so loved them; so loved them, as to become incarnate for them; so loved them, as to lay down his life for them; so loved them, as to wash them from their sins in his blood; so loved them, as to bear their sins, and all the punishment due unto them, to suffer, the just for the unjust; so loved them, as to be delivered into the hands of justice and death for their offences, and to rise again for their justification; the appearance and sight of such a person, must needs be loved by those to whom he has shewn so much love.

3. Because his appearance will be a glorious one, as before observed, and therefore to be looked for gladly, to be loved and longed for; *looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*³.

4. Because when Christ shall appear, his saints shall appear with him; their souls will be brought along with him, and their bodies will be raised, and both re-united, and they all appear in glory⁴ with him, with a glory both on their souls and bodies: *when he shall appear, they shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is*⁵; see him in his glory, and be conformed unto him; and changed into the same image and likeness, so far as they are capable of; and then shall they be completely satisfied, and not before; *as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness*⁶: and it is not to be wondered at, that such persons should love the appearing of Christ.

5. Because the saints at Christ's appearing shall not only see him, and be like him, but they shall receive much from him; much grace they have received from him now, but they will then receive it in its full perfection; wherefore they are exhorted to *gird up the loins of their mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto them at the revelation of Jesus Christ*⁷: and when also they shall receive from him the crown of life and righteousness; for *when the chief shepherd shall appear, not only the under-shepherds that are faithful, but even all the sheep themselves, that hear the voice of Christ, and follow him, shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away*⁸.

6. Because then the saints will be put into the possession of their complete salvation; for *to them that look for him, will Christ appear the second time without sin unto salvation*⁹: when he came the first time, salvation was wrought out by him for them, he became the author of it; and it is brought home to them by

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¹ Cant. iii. 1.

² Psalm lxxiii. 25.

³ Titus ii. 13.

⁴ Col. iii. 4.

⁵ 1 John iii. 2.

⁶ Psalm xvii. 15.

⁷ 1 Peter i. 13.

⁸ 1 Peter v. 4.

⁹ Heb. ix. 28.

the Spirit of God at conversion, and applied unto them, and they are shewn their interest in it; but as yet are not in the full enjoyment of it; though *now is their salvation nearer than when they first believed*, and they are *kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time*¹; that is, when Christ shall appear, and reveal it to them, and put them in the full possession of it.

7. The appearing of Christ is to be loved by the saints, because they shall be with him, and be for ever with him, and never part more: here they have a visit from Christ now and then, and this but short; he is like a *wayfaring man that tarries for a night*; but when he shall come again from heaven, with all the saints, the dead raised, and the living changed, they shall be caught up to meet him, *and so shall they be ever with the Lord*²; with which words they may comfort one another now, whilst they are looking and longing for the appearing of Christ.

Thus have I considered this passage of scripture, as briefly as I well could, at the request of the surviving relative of the deceased; of whom it may be expected I should give some account: his person, doctrine, and manner of life, were known to many, if not most of you; some things I may be able to say, not known by you, or but by a few.

The Reverend Mr WILLIAM ANDERSON was called by the grace of God under my ministry, between *forty* and *fifty* years ago; for I find on search, that he was baptized by me on a profession of his faith, *Jan. 1, 1723-4*, near *forty-four* years ago; and soon after was received into fellowship with this church, with which he walked very honourably and comfortably as a private member for several years: and in process of time, it being perceived and thought by some that he had a gift for public usefulness, he was called by the church to the exercise of it; and after sufficient trial, he was regularly sent forth to preach the gospel, where God in his providence might call him; and for some time he preached occasionally among the churches, with good liking and approbation; and in a course of time, I am not able to say exactly how long, he was invited by a small destitute people in *Westminster*, to preach unto them; which he accordingly did, to their great satisfaction; and after some time they chose him to be their pastor, and gave him a call to take upon him that office, which he accepted of; and was ordained, *May 12, 1743*, upwards of *twenty-four* years ago. This charge he undertook, not with any sinister and worldly views, the people being few, and for the most part poor, and were far from being capable of providing a proper maintenance for him; and certain it is, he left a very *lucrative* employment to serve them, and the interest of Christ among them, on which

¹ Rom. xiii. 11 ² Peter i. 5.

