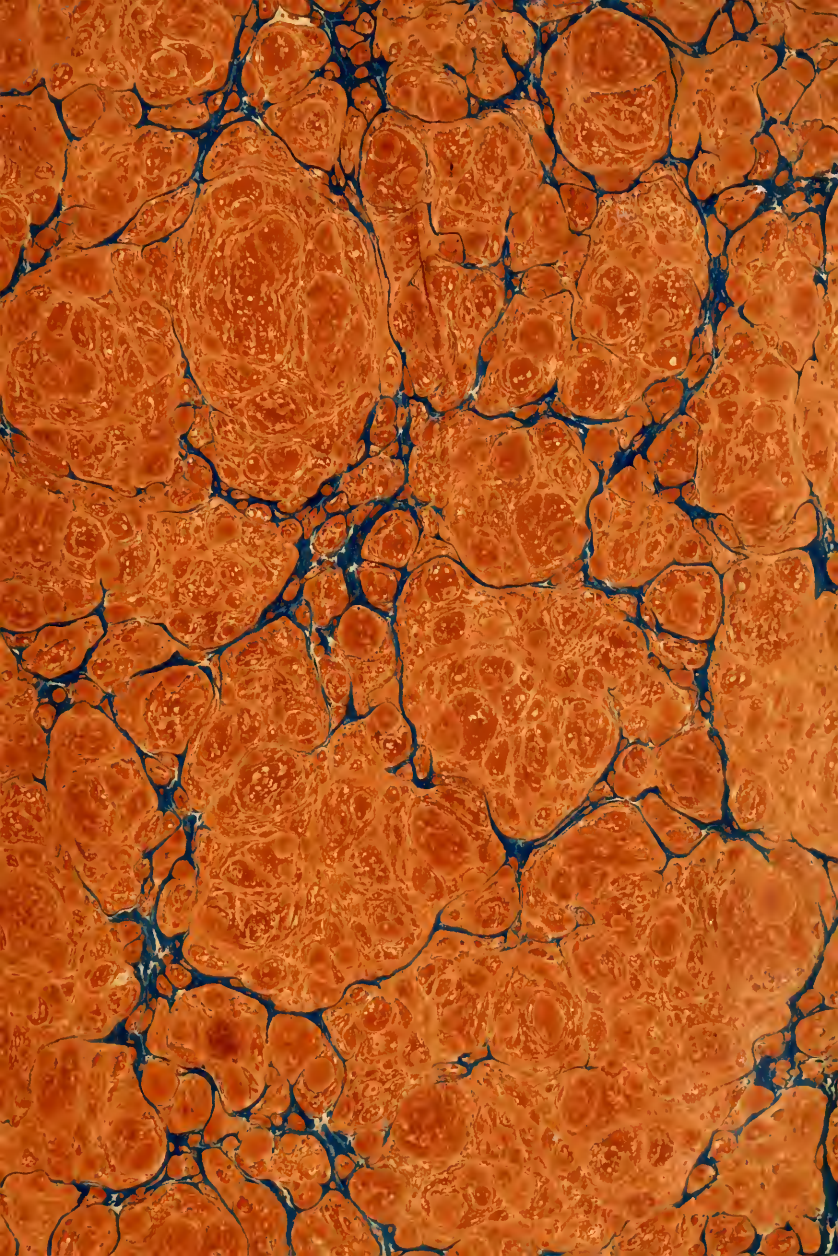


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COLLECTION
OF SUNDRY
BOOKS, EPISTLES AND PAPERS,

WRITTEN BY
JAMES NAYLER;

WITH
AN IMPARTIAL RELATION

OF THE
MOST REMARKABLE TRANSACTIONS RELATING TO HIS LIFE,

Dan. 11. 35. And some of them of understanding shall fall to try them, and to purge,
and to make them white, &c.
Micha. 7. 8. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, when I fall I shall rise, &c.
Psal. 130. 4. With the Lord is forgiveness, that he may be feared.

CINCINNATI:

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.....
1829.



EPISTLE TO THE SERIOUS READER.

Containing an impartial account of the most remarkable transactions relating to

JAMES NAYLER.

SINCE the Lord, our most gracious God was pleased, in great mercy and love to my soul, to open my eyes and make known his living truth, in the light and spirit of his dear son Christ Jesus, shining in my heart and soul, by the dawning and breaking forth of the day and power of Christ, the darkness (which I had been under with many more) came to be dispelled, and the clouds of ignorance and unbelief dispersed in a great measure. I say, after I had experienced these blessed effects of God's visitation by this day-spring and spiritual appearance of Christ, his light and grace, I had many deep considerations of the work of the Lord, and sincere desires of the prosperity thereof in my own heart, and truly loved the company and society of the faithful and upright in heart, who walked in the simplicity of truth; and both before and after some degrees of a living testimony were given me to bear for our Lord Jesus Christ, I made serious observation of the sober conversations, conduct and testimony of my elder brethren, whom I tenderly loved and esteemed in Christ. And by the early notice and observation I took of matters relating to the truth and to my friends and brethren, they had the deeper impression upon my spirit, and became the more memorable, the better and longer to be remembered; especially matters most remarkable and of greatest importance, wherein our standing and steadfastness in the grace of God and faith of Christ were concerned. And when I saw any one backslide, or turn aside, or err from

the same, it became matter of sorrow and great grief to my soul, yet in that the Lord gave me to believe and understand he had and should have a faithful people, family, church and house, built upon a sure foundation, the rock *Christ Jesus*, which the gates of Hell should not prevail against; and that I should see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. This faith in the Lord's power and work, and hope in his mercy and goodness, became a stay to my mind and anchor to my soul though manifold afflictions, sorrows and trials, as it hath been to many more of his faithful servants and witnesses, who have finished their course with joy and ended their days in peace. Even in our times since we were a people many such have been who in derision were first termed *Quakers*, because they trembled at the word and power of the Lord God.

I have long been satisfied that the truth is unchangeable, and will continue truth still, how many soever oppose, gainsay or turn from it, as many have done in our times, as in the primitive christian days; there were then backsliders, apostates, and some turned bitter adversaries, who crucified to themselves the Lord of life afresh, and put him to open shame and reproach. There were some that were said to tread under foot the Son of God (by their contempt against him, his light and spirit) doing despite to his spirit of grace, and turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. Many also there were whose condition the apostle lamented, who turned into corrupt liberty, to glory in their shame, to mind earthly things more than heavenly, and these were enemies to the cross of Christ, and whose end was destruction, Phil. 3. 18, 19. Others caused divisions, rents, schisms and factions, and set up sect-masters, even among the primitive churches; against such the holy apostles gave divers weighty cautions and testimonies. Many ways, wiles and devices has satan, the old adversary, to beguile, seduce, and lead away captive the unwatchful, unwary, unstable and unfaithful souls: howbeit, some prodigals and backsliders (not altogether hardened in sin) have returned unto the fathers house, and some who have fallen under temptations have risen again, when they have been hum-

bled under affliction, chastisement and judgment from God, and in the midst of judgment he has remembered mercy, that he might be feared.

And although there has been a falling away of some, through the subtle working of satan in his various transformings, so as that wicked one, the son of perdition, that spiritual Judas and betrayer, that man of sin might be the more revealed and made manifest. And although some have been betrayed, veiled, clouded, captivated in their understandings, and misled for a time by that betraying, false and treacherous spirit, yet where they have not been wholly dead, but some life and ground of sincerity remaining, some tender desires toward God have sprung up, and he hath opened their eyes, to see and escape the snare of the adversary, so as such have not been led nor drawn back into perdition, to be utterly lost; but according to the mercy of God and riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, have been restored, and obtained salvation through faith and patience in him, and been delivered from the snares of satan and out of their afflictions, tribulations, manifold trials and temptations.

As to our early friend and brother *James Nayler*, his failure was not into the common pollutions or enormities of the world, for against them he testified in conversation and doctrine; although some time after he came to London, an hour of deep temptation and heavy sufferings befel him, which were suffered to try the Lord's people in that day; and their persecutors also who made a profession and shew of Religion and Christianity, but not in sincerity, when their severer practices of persecution manifested the contrary.

Some more particular account I may give from what I have really observed and understood relating to him, his testimony, temptation and restoration.

He came forth early in a good degree of brightness, in a Christian testimony in behalf of Christ Jesus his universal light and grace, being accordingly of a very sober conversation, and a strict self-denying religious example, and appeared well read in Holy Scripture.

His imprisonment at Appleby in Westmoreland, 1652, and his testimony for truth therein, and upon his exami-

nation at their sessions was much taken notice of in that country; and he was instrumental in convincing divers enquirers after the way of truth in and about Strickland, in the same county. He was enabled by the light and spirit of Christ to vindicate his truth and gospel, and zealously to contend for the faith thereof, as delivered to the Saints against opposers and gainsayers in those days, Priests and persecutors, &c.

By a good measure of divine illumination and inward experience, he knew the ministration of judgment and mercy, law and gospel, preferring the ministration of the *spirit* above that of the *letter*; and accordingly preached to turn people's minds to the light, the life, the spirit and power of Christ in them, out of all empty forms, carnal observations, dead literal preachings and professions, where the power of Godliness was or is denied. In these matters the said J. N. was in measure gifted, with demonstration of the spirit of Christ while the light shined upon his Tabernacle, before he was clouded and hurt.

Some time after I was convinced, and knew the truth, I heard him at sundry meetings in Westmoreland, and Sedberg in Yorkshire, 1653. At one meeting at Drawwell I remember, he declaring upon a mysterious place in the Revelation, he proceeded not to explain the passage, but made a stop, seeming to give a check to himself, intimating, that he would not stretch or go beyond his measure, according to that saying of the Apostle, 2 Cor. x. 13. *But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even to you. Ver. 14. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, &c.*

I took great notice of this passage, and I truly wish that all who have a part in the same Ministry may take good notice of the same, so as not to stretch themselves beyond their own measures given them of God.

Afterwards he came to London, 1655, where Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough had been some time before him, and by their Ministry convinced many of the blessed truth, and turned them to the light and worship

of God in spirit and truth. The said J. N. for some time had a service in the Ministry and vindication of the truth, by his preaching and divers books written by him, and was for some time admired and much followed by many.

And some too much glorying in, and admiring the said J. N. above his brethren, tended to his hurt and loss, as soon after followed; insomuch that he came to be ensnared through the subtil adversary's getting advantage upon him, by means of some persons, who too much gloried in him, and endeavoured to exalt him above his brethren; and also to cause division between him and them: for so it came to pass, according as J. N. related to me some time after the Lord had restored him out of his bewildered and suffering state, that a few forward, conceited, imaginary women, especially one Martha Simods and some others, under pretence of some divine motions, grew somewhat turbulent, and interrupting the Ministry and service of the said F. Howgill and E. Burrough in some public meetings, they reproving her and her party, and manifesting their dislike thereto, seeing their forwardness, indiscretion and hurt they did in some meetings, interrupting the public service wherein those faithful and able Ministers, F. H. and E. B. were engaged. Whereupon the said Martha and another woman went and made their complaint to James Nayler, against the said F. H. and E. B. endeavouring to set him against them, and to draw a judgment from him against them; which not obtaining from him (for he was afraid to pass judgment upon his brethren as they desired.) Whereupon the said Martha fell into a passion in a kind of mourning, or weeping, and bitterly crying out with a mournful shrill voice, saying, "I looked for judgment, but behold a cry!" and with that cried aloud in a passionate lamenting manner, which so entered and pierced poor James Nayler, that it smote him down into so much sorrow and sadness, that he was much dejected in spirit or disconsolate, fears and doubting then entered him, that he came to be clouded in his understanding, bewildered, and at a loss in his judgment. Thus, poor man, he stood not in his dominion (as he should have done)

over that dividing, false transforming spirit, which sought to sow discord among brethren; which for a time caused some estrangement and distance in him from his brethren and true friends.

The substance of the foregoing relation, how J. N. came to be ensnared and to such a loss, he himself gave me the account, as we were walking together in the field at Great Strickland in Westmoreland, 1657. After we had both been at a meeting of Friends on Strickland-Heath. And this was after he was revived, and restored to a measure of good understanding and judgment, and inward sense also of the great mercy and love of God therein, whereby his first love was renewed in him towards his faithful friends and brethren in Christ.

Before we parted that time the said J. N. and I had a meeting with some Friends in a Friend's house near Strickland, where he very much exhorted them to love and unity (against division and discord) much pressing them to charity, and to have fervent charity or love among themselves, to put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness, &c. Which was very seasonable.

But to return to give some further hints of the sad and hard consequences which followed the said J. N.'s falling under the spirit of those persons who had complained and cried to him for judgment against his brethren. After some time they cried him up publickly in divers places, bowing and kneeling before him, magnifying him with high appellations: for which their bowing and falling down before him, the example of the Shunamite falling down at the feet of Elisha was pleaded; though that was in a different case and condition, (2 Kings iv. 27, 37.) and no just parallel.

When many of us who were then sufferers in divers Prisons, heard of and understood their madness and superstitious behaviour toward J. N. we were surprised and grieved that he suffered them so to follow and expose him, to make a fool and gazing-stock of him, without reprehending them, which gave his adversaries and persecutors the chief advantage against him upon his examination before the committee of Parliament. His forbearing in due time to testify against the folly of those

his followers, who magnified him, was his great weakness and loss of judgment, and brought the greater suffering upon him, poor man! Though when he was delivered out of the snare, he did condemn all their wild and mad actions toward him, and judged himself also: Howbeit, our adversaries and persecutors unjustly took occasion thereupon, to triumph and insult, and to reproach and roar against Quakers, tho' as a people wholly unconcerned and clear from those occasions and offences.

But, however, the cruel and barbarous usage which the said J. N. met withal seemed to be so intolerable, as might tend to satisfy the highest revenge, and mitigate the greatest fury, and abate the loudest clamour and reproach of the most invidious persecutors and adversaries. For a man to be sentenced "to stand two hours in the Pillory at Westminster, and from thence to be whipped by the common hangman over every kennell as far as the old Exchange with three hundred and ten stripes, and there again to stand two hours in the pillory, and bored through the tongue with a hot iron, under pretence of blasphemy, when no real proof could be made thereof against him. Which treatment and usage the said J. N. met withal. This might seem intolerable barbarity exceeding Jews or Turks. Many sober men and persons of quality were ashamed thereof, and greatly pitied him, and some petitioned the Parliament to respite the execution of the last part of the sentence for one week's time, because the sufferer was in a very ill and dangerous condition of body, by the severities he had suffered from the first part of the sentence; which respite was granted. But about one hundred and ten persons presented another petition at the bar of the house of Commons, begging that the remaining part of the sentence against J. N. might be remitted. Which not producing the desired effect, they addressed Oliver, then Lord Protector, as he was termed, by petition, that he being jointly interested in the proceeding of the then Parliament and liberty of conscience (pretended) &c. would please to stand up for the poor people of God, and take such course as that the intended execution,

and remaining punishment against the said J. N. might be remitted and prevented. But he slightly turned it off, rather seeming to take for granted, that the sufferer might be guilty of the crimes imputed to him, yet desired that the house would let him know the grounds and reasons whereupon they had proceeded; which seemed a poor shift and evasion! Notwithstanding all which solicitations the sentence of Parliament took place and was executed upon the said J. N." Narr. pp. 54, 55, 56.

All which severities appeared to be designed to bring odiums and reproach upon us as a people, and our holy profession: for in those days the high and proud professors and persecutors were generally bitterly set against the people called Quakers, when Presbytery and independency swam and floated in profession, and with their long lectures against us cried out, these are the anti-christs come in the last times, &c. "For at that time in December, 1656, were several petitions presented to the Parliament, containing complaints against the growth and exorbitances of the people called Quakers, from Ministers, Magistrates and others of the counties and cities following, viz. Devon and Exeter, Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle upon Tine, county of Chester and city of Chester, city of Bristol and county of Cornwall."

"Which said petitions were all referred to a committee to consider of them, and to collect such heads as might be fittest for a bill, for suppressing of the mischiefs and inconveniences complained of therein. Narr, p. 37.

Note, it was observable, how busy the proud, covetous and envious priests were in those days, to incense the magistrates against us, to make them their servants and drudges in persecution, supposing that a fit opportunity given them to brand us with blasphemy, and under that pretence to suppress us by force of persecution.

How be it by all the strict inquisition made upon the said J. N. and severe proceedings against him, and reproaches and aggravations thereupon, to make him guilty of blasphemy, I never understood that he assu-

med, or arrogated to himself the names or titles of Jesus or Christ; but contrarywise confessed to his Inquisitors of the Committee and Parliament, that he did not call himself by that name, nor understood that they who took his part meant so of himself being a visible creature, not God nor Christ; but what all true christians and children of God believe and own, that God was his father, and that he knew Christ in measure to be spiritually in him by his holy spirit, light and grace, as he is in all his saints and true believers; which is no blasphemy, but true christian doctrine: and neither was this any denial of Christ come in the flesh, nor to set up any other for Jesus Christ, but the same Messiah, the very Christ the Son of the Living God, born of the Virgin Mary at Bethlehem in Judea, whose coming in the flesh, and revelation and coming in spirit, are both testified in Holy Scripture; consequently neither blasphemy nor antichristian doctrine could be proved from confessing Christ in either respect, seeing neither were denied, but owned according to our christian principle and doctrine.

After I and some other friends came to be released out of a close, long and hard confinement, in Edmundsbury jail in the county of Suffolk, which was in the years 1655 and 1656, I came to London, and went to see the said J. N. then prisoner in the Gatehouse at Westminster, but could not get into the room where he was, but saw him and spake to him through the grate of the door, to know how he did? He looked on me, but said little: he seemed to be in a suffering condition of spirit, as well as body.

The said Martha Simmons, with some other women that had cried him up, and followed him to his prejudice, being in another room, I went up to see them, and Martha understanding who I was, began furiously to judge me, telling me, all that I had done must come to the fire: but when I soberly questioned her judgment, she could render no reason for the same, but persisted in her rash uncivil behaviour and folly, which I testified against, and cleared my conscience before the company with her; for I was sensible a great darkness was then over them.

Having lately perused the narrative of the said J. N.'s examination before the committee and House of Commons in Parliament and compared matters of fact and his cruel sufferings, I find his punishment so far from being *Secundum qualitatem, & quantitatem delicti*, that they far exceed both, consequently arbitrary, and extremely unjust and barbarous.

For 1st, he suffered chiefly for the offence of other persons with him, their giving him such high honor or homage, as they did in a public manner, esteeming him as a great and eminent prophet of the most high, replenished with Christ, or partaking of his fulness above his brethren, to make division between him and them.

2. He did not rebuke nor reject them therein; but quietly suffered them in their superstitious behaviour and high acclamations, which was from privation of true judgment, and his great weakness and indiscretion disowned by his true friends and brethren.

3. By confessing himself to be but a visible creature, and did not own nor attribute to himself the name of Jesus or Christ, he did thereby endeavor to free and quit himself from their charge of blasphemy, who sought such occasion against him, to colour over and excuse their own severities.

4. It was certainly Satan in his transformings that made use of instruments to betray him into division and disunion with his brethren and friends, and it was the Devil in his great envy and malice, that made use of instruments to use him inhumanly and barbarously, as aforesaid, to bring reproach upon the Lord's people and heritage. But our God suffered these trials and hardships to try and discover many high professors of Christianity in those days; and how far contrary thereto, their actions of cruelty did openly manifest. And also the Lord our God gave us his innocent people faith and patience to bear them; Blessed be his name for ever.

When I understood what offence J. N. had given, and what sufferings fell upon him, and reproach upon us thereby, I often remembered and considered the prophecy of Daniel, Chap. 11. 35. And some of them of un-

derstanding shall fall to try them, and to purge, and to make them white: even to the time of the end, &c. Ver. 34. Now when they shall fall they shall be holpen with a little help; but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.

Some of these things came to pass in the condition and case of J. N. He was a man of understanding, yet had a fall: flatterers did cleave unto him, but he was holpen with a little help, yet in great mercy and compassion to him.

When J. N. was prisoner in Old Bridewell in London, it pleased the Lord to afford him a fresh visitation, and to open his understanding, and remove the cloud that had been over him, whereupon he wrote some brief testimonies to clear and vindicate the truth which had deeply suffered on this account, as before.

Serious reader (by the way) note, that there are marginal notes added to the before-mentioned narrative of the parliament's proceedings against J. N. (by what hand I know not) wherein some scriptures in the margin are misapplied, though the narrative itself appears impartial.

After the said J. N. was brought under suffering and contempt through the folly of that party that too highly applauded him, and his too much suffering them without reprehending them in due season; some other persons of a loose ranting spirit got up, and frequently disturbed our friends meetings in London, by their ranting, singing, bawling and reproaching us, crying out against divers of our faithful ministers and their testimonies, in this manner, viz., you have lost the power; you have lost the power, &c. All which disorder and that wicked spirit J. N. condemned, being heartily sorry that they had any strength upon his account; as he signified when the Lord had brought him under judgment.

And of this turbulent company was one Mildred, an impudent woman, and two or three rude boisterous fellows, who were Ranters; and this kind of their disturbance continued for some weeks, until the Lord by his power stopped and confounded them, so as they came to nought.

One Robert Rich, a merchant in London, who had been convinced of truth, he was a great admirer of J. N. and did much appear and solicit for him, when he was under prosecution and examination before the parliament, and also stood by him on the pillory, when he suffered under the cruel sentence of boring through the tongue, and stigmatizing with an hot iron, and then publicly licked his wounds, thereby shewing his great affection to him.

After some time the said Robert Rich went into Barbadoes, where (as we had account) he was turbulent in our friends meetings with noisy singing, &c. to the offence of sober friends there. After some years he returned to London, and came into some of our meetings, and walked up and down therein in a stately manner (having a very long white beard) in his black velvet coat, with a loose hanging cloth one over it. When he heard something declared that pleased him, he would cry *Amen, Amen, Amen.*

After a meeting in White-Heart-Court in Gracious Street, he came up into Gerard Robert's room to some of us, and declared unto me these words, viz "I am one of the dogs that licked Lazarus his sores."

I had some discourse with the said R. R. another time, about the seed of God (the eternal word) in man and the soul of man; and he could not distinguish them, putting no difference between the soul or spirit of man, and that which saves it; to wit the ingrafted immortal word, which is able to save the soul. So that he seemed to leave no room for the immortality of the soul of man, but only of the immortal seed or word of God; but discoursing him a little closely upon the point, he put me off with an evasive slight, saying, "thou art wise in the letter, but I am in that which is above thy wisdom;" to wit, in the mystery, &c.

As the occasion and beginning of this tragedy which fell so heavily and severely upon poor J. N. (as is before related) was introduced by a spirit of division and enmity, it ended in a divided, loose and factious party, which at last the Lord delivered him out of and from; though some were lost in it: for I never knew any open

schism, rent or faction made from our christian society by a partial admiring and setting up particular men or persons, as sect-masters, but some or other were scattered and lost in such a breach, division and faction, being turned aside from the holy commandment of love, and from the footsteps of Christ's flock and family.

Some of those followers and admirers of J. N. (when in his clouded condition) were puffed up in their imaginations concerning him, as vainly conceiting his growth and attainments in Christ amounted to more equality with him [when on earth] than is attainable by any particular member; probably mistaking that Scripture, Ephes. 4. 13. "Till we all meet together [or come] into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, and to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature [or of the age] of the fulness of Christ."—Which is not predicated of any particular member, but of the whole body or church, as united to Christ the head or principle thereof; which therefore is said to be the "fulness of him that filleth all in all, Ephes. 1. 23." And is not meant as if every one, or any of the members in parliament should be equal with the head, though every member of Christ be complete and perfect in him; and all the members of the church, or mystical body of Christ are completed in him, as united in spirit, in true faith and love unto him, as their head, their life and nourishment, their strength and salvation, [Coloss. 2. 9, 10, 19.] It is the head that supplies all; and they are all partakers of his fulness, as they receive thereof, grace for grace. But unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, Ephes. 4. 7. whereby we all may jointly, as one man in Christ our head, one body united to and in him, attain unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, Ephes. Chap. 4. Ver. 13. But when any one of us, or any living member of Christ's body, receive of his grace, spirit, power or wisdom, it is by measure, as to us or our capacities: But he [Christ Jesus] received the spirit not by measure but in fulness; all power in Heaven and earth is given to the Son, Matth. 28. 18. It hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell: And he is

the head of the body of the church, and in all things must have the pre-eminence, 1 Coloss. 1. 18, 19. As Christ is our head, we are all inferior to him; and his church is subject to him, Eph. 5. 24.

And if any of them who too highly admired J. N. would alledge Phil. 2. 5. Let the same mind be in you that was even in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, &c. The same mind that was to be in them, was his humble, lowly, self-denying mind, wherein he made himself of no reputation, but humbled himself, and became obedient to the death of the cross. This was a mind meet for believers, and not to think themselves equal with god or CHRIST.

The Galatians, when they so highly admired the apostle Paul at first, that they received him as an angel of God; yea, as Christ Jesus, insomuch that if it had been possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and have given him, Gal. 4. 14, 15. Yet for all that affection they were then but weak and unstable christians; seeing they did not persevere nor obey the truth, when bewitched or seduced from the spirit into the flesh, to observe fleshy and legal observations of shadows and ceremonies, which Jesus Christ being crucified, had ended, blotted out, and nailed to his cross, [Gal. 3. 1, 2, 3. Coloss. 2. 14.] In order to introduce and establish a more excellent dispensation of the spirit and new covenant.

These things seriously considered, people may see and take caution, not to admire men, nor think of men above what is meet, nor to glory in men, [1 Corinth. 3. 21, 22, 23.] nor to give way to a partial indiscreet affection to men or persons, that can be no safe foundation or building which is so laid or built: but Christ Jesus the sure foundation, the sure immoveable rock and chief corner stone, upon which the true church, the spiritual house must be built and established, which the gates of hell may not prevail against.

When our friends understood the Lord had in measure mercifully restored J. N. out of the snare of the adversary, into a right sight and sense of the light and life of

Christ, whereby he saw the loss and hurt he had sustained, many were truly comforted in the mercy of God toward him, for his name and truth's sake, which he had borne witness of.

Although I had some times heard and observed the said J. N. in his ministry and solid deportment in the north of England, as before related, some time before his coming to London, yet had very little conversation with him until after he was recovered out of the fall, and delivered out of his said suffering condition in London, &c. where it so providentially fell out, that he and I for some time lodged together at William Travers his house in Watling Street, London (about Anno 1659 and 1660.) And we had innocent, loving and comfortable conversation together, he being revived by the Lord's power, and in measure restored into his ancient testimony, and to bear the same publicly in divers parts of the nation, as the Lord enabled him, both in his ministry and writings. And he walked in much brotherly love and simplicity among us until his end came: and near his departure he expressed his great care for the lambs of Christ's fold, according as was intimated to me by a dear friend and brother, and ended his days like an innocent lamb, in peace and quietness, and was buried by friends in Huntingtonshire, where he died, near Thomas Parnell's, who lived at Kings-rippon.

If it should be enquired, "why was the reprinting of his books so long deferred, at least some of his principal books and writings? And how came they now to be reprinted?"

Answer, 1. Because some friends were in a strait and fear about reprinting his works, because of his failure and occasion of reproach formerly given thereby; yet some of them were reprinted since.

2. Because since the same offence is removed, and reproach stopped and taken away through his unfeigned repentance, confessions, retractations and submission to the ancient truth, and reconciliation therein to faithful friends and brethren. And for the sake of many weighty testimonies in his books and writings; many friends

of late have desired, that at least some of his most serviceable books and writings might be reprinted.

3. The fall, miscarriages, or failings of David, Hezekiah, Peter, (and divers others mentioned in holy Scripture) being repented of, and they themselves restored, yet these did not prevent or hinder the religious, pious and christian testimonies from being published, and left upon record to posterity, that the judgments of God and his chastisements for sin, and his mercy and forgiveness upon true repentance may be remembered, and his grace and tender mercy in Christ the more magnified.

King David was deeply humbled under judgment unto repentance, for his great transgression, and his blessed testimonies, prophecies and good actions also are left upon record in the book of Psalms, &c.

King Solomon came to see all his earthly delights and sensual pleasures to be but vanity and vexation of spirit, Eccles. Chap. 1, 2, 3. &c. Which shows a real change in his mind and affections, and many of his writings, wise sayings and proverbs are left upon record.

Hezekiah king of Judah humbled himself, when God was angry with him, because his heart was lifted up with pride, when the Lord had left him to try him, that he might see all that was in his heart, 2 Chron. 32. and Chap. 25. Ver. 26. 31. And yet both the humiliation, prayer and writing of Hezekiah are recorded, and so left to posterity, 2 Kings 19. Isai. 38.

Peter wept bitterly after he had denied his Lord Christ, Mat. 26. 75. Yet he became an evangelical preacher and writer, an eminent apostle, elder and minister of Jesus Christ.

It was well known, that the said J. N. through deep sorrow, contrition and humiliation, made humble acknowledgment of the hurt and loss he had fallen under, and offence he had given to truth and his brethren, &c. of our society, and that it was the great mercy of God through Jesus Christ to restore him, as is more fully intimated in some of his writings.

Surely it greatly behooves us to forgive and pass by trespasses and offences when God forgives them, blots them out, and remembers them no more against the tru-

ly penitent, who enter into covenant and keep covenant with him, who is a God keeping covenant and mercy for ever to them who truly love and fear him.

Serious and friendly reader, though I have not read all J. N's books and writings, yet some I have; and hope thou wilt find many weighty and informing truths in them. And if any thing of sentence, words, or expressions seem not intelligible, or well distinguished or adapted, or not clear to thy understanding, or mysteriously expressed, I hope thy charity will either pass by the same, or make the best or most favourable construction thereof, with respect to the general import of the matters and things in those most clear and evident truths aimed at, which every ingenious reader will observe, more than nice criticisms, or carping at words, or modes of expressions.

Thou mayst find such essential and weighty truths therein, as may tend to thy profitable information in righteousness, wherein I heartily desire may be thy interest, peace and prosperity.

G. W.

TWO SHORT PAPERS OF CONFESSIONS, &c.

TAKEN OUT OF HIS OWN HAND WRITING.

DEAR BRETHREN,

My heart is broken this day for the offence that I have occasioned to God's truth and people, and especially to you, who in dear love followed me, seeking me in faithfulness to God; which I rejected, being bound wherein I could not come forth till God's hand brought me, to whose love I now confess; and I beseech you, forgive wherein I evilly requitted your love in that day, God knows my sorrow for it, since I see it, that ever I should offend that of God in any, or reject his counsel; and now that paper you have seen lies much upon me, and I greatly fear further to offend, or do amiss, whereby the innocent truth, or people of God should suffer, or that I should disobey therein.

Unless the Lord himself keep you from me, I beseech you let nothing else hinder your coming to me, that I

might have your help in the Lord; in the mercies of Christ Jesus, this I beg of you, as if it was your own case, let me not be forgotten of you.

And I entreat you, speak to Henry Clarke, or whoever else I have most offended; and by the power of God, and in the spirit of Christ Jesus I am willing to confess the offence, that God's love may arise in all hearts, as before, if it be his will, who only can remove what stands in the way; and nothing thereof do I intend to cover: God is witness herein.

Dear Friend,

I would not grieve thee, nor any way offend the people of the Lord, who is my witness of the daily sorrow and travail of my soul, for the offences that have been already, and that the peace of any should be broken through me, who are dear to me; and nothing have I in this world near in my heart but his innocent people, whom he hath called out of the world; and I cannot trouble you but I oppress my own life: the Lord God of peace rebuke him, who daily seeks to turn the simplicity out of its way, who hath long withstood me, and doth withstand me: truly my heart dreads for fear of more divisions; gladly would I see thy face, if it be the will of God; my bowels yearn in unfeigned love towards thee, God knows I lie not, and in the spirit of meekness I know thou wilt feel me in truth. And whatever the Lord, in any of you, shall lay upon me, I am willing to suffer or do, that all breaches may be removed from the just.

J. N.

Dear J. N.

God hath heard the prayers which hath been to him, for to give unto the understanding to discern and rule over that spirit that bowed thee down, and in captivity kept thee, and would not suffer thee to incline thine ear to the counsel of the brethren, who witnessed against what it did out of the wisdom of God; which in the deepest of thy captivity, when the greatest weight lay upon me, my God did hear, and not leave me without hope concerning thy rising again, and returning into the unity with the saints in light, and to deny that spirit

that run out and made disturbance in the peaceable meetings of the Lord's people. In this Counsel of my Father I waited in the sufferings, until he in his wisdom made way to send unto thee, which was done, and he alone seen in giving it to thee, which that I feel moving in thee, from whence thou hast given forth, since I sent unto thee, hath in measure answered. Blessed be the name of the Lord, who in measure hath given thee power over that spirit which the righteous seed groaned under: let this mercy be prized, and in the light wait to be kept single to the Lord, he will bring again all that hath been driven away; they returning again to his counsel, the light, in which the dear babes and children of my Father grow in the unity, and bring forth much fruit in the power of his love; and great is the increase of his flock all abroad, and his powerful presence keeps them savory and sweet in his life, to the praise and glory of his name over all, who alone is worthy, *Amen.*

W. D.

Copied from the original, in his own hand, by J. W.

To all the dearly beloved people of God, mercy and peace.

There is nothing dear and precious to me in this world but God's truth, and his life of righteousness; for which I have forsaken all the world, and whatever was dear to me therein, I have hated and counted it as an enemy, that I might obtain Christ, the fountain and spring of that eternal life of truth, the beauty whereof I cannot express, as I see it and feel it; the loveliness thereof to my soul hath so dearly united my spirit to all that bear the image and life of it, that there can be no separation, but my life suffers thereby: and I can truly say, that there is no other thing whatsoever that can unite me as one with any creature living, but this image and life, where I see it borne up, or breathing to life; but in whomsoever it be (without respect of persons) that I see the least appearance of this seed of life is, I can (by that power of love the Father hath begotten in me) lay down my life for the seed's sake. And wherein I have come short of this formerly, and have respected the

high more than stood only in this seed, I have been judged of the Lord, and my evil thoughts therein condemned; yea, and I do condemn them before all the world, to be of that which favours self, and not the things of Christ: and the lower God doth bring me, and the nearer to himself, the more doth this love and tenderness spring and spread towards the poor, simple, and despised ones, who are poor in spirit, meek and lowly suffering lambs; and with those I choose to suffer, and do suffer wherever they are found, and I bear my testimony against that spirit by which they suffer, wherever it is found; and this lies upon me from the Lord: hearing and feeling a spirit of enmity having got head, by what the Lord hath suffered to be done with me, and now doth exercise its power against the peaceable meetings of the Lord's people, the burthen whereof lies heavy upon me, and I suffer under it, and have long waited with prayers, and tears of sorrow, night and day, to receive counsel from the Lord what to do in it, in that condition I am now at present: God knows, I lie not, for there is nothing of all my hardships that hath lain and doth lie upon me like this, that any of the flock of God should be offended, or suffer through me; therefore I have not ceased to warn (as God hath opened to me) such as I could speak to; to live in peace and love; to suffer, but not to act strife and violence, and have denied that spirit, not to be of the Lamb, but an enemy to him, though the creature may not know it, but may think it is doing God service; it being got above the suffering seed in themselves, would scatter and devour it in others: and this spirit the Lord hath shewed me, and its end, and hath redeemed me from it by the spirit of the lamb; and I shall never join, as head or tail, therewith; but shall earnestly pray to the Father, that a deep search of truth may seriously pass through the hearts and reins of all contenders, that all that are guilty herein may speedily come to repentance, least they be hardened therein, and there come a time when they would give whatever is dear to them for one hour's society with the people of God, and cannot obtain it; then with lamentable woe shall the wrath of that be known, that is now

trampled on, without the true fear of God, or life of his love: and having at length received this favour of the Lord, I have taken this time, in the tender bowels of love (as one wounded therewith) to warn you hereof: beseeching you all, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, that you all search low for the bowels of him who loved you, and suffered for you, when you were his enemies, and put them on towards all men, but especially towards one another, who have been called by one spirit into one truth; that so the holy spirit be no more grieved, nor satan get any more advantage; whose work it is to sow dissention, even among brethren.

And the Lord God of Love give us all to see, that whatever our gifts or powers be, yet if we have not the life and power of love, it avails not with God, though men may esteem of us never so high: for only he that dwells in love, knows God, and lives in him; the rest know not what spirit they are of. And this I feelingly declare, from that dear love of God in me, begotten to all his people; whereby I am so far from taking delight in troubling the people of God, that their growth in peace and truth, upon the foundation laid already, was never so much desired; and my love to them is daily increased, beyond what I can here express, yet the Lord knows it, and whence it is, whether it be received by men or no; yet the seed shall feel it [in God's time] to which it is, and in whose peace only I have peace; and I hope, in the power of that love, God will so strengthen me, that nothing of shame, loss, or reproach, shall ever be too hard to take up for the advancement thereof, as God shall shew and lead me therein, without whom I dare do nothing, lest I deny his work, or confound it with my own.

And concerning you, the tender plants of my Father, who have suffered through me, or with me, in what the Lord hath suffered to be done with me, in this time of great trial and temptation; the Almighty God of Love, who hath numbered every sigh, and put every tear in his bottle, reward it a thousand fold into your bosoms, in the day of your need, when you shall come to be tried and tempted; and in the mean time fulfil your joy with

his love, which you seek after. The Lord knows, it was never in my heart to cause you to mourn, whose sufferings is my greatest sorrow that ever yet came upon me, for you are innocent herein: but the envious one hath taken his advantage, which the Lord will turn to his disadvantage, and utter ruin in many souls; and in this believing is all my rest, in my great trouble of heart, concerning you or myself; and in patience I wait to see it, when the man of sin hath had his time, to be revealed. For I have seen the good hand of God working in it; whose end is good to all that love him, else had I been destroyed ere this, such hath been the violence of the enemy of my soul: but he hath numbered my hairs, and not left me in the fire or water; when none else were with me, thou wast my comforter. O that I may never hide thy praise, by covering my sin or shame! God forbid.

By a way unexpected did the Lord open a way to declare these words, all other means of writing being taken from me. Blessed be he, on whom I wait further to see his will, that I may do or suffer it.

The presence and peace of the Almighty comfort his people, whom I salute in the bowels of love.

JAMES NAYLER.

I beseech you, all that can, to receive it, even as you would be received of the Lord; and for the rest, the Lord give me patience to suffer, till the Lord make up the breach.

TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE LORD, EVERY WHERE

GATHERED OR SCATTERED.

In the fear of God, and love to his truth, and people, do I declare, in the spirit of meekness, what hath long oppressed my soul, concerning those unclean spirits gone out from the unity of truth and light, by which we have been called, and gathered into one in Christ Jesus, the head over all his, blessed for ever; whose name hath been greatly dishonoured through many wild actings, and his innocent spirit grieved, and many simple souls

deceived; many oppressed, and many offended against the truth, because of those spirits gone out from the truth, and now secretly, under a pretence, seek daily to make it odious unto all. [For which work my soul hath been much troubled:] Who to this day raven about from place to place, amongst the people of God, seeking to enter where they can; and so to strengthen themselves into parties, to trouble such as they cannot enter, seeking to spoil the peaceable pasture of the lambs, that they should not feed in peace: and for that end, hunt after the meetings of the people of God. All which practices and pretences, I deny in my soul, and the spirit that acts therein.

And the more it lies upon me from the Lord, to warn the simple innocent ones of his thereof openly, in that through me these spirits have got much head and entrance, into the minds of some who were simple towards God's truth: and this the envious one hath done, in the night of my trial, and hour of darkness and temptation, taking advantage at my sufferings, in the day when my judgment was taken away, and I led captive under the power of darkness, which all along hath sought my life, had not the Father hid it, and with his hand upon me, stayed me in those great temptations; to whom alone I give the glory of my deliverance from that great destruction, as his promise was to me before I came into that trial; who hath now brought me up again, and hath given me to see those evil spirits, and that the work of the murderer and devourer is therein, against the life of God in his Temple: which, though they seek entrance under pretence of humility, promising some great things, and more holiness in that way, to steal into simple minds; but being got in, exalt themselves above the seed of God, and trample the meek spirit under foot, and so darken the vessels, and being exalted in the imaginations, lead the creature, [as God] above that of God, and so against that of God he wars in others, where God is above.

And this mystery of deep iniquity hath the Lord God in the spirit of the Lamb revealed unto me, whose powerful working I have found, working in me a-

against the pure measure and unspotted life of God. And though in the simplicity of Christ Jesus, had given up my body all along, a free offering to the will of God, in life or in death, for the seeds sake, yet ungathered in the world; [as God knoweth I lie not] yet could I often feel that exalted one above, secretly tempting to envy against the people of God already gathered, pretending a greater thing to come another way; but this, with the life of God was ever judged; though often I was buffeted therewith, sometimes so strongly as to force words from me, above the meek and lowly principle; all which words were soon judged, with the sufferer which lay under, and with his life be they condemned for ever.

And this lies upon me to declare openly, which God hath revealed to me, for the sake of the simple ones, who may be deceived therewith, but would not, did they know his subtilty: and by this shall you all perceive that spirit whatever it pretends, it will secretly withdraw your entire love from the flock of God already gathered, and cool your affections and zeal towards their present meetings, and if you judge it not there, it will grow on with an evil eye, to spy out their failings, and delight to hear of them, and talk of them with a hidden joy whispering them to others, and adding thereunto, with a desire to see them broken, and their nakedness laid open, if any thing be amiss: and thus it hath wrought in a mystery of wickedness in some unjudged, until it be seated in the throne of open enmity and strife against the lambs of Christ, preferring the society of the profane before them, and taking part therewith against them, joining with any who seek to scatter them. And whatever pretence this spirit seeks to cover itself with, this I declare of it [having been kept by the good hand of God, to see it revealed in its ground and end] that it is the old spirit of the *Ranters*, which now in a new way makes head against the light of Christ, and life of his cross; which is the only thing that stands in its way, by condemning its filthiness in every conscience: and so they in whom this is entered, being exalted above the living witness in themselves, would devour it in others.

And this in the presence and fear of God I declare, without the least prejudice against the person of any man or woman; but in obedience to God, and for the seeds sake, lest any more of the simple should be deceived, and that such as are deceived already, might recover themselves out of satan's snares; no selfish end have I in it, God knoweth. And long time hath my soul been in travail, ere I could obtain power herein, so strongly hath he that letteth withstood my way.

Therefore in the bowels of tender love, I warn you all, to take heed how you ever come under that spirit under any pretence whatsoever; but let the fear of God, and sound judgment in the spirit of meekness, preserve you all above it; for wheresoever it enters by consent, it is hardly got out again; and if it be, it is not without much sorrow: and this I have found in the depth, which for your sakes I declare in plainness and truth, as I have learned of the Lord, labouring with him without ceasing, that the rest of the people of God every where may be saved from this devourer, who goeth daily about to deceive, and whosoever he takes, he casts into the earth or into the sea; for wickedness is with him wheresoever he goeth.

Even the Lord God Almighty arm you all against his wiles, being warned thereof in his love, and the eternal power of holiness preserve you all clean to himself, who are dearer unto me than ever, and that in no other thing, but in that innocent principle in which you are kept free from all the pollutions of the world, and fleshly liberty, and stand witnesses for God against it, before all men, and in no other thing have I fellowship with any, which is that I seek to set up above all.

And this was I moved to give forth, to go every where, as a witness against that unclean spirit wherever it goes, feeling its work is to run to and fro to deceive; that all may be warned by what I have learned in sufferings, and that they that will not may be left without excuse.

JAMES NAYLER.

Written in Bridewell, about the beginning of 1658.

A TESTIMONY TO CHRIST JESUS, DELIVERED TO THE PARLIAMENT,
WHIO PERSECUTED HIM AS A BLASPHEMER: WRITTEN
IN THE TIME OF HIS IMPRISONMENT
IN BRIDEWELL.

Christ Jesus, the Immanuel, [of whose sufferings the scriptures declare] him alone I confess before men; for whose sake I have denied whatever was dear to me in this world, that I might win him, and be found in him, and not in myself, whose life and virtue I find daily manifest in my mortal body, [which is my eternal joy and hope of glory] whom alone I seek to serve in spirit, soul and body, night and day, [according to the measure of grace working in me] that in me he may be glorified, whether by life or death; and for his sake I suffer all things, that he alone may have the glory of my change, whose work alone it is in me: even to that eternal spirit be glory, and to the lamb for ever.

But to ascribe this name, power and virtue to *James Nayler*, [or to that which had a beginning, and must return to dust] or for that to be exalted or worshipped, to me is great idolatry, and with the spirit of Christ Jesus in me it is condemned; which spirit leads to lowliness, meekness and long suffering.

So having an opportunity given [with readiness] I am willing in the fear of God the Father, [in honour to Christ Jesus, and to take off all offences from every simple heart] this to declare to all the world, as the truth of Christ is in me, without guile or deceit, daily finding it to be my work to seek peace in truth with all men in that spirit.

JAMES NAYLER.

HIS CONFESSIONS AND ANSWER TO SOME PARTICULARS, PRINTED 1659.

Having heard that some have wronged my words, which I spoke before the Committee of Parliament, concerning Jesus Christ, and concerning the Old and New Testament, some have printed words which I spoke not: also some have printed a paper, and call it James Nayler's Recantation, unknown to me: to all which things I shall speak a few words, which may satisfy such as love the truth, and that he who is out of the truth may proceed no further.

Concerning Jesus Christ, the same Christ and no other, of whom the scriptures testify, who is the light

of the world, and redeemer of lost man, from under the power of darkness, known of old by the name Immanuel; that eternal spirit of truth is the same to whom I confess all power, glory, honour and worship, in Heaven and in earth: and wherein-soever this earthly vessel, or any thing therein hath been set up in the minds of any, to diminish the glory of that invisible power, or to draw any one from the measure of the same spirit in themselves, or to offend the least measure of that pure and tender spirit in any of his people, all that I condemn and deny as a thing never intended by me; but is the work of the adversary, who seeks all occasions against the truth of God, to devour them in whom it is begotten; who took his advantage in the time of my trial and sufferings, to stir up enmity and despite against the spirit of truth, and with all his power sought to dishonour the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for which I have denied all that I loved in this world; which name stands in the power and nature of that eternal spirit, and to the power the name is given (and not to James Nayler) as Christ himself said, John 14. 26. and in the eternal seed is the son-ship, and the Lamb is he that bears all things.

And concerning his sufferings at Jerusalem, I have believed them from a child, according to the Scriptures, and I can truly say, I was never of any faith contrary; and much more I am confirmed therein daily, having found the effect and power of that suffering spirit to be all my strength in all my tribulations, who in all our afflictions hath been afflicted, which whosoever abides in, seeks no revenge, their reward being present with them; which power and spirit whosoever feels in the deep, cannot call Jesus accursed, nor undervalue his sufferings, neither can any say, in truth, that he is Lord, but thereby.

And concerning the Old and New Testament being the word, the Old is that which was dedicated with the blood of calves and goats, enjoined for its time, and disannulled for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, because it could not make perfect, Heb. 7. 18, 19. and 9. 18, 19, 20. But the word of God is not disannulled, unprofitable nor imperfect, but quick and powerful, living and abiding for ever, Heb. 4. 12.

And the New Testament I own, which is in the blood of Christ, Luke 22. 20. And the apostle saith, God hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit, 2 Cor. 3. 6. And these were ministers of the word, who said, they were not ministers of the letter, which word was in them, and spiritual, and they knew his voice, that liveth for ever, Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8.

So the Scriptures I own which declare of these things, and the word I own which was before these things were written; but my life stands in that which quickneth, liveth, and abideth for ever; and he is the word which by the gospel is preached, and they that have him can believe what is written of him, John 1. 1 Pet. 2. 23, 24, 25. Rev. 19. 13.

And as touching the printing of that paper, called J. N's Recantation, it was not done by me, nor with my knowledge in the least, nor do I yet at all know the man that hath done it; but out of the truth and against the truth he hath done it, and for evil towards me whoever it was; the Lord God of my life, who hath kept me alive in all distress, turn it for good and forgive the evil: And though he that hath done it hath not done it in truth, nor love to it, yet what of truth there is in the paper I shall own, as stands on truths behalf; for thus it was, that after I was put into the hole at Bridewell, I heard of many wild actions done by a sort of people who pretended that they owned me, and these were earnestly stirred up at that day, with much violence, and many unseemly actions, to go into the meetings of the people of the Lord called *Quakers*, on purpose to hinder their peaceable meetings, and yet would take that holy and pure name of God, and Christ, frequently into their mouth, whereby the name of Lord was much dishonoured, and his pure spirit grieved, and much disorder they caused in many places of the nation, to the dishonour of Christ Jesus, for which I felt wrath from God; which when I understood that they had any strength through me, I used all means I could to declare against that evil spirit, which under the name of God and Christ, was against God and Christ, his truth and people; and some-

thing I did give forth about a year and a half since in denial of these spirits, which it seems to me, he that hath done this hath got a sight of,* and hath added to it the thoughts of his own heart, and so hath brought out this darkness, that people know not what to make of it.

Therefore, so far as it testifies against those unclean ranting spirits, and all the actions wherein the holy name of God hath been dishonoured, and his spirit grieved, so far I own it; but in that it is turned as though I denied the Lord Jesus Christ, and his truth which hath called me out of the world, or his people whom he hath called into light, in that I own it not; for in the patience and tribulation of Christ Jesus, and with those who have the power this day to testify therein, against all the evils of this present world, I am one in heart and soul to the utmost of my strength, till the coming of the Lord Jesus over all, and the throne of meekness, and truth be set on the top of all enmity and deceit, in which faith and power I am given up to live or die, suffer or rejoice, as God will, even so be it, without murmuring.

JAMES NAYLER.

TO THE LIFE OF GOD IN ALL.

THE love of that precious life of Christ Jesus in me, constrains me, as the light thereof arises to declare to all people, and to generations to come, how that innocent, just, and holy life came to suffer in me, and be betrayed, and I to lose the light thereof, so far as to be taken captive again under the power of darkness, sin and death, from which, that life had once set me free, and borne me in it self for some years, above all the craft, subtilty and power of satan, that old deceiver and tempter of mankind, who ceaseth not to take every occasion that pure life to devour, and so to take the creature captive again, who with that precious life hath once been ransomed, as once I had been by the living virtue thereof; for out of kindreds and estate, and all visible relations had he once called me, and set me free, and had

* That to all the people of the Lord, aforesaid.

broken all my bonds as to all earthly things, which were strong and many, and redeemed me from all my sins past, and with his precious blood had he sprinkled my conscience before God, as though I had never sinned in his sight, anointing me with the oil of deliverance and peace towards God and man; and sent me forth in the same bowels to call lost and strayed souls to the same everlasting light, therein to wait for the appearance of the same purifying life and power in themselves, therewith to be gathered to the pure God, to whom the children of darkness and wicked workers cannot come, till with the word of life they be cleansed and made new after himself, in whom is no iniquity.

And in this his work, by him I was preserved against all enmity, born in all afflictions, and fed above all wants within and without, though sent into a strange country without money, bag or scrip, and among a strange people that knew not God, in the north parts of this English nation; and I may truly say, as a sheep among wolves I was wherever I came; yet had none power to touch me further than what should make for his glory in whom I lived, and the advantage of that work I was about, which he daily turned to my exceeding joy and great reward; and his living presence did ever furnish me with renewed strength against all contrary spirits, and the power thereof, and in him I had judgment and power over them, wherever they withstood his pure work.

And in this same life and dominion did he bring me up into this great city London, into which I entered with the greatest fear that ever into any place I came, in spirit foreseeing somewhat to befall me therein, but not knowing what it might be; yet had I the same presence and power as before; into what place or service soever I was led of the spirit, in that life I never returned without victory in Christ Jesus, the Lord thereof.