³ 1 Thess. iv. 17, 18.


which his heart was fet; and it pleased God to bless his labours, both for edification and conversion, so that there was an increase both of audience and members; and he laid himself out indefatigably to serve them, both as to their temporals and spirituals: by his means, and through his interest, a commodious house for worship was built, which they greatly wanted; and he also brought them to be one of the churches in the *fund*, for the assistance of poor ministers and churches in the country; in short, he was the instrument of raising them from a low and mean condition, to a greater degree of credit and reputation among the churches than they ever had before: and thus they went on comfortably and harmoniously for many years; but of late a *sad retaliation* has been made him for all his work and labour of love! the *walls* of that house, built by him, through his interest, and the *pulpit* in it, out of which he was kept, will be standing witnesses against the *people* that meet in the one, and the *man* that fills the other, for their *unparalleled ingratitude* to him; I say, *unparalleled*, for I am persuaded, that neither the memory of any man living, nor perhaps the history of any age, can furnish an instance similar to this case; that a worthy minister of the gospel should be divested of his office, and turned out of his place, when no charge, neither of *immorality* nor of *false doctrine*, was laid against him. Such hard usage did this faithful minister of Christ meet with! these were the wounds he received in the house of those he once thought his friends; the pain of which went to his heart, and the anguish thereof drank up his spirits. Nevertheless he ceased not from his Master's work; and which he performed with more vigour, comfort and cheerfulness, than could have been expected, among those few that cleaved unto him, and abode with him; and so he continued till his last illness seized him, which it seems was in this pulpit a few weeks ago. This affliction he bore with great patience; though his bodily pains were sometimes so great, as caused him to cry out in the extremity of them, and to pray and desire his friends to pray for him, that the God of patience would give him more: not a murmuring word against the hand of the Lord was heard from him throughout the whole; nor did any worldly concerns, or any others, distress his mind; nor was the enemy of souls suffered to buffet him, which he thought a great mercy. He expressed the inward joy and comfort he felt, to various persons at different times: to one, that the doctrines he had preached to others, he now found to be the comfort of his soul:—to another, that he saw Christ to be his foundation, and doubted not of his interest in him; and in the presence of several declared, that Christ was the only bottom he had to rest on; and that he was precious to him, had been, and would be so:—to another, that the indissoluble union between Christ and his people, was his great support; but wanted to find himself in a more waiting posture:—to another, who said to him, Sir, you have almost finished your course; he answered, Yes; but I know, said he, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which he spoke.

spoke with an emphasis: —to another, What, my dear child, my joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord! this he spoke with an extasy of joy —to another, that saw his lips move, and asked him what he said, his answer was, though I am so unworthy in myself, yet I am complete in him; meaning in Christ: —at another time he was heard to say, “*Is Ephraim a dear son? is he a pleasant child?*” “can it be that he is a pleasant child?” he answered, yes, he is;” and with an appropriation to himself.—A few hours before his death, he thus expressed himself, in the words of the church, in the hearing of many friends, *let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine; I say, is better than wine:* a ministering brother coming into the room, and to his bed-side at the same time, he said to him, “I am going home;” to which the brother replied, I perceive you are, and going apace; are you comfortable? he said, “I am; “God is with me, and will be with me.”—About an hour before he died, he uttered these words; “my God, my God, my God in Christ!” Then, Sir, said a stander by, you have enough; he replied, —“I have.” Thus died this worthy servant of Christ, who is now entered into the joy of his Lord, and into his rest; and you, his mournful widow, may dry up your tears, and rather rejoice that he is gone; where he is free from all trouble and distress; where there is no more pain, no more sorrow and crying, no more death; where he is delivered from, and is out of the reach of every open enemy, and every faithless friend; and where he enjoys uninterrupted communion with God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and with angels and glorified saints. And as for you, his little flock who cleaved unto him, and followed him in his adversity, as I understand you design to keep together to see what the Lord will do with you, be encouraged so to do; for though you may be saying, *By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small;* the God of *Jacob* can raise you up; and *multiply* you, that ye be not *few*; and *glorify* you, that ye be not *small*; sometimes from small beginnings great things arise: if God should send you a pastor, to feed you with knowledge and understanding, which I perceive you have some hope of; if God should bless his labours, the place of your tent may be enlarged, and the curtains of your habitations may be stretched forth, and God may increase you with men as a flock; frequently meet together, pray earnestly and constantly, who knows but God may have a blessing in store for you? To conclude; since we have all in one shape or another a warfare to war, a race to run, and a trust to discharge; let us manfully fight till the warfare is accomplished; and run, with patience and diligence, the remainder of the race set before us; and faithfully perform the trust reposed in us; that when all is done and over, we may enjoy the crown of righteousness, which is in common provided for all that love the appearing of Christ.

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