But not minding in all things to stand single and low to the motions of that endless life, by it to be led in all things, within and without; but giving way to the reasoning part, as to some things which in themselves had no seeming evil, by little and little drew out my mind after trifles, vanities, and persons which took the affec-

tionate part, by which my mind was drawn from the constant watch, and pure fear, into which I was once begotten, and spiritual adultery was committed against that precious pure life which had purchased me unto himself alone, and is grieved with the least departure from him in body, spirit or mind, even that eternal, pure and zealous spirit from above, had drawn me near into himself, and that pure word was become my life, who said, "he that doth but look upon a woman to lust, commits adultery;" and in whose sight the least coveting, or letting any visible object into the affections is idolatry: into that life I was comprehended, and the apple of that pure eye was opened in me, which admits not of an evil thought; but is wounded and bruised with the least appearance of evil, even this birth was born which reigns through righteousness, and suffers till all righteousness be fulfilled in every particular. And this is the Son of God for ever, and into this life and kingdom I was translated; and I was in him that is true, in whom there is no sin; and he alone lived and ruled in this his temple, which to himself he had purchased with his precious blood, and his delight was in me, and his presence was glorious, and not the least evil could appear, but I could feel him in spirit lifting up his witness against it.

But when I reasoned against his tender reproof, and consulted with another, and so let the creatures into my affections, then his temple was defiled through lust, and his pure spirit was grieved, and he ceased to reprove, and he gave me up, and his light he withdrew and his judgment took away; and so the body of death and sin revived again, and I possessed afresh the iniquities of my youth, and that which had of old been buried, arose and stood against me, and so the temple was filled with darkness and the power of death, and my heart with sorrow, and satan daily at my right hand to tempt me further to provoke the Lord, and to take away my life.

Thus having in a great measure lost my own guide, and darkness being come upon me, I sought a place where I might have been alone, to weep and cry before the Lord, that his face I might find, and my condition recover: but then my adversary who had long waited

his opportunity, had got in, and bestirred himself every way, so that I could not be hid, and divers messages came to me in that case, some true, some false, (as I have seen since) so I knowing some to be true, to wit, how I had lost my condition, with this I let in the false message too; and so letting go that little of the true light which I had yet remaining in my self, I gave up my life wholly to be led by others, whose work was then wholly to divide me from the children of light; which was done, though much was done by divers of them to prevent it, and in bowels of tender love many laboured to have stayed me with them. And after I was led out from them, the Lord God of my life sent divers of his servants with his word after me, for my return: all which was rejected; yea, the provocations of that time of temptation was exceeding great against the pure love of God, yet he left me not; for after I had given myself under that power, and darkness was above, my adversary so prevailed, that all things were turned and perverted against my right seeing, hearing or understanding, only a secret hope and faith I had in my God, whom I had served, that he would bring me through it, and to the end of it; and that I should again see the day of my redemption from under it all: and this quieted my soul in my greatest tribulation.

Thus was I led out from amongst the children of light and into the world, to be a sign, where I was chased as a wandering bird gone from her nest, so was my soul daily, and my body from one prison to another, till at length I was brought in their own way before a backsliding power to be judged, who had lost their first love, as I had done; so they sentenced me, but could not see their sign, and a sign to the nation, and a sign to the world of the dreadful day of the just God, who is come and coming to avenge for that pure life, where it is transgressed, and to plead the cause of that precious seed wherever it is oppressed and suffers under the fleshy lusts of this present world, and the cup is deep and very dreadful that is seen and filling, and it hath begun at God's house, but many must drink it, except there be speedy repentance.

And in this time of my darkness and night of great temptations (which darkness I had let up over my head, and my judgment being much lost) there got up many wild spirits, ranters and such like, acting many evil things against the life of truth and name of Christ, his light and people that walk therein, on purpose to bring reproach thereon, and set themselves to break and disquiet the meetings of the people of God, and made use of my name therein, and others rejoiced thereat, and cried, "thus would we have it, they are divided among themselves; this is that we looked for, &c." Others came to me in that time in true pity, and in sorrow of heart suffered with me for all that was befallen me, and that precious truth I had walked in.

Thus became I an occasion to make sad the innocent and harmless people, whose hearts were tender, and to make glad the man that delights in mischief, and such as rejoice in iniquity, and to gratify many unclean spirits: which things the pure God hates, and my soul hates, and all that name that God had formerly given me in his house, and that power, the wicked one made use on against the Lord, and his lambs, and his truth, wherein I had received that name and power. Thus I abused my power and knew not, by coming under him who seeks to pervert the right ways of God, and his truth to turn into a lie, wherever he gets above, whom the Lord had once trodden under my feet and all his instruments. And over the head of all this was I kept by his power, while singly I stood in his pure counsel, and humbly walked in his daily fear: the loss whereof was of myself. And this to his eternal glory I confess for ever.

So to that precious life of Christ Jesus I confess openly, which I have openly sinned against, which life is the light of the world, and all the good that is in man is from the virtue thereof; which whosoever goes from to feed elsewhere, forsakes their own mercies, and to this must return, and confess again, if ever they come to true peace in God: for this is the peacemaker and the Christ of God, and the lamb that takes away sin, and reconciles to the father of spirits, and that spirit that quickens the dead, of whom I testify for ever, and him I con-

fess in the night and in the day before God and before men, who under all hath been my help and Saviour, immortal praises for ever.

And he that hath this precious life hath the son of the eternal God and eternal life; and with all that receive him as king and leader, with such the father is well pleased, because he alone it is that leads in all holy ways, and out of all show of lust and uncleanness, and teaches to avoid every appearance of evil within and without; therefore the pure God loves him above all in Heaven and earth, and hath placed his fulness in him, from whom the living of all ages are to be fed, and whatever good gift any creature receives from God the father, it is in this pure life and for the sake of this unspotted seed; and that he alone (that spirit) may be exalted in all and above all, not flesh which is grass, whose glory turns into dust. If this life withdraw its virtue, then all his wisdom is shame and folly, who goes out from this light and counsel: for this life is he, which being disobeyed is man's fall; and his spirit being grieved, is God's wrath upon every creature; but in his favour is length of days and eternal glory; and both these I have learned in the day and in the night: so I give all glory to the life for evermore, and to him it is due, and all the evil hath been from self.

This life is the root and offspring of all heavenly fruit upon earth, and in whom this is planted, as it grows it will bring forth truth and righteousness towards God and man, and the virtue that rises with it will fill the creature with springs of eternal life and heavenly power, it will cover thee with health of salvation, and stay thee with immortal strength; he will guide thee with counsel of life, and open thy mouth in that wisdom which none shall confound; yea, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Him, and the richest excellency that ever appeared in flesh in Him is sealed; for all generations that receive Him in their faith and obedience, and as he arises in his temples, he gives forth of his riches, gifts to adorn his habitation, and to cover it with his light and glory.

But this is the evil in his sight, and that which provokes his pure spirit, that vain man, in whom he thus delights, should be exalted in himself, because of the gifts, and glory in his strength and wisdom, and so grow wanton against the life from whence he hath it; and so through feeding on the gifts, ceases to walk humbly with the giver in his own vessel. Here man forgets his God, and so withers at the root, and be the tree never so great it will fall in the end, and great will be the fall thereof.

And this is that God against whom I have sinned, and my offence I confess to the root that bore me, who raiseth up the meek and lowly, and casteth down him that boasteth above the root, who doth what he will in the heavens, and ruleth in the kingdoms of men, the Lord of hosts is his name, and he is worthy; yea, and will be feared: even so be it for evermore.

And whatever of that worship or honour hath any way by any creature been given or received to my person, which belongs to that eternal spirit, for ever by me it is denied and condemned as idolatry; and whatever creature I have at any time gone out to, from this pure spirit, and let into my affections, or whatever I have taken counsel of without this life and against it, is for ever condemned as adultery in my heart, and so I have found it in his pure sight, to whom I confess for my God and Saviour in all my troubles.

In whomsoever this pure and eternal spirit of life throughout the world hath been troubled or offended, in man or woman, through my fall, or the advantage which the adversary got against my soul, God's truth and his people, to that in all I acknowledge my offence. Against thee have I sinned who was with me in the deep, and in so many tender hearts for my recovery and salvation, which is one in all, for ever confessed to, and the occasion of the grief thereof for ever condemned in the presence of God, his host and people.

But against him that sought my life in that day, and rejoiced at that occasion, have I requited no evil in my heart, neither have I opened my mouth before the Lord, that the evil day should haste, who rejoiced at my fall,

and was glad at that advantage, to pursue my soul into the pit, that I might never have seen light more, nor have appeared in the assemblies of them which God hath sanctified on the earth: but in the bowels, of Him that hath borne me through all adversity, I have been kept towards them, and I know it is the spirit of Christ Jesus which thinks not evil for evil. And when all visible help was removed afar off, and I in the depth of the pit, then this was with me and in me before God, which often appeared when all else was gone, and many a time stayed my soul in secret, that it sunk not under the accuser; and the weight of his temptations when I was alone from any creature. And now seeing that the loving kindness of the Lord hath outlived all this enmity, and the long suffering of Christ Jesus hath borne to the end thereof, and that endless life hath ministered freedom for me, thereto be glory and praise for evermore.

And to God the Father of all be thanks for ever, who is begetting his creatures into that one pure life, and with the chords thereof hath bound up as in one bundle so many at this day, who in his living spirit and power are made at the needful time to stand before him, with cries and prayers one for another, which he hath heard and doth hear, even as he hath begotten thereto in every creature, the answer whereof makes many glad at this day, praises to God everlasting.

And to the glory of this precious life is this sent forth, that all that have sinned against him may have hope in him and return, whose judgments are right and his mercy endures for ever, and that all who have made their graves deep through disobedience, and their darkness thick through lust, might awake and confess to the Lord of life, and come forth, who quickeneth the dead, at his word the blind he makes to see, and hath called to the great deeps, that his praises may live for ever.

And that all you in whom any measure of this precious life hath been betrayed, either through this or any other thing, that to the light thereof you may return in yourselves, and there wait till the life arise, which is

your return, and which must give you rest with the flock of God; for it's the life that's the door and the fold, and without it you will be but wanderers, and lost in all your thoughts and motions, and God will cross you and curse you for its sake, and plead against you till you return, if he cast you not off for often rebellion, from which the Lord keep you. And take heed of evil thoughts to which you will be tempted, you that are gone out from the true light, or an evil eye going out of your own hearts against the truth you once were called into, or them that walk in it, to spy faults in others and feed thereon; this food will but strengthen the enmity in you against you and your return, and with this you may make bonds which you cannot break when you would, and your evil thoughts are as witchcraft to the pure life, and as a canker, will eat till it have devoured all that remains in you, to lead you to repentance, that not so much as the place thereof you will find in the end. And this I am moved to warn you of, having been often tempted therewith, that the life of peace and truth may only live and guide in you in all, without which there can be no true unity with God or his people, which is that the devil chiefly hates, and withstands in all in whom he can prevail.

Thus having drunken a measure of that depth which cannot be measured, I cannot but confess thereto, and declare thereof to his praise, who above all excelleth in judgment and mercy, to every particular creature in their several states and conditions, that all might hear and take heed to abide in him, whose offspring they are, who hath his way in the deeps, and makes darkness as light before him; he turns man to destruction for his disobedience, and the light of his word is salvation, and his life the resurrection out of the greatest depth, who hath saved my soul from death thus far, and lifted my feet out of the pit, even to him be immortal glory for ever; and let every troubled soul trust in Him, for his mercy endureth for ever.

JAMES NAYLER.

AND IN THE DAY WHEN MY GOD LIFTED MY FEET OUT OF THE PIT
WAS THIS GIVEN FORTH.

It is in my heart to praise thee, O my God, let me never forget thee, what thou hast been to me in the night, by thy presence in the day of trial, when I was beset in darkness, when I was cast out as a wandering bird, when I was assaulted with strong temptations, then thy presence in secret did preserve me; and in a low estate I felt thee near me, when the floods sought to sweep me away, thou set a compass for them, how far they should pass over, when my way was through the sea, and when I passed under the mountains, there wast thou present with me, when the weight of the hills was upon me, thou upheld'st me, else had I sunk under the earth, when I was as one altogether helpless, when tribulation and anguish was upon me day and night, and the earth without foundation; when I went on the way of wrath, and passed by the gates of hell; when all comforts stood a far off, and he that is mine enemy had dominion; when I was cast into the pit, and was as one appointed to death; when I was between the millstones, and as one crushed with the weight of his adversary, as a father thou wast with me, and the rock of thy presence, when the mouths of lions roared against me, and fear took hold on my soul in the pit: then I called upon thee in the night, and my cries were strong before thee daily, who answered'st me from thy habitation, and delivered'st me from thy dwelling place, saying, "I will set thee above all thy fears, and lift up thy feet above the head of oppression:" I believed and was strengthened, and thy word was salvation. Thou didst fight on my part when I wrestled with death; and when darkness would have shut me up, then thy light shone about me, and thy banner was over my head. When my work was in the furnace, and as I passed through the fire, by thee I was not consumed, though the flames ascended above my head: when I beheld the dreadful visions and was amongst the fiery spirits, thy faith stayed me, else through fear I had fallen: I saw thee and believed, so the enemy could not prevail.

When I look back into thy works I am astonished, and see no end of thy praises: glory, glory to thee, saith my soul, and let my heart be ever filled with thanksgiving; whilst tny works remain, they shall shew forth thy power; then didst thou lay the foundation of the earth, and led'st me under the waters, and in the deep did'st thou shew me wonders, and the forming of the world. By thy hand thou led'st me in safety till thou shewed'st me the pillars of the earth: then did the heavens shower down, they were covered with darkness and the powers thereof were shaken, and thy glory descended, thou filled'st the lower parts of the earth with gladness, and the springs of the valleys were opened; thy showers descended abundantly, so the earth was filled with virtue. Thou madest thy plant to spring, and the thirsty soul became as a watered garden; then did'st thou lift me out of the pit, and set me forth in the sight of my enemies: thou proclaimed'st liberty to the captive, and called'st mine acquaintance near me, they to whom I had been a wonder, looked upon me, and in thy love I obtained favour in those who had forsook me, then did gladness swallow up sorrow, and I forsook all my troubles; and I said, how good is it that man be proved in the night, that he may know his folly, that every mouth may become silent in thy hand, until thou makest man known to himself, and hast slain the boaster, and shewed him the vanity that vexeth thy spirit.

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Glory to God Almighty, who ruleth in the heavens, and in whose hands are all the kingdoms of the earth, who raiseth up and casteth down at his will, who hath ways to confound the exaltation of man and to chastise his children, and to make man to know himself to be as grass before him, whose judgments are above the highest of men, and his pity reacheth the deepest misery: and the arm of his mercy is underneath, to lift up the prisoner out of the pit, and to save such as trust in him from the great destruction, which vain man through his folly brings on himself; who hath delivered my soul out of

darkness, and made way for my freedom out of the prison-house, ransomed me from the great captivity, who divides the seas before him, and removes the mountains out of his way, in the day when he takes upon him to deliver the oppressed out of the hand of him that is too mighty for him in the earth; let his name be exalted for ever, and let all flesh fear before him, whose breath is life to his own, but a consuming fire to the adversary.

And to the Lord Jesus Christ be everlasting dominion upon earth, and his kingdom above all the powers of darkness, even that Christ of whom the scriptures declare, which was, and is, and is to come, the light of the world to all generations, of whose coming I testify, with the rest of the children of light begotten of the immortal seed, whose truth and virtue now shine in the world unto the righteousness of eternal life, and the Saviour of all that believe therein, who hath been the rock of my salvation, and his spirit hath given quietness and patience to my soul in deep affliction, even for his name sake: praises for ever.

But condemned for ever be all those false worships, with which any have idolized my person in the night of my temptation, when the power of darkness was above; all their casting off their clothes in the way, their bowings and singings, and all the rest of those wild actions which did any way tend to dishonour the Lord, or draw the minds of any from the measure of Christ Jesus in themselves, to look at flesh which is grass, or to ascribe that to the visible which belongs to Christ Jesus; all *that* I condemn by which the pure name of the Lord hath any way been blasphemed through me in that time of temptation, or the spirits of any people grieved that truly love the Lord Jesus throughout the whole world, of what sort soever.

This offence I confess, which hath been sorrow of heart, that the enemy of man's peace in Christ should get this advantage in the night of my trial, to stir up wrath and offences in the creation of God, a thing the simplicity of my heart did not intend, the Lord knows, who in his endless love hath given me power over it to

condemn it; and also that letter sent me to Exeter, by John Stranger, when I was in prison, with these words, thy name shall be no more James Nayler, but Jesus. This I judge to be written from the imaginations, and a fear struck me when I first saw it; and so I put it in my pocket [close] not intending any should see it: which they finding on me, spread it abroad, which the simplicity of my heart never owned. So this I deny also, that the name of *Christ Jesus*, is received instead of *James Nayler*, or be ascribed to him; for the name is to the promised seed to all generations, and he that hath the son, hath the name which is life and power, the salvation and the unction, into which name all the children of light are baptized: so the name of Christ I confess before men, but not according to men; which name to me hath been a strong tower, in the night and in the day.

And this is the name of Jesus Christ which I confess, the Son and the Lamb, the promised seed, where he speaks in male or female; but who hath not this in himself, hath not life, neither can have by idolizing my person, or the person of any flesh, but in whom the heir is born and hath spoken, or doth speak, there he must not be denied the mouth to speak by, who is head over all, and in all his own, God blessed for ever.

And all those ranting wild spirits, which then gathered about me in the time of darkness, and all their wild actions and wicked words against the honour of God and his pure spirit and people, I deny the spirit, the power and the works thereof, and as far as I gave advantage, through want of judgment, for that evil spirit in any to arise, I take shame to myself justly, having formerly had power over that spirit in judgment and discerning wherever it was: which darkness came over me through want of watchfulness and obedience to the pure eye of God, and diligent minding the reproof of life, which condemns the adultrous spirit: so the adversary got advantage, who ceases not to seek to devour; and being taken captive from the true light, walked in the night, where none can work, as a wandering bird fit for the prey. And if the Lord of all my mercies had

not rescued me, I had perished; for I was as one appointed to death and destruction, and there was none could deliver me.

And this I confess, that God may be justified in his judgment, and magnified in his mercies without end, who did not forsake his captive in the night, even when his spirit was daily provoked and grieved; but hath brought me forth to give glory to his name for ever. And it is in my heart to confess to God, and before men, my folly and offence in that day; yet was there many things formed against me at that day to take away my life, and cast upon the truth, of which I am not guilty at all; as that accusation, as if I had committed adultery with some of those women who came with us from Exeter prison; and also those who were with me at Bristol the night before I suffered there. Of both which accusations I am clear before God, who kept me at that day both in thought and deed, as to all women as a little child, God is my record. And this I mention in particular [hearing of some who still cease not to reproach therewith God's truth and people] that the mouth of enmity may be shut from evil-speaking, though this touch not my conscience.

Also that report, as though I had raised *Dorcas Erbury* from death; this I deny also, and condemn that testimony to be out of the truth, though that power that quickens the dead I deny not, which is the word of eternal life.

And this I give forth, that it may go as far as the offence against the spirit of truth hath gone abroad, that all burthens may be taken off with the truth, and the truth cleared thereby, and the true light and all that walk therein; and the deeds of darkness be condemned, and that all that are in darkness may not act in the night, but stay upon God who dwells in the light, who with the workers of iniquity hath not fellowship; which had I done when first darkness came upon me, and not been led by others, I had not run against that rock to be broken, which so long had borne me, and of whom I had so largely drunken, and of which I now drink in measure; to whom be the glory of all, and to

him must every tongue confess, as judge and Saviour, God over all, blessed for ever.

And this further is given me to say to every particular person, to whom this writing shall come, whatever is thy condition, wait in the light which lest thee see it; there is thy counsel and thy strength to be received, to stay thee, and to recover thee. Art thou tempted to sin? Abide in that which lest thee see it, that there thou mayst come to feed on the right body, and not on the temptation; for if thou mindest the temptation it will overcome thee, but in the light is salvation: or having sinned, art thou tempted to despair or to destroy thy self. Mind not the temptation, for it's death that sin hath brought forth; feed not on it nor mind it, least thou eatest condemnation, for that's the wrong body.

The body of Christ is felt in the light, in which is life from death, grace and truth to feed on, which will overcome for thee being followed; but if thou followest the temptation, fear and condemnation will swallow thee up; if there appear to thee voices, visions and revelations, feed not thereon, but abide in the light and feel the body of Christ, and there wilt thou receive faith and power to judge of every appearance and spirits, the good to hold fast and obey, and the false to resist. Art thou in darkness? Mind it not; for if thou dost, it will fill thee more; but stand still and act not, and wait in patience till light arise out of darkness to lead thee.—Art thou wounded in conscience? Feed not there, but abide in the light, which leads to the grace and truth, which teaches to deny and put off the weight, and removes the cause, and brings saving health to light; yea, this I say to thee in the name of Jesus Christ, that though thou hast made thy grave as deep as the nethermost hell, or were the afflictions as great as Job's, and thy darkness as the depth of the sea, yet if thou wilt not run to vain helps, as I have done, but stay upon the Lord, till he give thee light by his word (who commands light to shine out of darkness) from thence will he bring thee forth, and his eye shall guide thee, and thou shalt praise his name, as I do this day, glory for evermore! And this word is nigh thee which must give thee light, though darkness comprehends it not.

And had'st thou gifts, revelations, knowledge, wisdom, or whatever thou canst read of the scriptures of truth, and dost not abide in the light, and feed on the body of Christ, whence the gifts spring, but feed on the gifts, thou may'st be up for a while in thy own sight, but certainly thou wilt wither and die to God, and darkness will come upon thee, and thy food will turn to thy condemnation in the sight of God.

And this I have learned in the deeps, and in secret when I was alone, and now declare openly in the day of my mercy, glory to the highest for evermore, who hath thus far set me free to praise his righteousness and his mercy, and to the eternal, invisible, pure God over all, be fear, obedience and glory evermore, *Amen.*

JAMES NAYLER.

[See more in his answer to the Fanatick History.]

A COLLECTION OF SUNDRY

BOOKS AND PAPERS,

WRITTEN BY

JAMES NAYLER.

DIVERS PARTICULARS OF THE PERSECUTIONS OF JAMES NAYLER,
BY THE PRIESTS OF WESTMORELAND.

JAMES NAYLER being raised up, and sent forth to declare the everlasting truth, came into Westmoreland, and being at a meeting at Edward Brigg's house on the first day, where many people met, he was desired by divers friends, to meet the day following at widow Cock's house, about a mile from Kendal; whereof the priests having notice, raised the town of Kendal against him: but being long in gathering together, the meeting was done: but spies being out upon the steeple top and other places, notice was given what way James passed from thence. And coming down towards Kendal, two priests, being accompanied with a justice of peace, and some other magistrates of the town, with an exceeding great multitude of people following them, met him, saying, "Nayler, I have a message from the Lord Jesus Christ to thee, but that there is not a convenient place." To which James answered, the Lord Jesus Christ is no respecter of places. The message that he had to declare was this, "I conjure thee, that thou tell me, by what power thou inflictest such punishment* upon the bodies of creatures." James answered, dost thou remember who it was that did adjure Christ to tell, if it were the Son of God, and asked by what authority he did those things? For James saw him to be one of that generation. But the priest still conjuring him, to tell by what power he did it? James answered, dost thou acknowledge it to be done† by a power? Yea, (saith he) I have

* What punishment not mentioned.

† Supposed to be trembling, &c.

the spirit of God, and thereby know it is done by a power. James said, if thou hast the spirit of God, as thou sayest thou hast, then thou canst tell by what power it is done. The priest said, when God comes, he comes to torment the souls, and not the bodies. James said, he comes to redeem the souls. But after much jangling, the priest began to accuse him before the justice and magistrates of many things: as, that he taught people to burn their bibles; children to disobey their parents; wives their husbands; people to disobey the magistrates, and such like accusations: to which James answered, thou art a false accuser: prove one of these things, if thou canst, here, before the magistrates. But not being able to prove any one, he began to accuse James, for holding out a light that doth convince of sin; which, said the priest, all have not. To which James said, put out one in all this great multitude, that dare say he hath it not: saith the priest, these are all christians, but if a Turk or Indian were here, he would deny it. James said, thou goest far for a proof, but if a Turk were here he would witness against thee.

The people beginning to fight, the priest turned away, saying, here will be a disturbance, said James, these are thy christians, and this is the fruits of thy ministry: but the justice, with some others, did endeavour to keep the rude people off him, so that they could not come to their purpose there: but he being to pass over the bridge, and through the town, they that were of the priests party ran before, swearing they would throw him off the bridge into the water: but coming thither, and seeing their purpose, he was encouraged in his God, who gave him assurance of protection, and did wonderfully keep him, and those that were with him: for when he came unto the bridge, the word of the Lord came unto him, and he was made to cry out against their rage, and the power of the Lord was with him, so that he received no harm, though he was made to speak all along, and in the market place, and till he came out of the town: but the raging priests continued shouting, crying, and some throwing of stones at him a quarter of a mile out of the town. But such was the power of the Lord, that

neither he, nor any with him, received any harm. The work was wonderful, and we were brought much to admire it, and praise the Lord, who is blessed for ever and ever.

Another time, James being desired of many christian friends, to be at a meeting at Orton, there to wait upon the Lord for what he would make known to his people, went accordingly; and many friends and brethren accompanied him: but the priests having intelligence some days before, five of them were gathered together, and many people from all quarters. A friend in the town desired James to come to his house, and being come into his house, a message was sent from the priests, desiring him to come into the field, under pretence of a more convenient place for the great multitude. To which James answered, It is my desire that all may be edified; and coming into the field, the priests came with a great multitude, and asked him, by what authority he came thither, and had gathered together so many people, to break the peace? And, tempting him, said, wilt thou be bound, that none here shall break the peace? To which James answered, we came not hither to create offences: but if any break the law, let him suffer by the law. For he perceived they intended violence, as it appeared afterwards.

But seeing they could not prevail in that, another of them desired him to go into the church, as he called it; tempting him, saying, *the people may all sit, and hear better.* But James perceiving their deceit, said, all places were alike to him, he would abide in the field; whereupon they pulled out an ordinance of parliament, forbidding any to speak, but such as were authorized to speak, either in church or chapel, or any public place; and bid him speak at his peril, as he would answer the contempt of it. To which he answered, saying, this is not a public place. No, said one of the priests, is not this a public place? the town field! And charged the constable of the town to do his office; and examined his authority. James answered, those that are sent to declare the things of God, have not their authority from men. But they bid him prove that. He said, Paul received not

his commission from man, nor by man. To which one of them answered, that was his gospel: but they would prove, that Paul had a call from man to preach; and for that end he named that place in Acts 13. 2. where the holy ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul: and the apostles laid their hand upon them: which, said one of them, was the laying on of hands of the presbytery. But when he had found that place, James asked him, if that was Paul's call to the ministry? [three times] but he answered nothing: then said James, if that was his call, he had preached long without a call before that; and instanced to prove it, Gal. 1.

Whereupon that business ended: but another priest stood up, and said, thou oughtest to give an account of thy faith to every one that asketh: whereupon he asked divers questions, whereunto James answered, insomuch that some who stood by cried out, answer not all, but ask him some. A while after James asked him, how he would prove himself a minister of the gospel, and live upon tithes; to which he would not answer: then said James, neither will I answer thee, if thou ask me twenty more.

The next question he asked was, whether Christ was ascended or no? but James said, I will not answer thee, whereupon he cried out to the people, and said, he denies the humanity of Christ: and made a great outcry among the people of it. But the people cried out, saying, let us hear him; you have often told us many things against him: let him speak, and then if he speak not truth, you may then reprove him. James hearing the desire of the people, began to speak; and the people gave audience, and were very silent. But beginning to hold out Christ alone to be the teacher of his people in spirit and truth, one of the priests cried out, I cannot endure to hear this seducer any longer. Upon which James said, prove me a seducer before all this people, or else thou art a false accuser. But he had not one word to say against any thing that he had spoken; but said, "if thou wilt not answer me that question I asked thee, I will call thee a seducer as long as I live.

Whereupon, seeing there could be no peace there, nor liberty to speak, they desired James to go into the house: and they kept close about him, to keep him from the violence of some that came along with the priest: but they raged so, that he and some other friends received blows, and with much ado got to the house: but they, like the raging Sodomites waited about the door to do mischief, and kept shouting about the house all the while he was speaking: but the house being filled with people they could not come to their purpose. And the Lord so ordered it, in the evening we came away without any more harm: but not long after, there came some of the priests party about the house, and asked, if Nayler was gone? And when they heard he was gone, they said, he may thank God for that. Thus by the wisdom of God he escaped their violence at that time.

But the priests missing of their purpose there, the next first day after, they prepared their sermons suitable to what they intended, possessing the people that he was a blasphemer, and denied the resurrection and the humanity of Christ, and all authority; and that the parliament had opened a gap for blasphemy, and as it was said by some of their hearers, they did God good service that would knock him down. Thus having stirred up the ruder sort, the next day they prevailed with one called a justice of peace, the priest's son got him to come twelve miles from his own house, he was one that had been in actual arms against the parliament, for the bringing in of the Scots, and having armed a great multitude against the next morning, they came very early to the house where he was, where many christian friends should have met that day, and asked for Nayler, threatening to knock out his brains against the stones in the wall, and that they would pull down the house if he would not come out; though the door was never shut against them. But some of them came into the house, and commanded him to come forth, under pretence to dispute with the priest. But James seeing what they intended, answered, you did not use me so civilly the last time I was amongst you, but if any have a mind, they may come in, the doors are open. Which answer

they told the priests; whereupon they rushed violently in, and taking him by the throat, hauled him out of the door into the field, where was a man whom they called a justice, and with a pitchfork struck off his hat, and commanded him to answer to such questions as the priests would ask him. Whereupon the priest began to ask many questions; as concerning the resurrection, the humanity of Christ, the Scriptures, and divers other questions, as the sacrament, and such like; to which he answered, and proved by Scripture. But at last being asked if Christ was in him, he said, he witnessed him in measure. The priest asked, if Christ was in him as man? James said, Christ is not divided; for if he be, he is no more Christ: but I witness that Christ in me who is God and man in measure. But the priest said, Christ is in Heaven with a carnal body. To which said James, Christ filleth Heaven and earth, and is not carnal, but spiritual: for if Christ be in Heaven with a carnal body, and the saints with a spiritual body, that is not proportionable or agreeable, neither was that a carnal body which came in among the disciples, the doors being shut: for Christ is a mystery, and thou knowest him not.

Then after much jangling and tempting, the priest not having got the advantage he waited for, he cried out unto the people, not to receive him into their houses, and alledged that in the second epistle of John, ver. 10. Now how suitable that place was for his purpose, all people may see, who have eyes: for there they are forbidden to receive any into their houses, but such who abide in the doctrine of Christ, and confess themselves that they had both the father and the son, and preach that doctrine; but the priests say that is blasphemy.

Then the priest turned away from him; upon which, the armed multitude began to be violent against divers friends that were there. James hearing friends cry out, said to the justice, you will surely set us peaceably in the house again: but seeing him to go away, and leave them in the hands of the rude multitude, he gave himself up, saying, the will of the Lord be done.

Upon which the justice turned again, saying, we will see him in the house again; and going towards the house, many friends kept close about James, exposing their own bodies to the danger of their weapons, to save him harmless: and so with much ado we got into the house, not receiving much harm. Which being done and as James was praising the Lord, for his wonderous deliverance from their malicious intents, some heard them say, if we let him go thus, all people will run after him. Whereupon they agreed that he should be brought before the Justice again, and came with violence, and hauled him out again. Then the Justice and the Priest getting on horseback, they caused him to run after them to an Alehouse on the other side the water, where they went in, not suffering one friend to go in with James. And when he came before the Justice, he told him, if he would not put off his hat, he would send him to prison; and also because he thou'd him; for the justice said, my commission runs ye. To which James answered, I do it not in contempt; for I own authority, and honour it according to the scriptures: but I find none such honour commanded in scripture, but forbidden. Then they concluded to commit him for that, and also as a wandering person, and said, none there knew from whence he came; for those who knew him were kept out. Then said he to Arthur Scaife, thou knowest me; I was in the army with thee eight or nine years. It is no matter, said the justice, thou art no soldier now.

Then they writ a mittimus to send him to prison, and carried him to Kirby-stephen that night, and shut him up in a chamber, and set a guard upon him: but divers of our friends following into the town, where a great multitude were gathered together for meeting: then did the people come from the Steeplehouse, where another had been preaching; for divers of the priests were gathered together that day, some preaching, some plotting and some persecuting: Jezabel's fast was a preparation for Naboth's death. But friends not being suffered to go into the house where James was, they abode in the streets; and some of them being moved to speak to the people, the priests perceiving the people to give

audience to what was spoken, made complaint: whereupon some were sent forth, and with violence fetched in Francis Howgill, a friend who was speaking to the people, and brought him into the Priests hall, where were five Priests assembled, with many others of their party, but not one friend. And bringing him before the Justice, he commanded to put off his hat. He answered, I know no such law. The priest said, he will tread both ministry and magistracy under his feet. He said, thou art a false accuser; prove wherein. But one that stood by, took off his hat, and cast it into the fire. Then said the Justice, what is this thou speakest against the ministers? He answered, what hast thou to accuse me of? Whereupon one affirmed that he said, all the ministers that taught for hire, and in Steeplehouses, were enemies, and liars against Jesus Christ, and no ministers of Jesus Christ. Upon that, the Justice said, thou speakest against the law; for the law gives them their maintenance. He said, I meddle not of the law, but of their practice. Then said Francis to the priest, didst thou ever know a minister of Jesus Christ, that was a persecuter, or did labour to imprison any? And after some more discourse, he said to the priest, I have seen a great deal of tyranny and persecution in this days actions. Then said the justice to the people; take notice, he saith, the law I act by, is tyranny and persecution. To which the people assented. Then said Francis, thou mayst give out to the people what thou wilt; but I speak not of the law, but of your actions. Upon that he was sent to prison; a guard of eight men was set over them, who spent the night in drinking, swearing, and filthy and unclean talking; and the more they were desired by the people to beware of sin, the more filthy they did appear. But these are the fittest instruments for acting the priests intentions, being members of their churches.

The next day they were guarded to Appleby; but some friends following, could not be suffered to pass on the streets that way; so great was their envy against all that set their faces that way. And the prisoners being brought thither, much means were used, that none

should come at them, but such as were sent to tempt them. There they were kept until the sessions; in which time they sent up and down the country, to seek for any who would witness any thing against them; and improved their utmost interest for their advantage. A jury was chosen; divers of whom were resolved on the business; so that it was told the prisoners what would become of them, before the day of examination came; and it was accordingly: for the day came, and judgment passed; but the prisoners never saw their accusers, nor know who they are. But against that day, the priests had prepared three large petitions, stuffed with most filthy untruths and slanders, raised out of the bottomless pit, but not one of them proved, though one of the justices said to them, *it is fit they should be proved*: neither was there any thing in them, which they could charge upon the prisoners, save only what the power of the Lord had manifested at their meetings in shaking proud flesh, and pouring out his spirit upon many, especially, as they said, upon little children: which the priests concluded was sorcery and witchery, and of the devil; hereby declaring themselves to be of that generation, who called the good man of the house, *Belzebub*; and if they should not do the same to them of his household, the words of Christ could not be fulfilled.

Likewise they had gathered up all reports, true or false, of things done by many that the prisoners had not seen the faces of, or ever knew; thinking thereby to make them odious to the people. They also brought two priests out of Lancashire, to swear things that another man had spoken in the presence of four Justices of the Peace, and for which the man had been tried and cleared. And these they brought thinking to add afflictions to the prisoners bonds. But he (with his fellow-prisoner) was kept in great peace and joy, having not any comfort from man, but from God, who hath appeared to him in this condition, and hath given him assurance of his love, in whom he rests. To whom be praise, honour, and glory for ever. *Amen.*

THE EXAMINATION OF JAMES NAYLER, UPON AN INDICTMENT OF BLASPHEMY, AT THE SESSIONS AT APPLEBY, IN JANUARY, 1652.

Justice Pearson. Put off your hats.

J. Nayler. I do it not in contempt of authority; for I honour the power as it is of God, without respecting mens persons, it being forbidden in scripture. He that respects persons, commits sin, and is convinced of the law as a transgressor.

Just. P. That is meant of respecting persons in judgment.

J. N. If I see one in goodly apparel, and a gold ring, and see one in poor and vile raiment; and say to him in fine apparel, sit thou in a higher place than the poor, I am partial, and judged of evil thoughts.

Col. Brigs. If thou wert in the Parliament house, wouldst thou keep it on?

J. N. If God should keep me in the same mind I am in now, I should.

Col. Brigs. I knew thou wouldst condemn authority.

J. N. I speak in the presence of God, I do not condemn authority; but I am subject to the power as it is of God, for conscience sake.

Just. P. Now authority commands thee put off thy hat, what sayst thou to it?

J. N. Where God commands one thing, and man another, I am to obey God rather than man.

Col. Benson. See whether the law commands it, or your own wills.

The indictment was read, wherein James was indicted for saying, that Christ was in him, and that there was but one word of God.

Col. Brigs. Where wast thou born?

J. N. At Ardislaw, two miles from Wakefield.

Col. Brigs. How long livedst thou there?

J. N. Until I was married: then I went into Wakefield parish.

Col. Brigs. What profession wast thou of?

J. N. A husbandman.

Col. Brigs. Wast thou a soldier?

J. N. Yea; I was a soldier between eight and nine years.

Col. Brigs. Wast thou not at Burford, among the levellers?

J. N. I was never there.

Col. Brigs. I charge thee by the Lord, that thou tell me whether thou wast or no.

J. N. I was then in the North, and was never taxed for any munity, or any other thing, while I served the Parliament.

Col Brigs. What was the cause of thy coming into these parts.

J. N. If I may have liberty, I shall declare it. I was at the plough, meditating on the things of God, and suddenly I heard a voice, saying unto me, get thee out from thy kindred, and from thy father's house. And I had a promise given in with it. Whereupon I did exceedingly rejoice, that I had heard the voice of that God which I had professed from a child, but had never known him.

Col. Brigs. Didst thou hear that voice?

J. N. Yes, I did hear it; and when I came at home, I gave up my estate, cast out my money; but not being obedient in going forth, the wrath of God was upon me, so that I was made a wonder to all; and none thought I would have lived. But [after I was made willing] I began to make some preparation, as apparel and other necessities, not knowing whither I should go: but shortly afterward, going a gate-ward with a friend from mine own house, having on an old snit, without any money, having neither taken leave of wife or children, not thinking then of any journey, I was commanded to go into the West, not knowing whether I should go, nor what I was to do there: but when I had been there a little while, I had given me what I was to declare; and ever since I have remained, not knowing to day, what I was to do to-morrow.

Col. Brigs. What was the promise that thou hadst given?

J. N. That God would be with me: which promise I find made good every day.

Col. Brigs. I never heard such a cause as this is, in our time.

J. N. I believe thee.

Just. Pears. Is Christ in thee?

J. N. I witness him in me: and if I should deny him before men, he would deny me before my father which is in heaven.

Just. Pears. Spiritual you mean?

J. N. Yea, spiritual.

Just. Pears. By faith, or how?

J. N. By faith.

Just. Pears, What difference then between the ministers and you?

J. N. The ministers affirm Christ to be in heaven with a carnal body, but I with a spiritual.

Just. Pears. Which of the ministers say Christ is in heaven with a carnal body?

J. N. The minister, so called, of Kirby-stephen.

Priest Higginson stood up, and affirmed it again openly before all the court.

J. N. If Christ be in heaven with a carnal body, and the saints with a spiritual body, it is not proportionable; neither was that a carnal body which appeared among the disciples, the doors being shut, and appeared in divers forms.

Quest. Was Christ man, or no?

J. N. Yea, he was, and took upon him the seed of Abraham, and was real flesh and bone; but is a mystery not known to the carnal man: for he is begotten of the immortal seed, and those that know him, know him to be spiritual; for it was the word that became flesh, and dwelt amongst us; and if he had not been spiritual, he had not wrought my redemption.

Just. Pears. Is Christ in thee as man?

J. N. Christ filleth all places, and is not divided; separate God and man, and he is no more Christ.

Just. Pears. If we stand to dispute these things, we should have the Ministers.

James perceiving Priest Higginson offended, because he had told of his saying, that Christ was in Heaven with a carnal body, James said, friend I had not accused thee, had I not been asked what was the difference between the ministers and me. For I am not come to accuse any; for I am against accusations.

Col. Brigs. Wast thou not of a kirk about Sawrby?

J. N. I was a member of an Independent Church at Weed Church.

Col. Brigs. Wast thou not excommunicated for thy blasphemous opinions?

J. N. I know not what they have done since I came forth; but before I was not, to my knowledge.

Col. Brigs called Mr. Coale, saying, did you e'er hear such a call as this? did you hear it?

Coale. Yea, I heard part of it.

Col. Brigs. Didst not thou write a paper, wherein was mentioned, that if thou thinkest to be saved by that Christ which died at Jerusalem, thou art deceived?

J. N. If I cannot witness Christ nearer than Jerusalem I shall have no benefit by him; but I own no other Christ, but that who witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate; which Christ I witness suffering in me now (viz. spiritually.)

Col. Brigs. Wilt thou deny thy hand?

J. N. I will not deny my hand, if I may see it; and I desire that I may have so much favour, that that paper may be kept as an evidence, either with or against me.

A large petition being read, wherein was something against Quaking and trembling.

Just. Pears. How comes it to pass that people quake and tremble?

J. N. The Scriptures witnes the same condition in the Saints formerly; as David, Daniel, Habbakkuk, and divers others.

Just. Pears. Did they fall down?

J. N. Yea, some of them did so.

Coale. David said, all his bones were broken, but they were whole.

J. N. So are these now.

Coale. Moses trembled; for he saw the face of God and all Isreal.

J. N. Did all Isreal see the face of God? That crosseth the Scriptures.

Coale. They saw his glory. I shall see the Lord with these eyes; putting his fingers to his eyes.

J. N. They must first be made spiritual; he cannot be seen with carnal eyes, for he is a spirit; and no flesh can see God and live.

Coale. That light by which I am justified, is a created light.

J. N. That light by which I am justified, is not a created light.

Coale. That is true.

Just. Pears. To the word: what sayest thou to the scriptures? are they the word of God?

J. N. They are a true declaration of the word, that was in them who spoke them forth.

Higginson. Is there not a written word?

J. N. Where readest thou in the scriptures, that they are called the written word? The word is spiritual, not seen with carnal eyes: but as for the scriptures, they are true, and I witness them true, in measure fulfilled in me, as far as I am grown up.

Just. Pears. Why dost thou disturb the ministers in their public worships?

J. N. I have not disturbed them in their public worship.

Just. Pears. Why dost thou speak against tythes, which are allowed by the states?

J. N. I meddle not with the states; I speak against them that are hirelings, as they are hirelings: those that were sent of Christ, never took tythes, nor ever sued any for wages.

Just Pears. Dost thou think we are so beggarly as the Heathens, that we cannot afford our ministers maintenance? We give them it freely.

J. N. They are the ministers of Christ, who abide in the doctrine of Christ.

Just. Pears. But who shall judge? How shall we know them?

J. N. By their fruits you shall know them; they that abide not in the doctrine of Christ, make it appear they are not the ministers of Christ.

Just. Pears. That is true.*

*This just Pearson was convinced at this sessions, by J. Nayler, as he sat on the bench one of his judges, being that Anthony Pearson, who afterwards wrote the book called, the great case of Tythes, &c.

After this, there passed some discourse between justice Benson, and others on the bench, concerning J. Nayler's commitment. Justice Benson alleged, that the words by him spoken, were neither within the act against blasphemy, nor against any law. Two of the justices replied, that rather than J. Nayler should go at liberty, and abroad in the country, they would stand to the hazard of being fined by the judges of the assize; and another of the justices said, that they rather committed him upon the ministers petitions (though none of the particulars therein were proved) than upon the indictment, there having been several petitions put up by the priests of Westmoreland to the justices of the peace, against J. N. G. Fox, F. Howgil, and others, and accordingly it was ordered by the justices at Appleby, that J. Nayler and F. Howgil should stay in prison till the petitions were answered: which said petitions were answered by G. Fox and J. Nayler; see the book, entitled, several petitions answered, that were put up by the priests of Westmoreland, against J. N. and G. F. So after about 20 weeks imprisonment, they were discharged; after which J. N. continued in the service of truth in the north, till he came to London about the year 1654, as will appear hereafter by his own account.

A LETTER OF JAMES NAYLER'S, TO SOME FRIENDS IN YORKSHIRE, GIVING
A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT LANCASTER SESSIONS
AGAINST HIM AND G. FOX; AS IN A BOOK, CALLED, A BRIEF
DISCOVERY, AND ALSO IN G. F.'S JOURNAL, PAGE 90, &c.

DEAR friends and brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ, my dear love is unto you all, desiring you may be kept steadfast in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the power of his love, boldly to witness forth the truth, as it is revealed in you by the mighty working of the father; to him alone be everlasting praise, and honour for evermore. Dear friends, the Lord doth much manifest his love and power in these parts.

Upon the second day of the last week, my brother George and I were at Lancaster, there were abundance of friends from all parts, and a great sort of people who

sided with the priests, giving out, they now hoped to see a stop put to that great work, which had gone on so fast, and with such power, that their kingdom is much shaken.

We were called before judge Fell, Col. West, Justice Sawrey, &c. to answer what was charged against George. There were three witnesses to eight particulars, but they were much confused in themselves, which gave much light to the truth; whereby the justices did plainly see, that it was envy, and they divers times told them so.

One of the witnesses was a young priest, who confessed, he had not meddled, had not another priest sent for him, and set him on work. The other witnesses were two priests sons. It was proved there, by many that heard one of them say, if he had power, he would make George deny his profession, and that he would take away his life. This was a single witness to one of the greatest untruths that were charged against George; and the justices told him, that they saw, because he could not take away his life, he went about to take away his liberty.

There was one priest chosen out of the whole number, as an orator, to plead against us; who spared no pains to show forth his envy against the truth; and when he could not prevail, he went down in a rage; and there came up a pack of them into the room, among whom was one Jacus. George was then speaking in the room, one of the justices having wished him, if he had any thing to say, he would speak: at which the said priest Jacus was in such a rage, that he broke forth into many high expressions against the truth spoken by my dear brother George; amongst which, this was one, that the letter and the spirit were inseparable. Hereupon the justices stood up, and bid him prove that, before he went any further. Then he seeing himself caught, would have denied it; and when he could not get off so, the rest of the priests would have helped him to a meaning for his words; but the justices would admit no other meaning, than the plain sense of the words, but told him, he had laid down a position, and it was fit he should prove it; pressing the matter close upon him.—

Whereupon the priests, being put to silence, went down in a greater rage than before; and some of them, after they were gone down, being asked what they had done, lied and said, they could not get into the room; thereby to hide their shame, and keep the people in blindness.

The justices, judge Fell and Col. West, were much convinced of the truth, and did set up justice and equity; and have much silenced the rage of the people. Many bitter spirits were at Lancaster, to see the event; but went home and cried, the priests had lost the day: everlasting praises be to him, who fought the battle for us, who is our king for ever.

There were others called, who the witnesses confessed were in the room, when the things charged on George were said to have been spoken; but they all as one man, denied, that any such words were spoken: which gave much light to the justices, and they durst trust what they had witnessed, for they said, they knew many of them to be honest men.

There was a warrant granted out against us at Appleby; but justice Benson told them, it was not according to law; and so it ceased: as I hear he is a faithful man to the truth.

The priests began to preach against the justices, and said, they were not to meddle in these things, but to end controversy betwixt neighbour and neighbour. They are not pleased with the law, because it is not in the statute to imprison us, as the priest, that pleaded against us, said, the justice bid him, go put it into the statute, if he could; he said, it should want no will of his. They are much afraid, that they shall lose all. They are much discontented in these parts; and some of them cry, *all is gone*.

Dear friends, dwell in patience, and wait upon the Lord, who will do his own work. Look not at man in the work, nor at man who opposeth the work; but rest in the will of the Lord, that so ye may be furnished with patience, both to do and to suffer what ye shall be called unto, that your end in all things may be his praise. And take up his cross freely, which keeps low the fleshy man, that Christ may be set up, and honoured in

all things, and so the light advanced in you, and the judgment set up, which must give sentence against all that opposeth the truth, that the captivity may be led captive, and the prisoner set free to seek the Lord; that righteousness may rule in you, and peace and joy may dwell in you, wherein consisteth the kingdom of the father; to whom be all praise for ever.

Dear friends, meet often together, and take heed of what exalteth it self above its brother; but keep low, and serve one another in love for the Lord's sake. Let all friends know how it is with us, that God may have the praise of all.

J. N.

Written from Killet, the 30th day of the 8th month, 1652.

TRUTH CLEARED FROM SCANDALS;

BEING JAMES NAYLER'S ANSWER AND DECLARATION, TOUCHING SOME THINGS CHARGED UPON HIM IN THE LANCASHIRE PETITION.

HAVING heard of divers untruths cast upon me by some of the priests in their high places, though I stand only to the Lord in respect of my self; yet lest any that love the truth, should be led to speak evil of the things they know not, I shall lay open the truth, as it is in me revealed, touching those things whereof I have been falsely accused.

1. Concerning Jesus Christ, who is the eternal word of God, by whom all things were made and are upholden, who was before all time, but manifested in time for the recovery of lost man; which word became flesh, and dwelt amongst the saints, who is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever; who did, and doth dwell in the saints; who suffered, and rose again, and ascended into Heaven, and is set at the right hand of God; to whom all power is given in Heaven and in earth,^a who filleth all places; he is the light of the world; but known to none, but those who receive and follow him; and those he leads up to God, out of all the ways, works, and worships of the world, by his pure light in them, whereby he reveals the man of sin, and by his power casts him

^a Jude 10. Re. 19. 13. 1 John 1. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. 1 Pet. 1. 25. John 1. 14. Eph. 5. 20. & 1. 21, 22. John 8. 12. 2 Thes. 2. 8. 2 Cor. 6. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17.

out, and so prepares the bodies of the saints a fit temple for the pure God to dwell in, with whom dwells no unclean things. And thus he reconciles God and man, and the image of God, which in purity and holiness is renewed; and the image of satan, which is all sin and uncleanness, is defaced.^a And none can witness redemption further than Christ is thus revealed in them, to set them free from sin:^b which Christ I witness to be revealed in me in measure, Gal. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 5. Col. 1. 27.

2. Concerning the Scriptures, that they are a true declaration of that word which was in them, that gave or spake them forth, and are of no private interpretation; but were given forth to be read and fulfilled in the saints, as they were given forth by the holy ghost, without adding or diminishing, and were not given forth for men to make a trade upon, to get money by;^c but as they are, they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. But they who trade in the letter, and are ignorant of the mystery, deny all perfection. And none can rightly understand the scriptures, but they who read them with the same spirit that gave them forth, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are spiritually discerned.

3. Concerning baptism. The true baptism is that of the spirit, with the holy ghost and with fire; baptized by one spirit into one body: not the washing away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: without which, no other baptism can save us, they being but figures or shadows; but this baptism of Christ is the substance, whereby we are baptized into his death; and those who are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.^d

4. Concerning the Lord's supper, the true supper of the Lord, is the spiritual eating and drinking of the flesh and blood of Christ spiritually, which the spiritual man

^a Cor. 5. 18, 19. Col. 3. 10. ^b John 8. 34, 36. ^c 1 John 1. 3, 5. 2 Pet. 1. 21. Deut. 4. 2. Rev. 22. 18. Tim. 3. 16, 17. ^d 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. John 3. 11. Acts 1. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 2. Col. 2. 12. Gal. 3. 27. Rom. 6. 3. Mat. 26. 26, 28. John 6. 51, 53, 54, 55, 56.

only eateth, and is thereby nourished up unto eternal life. Without which eating there can be no life in the creature, profess what you will. And all who eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, have real communion with Christ the head, and also one with another, as members, and are all of one heart, and one mind, a complete body in Christ.^a Now the world, who take only the outward signs, and are not brought into a discerning of the Lord's body, eat and drink damnation to themselves, and become guilty of the body and blood of Christ; and calls this a communion, but lives in envy, strife and debate, fighting, and going to law one with another, for earthly things.

5. Concerning the resurrection. That all shall arise to give an account, and receive at the last day, according to their works done in the flesh, whether good or evil: these bodies that are dust, shall turn to dust, but God shall give a body as pleaseth him.^b That which is sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body: and as we have borne the image of the earthly, so we shall bear the image of the Heavenly: but flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of Heaven; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption, for we shall all be changed.^c But they who cannot witness the first resurrection within themselves, know nothing of the second, but by hearsay: and therefore say some of your teachers, that Christ is in Heaven with a carnal body.^d Now that Christ, who is the first fruits, should be there with a carnal body, and the saints with a spiritual body, is not proportionable.

6. Concerning magistracy; that it is an ordinance of God, ordained for the punishment of evil doers, and an encouragement of those that do well.^e Where justice and righteousness is the head, and ruleth without partiality, that land is kept in peace; and those who judge for the Lord, I honour as my own life,^f not with a flattering honour of putting off the hat, and bowing of the

a 1 Cor. 10. 16. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. Col. 2. 10. Acts 4. 32. 1 Cor. 11. 27, 28, 29.—
John 5. 20. b 1 Cor. 15. 38. c Cor. 15. 42, 43, 44, 46, 50, 51. d Rev. 20. 6. Phil. 3. 21
1 Cor. 15. 20. e 1 Cor. 15. 47. Col. 1. 15. f Rom. 13. 3. f Jude 16.

knee, which is the honour of the world, having mens persons in admiration, because of advantage, for self-ends, but from my heart for conscience sake, as to the power which is of God, and not to mens persons: for the Scripture saith, he that respects persons commits sin, and is convicted of the law, as are transgressors.^a And the apostle James commands the saints, not to have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons: and faith, such are partial in themselves, and become judges of evil thoughts.^b And saith Paul, let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for, saith he, there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God, not of man: and that whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and saith, we must needs be subject for conscience sake.^c And therefore, though the prophets and saints were often sent by the Lord, to pronounce judgment against unjust men, who had the power committed to them, and did not judge for God, but for self-ends; yet they never attempted to raise any violence against them, but used all means to persuade them to do justly, love mercy, and walk humble with God, that they might be established, and the wrath of God turned away from them:^d for those that be of God cannot rejoice in the destruction of any, but would have all to turn to God, and find mercy.^e

7. Concerning the ministry. The true ministers of Jesus Christ have always been, and are still, such as came not by the will of man, but by the will of God; neither are they fitted for that work by any thing of man, but by God alone; for the true ministry is the gift of Jesus Christ, given for the perfecting of the saints, and needs no addition of humane helps and learning,^f but as the work is spiritual, and of the Lord, so they are spiritually fitted only by the Lord. And therefore he chose herdsman, fishermen and ploughmen, and such like. And as he gave them an immediate call, without the leave of man;^g so he fitted them immediately, without the help of man: and as they received the gift freely, so they were to give freely. And whenever they found

^a Rom. 13. 5. ^b James 2. 5. Ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. ^c Rom. 13. 1, 5. ^d Mic. 6. 8. ^e 1 Pet. 1. 12. Eph. 4. 11, 12. ^f 1 Cor. 12. 7. ^g Pet. 4. 10. 11. Gal. 11. 11, 12, 16.

any of the false ministers, who taught for hire, they cried out against them, and pronounced woes against them, and showed them, that they lay in iniquity, because they thought that the gift of God could be bought and sold for money. And Christ calls them hirelings, and saith, they care not for the sheep. And Micah cries out against the priests that taught for hire. and saith, they build up Sion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.^a And Jeremiah cried out against the priests in his days, that bear rule by the prophets means, and calls it an horrible thing, and saith, that from the least of them to the greatest, they are all given to covetousness.^b— And Isaiah cried out of such in his days, and calls them greedy dogs, that can never have enough; and, saith he, they all look for their gain from their quarter.^c And Peter saith of such in his days as should come, that they through covetousness should make merchandize of the people, and saith, they have hearts exercised with covetous practices, who have forsaken the right way, and have followed the way of Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.^d And Jude cries, woe unto them, for they go on in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Balaam, for rewards. But those that were sent out by Christ, counted it their reward to make the gospel without charge; neither ever had they any set means, but went about, having no certain dwelling place; neither were masters, but servants to all for Christ's sake; nor ever went to law for tithes, or any other earthly thing, but suffered persecution.^e And as always he that was after the flesh, persecuted him that was after the spirit; even so it is now.

Now all people, try your priests by the scriptures, whether they are of God, or of the world; and never think to hear the word of the Lord from their mouths, who walk contrary to the Scriptures; for such were never sent of God: for had they been sent of God, they would abide in his doctrine. And John saith, such have not God, but he that abides in the doctrine of Christ,

^a Mat. 10. 3. Acts 8. 20. John 10. 13. Micha. 3. 10. ^b Jer. 5. 30. and 6. 13. ^c Isai. 56. 10, 11. ^d 2 Pet. 2. 14, 15. 2 Cor. 11. 15. Jude 11. 1 Cor. 16, 17, 18. ^e 1 Cor 9. 4. 11. Gal. 4. 19.

hath both the father and the son. And if there come any to you, and bring not this doctrine, you are forbidden to receive them into your houses, or bid them God speed: for if you do, you are partakers of their evil deeds.^a And unto the wicked, saith God, what hast thou to do to declare my statues, or that thou shouldst take my covenant into thy mouth; seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thy back, and art a partaker with the thief, the adulterer, evil-speaking, slanderer and deceit; and such as do these things, think God to be like themselves. But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.^b

1653.

J. N.

AN EPISTLE TO SEVERAL FRIENDS ABOUT WAKEFIELD.

James Nayler, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, unto all that love the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ every where, grace and peace be multiplied from God the father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

My dear hearts, you whom the Lord hath manifested so much love unto, as to call you out of sin and death, and the world, all the delights and pleasures of the world which fade away, up to himself; where is joy unspeakable, pleasures and riches that endure for evermore.

Dear friends, watch and be sober, that you may hear the voice of your beloved when he calleth, and let not the precious proffers of the love of God be tendered in vain. While you have an ear open to the world, you cannot hear the voice of God; so that you have been made to groan under it. How long have you been deceived by it? All your time promising peace, fulness, and satisfaction: but have been brought to cry out of oppression and deceit. And your cries are come before the Lord of Sabbaths, who is your rest; and he is now appeared to deliver you, and set you free from bondage, that you may serve him alone.

And now take heed of consulting with your old mas-

a 1 John 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. John 9, 10, 2 John 9, 10, 11. b Psalm 50, 16, 17. Psalm 50, 21.

ter: hath the Lord been so merciful unto you, as that he hath set your faces out of Sodom and Egypt, towards the promised land? Oh! take heed of looking back, lest you be taken captive, and led back again; and so you come short of redemption, and your faith fail you, and so you come short of the promise; for unbelief cannot enter into the rest. But you, dear friends, put on resolution, put on strength, be valiant for your freedom, cast off every weight, follow your captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and so entered into rest and glory.

Take heed of halting between God and the world: what agreement can there be, or what peace while you are married to the world? Your thoughts turn in thither, and you are adulterated from God, who gives you all good things, as so many tokens of his love. Hereby is the broken language brought forth, and you cannot speak the pure language of the land of rest. And while you give way to that in you, which leads you to look back to what is behind you, you keep yourselves in the wilderness and darkness, and lose your way, and know not where you are; grieving the holy spirit of the Lord, which hath appeared unto you to guide you.

But [O friends!] mind your guide and follow him; arise, shine, your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you; the night is far spent, the day is at hand, even the day of Sion's deliverance: arise, come away, all you that love her, come off from the world and wordly things, come into the life, lie no longer in death and dead things. Awake, thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, that Christ may give thee light: come forth, come forth of all created things, witness your redemption from the world that you are redeemed from the earth up to God, out of all kindreds, tongues, people and nations, to reign as kings and priests for ever, above the world, sin and death, triumphing and treading upon all that would take you captive. This is the day of your deliverance, own it with the loss of all fading pleasures, make it appear to all the world, this is the day you waited for: even the day of your

joy, but of the world's sorrow: a day of blackness and gloominess; a day of fear and trouble to them that oppress you; a day wherein the kingdom of Jesus Christ shall be exalted, and all the kingdoms and powers of the earth shaken; a day wherein the Lord will avenge the power of him that is too strong for you. Rejoice, rejoice, ye meek of the earth, shout for joy, ye poor despised ones, whom your brethren have trodden upon, and have cast you out, and you have been made their mocking stock for the truth's sake; sing and rejoice, the voice of a king is amongst you, and he will marry you to himself in righteousness, purity and holiness, and will rejoice over you, as a bridegroom over the bride, and you shall be for a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

O my dear hearts! my desire to God for you all, is, that you might come to see what unspeakable riches is laid up for you in Jesus Christ, which is hid from all flesh, neither can they see it who live after the flesh: and while they continue their love to the world and worldly things, they keep out the manifestation of the father's love, for their hearts cannot receive both.

Now shew yourselves wise men, choose that which is eternal: here is light and life tendered to you in Jesus Christ, freely out of the father's love: freely receive life and love, and shew forth life and love to God again, by giving up to him all you have, and all you are for Christ's sake; that so you may come to receive all again with Christ, who is the fulness of the father's love, and in him are all good things needful for this life, and that which is to come, even the earnest of your inheritance, which none can take from you; which being received, you shall never hunger more, having a well spring within, even the witness of eternal life and love. And as Christ appears, who is our life and love; so shall life and love appear, spring, blossom, and bring forth fruit towards God and man: that so, being raised by him from death and dead works, you may henceforth live unto God: and being brought into oneness with him, and purity, and holiness, you may be one amongst your-

selves, of one heart and one mind, speaking one and the self-same thing; and having the same care one for another, as for yourselves. And take heed that there be not in any of you a principle of self-love, which will lead to separation and division, casting a stumbling block in the way of the simple; and so they that are weak, may be defiled and turned back into the world.

And I beseech you, brethren, that you mark them that once set their faces towards Sion, but not being willing to deny the world, and take up the cross, have consulted with flesh and blood, and turned back into Egypt again: of such take heed, knowing, that the same spirit that hath wrought in them deceitfully, will not cease to work by them to deceive others, to maintain its own kingdom. But you, standing fast in the pure light of Christ, shall see whither those return, and the cause of their returnings, and that the end of such is worse than the beginning: but there will be such, that they who are approved may be made manifest. But you my brethren, be ye so far from following such, that their falling away, may cause you to watch, and search by what power you stand; and so a pure fear may be preserved in you, by which you may be kept in the way that leads to the crown which is immortal; for it is he that overcomes that must wear the crown: wherefore faint not, nor think any thing hard the Lord calls you unto; nothing must suffer, but that which is to die, that your souls may live. Oh! your light affliction worketh for you a far more exceeding weight of glory, while you keep your eye to that which is invisible. Wherefore give up yourselves to his will in all things.

Stand in the will of God in your present condition, you are my joy in the Lord, let my bowels be refreshed to hear of your steadfastness and growth in the truth. Take heed of propounding ends to yourselves in any thing, for that leads out of the way of God, and gives way to your own wisdom; and so you seek to preserve that alive which is appointed for death, and so you maintain war against God, and know it not. And in this condition you can have no peace, while the enemies are in arms against your peace. Oh! dear friends,

you are in my heart, my prayer to God for you is, that you may be kept blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, blessed for ever.

My fellow prisoner, and dear companion in the Lord. (F. H.) salutes you all. Cease not to pray for us, that we may be kept to his praise, who hath counted us worthy to suffer for his name. We are well, and in great peace, kept in our father's love above all. We are often brought to stand, and wonder how we are kept in the midst of the fire, and not consumed; and the more that the enemy rages, the more are we kept in peace within. Here are strange devices used to ensnare us, to get aught against us (true or false) but all is ordered by a power the world knows not. God is our strength, rejoice with us, all dear friends, and praise his name for evermore, for he is worthy, for his mercy endures for ever.

JAMES NAYLER.

A prisoner at Appleby, in Westmoreland, for the truth's sake, 1653.

TO ALL DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS IN HOLDERNESS AND IN THE
EAST PARTS OF YORKSHIRE.

DEAR FRIENDS,—I rejoice in you, as you are entered into the love of the truth, and have owned the voice that calls out of the darkness that is over all the earth, to set your faces towards Sion, the city of everlasting light. And now mind your way, and the light that is given to guide you in the way, to keep your eye to the light, that it may lead you through all the visible things of the world: and as you pass through, you may stand single in the mind unto God, not turning to the right or left hand, where lies the temptation; nor looking back, which lays you open to be assaulted afresh by those evils you had once escaped from; but keeping the eye towards the mark, pass on, leaving and forgetting what is behind, and treading and trampling under your feet, what the enemy shall lay as stumbling blocks in your way, which your carnal eyes, or ears, or hearts would be closing with, for the temptation lies in the carnal things, and there is the bondage of the creature to things that are corrupt: from which bondage from sin

and corruption the Lord is now appeared, that in the light he may redeem and lead out of it all that will own and follow him.

And this light and redemption is in his son, whom he is about to exalt, in which exaltation a strange and mighty work is to be brought to pass, whereat all that stand not in his counsel and fear, and to whom he shall not reveal his secrets, shall be offended: for all that is exalted, shall be laid low and debased; the wisdom of the wise shall come to nought, and the understanding of the prudent ones shall be hid: riches and honours shall fall to dust, from whence they came, and the worship of the world shall become filthiness, the Gods of the heathen shall be famished with looking for worship, but shall get none; and the strongest of them shall not be able to deliver himself: for the Lord will bring down all heights and mountains into the valleys; for in the valley of Jehosaphat he will plead with all flesh, which have scattered the seed of the covenant.

And now, dear friends, here is your peace and blessedness, that you silence all flesh, and cease from your own wisdom, and give over your imaginations about the things of God; come out of the love of the world, and arise out of all visible things, and prepare to meet the Lord: cast off all your idols that have had your hearts, and put off the stumbling blocks of your iniquities from before your faces, and give up all that will not that he should reign over them, that his enemies may be your enemies: for in judgment and righteousness is he come out, to be avenged upon the unrighteous seed. And now stand in the light, that a separation may be made in you, the precious from the vile, that a true Saviour may arise, that you may know your calling and election, what is called, and what you are to come out of, lest you stay in any of that to which the plagues are; for this is the cause of your suffering, not discerning in the pure wisdom, what that antichrist or exalted spirit is, that is got into the seat of God, and shews himself to be as God, whose kingdom stands in the wisdom, glory and riches of the world, whereat all that know not the true God in spirit ask counsel.

Therefore, dear friends, look not out into the visible things, for there he is ready to present to you false voices and visions, lying wonders, to lead out the vain mind into the liberty and boasting of high things, in words without power: but while such speak of liberty, they are in bondage, in mind, to corrupt and fading things. And while these are head in the creature, there is not redemption: for the bonds of iniquity are unloosed, and the pure seed is oppressed, and the plagues must pass upon that nature. Therefore sink down into the sufferings and death, that you may find the door whereat to enter; for there is a vale of tears to pass through. You shall find your well springs in him, where you shall drink of the water of life, and find refreshment, and grow from strength to strength, till you come up to Sion. Stand fast, take heed of words without life, spoken from the comprehensions, for that feeds not the pure seed, but feeds the wisdom which is below, and the itching ears, and so the pure is covered with earth, and the fowls of the air are fed, and no fruit is brought forth to perfection. And take heed of that nature that would know more than God is willing to reveal: for you shall find that unwilling to obey what it knows: and take heed of that which desires to appear before men to be commended, for that seldom deserves praise of God. And let a godly conversation declare what is within; and know one another in spirit, and not in word, and meet often together, and wait upon God, (for his teaching alone) in a cross to your own wills, for therein is the secrets of God revealed. Let love abound in you one towards another, without being partial.

And I beseech you by the love of God, that you halt not between God and the world; but as you profess that you are not of the world, so let your conversation be out of its fashions, customs, traditions and covetous practices, that it may appear you are marked out for the Lord's, and that you are not ashamed to own that which differs, and so walk, as not to cast an offence on the gospel, that you become not a scorn to fools; but let wisdom be justified of her children. And take heed of that which would be exalted above others, teaching

and talking of things without life. And you that would be counted somebody, let such first learn to wash the feet of them they would be above; and he that would be greatest, let him be servant to all, for it is the humble, and not the high spirits that are taught of God, and such so walk, as their lives and practices teach and judge all vain, light and haughty spirits. And mind how you grow out of the earth, and out of that which is in the enmity: and until you be brought out of the love of all visible things, and wholly infolded into the love of God, you cannot witness redemption, nor receive the true joy that ariseth in the manifestation of the Love; for it is only he that is brought up out of the death to reign over it, whose heart is come out of the unrighteous mammon, who is entered into the kingdom of righteousness, joy and peace. And as you arise out of the earthly bondage, you shall witness the glorious liberty, and so come to know your own measures, every one in particular to improve it, and not to boast above it in another man's line: and so you will come to see by what power you stand in your warfare, how far you are conquerors, and who is your enemy at present; and so be able to give an account in yourselves of your faith, and how you grow from faith to faith.

And, dear friends, watch over one another, exhort, reprove, admonish in pure love and meekness of spirit, lest you also be tempted; and all know, that you are set as a city on a hill, as signs to this generation: therefore lift up your light to all the world, that all mouths may be stopped, and hearts convinced; so that all that see you, may see you to be children of light, and being judged by you, may be ashamed of their deeds of darkness: for great is the work of the Lord, and blessed are they that are found faithful in it, and what is committed to them.

Farewell, dear hearts, and the Lord God Almighty bless, prosper, and preserve you pure and clear unto his kingdom, *Amen*.

My love in the Lord salutes you all, and if my father please, I shall be glad to see your faces in the

flesh; but his will is my peace, who is blessed for evermore.

A lover of your souls, JAMES NAYLER.
Written from Nuby, the last day of the seventh month, 1653.

The work of the Lord is great in these parts, and he carries it on with a high hand, having got himself the victory.

Praise the Lord with us, all that know him, who is worthy, even him alone for ever.

THE POWER AND GLORY OF THE LORD, SHINING OUT OF THE NORTH,
OR, THE DAY OF THE LORD DAWNING; WHEREIN THE TRUE LIGHT
IS HOLDEN FORTH, TO ALL WHO DESIRE TO WALK IN THE DAY.
WITH A WARNING TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND, OF ALL
SORTS, NOT TO OPPOSE CHRIST IN HIS KINGDOM.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life, John 8. 12.

Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid, Isai. 29. 14.

ALL people every where, who profess that you love God, and have a desire to walk in his ways, and are in this dark world, wandering to and fro, enquiring the way, how you may come out of this great city, which is Sodom and Egypt, where filthiness and darkness rules,^a and is heard, wherein the Lord is crucified, and all the righteous blood hath been shed, and yourselves are kept in bondage to sin and unrighteousness, blindness and thick darkness, and know not where you are, nor the way out of this condition; though many of you have been enquiring after the way so many years, seeking after your blind guides, who are not the way, neither in the way themselves, and so have forsaken the fountain of light, and have run after, and have been led by them who are in the same darkness with you. Now stand still a while, and see where you are, and what you have been doing. You pretend as to the kingdom of God, but you are not seeking where it is: you have been seek-

^a Rev. 11. 8.

ing without, but it is within you; and there you must find it, if ever you find it. It is not to be found in forms and customs, and out side observations: but the kingdom of God is within you,^a and the way to the kingdom is within you, and the light that guides into the way is within. Christ is the way, and know ye not that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? And as he is the way, so he is the light; I am the light of the world, and lighten every one that cometh into the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.^b I am the true shepherd of the sheep, and my sheep know my voice, but the voice of a stranger they will not hear.^c And the voice of Christ is spiritual, and not carnal; and he speaks to the spirits in prison: and he that hath an ear, hears what the spirit saith. And he who comes once to hear the voice of Christ in spirit, will no more desire to hear the voice of strangers.

All your hirelings are strangers to Christ, and he knows them not: for though they may prophesy in his name, and in his name cast out devils;^d yet if they be workers of iniquity, Christ knows them not, and such know not Christ; for he that saith, I know him, and keeps not his commandment, is a liar.^e

Now all people, cease from your strange guides, and out-side lights, and return to the light of Christ in you, that which shows you sin and evil, and the deeds of darkness: for whatever makes manifest is light;^f and this is that light which shines into the conscience, which tells you, that lying, swearing, pride, envy, covetousness, back-biting and dissembling leads to condemnation: And this light checks you for sin, and would have you to do to all men, as you would be done to. And this light is not a chapter without you, in a book, but it is that light that revealed the Scriptures to the saints, in their several measures, which they spoke forth, and which thou readest in the chapter. And this light being minded, will lead to the perfect day, which declares all things as they are.

^a Luke 17. 21. ^b John 14. 6. ² Cor. 13. 5. ^c John 1. 9. & 8. 12. ^c 1 Pet. 3. 19. ^{Rev} 2. 7. 17. ^d John 10. 11. 12. ^d Mat. 7. 22, 23. ^e 1 John 2. 4. ^f Eph. 5. 13.

And this did the apostles exhort the saints every where to take heed unto, till the day dawned, and the day star did arise in their hearts:^a and this is a more sure word of prophesy, than that the apostles did hear in the mount, as he declared unto them. And if you take heed to this light, to obey and love it, then it will show that to you, which no outward declaration of man can show you; it will let you see all your sins done in secret, and whom you have wronged, and how you have spent your time, and will bring you to repentance, and to tenderness of heart towards all people, and will bring you to exercise a pure conscience in the fear of God, towards God and man in uprightness, and so will lead up to justification and peace.^b And if you disobey it, it will condemn you in your own hearts, and will show you that God is greater than your hearts, who will render to every one according to their work. And here you are left without excuse before God, men and angels; and in this, that you know sin, and live in it. Here you have learned your condemnation, and your deceit is discovered, whereby with a pretence you make prayers, and say, Lord, shew us a sight of our sins;^c whereas God hath given you a light within you, which being minded and obeyed, will show you all your sins and wickedness, and lead you out of them.

But this light you hate, because you love your evil deeds; and you perish not for want of light tendered, but because you turn your backs on it: for when you should bring your works to it, to be proved, then you join with the deceit, to make coverings for your sins, and hide them lest they should come to the light, and be made manifest. And this is the cause why you stumble, because you walk not in the light; for your evil deeds will not abide the light: the adulterer loves the night, and the thief loves the night, and the drunkard loves the night, and all the children of darkness love the night, that they may bring forth their evil deeds un-reproved.^d

And here thou art who lovest thy sins, and here wilt thou be found, profess what thou wilt; for the day will

a 1 Pet. 1. 19. b Acts 24. 16. c John 3. 20. d Job 24. 15, & 16. 1 Thess. 5. 7.

thoroughly declare thee what thou art, for now is the day of the Lord, which will judge thee as thou art, near at hand. And wo to thee that hidest thy sins, and coverest thine iniquities. Thou mayst hide from men, and make men believe thou art a christian, but God will not be mocked;^a for above all he abhors the hypocrite and dissembler: wherefore take heed and turn from your deceit, and come forth, you children of darkness, and come into the light, where there is no occasion of stumbling, and make it appear you are children of the light, by loving it: and make it appear you love the light, by bringing your deeds to it to be proved, that all your works may be works of the light, that your light may shine forth before all men in your works, and that true judgment may be set up in you, and all unrighteousness condemned and cast out, and truth received in, that the truth may make you free:^b for while you join with the deceit, you consent to keep your sins, and while you commit sin, you are the servants of sin, and the wages of sin is death,^c and death reigns in you, because you will not come to Christ, who is the light, that you may have life, and your destruction is of yourselves; and God is just, and your condemnation is this, that light is come into the world, and you love darkness rather than light, because your deeds are evil: and this is that grace of God which hath appeared to all men; which is the saints teacher, and teacheth them to deny ungodliness and wordly lusts,^d which you that live in your lusts turn into wantonness, and will not be taught by it; and here you read your condemnation in every sin you commit.

O you people of England! How long will it be ere you be obedient to the kingdom of Jesus Christ? How long will you profess him in words and forms, and yet will not own him in power? You can be content to let him have the name of a king, so that you yourselves may reign, and under the name of Christ's kingdom, act your own wills.^e And though you cannot bear it, to be judged by the spirit of Christ where it is in his people, which judgeth all the world, and all things, yet you can-

^a Eph. 5. 8. ^b John 8. 32, 34. ^c John 3. 19. ^d Tit. 2. 11, 12. Jude 4. ^e 1 Cor. 4. 20. Tit. 1. 16.

not escape,^a for you shall be found guilty before the mighty judge of Heaven and earth, when he shall appear in flames and fire, to be avenged upon all deceit and unrighteousness of men.^b And will you be found at that day subjects in the kingdom of Christ, wherein all the saints are one, and Christ their head and lawgiver? Or are you not lords over God's heritage; yea, over Christ himself? And you will appear such, when the mystery of iniquity shall be revealed in you;^c you who ought to make it your whole care to observe the law of Christ in all. Things that he commands, as a rule for you to walk by. But are you in your duty, as servants to Christ, when you are prescribing him ways to walk by in his church? And is it not so, when you would limit him to speak only by such as you in your wisdom approve of, or else he shall be silent? And to effect this, are all the powers of the earth combined together: do not you here take upon you to be lords of the vineyard, and not servants? And would not suffer him to send forth labourers into it, who is Lord of it. Is not this the way to make the heritage your own? Hath not all the persecution of the messengers of God, arisen from this ground? And how many times have earthly powers been broken to pieces against this rock?^d And do you walk according to the Scriptures, which you say is your rule, when you would limit the spirit of the Lord, not to speak in his own time, and in what place soever they who have the message are sent into? You, who are offended because the Lord sends his messengers into your idol temples, to cry against your idol worships and heathenish customs, and to call out poor ignorant people from amongst you, who have long been deceived by their blind guides:^e and to call them out of forms and likenesses, into the substance of all worships, which is only in spirit, and not in forms and customs, and out-side observations, that they may come to know what they worship, even the living God, that their souls may live.^f— Which was the way by which the apostles did gather

a 1 Cor. 2. 15. b 1 Pet. 5. 3. c Mat. 23. 20. d Mat. 21. 23, to the end. 2 Chron. 36. 16. e Amos 7. 13. Acts 5. 19, 20. Acts 17. 2, 3. f John 4. 21, 22, 23, 24.

the saints out of all the idols, temples, and carnal worships, into the spirit, as you may read in the Scripture.

And this (with you) is a transgression of your law, and you say, it breeds distraction in your churches: but what churches are they, which will be so soon distracted? And what people are those churches made up of, who no sooner hear one deliver the Lord's message in a peaceable way, but they are all on fire, beating, buffeting, cursing, swearing, and hauling them to prison? And were you not blind, you might plainly see what generation these are, who are, and always have been offended at the will of God.

Is not the love of God to souls, to send to call them who will hear his voice, out of such churches as are thus acted by a spirit of envy, rage and murder, which is the spirit of the devil? And this is that spirit which being offended, sets the creatures one to destroy another, lest his deceit should be revealed.

And are you not blind, who cannot distinguish between that spirit which acts in the persecutor, and that spirit which acts in the sufferer, and hath so done in all ages, and come out from amongst them? And what law is that which you say is transgressed by the creature, being obedient to the creator, obeying the voice of Christ, witnessed in the Scripture, by the practice of the holy men of God, sent out by the same spirit into the world, as these are at this day? Is this a christian law, as you pretend it to be, that thus withstands Christ in his kingdom? And were you spiritual, as you pretend, would not these carnal laws, that oppose the spirit and practice of the saints, be laid aside by you?^a

And now try whether that spirit act in you, which led the apostles and saints into the temple and synagogues daily, there to dispute against all idolatrous worships, and to hold out to the people the true substance, and thereby gathered the church into God, in the spirit, there to meet and worship;^b or that spirit that was in them who persecuted the saints for so doing, and commanded them to be silent, and charged them with breaking their law, and turning the world upside down,

^a Acts 17. 2, 3. ^b Arts 16, 19, 20, 21.

and counted them madmen. And if any be moved to speak a word of truth, while your parish teachers are talking, or before their glass be run. You that execute a carnal law upon the bodies of such, are you subject to the kingdom of Christ, which is in the spirits of his own, whereby he rules the conscience, and brings them to obey him in his commands? Or will not you be found in the day of trial, to be fighters against God, under the name of professing them? And do these whom you persecute any thing but what was the saints practice? And how are you not ashamed to profess that Scripture to be your rule, which saith, if any thing be revealed to another that sits by, let the first hold his peace. And this the apostle sets down as order, and the saints liberty. But what spirit acts you, who would restrain it, and call it disorder, and haul them before rulers, or to prison for so doing? And you that say, if such have their own liberty, it is reason they should be silent, and not cry out against others; know that the law of Christ is not grounded on the will and reason of men: and is your reason here any thing but carnal? For doth pure reason give any way, that deceit should go under the name of truth unproved? And is there any reason to limit the spirit of Christ, that it shall not discover the man of sin, wherever he is, who must be revealed and destroyed by the brightness of his coming in the saints, and by the sword of his mouth? And is there any reason, that the powers of the earth should make laws for the spirit of Christ in the saints to act by, though in all ages they would be meddling with it to their own hurt? And if all should be subject to your law, which you say is reason, how should truth be spread abroad, and deceit be brought to blush: seeing deceit hath always, and doth still wind into the earthly powers for safety? But truth seeks no corners, nor shelters from earthly powers; for all that ever were sent out by Christ to preach the gospel, were called by him alone, without the consent of earthly powers, neither stood they to the judgment or trial of any men of powers, as from them to receive or-

der, whether to preach or forbear: but by his authority alone, by whom they were sent, to whom alone they were to give account of their ministry, with joy or sorrow.

And in this work they denied all the learning and wisdom of the world. Few of the apostles were learned, and Paul, when he tells of his bringing up in learning, counts it amongst other (carnal) things, loss and dung, which before he had counted gain, that in the loss of them he might win Christ; and saith, of the knowledge of the gospel, that he had it not of man, nor by man, nor was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.^a But what rule walk you by, who must have them to such a pitch of learning, and so many years at Oxford or Cambridge, and there study so long in books and old authors? And all this to know, what unlearned men, fishermen, ploughmen and herdsmen, did mean, when they spoke forth the Scriptures, who were counted fools and madmen by the learned generation when they spake them forth: and they who speak it by the same spirit, are so still by the same serpent's wisdom. And when you have brought them to this height of learning, yet the Scripture is a book sealed to all their wisdom and learning;^b and they from whom you expect the opening of this mystery, are at a jar amongst themselves, what should be the meaning of it; and have been in all ages disputing, quarreling, imprisoning, killing and burning one another, and would do so now had they power: for this learned generation have been the stirrers up of all strife and blood-shed, setting kingdoms, nations and people one against another, and all about standing to uphold their meanings, forms, imaginations and vain conceptions from the letter, but are all ignorant of that spirit which gave it forth; for they who have the substance, contend not about words and meanings; and that spirit is the substance which gave it forth, and opens it again, as it ariseth in its measure. And they who have that spirit, are ministers of the spirit, and they manifest to the raising up of the spirit in others, and not to the

^a Acts 4. 13, Phil. 3. 7, 8. Gal. 1. 11, 12. ^b Rev. 5. 2.

serpent's wisdom; for they know, that wisdom which stands in the will of man must not enter; for the mystery is hid from it. And such cannot persecute the bodies of men, because they know not so much as they, neither do they seek to destroy the creature; but they strike at the accursed spirit, which keeps the creature in blindness and bondage, and so redeems the creature and reconciles him to God in the spirit. And this is the ministry of reconciliation, guided by the spirit, and by this was the scripture written forth: for holy men of God spoke forth the scriptures as they were moved by the holy ghost, without carnal learning.^a And holy men by the same spirit read and understood them again; not by carnal learning and natural tongues; for the spirit is the original, which first reveals the mystery to the spirit within man, and then declares it forth in words or writing to the understanding of others, to the directing their minds to wait upon God for the same free gift of the spirit.^b

And here is the true worship in spirit found and performed, which stands in the teaching of the spirit, and not in the letter, unknown to the world, but owned of God.

But all you, who seek to find out the invisible things of God, or the way of his worship, by your learning and wisdom in the letter, you seek that which is hid from your wisdom, and you take the saints conditions to talk on;^c and they having outwardly declared their inward worship and fellowship they had with God in spirit, this you find in the letter, and every one, according to his several conceiving thereof, sets up an outward form, image, or likeness of the saints worship. And here you worship, and for this you contend by reasons and arguments, and wrest the scriptures to uphold your form;^d and if any will not worship this your image, you are greatly offended at.

And here is all the contention in the world about things without, as forms, customs and traditions, and here carnal minds contend with carnal words and wea-

^a 2 Pet. 1, 12. ^b 1 Cor. 2, 14. Eph. 3, 3, 5. ^c Mat. 11, 25. 1 John 1, 3. ^d 2 Pet. 3, 16.

pons about carnal things: and you who are here cannot own the saints conditions in yourselves, as to witness the infallible teachings of the spirit, and the body of sin put off, and to be sanctified throughout in soul and body.^a But you will own the scriptures (as they are) as far as they will make with your form, and that you may live in the delights of the world; and for those which cross your ways and wills, you will alter them by meanings and expositions.

And thus the scripture must bend to you, and submit to your wills, that the will may reign, and you live in your lusts: but to believe, that ever they shall be fulfilled in you by Christ, as they are and were in the saints, to this your faith is reprobate.^b And yet you are not ashamed to profess Christ your king, and the scripture your rule, and you make a great sound in words, the kingdom of Christ, and the ordinances of Christ, and the church of Christ, and the saints practice, and the scripture rule, but is it so upon trial, or but a thing like these you speak on? And where you appear to be wanting, there you have covered with words, meanings and expositions: but the saints, whose conditions you talk on, was what they spoke without your meanings or deceit:^c they were subjects in the kingdom of Christ, and he did rule in them, and they followed him through persecutions, mockings and death: but is it so with you, who are lords over your brethren, beating, mocking, imprisoning and killing them, because they will not forsake the commands of Christ, to be subject to your wills and heathenish customs, as to bow down to you, and worship you, and to be silent at your will, and to speak at your wills, though Christ command the contrary? Is this to own Christ for your king?

And as for your ordinances you cry up so much, are these they, to set up a proud man, called by you master, having the highest place in the idols temple, preaching always from a verse of another man's condition, but not fulfilled in himself;^d raising points, reasons, objections and uses, a divination of his own brain, but not from the mouth of the Lord; adding and diminishing to the scrip-

a Rom. 6, 6, 7. b Rom. 8, 3, 4. c Rev. 7, 14. d Mat. 23, 6, 10.

ture; sprinkling of infants, and calling it, baptizing into Christ; singing David's conditions in rhymes; telling people of a sacrament, and observing of times, doing all for tithes or money,^a living in pride, fullness and covetousness, and many more like things, never used by any that Christ sent?

And is this your church, all within such a place or parish, sprinkled when they were infants, but not yet washed from sin, but many are still liars, swearers, drunkards, whoremongers, covetous, scorers, proud, wanton, oppressors, and such like, but not one that can witness that faith which hath overcome the world, sin and the devil, or believe, that ever they shall overcome while they are here?^b and is this the church of Christ (which is his body) whilst limbs of the devil, and serve him at his will? and is this the saints practice you speak of, to exalt yourselves one above another, to sue one another, to accuse falsely, to be proud and covetous, to live in the lusts of the flesh, sporting and gaming, and calling it recreation;^c living in excess of apparel and diet, spending the creatures in your lusts, when your brethren want food and raiment, causing others to labour in wants, that they may bring it to you to spend in your lusts and vanity? And when you should hearken to the light of Christ in your conscience, then you join with the deceit to make coverings for your iniquities, and say it is but as your place and state requires; as though God had given out his law with respect of persons, and had given you a toleration to abuse the creature, and live in your lusts more than others, because you have more of the earth, or a greater power committed to your charge amongst men than others;^d not considering that the heathen exercise these things, but the saints, the greater power, the more humble, and the more careful to walk as examples to others, that so they may exalt him alone, whose ministers they are, and not themselves in pride.

And this is to be truly honourable, and herein have all the faithful been honoured; but you who seek for the

^a Gal. 4, 10, 11. ^b 1 John 2, 4. ^c Mat. 20, 26, 27. Gal. 5, 24. ^d Jam. 5, 1, 2, 3, 5. Mat. 20, 25, 26, 27. Luk. 22, 26.

worlds honour, are not of the faithful; for, saith Christ, how can you believe, that seek for honour one of another?

Now ye that talk of the saints practice, own it in yourselves, and it will take you off from these, and many more vanities you live in;^a God will not be mocked, ye hypocrites, be not sayers, but doers. And you talk of the scriptures being a golden rule, but your ways prove how little you are ruled by it.

Do you seek to be perfect? for God is perfect: holy, as he is holy? Do ye love God above all, and your neighbours as yourselves, when you make them your footstool? Do you do to all as you would be done by? have you forsaken the world and the love of it? is the lusts and affections of your flesh crucified? Having food and raiment, are ye there with content? do you live by faith, not taking thought for to-morrow, what to eat, and what to put on? do you live as the Lord's lilies? do you feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, and let the oppressed go free? are ye no respectors of persons in all your dealings?^b are you brought to yea and nay in all your communication, without any more, which comes of evil? do you suffer, and are hated, and have all manner of evil spoken of you falsely, for the name of Christ?^c are you brought out of all the customs of the heathen, and are conformable to Christ in his life and sufferings?^d prove yourselves, if you be what you profess in truth, that you be saints, sanctified and redeemed out of all worldly and earthly things, to live to God in all things, in righteousness and holiness. Oh! you take but their conditions to talk on, which were so, and so you boast in another man's line, on things that are not your own.

See if you be made the righteousness of God in Christ, as they were, and if you know him,^e whom you say you worship, to dwell in your bodies, as they did; and that you are taught of him in spirit, how he will be worshipped, as they were whom you talk on.^f

^a John 5. 41, 44. ^b Heb. 13. 5. ^c 1 Tim. 6. 3, 9. ^d Mat. 6. 25, to the end. Jam. 2. 1, 9. ^e Mat. 5. 37. ^f Mat. 5. 11. ^g Luke 6. 22. ^h 1 Cor. 13. 10. ⁱ 2 Cor. 13. 10. ^j 2 Cor. 6. 16.

See whether these things be so in substance, or you have but a form of their worship, gathered out of the letter; and so you worship a likeness or image of that whereof they had the substance. Now, if you have but the outside, take heed; for now is the hand of the Lord upon all the idols of the world.^a And that which is not the substance, is but an image.^b And now shall the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, break thee and thy image in pieces, and he that is without form, shall by his power, break all your forms, and formal worships in pieces.^c And that worship alone shall be set up, which is in spirit, and not in form, and is accepted by that God who never was known in form, but in spirit blessed for ever.

And, you rulers of the nation, take heed how you step into the throne of Christ, or exalt yourselves in his kingdom, and mind what power you are entrusted with by the Lord, and be faithful in that, as the ministers of God, to whom you are to give an account. You are to punish sin in whom it is, without respect of persons: and if you be faithful herein, you will find work enough in the nation. And you are to encourage them that do well, and deliver them from the power of cruel and blood thirsty men that oppress them; for he that departs from iniquity is made a prey to this generation.^d And you are to walk as examples to the people, in all holiness and righteousness, that God may bless you, and honour you in the doing of his commands: but as for sending out labourers into his vineyard, where hath he commanded this at your hands? or, when did he in any age reprove any for not doing it? He hath overthrown kingdoms and nations, for abusing and going about to stop the mouths of those that he sent;^e and hath reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying touch them not: but these were such as he sent; for he never entrusted the powers of the earth to choose him messengers to go on his message.^f And hath he now put power into your hand, that you should not suffer him to choose his own messengers, by whom he will send to his own peo-

^a Zac. 13, 2. ^b Dan. 3, 34. ^c Rev. 14, 9. ^d 2 Sam. 23, 3. Isa. 56, 1. 1 Pet. 2, 14. Psal. 82, 2, 3, 4. ^e Pro. 29, 2, Isa. 59, 15. ^f 2 Chron. 36, 15, 16. Luke 10, 2.

ple? And have you the message to put into their mouths? and must they go on your errand or his? and will not you give him leave to choose his own servants, and what he will employ them about? Will you deal so with him, as you would not have any to deal with you?

And for your tithes, augmentations and set benefits, when did ever God require any such thing from any magistrates under the gospel? And doth it serve for any other end, but to hold up an idle loitering ministry, one pulling another out of places, and setting themselves in their stead, that they may heap up riches, and live in their lusts, all running greedily after the wages of Balaam for gifts and rewards? and do you fear that the hand of God is shortened, that he will not raise up such as will go on his message, unless you provide them wages? Did ever any that he sent complain to the world for want? nay, all my father's servants have bread enough, without being cared for by the world; for those who are sent by Christ take little care for such earthly things, having a better reward in durable riches. And can you ever keep the ministers of antichrist out of places (who will conform to any thing for gain) so long as they can have you to feed them with money? And will not you be found guilty of keeping up the hirelings, that the woe is to, and them that hold them up, and whom Christ is come to discover and cast out, and so you be found fighters against him? and when you leave all that say they are Christ's ministers, to Christ's maintenance, set down in the gospel, then it will appear who have run unsent, and have not profited the people. And is it not the love of God, to cast out such as have called themselves teachers, and have been thus long in places, and have their people yet liars, swearers, drunkards, proud and covetous, and in all filthiness; but not one that is set free from sin, and brought out of the world; and they who have taught them, dare not trust them for maintenance, without a law to compel them? And are you doing any acceptable service to God, in maintain-

ing such as these as they live? And will it not be said to you one day, who requires these things at your hands,^a to oppress the poor, who labour hard to give their labours to maintain these belly-gods [contrary to their consciences] in their fulness, pride and lust, and their wives and families in idleness; and they that labour for it are many times in great want?

Oh! be wise and take heed what ye do; and as you profess yourselves to be a christian magistracy, so mind the commands of Christ, and not your own wills. It is not saying you are christians, but walking after Christ and his commands, that differs you from the heathens: and do not profess the scripture in words, but own their practice that gave them forth; and let them who say they are ministers, make proof of their ministry in power, and not in getting a few words whereby to deceive you and the people: but let them first sow spiritual things, before they reap carnal: first beget a people out of the world into the spirit, and then they shall not need to contend with them about food and raiment, nor sue them at the law: first plant, then eat.^b

And this was the practice of such as Christ sent, and he always provided them a house to go to who were worthy, and meat to eat, and they never wanted what was good for them.^c And I witness that he is the same now, and hath the same care over those that he sends into the world, with divers others, whom he hath sent out without bag or scrip, yea, into the most brutish parts in the nation: praises, praises be to our God, whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof.

And thus do we witness the scripture fulfilled, and take no thought for food and raiment, as the heathen do, but are come into the unity with all saints in their joy and sufferings, and are taught by Christ how to want, and how to abound, and in all conditions to be therewithal content.^d And we can truly say, all is for good to us, and to the church of Christ: and our kingdom and joy is not of this world, nor doth the world know us, nor our joy; glory to the highest forever, who is shaking all the wisdoms and powers of men, to establish that which is

^a Prov. 22, 16. ^b 1 Cor. 9, 11. ^c Acts 4, 34. ^d Mat. 6, 25. Phil. 4, 11, 12:

of himself alone, to which all shall be made to bend and bow.^a

And you that are in power, mind the promise of the father, at the coming of Christ to his kingdom, I will overturn, overturn, overturn, till it come into his hand whose right it is, and upon his shoulders shall the government be established he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.^b And take notice how many have been overturned already, who would have been limiting him by their wisdoms. And now it is come into your hands, who above all have seen his wonders done for you and the nation, and you above all have declared, that your desire is, that Christ alone may reign in his kingdom:^c and some of you I have known to be tender towards any who looked that way. Oh! that there were such a heart in you, to lay aside all your own wills, and carnal consultations,^d and to take counsel at the spirit of the Lord, and be guided by his pure light, shining in your conscience, which would bring you into the fear of the Lord, and to depart from self-ends, interests and exaltations, and to follow the law of God, in establishing laws for yourselves and others to walk by, and that you may follow the practice of the saints left in scripture, without wresting it, that so you might come to have unity with them in the same spirit that gave them forth,^e and so be guided by the same spirit of justice and judgment, by which all were guided that ever have ruled well in all ages, whom God did bless, and hath honoured for ever: that so God may bless you, and establish you, and preserve the nation out of the hands of yours and the nation's enemies; and that you may be honoured with taking away oppression, and wicked and unjust rulers, who are the cause of it, who judge not the cause of the poor and needy, and which the Lord hath been grieved at these many years.^f But if you forget yourselves and what you have promised before the Lord, in the day when you sought unto him for deliverance, and so exalt yourselves over the poor, and set up your own laws, and not the law of God in its purity: I declare

^a John 16, 22. ^b Isa. 9, 6, 7. ^c Amos 3, 2. ^d Isa. 30, 1. ^e Psal. 89, 14, 15, 16. ^f Isa. 1. 23. Zach. 7, 9, 10, to the end.

unto you this day from the word of the Lord, that he will overturn you, and raise up his kingdom another way;^a whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, the word of the Lord shall stand, for the almighty God hath been shaking the nations, that his glory may appear; and there shall be no rest, until his kingdom be established above all mountains. Hear all ye powers of the earth, the Lord alone will reign.

This I am to declare abroad, that they who are wise-hearted, may understand and fear before the Lord God almighty: the time is at hand; he that believes shall be established.

JAMES NAYLER.

THE WAY HOW ALL FLESH COME TO KNOW THE LORD AND FEAR HIM, BY HIS TERRIBLE SHAKING THE EARTHLY PART IN MAN, WITNESSED BY THE HOLY MEN OF GOD IN SCRIPTURE.

For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken; surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel, so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the Heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. Ezek. xxxviii. 19, 20.

TAKE heed how you speak evil of the things you know not, Jude 10. You who neither know the Lord, nor his works in yourselves, take heed how you judge it in others; you are without God in the world. And the works of God have always been strange to that nature which your live in, but search the Scriptures, and you shall find that the holy men of God do witness quaking and trembling, and roaring, and weeping, and fasting and tears; but the world knows not the saints conditions: but beware therefore lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets and apostles, of such despisers and scorers as you are.

Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall not in any wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.—Acts 13. 40, 41. The Lord reigneth, let the people

^a Isa. 42. 23. Isa. 14. 26, 27. Hag. 2. 5, 7.

tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims, let the earth be moved, Psal. 99. 1. Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, Psal. 114. My flesh trembleth because of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments, Ps. 119. 120. He looketh upon the earth, and it trembled: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke, Psal. 114. 30. A fire goeth before his face, and burneth up all his enemies round about. His lightning enlighthneth the world; the earth saw and trembled: the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, Psal. 97. 3, 4, 5. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me, Psal. 55. 5. So terrible was the voice, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and tremble: whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath said, that once more I shake not the earth only, but Heaven also, Heb. 12. 21, 26.

When Paul heard the voice of Christ, he trembled and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts 9. 6. The Corinthians received Titus in obedience, with fear and trembling, 2 Cor. 7. 15. Paul was with the Corinthians in weakness and fear, and much trembling, 1 Cor. 2. 3. When Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, Felix trembled, Acts 24. 25. The apostle exhorts the saints, to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2. 12. The goaler, when he believed, he came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, Acts 16. 29. When Isaac blessed his sons, he trembled very exceedingly, Gen. 27. 13. Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name sake, said, let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed, Isa. 66. 5. Thus saith the Lord, to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite heart, and trembleth at my words, Isa. 66. 2. Oh! that thou wouldst rent the Heavens, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire causeth the water to boil: and to make his name known to his adversaries, that the nations may tremble at his presence, Isa. 64. 1, 2. Yea, I will make many people amazed at thee, and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee,

when I shall brandish my sword before them, and they shall tremble at every moment, every man for his own life, in the day of thy fall, Ezek. 32. 10.

When Habakkuk heard the voice; his belly trembled, his lips quivered, and rottenness entered into his bones, and he trembled in himself, that he might rest in the day of trouble, Hab. 3. 16. When Daniel saw the vision, he stood trembling, and they that were with him, thought they saw it not, yet a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves, Dan. 10. 7, 11. When God sets up his son as king, all are exhorted to serve him with fear, and rejoice with trembling, Psal. 2. 6, 11.

When Job remembered God, he was afraid, and trembling took hold of his flesh, Job 21. 6. The pillars of Heaven tremble, and are astonished at his presence, Job 36. 11. Which shaketh the earth out of her place, the pillars thereof tremble, Job 9. 6. Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment, thou hast made the earth to tremble: thou hast broken it, heal the breaches thereof, for it shaketh, Psal. 60. 2, 3. The earth shook, the Heavens also dropped at the presence of the God of Israel, Psal. 68. 8. And the land shall tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, Jerem. 51. 29.

When Ezra heard of the peoples sins, he plucked his hair off his head; and off his beard; he rent his garment, and sat down astonished; and there assembled unto him all that trembled at the word of the God of Israel, Ezra 9. 3, 4. The people were to enter into covenant with God, by the counsel of those that trembled at the command of God, Ezra 10. 3. The Lord will take the cup of trembling out of the hands of his people, and put into the hands of those that afflict them, Isa. 51. 22, 23. When the Lord shall roar, then the children shall tremble as a bird, Hos. 11. 10, 11. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? And all feasts shall be turned into mourning, and all songs into lamentation, as a lamentation for an only son, Amos. 8. 8, 10. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, yet a little while, and I will shake the Havens, the earth, the sea, and the dry land: and I will shake all

nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill my house with glory, saith the Lord, Hagg. 2. 6, 7. I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly, Jer. 4. 24. At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation, Jer. 10. 10. Tremble ye women that are at ease; be troubled ye careless ones: strip ye, and make ye bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins, Isa. 31. 11. Jeremiah said, his heart was broken within him; and all his bones shaken because of the Lord, and because of the word of his holiness, Jer. 23. 9. The elders of Bethlehem trembled at the coming of Samuel, 1 Sam. 16. 4. Ezekiel was commanded to eat his bread with quaking, and drink his water with trembling and with carefulness, Ezek. 12. 18. Blow the trumpet in Sion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain. Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh; for it is nigh at hand, Joel 2. 1. For in my jealousy, and in the fire of my wrath, have I spoken: surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel, so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the Heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground, Ezek. 38. 19, 20. When God heard David's prayer out of his holy temple, the earth shook and trembled, the foundations of the hills moved, and were shaken because he was wroth, Psal. 18. 6, 7.

David roared all the day long, and was weary with his groanings: he wept all the night, and made his bed to swim with tears: he fasted till his knees grew feeble, and his flesh failed of fatness; until he could number his bones, while he suffered the terrors of God. He was distracted; he was a reproach among men for so doing, and despised of the people. All that saw him, laughed him to scorn; he was a mocking to the wicked, they made mouths at him, and shook the head at him:^a the

^a a Psalms 38. 8. Ps. 32. 3. Ps. 6. 6. Ps. 109. 24. Ps. 22. 6, 7, 17. Ps. 88. 15. Ps. 35. 16. Ps. 22. 16. Ps. 41. 6. Ps. 71. 7.

drunkards made songs of him; he was a taunt and a by-word among them. Dogs compassed him about, the assemblies of wicked men enclosed him; vain persons came to see him, that they might tell it abroad; and he was a wonder to many, and a stranger to his brethren, and his kinsmen stood a far off.

Thus saith the Lord, we have heard a voice trembling of fear, and not of peace. Ask now, and see whether a man doth travel with child: wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it, Jer. 30. 5, 6, 7.

Hear now this, ye foolish people, and without understanding, which have eyes and see not; which have ears and hear not; fear ye not me, saith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my presence? Jer. 5, 21, 22.

A WORD TO THE SEED OF THE SERPENT, OR MINISTERS OF
ANTICHRIST, OR MAN OF SIN, WHEREVER FOUND.

KNOW this thou subtle one, who hast long upholden a kingdom of sin, unrighteousness, injustice and oppression, with all manner of filthiness by thy wisdom, that now the day of thy torment is at hand; for now is that seed arisen, which is appointed to discover thee and thy deceitful workings, and to bruise thy head, and to lay all thy pride and glory in the dust:^a and he will set up a kindom of righteousness, purity and holiness in the hearts of his people, who have been deceived through thy divination and witchcrafts these many years. And you ministers of antichrist, who have made people believe that you were the ministers of Jesus Christ, the son of righteousness, by your crying out against sin in words, and making poor ignorant people think that you were enemies to all unrighteousness, and lovers of purity and perfection; but now that the Lord is bringing out a people out of the unrighteous world. destroying the

^a Isa. 29. 14, 15.

body of sin, and bringing them up to righteousness, holiness and perfection, even to the image of his dear son, in which they were created, and so to himself again, from whence they were fallen by sin, and could no other way be restored, but by being made the righteousness of God in Christ, 2 Cor. 5. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. Which God having begun to effect, now you are forced to uncover and show yourselves, whose ministers you are, and what kingdom you stand for, with all your power opposing the kingdom of Christ, which is in holiness and perfection; and now you are forced, lest the man of sin should fall to tell the same people to whom you have been all this while talking against sin, impurity and imperfection, that they must never look while they are here to overcome sin, the world, and the devil, nor ever come to purity and perfection:^a and thus you labour to keep a hold for the man of sin as long as people live; and so persuade them to leave the work of redemption and freedom till after death, or you know not when, and thus encourage people to spend their days in folly, and leave the world with torment and horror at their death.

Now it being that you are ignorant of that pure light of the spirit that convinceth those who will own it, I am moved from the Lord, for the simple ones sake, who have been long deceived by you, to give some discoveries to yourselves, and all who will see whose ministers you are, and for whose kingdom you minister.

And first, you that say none can be free from sin while they are here, you are ministers against the truth, John 8. 32, 34.

Secondly, you are against that which the father promised at the coming of Christ, Mat. 1. 21. John 1. 29. Jer. 50. 20.

Thirdly, you are against the end for which Christ came into the world, John 8. 34, 36.

Fourthly, you are against the end of Christ's sufferings, Gal. 1. 4. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Rom. 4. 25, Rom. 6. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 21, 22.

Fifthly, you are against the end of Christ being manifested in the saints, Rom. 8. 3, 4. 1 John 3. 8. and 3. 5.

Sixthly, you are against that which manifests the children of God from the children of the devil, 1 John 3. 10. and 5. 18.

Seventhly, you are against the commands of God and Christ, Isa. 52. 11. John 8. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 5. John 5, 14.

Eighthly, you are against that which the saints did witness wrought in them by Christ, Rom. 6. 1, 6, 7, 18, 22. Rev. 1. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 24. 1 John 3. 6. 1 Job 5. 18. Col. 2. 11.

And you that say, none can come to holiness and perfection while they are here; and to prove this you take the saints conditions, which they declared as they were passing on in growth towards it: and hence you go about by your subtilty to make people believe that they never did attain to perfection; and all this, lest any should press alter it, as though God did command his people to labour for that which is not to be attained. And now judge (if you were not blind) whom you minister for, and whom you are against.

First, you are against the end for which Christ offered up himself, Heb. 10. 14. Tit. 2. 14.

Secondly, you are against the commands of God, Mat. 5. 48. 1 Pet. 1. 16. Levit. 11. 44. Deut. 18. 13. Levit. 20. 7, 12, 13.

Thirdly, you are against the end for which Christ comes into the saints, John 17. 23.

Fourthly, you are against the end for which Christ be gifted and sent out all his ministers into the world, Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13.

Fifthly, you are against the work of the apostles and prophets, to whom they writ and taught, Jam. 1. 4. 2 Cor. 7. 1. and 13. 11. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Heb. 6. 1.

Sixthly, you are against that which the apostles and ministers of Christ laboured and prayed for to be wrought in the saints, night and day, 1 Thes. 3. 10. Col. 1. 28. Heb. 13. 20, 21. 1 Pet. 5. 10. Col. 4. 12.

Seventhly, you are against the end for which the Scriptures are written, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.

Eighthly, you are against the testimony God himself bears of his own, Gen. 6. 9. Job. 1. 8. and 2. 3.

Ninthly, you are against what the saints witnessed to be in themselves and others, 2 Kings 20. 3. Phil. 2. 15. 1 Cor. 2. 6. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Prov. 2. 21. and 11. 5. Psal. 37. 37. and 64. 4. and 101. 2. Heb. 12. 23. 1 John 3. 3. and 4. 17.

Tenthly, you are against that, without which God and man can never be reconciled in one again, Heb. 7. 19. Hab. 1. 13. Dan. 9. 44. 2 Tim. 2. 21. 1 Cor. 3. 17. Mat. 5. 8. Psal. 15. Prov. 15. 9, 29. Psal. 5. 4.

And now let them who are wise hearted, judge whose ministers you are, that are thus against God, and the recovery of lost man into his first estate, and see if it be not the same spirit that acts you thus in subtilty to keep man in the fall, by which the fall of man was occasioned at the first; and let all judge whether you be the ministers of righteousness, or of unrighteousness; of Christ the king of purity and peace, or of anticrist, the prince of this world and man of sin, and opposition; now by your fruits you are known and shall be judged: wherefore repent and cease limiting the Lord, and measuring the pure spirit of God in his people, whom he hath called out of the world, and sanctified thereby unto fruits of righteousness, obedience, holiness and perfection; and measure not this with that spirit of pride, covetousness, self love, and envy, and persecution which rules in you, who are yet in the world, and the love of it, which is enmity with God, James 4. 4. But see within yourselves what is the cause why you are such enemies to righteousness and perfection: you are too rich in yourselves, in your own wisdom, by your earthly wisdom, to wait for the good and perfect gifts of God from above, James 1. 17. You envious ones, you want the bond of perfectness, which is charity, Col. 3. 14. You hypocrites, who hear, and say, and do not that which leads to it; how can you come to perfection? James 1. 22, 23, 24, 25. You are too much in words, but too little in practice to come to perfection: for faith is made perfect through works, and not through words, Jam. 2. 22. 1 Cor. 4. 20.

And you fat worldlings, who live in pride, pleasure and fulness, and have your hearts in the earth, see Luke 8, 14. and there Christ tells you the plain cause

why you bring no fruit to perfection: now wo unto you! who have set yourselves in places to lead people up to God out of the fall, sin and uncleanness; but now when the Lord is come, none are found such opposers of purity as you are: O repent! how long will it be ere you cease to pervert the ways of God for your own ends? Oh that you had eyes to see, that you might make peace with him, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

And now to you poor scattered sheep, who have been scattered by these hirelings, in this cloudy dark day, which hath been upon all flesh spread upon the face of the earth, and you have been running from mountain to hill to find the Lord, but have not found him, who is to give rest to your souls: and many of you are still wandering you know not where. Others have seated themselves under green trees, and are worshipping you know not what, but as others tells you, who know as little of the true and living God as yourselves. Others are weary with seeking where nothing can be found, and are fallen asleep in the world of ease and carelessness. Others have their ears open to all voices, which cry, lo, here, lo, there, but know not who to trust, being all in confusion. Now all awake to meet the Lord, who is arisen to seek and save, and gather into one fold all his scattered ones, and to bring them up to Zion the holy city, where he will feed them himself alone, without fear, in good pasture, where they shall lie down in peace: now come off from all your blind guides, that are not in the way themselves; nor can they direct others where the way is: come out of the world and worldly cares and pleasures, and return to the Lord in spirit, he is within you, and there if you wait in spirit you shall hear him speak to your spirits, to the directing your minds out of all the works of darkness and sin, up to God, where no sin is, nor unclean thing can come; and if you mind to obey his voice, he will teach you to lay aside all your dissembling, and hypocrisy, whereby you have deceived yourselves and others, professing godliness in words, but denying it in power, and you will find power given in from the Lord, to become what you profess in

reality and truth, and to profess no more but what you are, that God may have glory by you, and take delight to dwell in you; for this is the day of your visitation, if you will own it; the day of salvation from all sin and unrighteousness, the day wherein all the children of the Lord shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace, in righteousness shall they be established, and they shall be far from oppression, Isa. 54, 13, 14. Many of you have had great travail, and gone through many sorrows to find rest, but have found none: many prayers and tears, but no answer of peace: many days of seeking, but have not found him whom your souls thirst after: and all this, because you have been seeking the living among the dead: he is not to be found in the world, nor formal worships, nor in humane wisdom and learning; but he is only to be found as he reveals himself freely to those who patiently wait for him in spirit. Dear people, to you that love the Lord above all earthly things, and yet have not your minds directed where to wait for him, to you I speak, to your souls that lie in death till they hear the voice of the son of God: he is near you, who is the way to the father, look not out, he is within you: that which I know declare I unto you, and the way I know, where I have found my beloved, my saviour, my redeemer, my husband, my maker, who hath set me above all the world, my sins, my fears, my sorrows, my tears, into his love, to live with him in spirit for ever; but dying daily to all visible things, praises, praises to my father for ever. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, come out of darkness all that love the Lord, into his marvellous light, where you shall see what you have been, and what you are redeemed from, that you may live and praise the Lord; for it is the living that praise the Lord, and not the dead: arise, come out of death, come away, and let us rejoice together in his love, in the life of our king, even so, *Amen.*

And you that are so much offended at perfection, and being cleansed from sin, I leave these queries with you to consider.

1. Whether any imperfect one committing sin, be the image of God, yea or no?

2. Whether any can witness the work of redemption complete in them by Christ, while they commit sin, and are overcome with the temptation of the devil, yea or no?

3. Whether any imperfect and unclean one that lives in sin, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, yea or no? And if not, how shall one dying in sin: and where shall he be made perfect and clean, seeing the tree must lie as it falls: and whether you own a purgatory, yea or no?

4. Whether a christian hath ground to believe, that he may be recovered by the second Adam into that estate in which he was created, and which he lost in the first Adam, yea, or no?

5. Whether God created man and woman perfect, without sin, and able in his power so to have stood, if they had not forsaken his power, and consented to the wisdom of the serpent, yea or no?

6. Whether God and man be wholly reconciled, till man be brought into that estate again, yea or no?

7. Whether all those that both by their life and doctrine labour to persuade people to abide in that condition of sin, imperfection and separation from God (which Christ come to destroy, and so to unite man to God again) be not ministers of antichrist, and for the upholding of the kingdom of the devil, yea or no?

A DISCOVERY OF THE WISDOM WHICH IS FROM BENEATH, AND
 THE WISDOM WHICH IS FROM ABOVE: OR, THE
 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO SEEDS,
 THE ONE AFTER THE FLESH, THE
 OTHER AFTER THE SPIRIT.

With the true worship of God after the spirit, and the false worship of the world, who lives in outward forms, useth customs and traditions, not knowing the only true God, that dwelleth in his saints, and rules by his spirit of power, which causeth them to differ from the world, and those that have the form of godliness, and want the power thereof.

Also the subtilty of the serpent, ruling in the hearts of the children of disobedience, discovered.

And a call to repentance to all that run on in blindness, darkness and ignorance; and the judgment that is due to all those that will not take counsel of the Lord, but turn the grace of God into wantonness.

Written by a servant of the Lord, whom the world scornfully calleth a Quaker, who is prisoner for the testimony of the truth at Appleby, in Westmoreland, whose name is JAMES NAYLER.

A DISCOVERY OF THE WISDOM FROM BENEATH, AND THE
 WISDOM FROM ABOVE.

The wisdom from beneath, which leadeth into bondage, and the wisdom from above, which leadeth up into perfect liberty, where there is freedom and communion with the father and the son.

Dear friends, all mind your guide within you, even the pure light of God, which bears witness against all our ungodly ways, ungodly words, thoughts, works and worships, which are after the world, and leads you without from the Lord your guide, for what stands in outward things, devised in the will and brain, which is the serpent's seat, is accursed from God, kept out of the kingdom, where the earthly will hath liberty, leads out to visible things, and feeds upon dust, which is the serpent's meat: but you, who desire to be fed with that which is eternal, lay aside all your wisdom, which is natural; for the natural man receives not the spiritual things of God; for that wisdom shall never know God, which stands in the will of man, but darkens the pure light in you, and opposeth it. And if you abide in the pure light within, you shall see, that whatever the light of Christ makes appear to be evil, and to be cast off; then the other, which stands in man's wisdom, makes a covering for it, that it may abide still.

And thus the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and that wisdom which ariseth out of the earth, opposeth that which is from above, and calls evil good, and good evil; and the woe being upon that nature, you can have no peace while that stands. And from hence comes all your troubles and darkness within you, because that eye which is open to the visible, offends. And here you are shut out of the kingdom, which consists in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy ghost but were that eye plucked out, and you turned within, to see with that eye that is single, then the whole body would be full of light: and abiding in that light, it will shew you a path which leads to purity and holiness, without which none shall ever see the Lord: and it will let you see a law written in your hearts, even the righteous law of the new covenant, which is a book sealed to all the wisdom of the world, and none can read it but by the pure light that gave it forth; which light as it ariseth in you, it will open all parables, and read all scriptures within you, in your measure.

And so you will come to the unity with all saints in measure, and so come to Christ the first-born, even to the innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to God the judge of all, where no serpents wisdom shall ever come. And that law being laid open, will be a limit to the carnal mind when it would run forth; and the judge will appear, who will pass true judgment upon all things as they are within you, and a separation will be made between the precious and the vile in you, and you will be brought to discern what leads to obedience, and what leads to disobedience. And here is your true teacher, whereby all shall be taught of God, as faith the scripture: and minding this light, it will shew you a cross to be daily taken up, whereby all the unruly nature must be crucified, for all must be brought subject to the yoke, even the most rebellious and stiff-necked in you; for he will tread upon the necks of kings, and that which hath captivated the pure in you must go into captivity; for now the Lord is risen to disquiet the earth, and them that are at rest, yea, wo to them that are at ease in

Sion; for he is risen who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and to deliver the oppressed, and so set open the prison doors, and so set the prisoners free, that they may serve him, and praise his name, even the name of the Lord, holy and pure, blessed for evermore.

And, dear friends, be faithful in what you know, take heed of making a profession of what you are not, and so you be found dissemblers before the Lord; but keep low in meekness and patience, standing in the will of God in all things. And all those enemies that will not that Christ should reign over them bring them before the judge that they may be slain, even upon that cross that is daily to be taken up, for the cross is to the carnal, wild, heady, brutish nature in you, which lies above the seed of God in you, and oppresseth the pure. Now giving this up to be crucified, makes way for that which is pure to arise, and guide your minds up to God, there to wait for power and strength against whatsoever the light of God makes manifest to be evil, and so to cast it off, and so you shall see where your strength lieth, and who it is in you that worketh the will and the deed, and then you shall be brought into a possession of what you have but had a profession, and find the power of what you had but in words, which is hid from all professions in the world, and is revealed no other way, but by the pure light of God dwelling in you, and you in it.

Take heed of searching into the hidden things of God by your own wisdom, which is carnal, for that hath God shut out of the kingdom, and separated it from him, and the things of God and his kingdom are hid from it, and it is appointed for utter darkness, accursed from him, and doth oppose him in all things; and in all ages, the wisdom of the great men of the earth have persecuted the pure wisdom of God, and accounted it foolishness; and God hath said this shall come to nought. And abiding in the pure light of Christ within, you shall see that same wisdom in yourselves, will be consulting and leading you any way, rather than to wait on the pure light. And this hath been a tempter from the beginning, and hath eaten of the forbidden

fruit, and that which hath eaten of the tree of knowledge, must not taste of the tree of life; but shall surely die. And the flaming sword is to this wisdom: therefore turn your minds within, and wait for a wisdom from above, which begins with the fear of the Lord, which is pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated. And if you keep your eye to this, you shall see, as this grows, which is pure, there will be a death to that which is sensual and carnal, and of the serpent; and as you grow in this pure, you will grow in the knowledge of Christ within you. And this is not to be attained by seeking without, lo, here and lo, there, but only by keeping your eye within to the invisible, and giving diligent ear to that voice that speaks to the soul and spirit, for the ministry of Christ is to the spirits in prison, not to the outward, but to the inward man, which is led captive and imprisoned by that serpentine wisdom that rules in the outward, and by which it is kept in death; which once coming to her the voice of Christ, it is raised from death to life; and then that scripture is fulfilled, the dead hear the voice of the son of God, and they that hear shall live. And this being once restored to life, is that which hath fellowship with the father and the son; yea, it is one with them. And this is that which as it ariseth, overcomes the world in you, gets the victory and obtains the crown: for it is the promised seed, and heir of all the promised in this life, and that which is to come; but there is no agreement between this and the seed of the serpent, for wherever the serpent's wisdom seeks after this, it is that he may slay it; but God hath hid it from him, and doth hide it out of the serpent's sight. But that seed sees the serpent where he is, and doth judge him, and condemn him, and bruise his head. How deep are thy counsels, O Lord! past finding out!

All labouring and striving by forms, customs and traditions, come short of that worship in spirit and in truth. The two ways which men walk in, viz. the spiritual and the carnal, the difference between them; and how you may know them by their fruits.

All men and women that make a profession, and go under the name of christians, and say you love Jesus

Christ; mind him whom you profess, that you may be taught by him in all your ways and worships,^a and do not suffer yourselves to be deceived any longer by fair speeches, and flattering high notions, by which you have been blinded for many years, and led on to worship God in outside forms and customs, after the traditions and commandments of men, which, by imaginary imitations and consultations, they have set up for their own ends, and have made laws to bind the people to observe them, contrary to that light shining into the conscience [the throne of Christ] and the practice of Christ and his apostles; and so have made the word of God of none effect by their traditions.^b But neither they nor you have known the true God, who is worshipped in spirit: for whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, nor known him. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar; nor have you fellowship with him, nor an answer of acceptance from him, though you have been worshippers in your formal customs all your time, and have many times afflicted yourselves from morning till evening, yet no answer.

And herein, how much you have resembled those four hundred worshippers, in Elijah's time, if ever your eyes be open, you will see. But the living God is not as the dumb idols to those who know him; for whom he accepts, he answers, and hath done in all ages, and they are brought into union with him, and know him, and how he will be worshipped; not by hear-say, but from him alone. And their worship is not an imitation by the letter, but they are all taught of him, every one in his measure, and they walk and worship him by his word, and the word is nigh them, in their hearts and in their mouths, by which they are guided, and they know his voice: but these are sheep, such as are born again, of the spirit, not after the will of man, but after the will of God.^c

But there is a generation, whose sacrifices God doth not accept, whose prayers are abomination, and whose

^a Eph. 4, 14. ^b Psal. 94, 20. Mark 7, 13. 1 John 2, 4. Ch. 2, 3, & 1, 3, 6. ^c 1 Kings 18, 26, 29. Psal. 65, 4, 5. Jonah 2, 3. Psal. 66, 18, 19. Isa. 54, 13. Rom. 10, 8. Joh. 10, 14. Gen. 4, 5. Pro. 15, 3, & 21, 4. Hag. 2, 13, 14. Pro. 3, 33. John 3, 3, 5, 6. 1 Cor. 15, 48, 49.

ploughing in sin, who pollute all they meddle with, who are hated of the Lord, whom Christ prays not for; for they, their sacrifice, and all they do are accursed from God. And these are in the first birth children of wrath, and enemies to God.

Now all people try yourselves, whether you be in the first birth, or you be born again: there is a first Adam, and there is a second Adam;^a and they who are in the first, bear his image: and they who are in the second, bear his image: and as is the earthly, such are they that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly. And these are contrary the one to the other; the one being from above, the other being from below; the one the seed of God, the other the seed of the serpent, and an enmity is put between them by God, and there can be no uniting them in one; for what concord hath Christ with Belial, or the believer and the unbeliever?^b

The first man is of the earth, earthly; minds earthly things, lives in the earth, delights in the earth, lusts after the earth, covets, contends and sues for it; for his treasure is in the earth, and his heart is with it; for it is his portion, and his thoughts, words and wisdom are all employed about it, plotting and forecasting how to compass it, and fetch it out of the hands of others, to heap up; but is never satisfied, but is a servant to it; it is his life, his joy; if it be taken from him, his comfort is gone:^c it is his God, and he worships it, and would have all to worship him, because of the abundance of it that he hath got together; for he knows no other God, nor greater happiness than what he sees with carnal eyes. And this all his actions witness; and thus is he exalted above all that is called God, and opposeth God in all his commands. When God saith, thou shalt not eat of the tree of knowledge; for if thou dost thou shalt die: the serpent saith, you may eat of it, and not die, but live better; be as Gods.^d When God saith, thou shalt not bow down, nor worship any creature in Heaven or earth; for I am jealous of mine honour, and will not have it given

^a Gen. 5. 17. ^b Gen. 3. 15. ^c Exod. 5. 2. ^d 2 Thess. 2. 4. Gen. 2. 17. Gen. 3. 45. Mat. 4. 10. Exo. 20. 5.

to any creature; but will visit that sin to the third and fourth generation; he saith, thou shalt bow down and worship me, and thou shalt gain by it, and be received into the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them, (for there I am prince) and I will bestow great things upon thee: but if thou wilt not, I make a decree, sign it with my own ring, and set all my servants to act it, that all thy seed shall be cut off out of my dominions in one day.^a And thus to oppose God, and seek to destroy his seed where it appears, hath been his way from the beginning, and is his way at this day. And here are all you haters, enviers and persecutors, and you are doing his work, and you are acted by him who was a murderer from the beginning.

The second man is the Lord from Heaven, and he that bears his image minds heavenly things, and delights in heavenly things; for he is spiritual, and judgeth not according to outward appearance;^b for the evil eye that offends is plucked out; that eye which leads into invisible things; and there is an eye turned inward, which pierceth into the hidden treasure which is eternal, which the natural eye sees not.^c And having once got a sight of the true riches, he casts away all his idols and idol-worships, and whatever is perishing, and treads upon all that may hinder his employment thereof, though they have been never so dear unto him; now it is become base, dross and dung, that he may obtain the invisible riches:^d and then the first born, whose heart is in the earth, calls him a fool and a madman, and thinks it strange that he will not serve the world, nor the times, for money, nor have men's persons in admiration because of advantage, nor observe the heathenish customs for fear of men; but is made to declare against them in open streets and markets.^e And then that nature which lives in these things, takes up stones to cast at him, and cries against him in tumults, away with him, it is not fit he should live, for he breaks all customs and traditions, which we and our fathers have lived in so many years, and turns the world up-side down: but being blind, they

a Luke 4. 5, 6, 7, 8. Hest. 3. b 1 Cor. 15. 47. Col. 1. 15. c Psal. 25. 14. d Phil. 3. 8. e Jude 16. Acts 14. 16.

cannot see that the Lord is in him, who counts all the customs of the heathen vain, and overturns kingdoms and nations at his will, and thereby makes way for him to reign, whose right it is.^a

The old man worships a God at a distance, but knows him not, nor where he is, but by relation from others, either by word or writing.^b And as he receives his knowledge of him from men, so his worship towards him is taught by the precepts of men; and if men, on whom he depends, command him to go to steeple-house, he goes; if they command him to pray, he prays; if they command him to sing, he sings; if they bid him hear, kneel, sit, stand, fast, or feast, he doth it. And here he hath fellowship with men, and doth as his neighbours do, or with those he calls brethren, if he be got into a more strict form; but as for any command from God binding to these, or any communion with God, or answer of acceptance from him, upon every performance, he looks for no such thing now in these days; as though God was not now the same to his people that he hath been in all ages. And thus in vain doth he worship, receiving for doctrines the commandments of men,^c and so uphold and plead for a customary worship in a form of tradition, which he is resolved to practise as long as he lives;^d but as for any other fellowship with God, or knowledge of him, or overcoming the body of sin, or growing up toward perfection, he looks for none while he is here: but he hath set up his stand as far as he intends to go, and if any go any further, or witness any more than he knows, he accounts it blasphemy, and cries out against it, as a thing not to be suffered, and with carnal weapons would force all to his way: but who have eyes open, see him to be blind.

The new man worships a God at hand, where he dwells in his holy temple, and he knows him by his own word from his dwelling place, and not by relation of others. And thus the holy men of God always knew him; for Abraham did not know him by what he had spoken to Noah, nor the prophets by what he had spo-

^a Acts 16. 20, 21. ^b 1 John 2. 4, & 8. 6. ^c Isa. 29. 13. ^d Mat. 15. 6. ^e Heb. 6. 1.

ken to Abraham, nor the apostles by what he spoke to the prophets, nor the saints by what he spoke to the apostles; but he that believeth hath the witness within himself, and thereby sets to his seal that God is true; and therefore Christ exhorts to have salt in yourselves, and the apostles exhort the saints to wait for the appearance of Christ in themselves, and to wait for the day star arising in their hearts; and they knew themselves to be the sons of God, by the spirit that he had given them; and so doth he that is born of the spirit: and by the same spirit that witnesseth God dwelling in him, he is taught how, and where, and after what manner he will be worshipped;^a and he knows what he worships, and he worships in spirit, and he prays in the spirit, and sings in the spirit and with understanding also, and not in form and custom; and he hath an ear open to hear what the spirit saith, by which he is taught when and how to pray, to sing, to fast or feast, and he feasteth of fat things, whereby the soul is nourished, and feeds not the lust, he feasts the inward man, and not the outward; for all is spiritual. And so grows in the spirit into near communion with God, and getting victory over sin, the world and the devil.^b And as he comes into purity, he is changed into the image of the Lord, from glory to glory, and all by the spirit.

The natural man is carnal, and knows not the things of God, but what he knows naturally, as brute beasts, and therein he doth corrupt himself, and doth use all his knowledge for corrupt ends;^c he boasts of learning, and tongues which are natural, and these he useth to defraud, oppress, and over-reach the simple, to revenge, sue, covet and heap together things that are for corruption, and with the same natural knowledge and tongues, he steps into the throne of Christ, and judges of the pure invisible things of God, comparing spiritual things with carnal, and thinks none knows more than he:^d but knows nothing as he ought to know; yet with this knowledge, and that power he hath got in the earth, he

^a John 4. 24. 2 Cor. 6. 16. 1 Cor. 6. 19. Gen. 12. 1, 2. Hos. 1. 1. 1 John 5. 10. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Gal. 4. 6, 7. John 16. 13, 14, 26, 4. 22. 1 Cor. 14. 5. Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29.
^b Rom. 8. 29. 2 Cor. 3. 18. ^c 1 Cor. 2. 14. ^d Jude 10.

sits as judge, and condemns the innocent, and lets the guilty go free: for being spiritually blind, he calls evil good, and good evil; and his seat is in the powers of the earth, and there he sits as Lord from the beginning, bearing rule by his means. And here he exerciseth his authority in the heathenish nature, under the power of the prince of the air, who hath the powers of darkness; but blessed be the father, who hath hid the glorious things of the kingdom from him, and hath appointed that this wisdom of his shall come to nought.^a

The spiritual man is begotten by the spirit, of the immortal seed, into the image of the father, he knows the father, and is known of him, not by relation of the creature, but by the indwelling of God in him, and he in God, according to that measure of light revealed in him.— And he stands in the will of God, improving that he hath freely received of God, whereby he grows in the knowledge of the father and the son, from grace to grace, from faith to faith, till he come to the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the son-ship, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. And standing faithful in the least measure, and waiting therein, the light of Christ under the cross, and not looking out, he is kept in peace, from the crafty and slighty doctrines of men, whereby they go about to deceive. And as the light grows, there is a discerning of things that differ, to choose the good, and refuse the evil; and as the son ariseth, the judgment is brought forth: for all judgment is committed to the son, and so the saints come to judge the world; yea, angels, and are made able to try the spirits, whether they be of God, or no.^b And that old serpent is judged by whom formerly they have been deceived: and so that which is born of God, overcomes the world, sin and the devil, and is kept out of all uncleanness, in which the carnal mind corrupts itself.^c And thus judgment is brought forth unto victory, and the unjust and unclean is judged, and condemned, and kept under within and without.

^a Mat. 20. 25, 26. Luke 22. 53. 1 Cor. 2. 6, 8. James 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 23. Col. 1. 15. Rom. 8. 29. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Eph. 4. 13, 14. ^b John 5. 22, 27, 30. 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. ^c 1 John 5. 4, 5.

The first man is proud and lofty, exalted above his brethren, a self-lover, lives to the flesh, and follows the lusts of the flesh in all things, and brings forth fruit to the flesh of all things;^a as lying, swearing, whoring, and all manner of evil, and for a covering, makes a profession of godliness, but performs nothing but for self-ends, and to be seen of men; but as to uprightness, holiness and purity, he is an enemy, a hater, a persecutor, a scorner, a railer, unreasonably covetous, would have all the earth and Heaven too, would live in pleasure all his life, and yet die the death of the righteous, would be an oppressor here;^b and upon such lies all the righteous blood that hath been shed from the first, till this day.

The second man is humbled and lowly, meek and full of love to all,^c honours all men according to God, without respect of persons, would have all to come to life, stands in the wisdom of God, which is pure and peaceable, is willing to be a fool to the world and serpent's wisdom, content to suffer wrongs buffetings, persecutions, slanders, reviling, mocking, without seeking revenge, but bears all the venom the serpent can cast upon him with patience, and thereby overcomes him and bruise his head, and is made perfect through suffering, and counts it joy, and rejoiceth in the cross, and loss of all things that are visible, but looks at that which is eternal, for he knows he cannot have both; for to be a friend to the world, is the enemy of God.^d

Now, all dear people, judge yourselves, if you will but deal faithfully with yourselves, there is that within you, that will tell you whence you are, and from whether of these roots all your actions proceed: for if the root be holy, the branches and fruit will be holy also. And by the fruits you bring forth, you may know the tree, whether you be of the first birth, or you be born again: and unless you be born again you cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven. You have long time taken things upon trust from men, and have been led blind, and brought forth fruits unto death, and have been servants to sin and the devil; let the time past be sufficient to have wrought

^a Gen. 21. 9. Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. ^b Num. 23. 10. ^c James 2. 1, 9. ^d Gal. 5. 22. 2 Cor. 4. 15, 18. James 4. 4.

the will of the flesh. And now approve yourselves the children of God, in your actions, for by your fruits you shall be judged. God is holy, and his children bear his image. Oh! redeem your time; prize your souls, and mind that which is eternal.

HOW THE SUBTILITY OF THE SERPENT WORKS IN THE CHILDREN OF
DISOBEDIENCE; AND HOW HE RAGES WHERE HE SEES THE
IMAGE OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE APPEAR, TO SMOTHER
AND STRANGLE THE HOLY CHILD JESUS CHRIST.

O THOU subtle serpent, why dost thou so rage at the voice of the Lord, when he speaks in his own, whom he hath redeemed?^a And why art thou so mad against his image, where it is renewed and doth appear, in whom he hath begotten to himself? Thou hast long uttered thy voice in open streets, by blasphemous swearing, cursing, lying, slandering, railing, false accusing, scorning, and all manner of evil speaking, and hast brought forth thy image in thy children, in persecuting, killing, stoning, mocking, imprisoning, covetousness, drunkenness, whoredoms, thefts, and all manner of evil works and deeds of darkness: thou hast long reigned as king on earth, and in earthly hearts and carnal minds, and there hast showed forth thy enmity against God; and in such thou art exalted above all that is called God, and hast got thy will upon them, and hast brought them to fall down and worship thee; for that thy pride looks much after.^b And as thou hast divers colours, so thou lookest for divers kinds of worship; and where thou appearest in greatest glory, there thou lookest for greatest worship. And those who will obey thee herein, to them thou givest large promises of great things in the world, and they shall be advanced in thy partial kingdom: but there is a seed thou couldest never bring to fall down before thee, though thou hast often attempted it, and divers ways; sometimes by great threatenings, even to destroy the whole seed at one blow, as in Haman to Mordecai, and all the seed of the Jews, because he would not worship thee;^c and sometimes by great prom-

^a Col. 3. 10, 11. ^b Rom: 8. 7. 2 Thess. 2. 4. Esth. 3. 5, 6. Ch. 5. 9, 13. & 6. 13.
^c Esth. 3. 6.

ises, and large dissembling proffers, as unto Christ the son of God, shewing him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory thereof, saying, all this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.^a But this seed is that which is appointed to bruise thy head, and lay all thy pride in the dust. And the voice of this seed is terrible to thee where it speaks; for it never speaks good concerning thee, but evil. And this seed is Christ, who is risen in his saints, to discover and destroy thy kingdom, by the sword of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming; for he speaks death to thee where he speaks, and declares thy kingdom to be death and darkness, and thy works to be dead works;^b and that all thy ways lead to the chambers of death; and that hell, death and destruction are the portion of all whom thou deceivest, and leadest on in the broad way. But wherever the seed of God appears, it holds forth life, and leads into the way of life, works, and words of life and power: for it is the light of life, and leads to life eternal. And as this light ariseth, it discovers thee, not only within, but also sees thee where thou art in the world; and is brought to lay thee open to others, and all thy deceivable workings, and to judge and condemn thee. And this is the son, and where he is he is the light of the world, and judge of the world; for the father hath committed all judgment unto the son, and he judgeth thee in and by the saints.^c

And now thou seest plainly, that if he do but speak, and the creature hear and believe, then he will discover all thy subtilty, and redeem from under thy power, by which thou hast deceived the nations, and ruled over them for many generations.

And therefore now thy design is to stop his mouth, that he may not speak under pain of imprisoning, or killing the body in whom he speaks.^d And if that will not prevail, then thou persuadest people not to believe that it is he that speaks in his own, calling it blasphemy for any to confess him to speak in them, or dwell in them now.

a Mat. 6. 8, 9. b Gen. 3. 15. 1 Kings 22. 8. 2 Thess. 2. 8. Rom. 8. 6. Mat. 7. 13.
c 1 Cor. 2. 15. & 6. 2, 3. d Pro. 26. 25, 26. Rev. 12. 13, 15.

O thou cursed, crooked, winding serpent! More subtle than all the beasts of the field.^a This was thy way amongst the professing wise, knowing Jews, when this seed first appeared in flesh, to make them believe, that it was not he who was the Christ, the saviour of the world; he was too poor, too plain, and of too mean a stock to be king of Israel: We know this man from whence he is, a carpenter's son, and his kindred are with us, and none believe on this man but sinners, women and children, and a poor people that know not the law, and they are accursed: but when Christ comes, then the rulers will own him, and believe in him.^b

Thus by persuading them to look for great things at a distance, a Christ to come, who would appear more glorious to their carnal eyes, thou prevailedst in them to crucify the son of God, and redeemer of the world.

But now that the history of Christ being come, and hath suffered, and is risen again, is generally believed, now thy design is, to persuade people that it is a thing passed long since, and settest them on to cry out against the Jews, for killing of him, and Judas for betraying of him; and thus settest one of thy children to cry out against another, making these believe, that they are in a better condition than their fathers, when they are all found in one and the same work, killing some, imprisoning others, mocking, stoning, beating and shamefully intreating others;^c and to keep them on in this work, persuadest them, that it is not Christ they persecute now; for Christ is in heaven, and sits at the right hand of God; and how can he be in his people now? He doth not appear in any now, or speak in any now; neither is there any revelation.^d It was so in the apostles time, and the saints of old witnessed such things; but it is blasphemy for any now to confess him in these days.

And thus thou beguilest carnal man, led by carnal reason to look for a carnal Christ, like themselves, who can but be in one place, or person; as though God had now found some new way to speak to his people, and

^a John 9, 22. & 6, 24. ^b Mat. 21, 15. John 7, 43, 49. ^c Mat. 21, 35, 36. ^d Gal. 1, 16, Mat. 11, 27. 1 Cor. 2, 14. Heb. 1, 2.

not by his son: and all this is to put out the light, lest thou should'st be discovered; for thou rulest in darkness, and by darkness keepest thy possession, amongst those whom thou hast blinded. But where Christ is revealed and known, he is known to be spiritual, and not carnal, not limited to one place, but filleth heaven and earth, is all, and in all his; but not seen by the carnal eye; though he be the light of the world: for the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of the world, that they cannot see him, for he is a mystery to them, and hid from all their carnal wisdom, neither can they hear his voice, for they are not of his sheep, but are as the deaf adder;^a but to them only in whom he dwells he is known, they hear his voice, and are taught by him alone, and will own no other voice nor teacher, and they know him to be the same Christ yesterday, to-day and for ever; the same who, when he was to ascend, said to his, if I go away, I will come again, that where I am, there may ye be also; the same who said, I will come and make mine abode with you; the same who was in the saints the hope of glory, and those who have him not in them are reprobates.

The same Christ who spoke in Paul and the rest, and they knew his voice wherever they heard it, and did obey it, though they suffered for it; for he was their light, their life, and their way to the father. And by believing and following him, they were led out of all the ways of death and darkness, up to God in purity and holiness. And thus were brought to witness their redemption by him.

And he is the same now, to those who know him, in all things according to the measure received; he reveals himself now to be the eternal son of God in them, in whom he reveals the father also, and that the son and the father are one. He speaks in them, and by them, and they know his voice from all other voices in themselves and others: they know his hand is not shortened, nor his love less than it hath been to his people; and that his delight is with the sons of men as much as

^a Col. 2, 10, 11. 2 Cor. 4, 4. Psal. 58, 4, 5. Ezek. 4, 20, 21. b John 10, 4, 5, & 14, 3. Col. 1, 27. 2 Cor. 13, 3. John 14, 6.

ever;^a but it is only in them who love and obey him, and not their lusts, and such can witness their fellowship with the father and the son. And they know that this is a mystery to all the world's wisdom, and that the serpent's brood can no more own his voice now, where he speaks, than formerly he could do when he spoke in flesh. And that he is but one in all, from the beginning to this day, and changes not: and that the serpent is but one in all his, though of divers colours and forms, and therefore at wars, disputes and janglings among themselves, and at envy one with another, only they are one in this, that they all join to persecute the pure seed in any where it appears;^b but where the pure seed appears, they are all of one colour, arrayed in pure linnen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints, and are of one heart and one mind, and these follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth, never to persecute any,^c but to suffer all the venom, rage and malice of the serpent's brood, and are led through great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb, and thereby they are brought to bruise thy head, and reign above thee, and tread upon thee.

And thus the promise of God is fulfilled in his people: and this is witnessed in them, and they know that they are redeemed, and set free from sin and death, even by the power and virtue of this seed, being raised up in them to rule in them, and is their guide, their judge and lawgiver, their light,^d by which they see thy several deceits, whereby thou deceivest the nations, and keepest them in sin and filthiness, persuading some, that Christ is come, and hath redeemed them among the rest, though they know it not, but still live in their sins; yet if they have but a profession, and so under the name of believers, and come before the Lord, as his people, in outward performances, though they have no witness within themselves, yet all their sins are satisfied, for past, present and to come.

^a Mat. 11, 27. Gal. 1, 16. John 10, 30, & 10, 4, 5. Prov. 8, 31. John 1, 3. Ch. 10, 20, & 17, 21. ^b Luk. 23, 12. Rev. 9, 13. ^c Rev. 19, 8, & 7, 14. ^d Rom. 6, 20. 21.

And lest they should doubt of it, thou settest them to the letter, to steal that which Christ in spirit witnessed in the saints, in whom he dwelt, but never yet in them.^a And thus by applying the promises of the righteous unto the wicked, encourageth them to live in sin without fear.

And this doctrine thou broachest amongst thy ranting crew, and so proclaims liberty to the lusts of the flesh; a doctrine well-pleasing to the first birth, and therefore so easily received, and cried up by many in these days. But if the judgment of God for sin seize upon the spirits of any, and they find that there can be no peace with God while sin stands; then thou hast another way to deceive them, persuading them, that though it be sin, and only sin that breaks their peace with God, yet what power have they against it of themselves?^b They must look for a day (which will always be to come) when they shall have power given in an easy way to overcome sin, and never take up the cross, nor deny their own lusts, nor have their own wills crucified.

And thus by tempting them to look out at redemption, past or to come, keeps them from minding their present condition, and tenders of Christ within them, who by his light would lead them out of sin and filthiness, and to witness redemption within themselves.

Another sort thou persuadest, that none ever was or ever shall be set free from sin, while they are here, and that it is a vain thing ever to look for it; and that they are but Pharisees, who seek to be cleaner than their neighbours: and that God is merciful, and Christ came to save sinners.^c And thus Christ serves for no other end to them but to talk on; and he who came to set the saints free from sin, and to discover sin, is by thine made a cloak for sin, and an encouragement in sin. And further to deceive them, thou gatherest up all the failings of the saints, which are written as warnings for all that come after, never to do the like; and these thou turnest to encourage thine in their sin; for this is thy cursed language, did not Noah sin? Did not David sin?

a 1 John 5, 10. b Heb. 3, 7. c John 3, 6, 7, 8.

Did not Peter sin? And am I better than they?^a And thus thou, who by sin at first didst stamp thy image on the creature, and so work a separation betwixt God and man: so by sin thou upholdest thy image and the separation; for sin is begotten by thee, and thou art the father of it, and it bears thy image, and the glory of thy kingdom stands in sin and filthiness, and thou and thy children delight in it.^b

But woe unto thee and thy kingdom, for the day of thy torment is upon thee; for now Michael our prince, who stands up for the children and people of God, is arisen against thee, who will break thee and thy image in pieces, and thou shalt be cast out of heaven, and thy angels into the earth, and thou shalt be chained in the bottomless pit, and shalt deceive the nations no more; for thou art dicovered, and the beast and the false prophet, by whom thou hast maintained wars against the saints, and you shall all be cast into the lake that burneth, there to be tormented for ever.^c

A caution to all who shall be found persecutors, persecuting the righteous, not suffering that spirit to speak, which boldly and impartially speaks without slavishness, being carried up above, fears not him who can kill the body, and can do no more; but fears God.

TAKE heed, ye men of the earth, how you contend against the Lord, and how you speak evil of the things you know not; why do ye imagine a vain thing against the Lord, and against his anointed? By your rage you shew yourselves to be heathen. He that sits in heaven shall laugh, the Lord shall have you in derision;^d he will set up his king upon his holy hill of Sion, without your leave. Did ever any strive against God and prosper? He will break you with a rod of iron, and dash you in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise, take heed, fear and tremble before the Lord, lest his wrath kindle against you, and you be consumed in his anger. Wo to him that striveth with his maker;^e let the potsheards strive with the potsheards of the earth: shall the clay

a John 3, 44. b Dan. 12, 1, & 2, 34. c Rev. 20, 10. d Psal. 2, 1, 2. Psal. 2, 4, 5. Psal. 37, 13. Job 9, 4, 12. e Isa. 41, 9. Isa. 29, 10.

question the work of the potter? You forget yourselves while you are contending against the mind of God; you are exalted, and have forgotten that you are but dust, and must to dust again. You are not made to oppose the Lord in his works, but to humble yourselves before him. And know this, all ye proud ones of the earth, that God is now exalting his own son, to be king alone upon the throne of David, and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end:^a for he shall order his kingdom himself in judgment and justice for ever: but wo unto the proud at that day, for the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, and leave them neither root nor branch; yea, who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appears?^b For he is like a refiner's fire, and fuller's soap, and shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and shall purify the sons of Levi. All you must pass through the fire, and all your dross and tin must be consumed; your high looks and great swelling words will be found dross, and are for the fire.

You that go about to limit the holy one of Israel,^c what he shall do, and how he must make himself known to his creatures, and by whom. God will never come your ways, for your ways are not his way, nor your thoughts his thoughts; for the one are contrary to the other. O vain man, shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him! He that reproveth God, let him answer it. What art thou that questions the work of the Lord, or his way?^d Thou art of that brood that came to ask Christ, by what authority he did those things his father had sent him to do; and because thou must not enter into the secrets of God by thy serpents wisdom, thou wilt forbid and persecute them in whom it is revealed, as they did. Now wouldst thou but look back, and search the scriptures, thou shouldst find thy generation all along from Cain to thy-self: for all persecutors are of that serpent's brood.

^a Isa. 2, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. ^b Mal. 3, 2, 3. ^c Job. 21, 22
^d Job. 40, 2.

It may be thou wilt own, all that generation to be of Cain, till it come to thy-self, and then thou wilt deny that thou art any of that brood, and yet art found acting in the very same things. And herein thou differest not at all from the rest; for they would all deny it, even from the first; for when God asked Cain where his brother was; he said he knew not; am I my brother's keeper,^a whenas he had slain him. And the scribes, Pharisees and chief priests garnished the sepulchres of the prophets, whom their fathers slew, and said, had we lived in their days, we would not have killed them; and at that very time were they consulting to kill the son of God, to whom all the prophets bear witness. But as the devil was a murderer from the beginning; so he was a liar from the beginning. But though thou wilt not own thy-self to be of the devil; yet thy actions declare to thy face, before men and angels, that thou art not of God. Did ever any that were of God, forbid any to speak in the name of the Lord Jesus, whom he sent to declare his will? Did they ever imprison any for it? Did they ever beat, stone, mock, revile or hate any? Did they ever raise lies, slanders, or false reports of any? Or seek false witnesses against them?^b Did they ever oppress the stranger, because he was a stranger, and send them to prison when they found them, because they knew them not, though they never did them harm? And then, to make way for their further oppression, to have their agents abroad, to seek out any who will witness any thing against them; and so lay snares and traps for the simple and harmless man? There were of thy generation in Isaiah's time, and God plagued them for it, as saith the prophet, the terrible ones are brought to naught, and the scorers are consumed; and all that watch for iniquity are cut off, that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproves in the gate.^c

Now all you that will be found in this practice, take heed, repent betimes, the righteous God will judge righteously, he is no respecter of persons,^d and he knows all

^a Gen. 4, 6 ^b Mat. 29, 30, 31. ^c Isa. 23, 3, 15. ^d Isa. 29, 20, 21. ^e Hos. 5, 1.

your secret plots, and who they are against. You may hide things from men, but wo unto them that dig deep, to hide their counsel from the Lord; and their works are in the dark, and they say, who seeth us? and who knoweth?^a Surely your turning things upside down, shall be esteemed as the potter's clay, and God will overturn, overturn you, and bring all your plotting wisdom to naught. Oh! consider, what is become of the persecutors of old? Did not God find them out, and plague them for it? And dost thou think to escape his hand? Thy thoughts are vain, and will deceive thee, the Lord will set a mark upon thee that thou art a persecutor of the messengers of the Lord; go to, saith the Lord, write it in a book, that it may be for time to come, for ever and ever, that this is a rebellious people, lying children, that will not hear the law of the Lord, which say to the seers, see not, and to the prophets, prophecy not to us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceit.^b

Now see if it be not so in these days; he that studies out eloquent words, to please the ears of men, and can talk against sin in words; but when they have done, join with the wicked in his wicked ways, as pride, covetousness, oppression, drunkenness, rioting, and such like, and so become men-pleasers. These are prophets most fit for them that love their sins, and would not have their minds crossed. Micah saith in his days, that a liar, and one that will prophecy of wine and strong drink, is a prophet most fit for this people:^c and these prophets shall never suffer persecution, nor ever turn any from their sins. But if any come with a true message from the Lord, and declare his judgments to come against all sin and filthiness, and witness against all the ways of the wicked, both in word and practice: then, away with such a fellow from the earth, it is not fit he should live, for he judgeth all but himself;^d send him to prison, or into his own country out of our coasts: what hath he to do here? or, who sent him? or, what is his authority? I love him not, for he never speaks good of us, but evil.

^a 1 Pet. 1, 17. Psal. 37, 12, 13, 14, 15. Isa. 29, 13, 14. ^b Isa. 30, 8, 9, 10, 11. 6 Micah. 2, 11. ^d Acts 22, 22.

O friend! Didst thou but know whom thou strivest against, thou'dst tremble before him, it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks, thou art not against man but God.^a

And this know, that no prophecy of old came by the will of man, but against the wills of all men in the world, both he that was sent, and they to whom they was sent.^b But who hath resisted his will? For there is a necessity laid upon such as are sent by him; and wo unto them if they go not. And they who are thus sent are no hireling, neither do they come with what will you give me? but they must witness forth freely what Christ hath revealed in them, though they suffer for it.^c But this call is not known to Babylon's merchants, who buy, sell, and trade for money; neither is it known to the world, for if it were, they would not hate and persecute it; but they that are sent by God have been hated in all ages, and it is the same now, else how should the scriptures be fulfilled;^d but O man! take heed what thou doest; thy power is limited, though thou knowest it not: thou canst but kill the body, and the soul shall live; thou canst but imprison the body, but the spirit is at liberty out of thy reach.^e And therefore Christ bids his, not to fear such, who can go no further. And it is so, for they who are kept close in obedience to Christ, are kept out of the fear of man: for saith the Lord, I, even I am he that comforted you:^f who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and the son of man that shall be as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and hath feared every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy; and where is the fury of the oppressor? But saith the Lord, I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee with the shadow of my hand. Behold I have taken out of thy hand the cup of my fury, and thou shalt no more drink it again; but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee, which say to the soul, bow down, that we may go over thee; and thou hast laid thy body

^a Kings 22, 8. ^b 2 Pet. 1, 21. ^c 1 Cor. 9, 16, 17. ^d Rev. 18, 11. ^e 1 Cor. 2, 8. ^f Mat. 10, 28. ^g Isa. 51, 12, 13.

as the ground, and as the street to them that go over.^a Therefore take heed, you that tread the poor and helpless under your feet; repent, repent, your day is coming on a pace, wherein the Lord will avenge the poor, on him that is too strong for him: and how canst thou stand at that day, when thou shalt become weak as another man, and no false pretences will be accepted? Thou must be judged according to thy work, good or evil; Oh! that you had hearts to humble yourselves before the Lord, that ye might find mercy at that day, for why will you perish through your own will?

A call to the world, to repentance; and the cursed condition that men lie in, professing much, but practising just nothing but pride, wantonness, covetousness; and yet cover themselves with large professions, and call themselves saints. Wo, wo to all them who profess the truth, and live in unrighteousness, and that turn the grace of God into wantonness.

ALL people, repent and turn to the Lord, from the evil of your doing, for the Lord is at hand, who will judge the world, and give every one according to their doings, whether they be good or evil; yea, he is coming with ten thousands of his saints, to be avenged on the heathen, and them that know not God^b.

Now all that live in sin and filthiness, it plainly appears you know not God; for if you did, you durst not heap iniquity, and live in your lusts, heaping up wrath against the day of wrath, wherein the Lord will appear as a consuming fire against all ungodliness of wicked men.

God is against you, you dissembling professors, who adorn the outside to be seen of men, but the inside is full of deceit, serving God in outside forms and notions, but your hearts are not upright with him;^c you are in the earth, and earthly mindedness, in your covetousness, which is idolatry. And God abhors the outside worship, when the heart is not upright with him; and Christ calls such, whited walls, painted sepulchres, hypocrites, serpents, a generation of vipers, children of the devil;^d and

^a Isa. 51, 16. Isa. 14, 10. ^b Isa. 3, 10, 11. Isiah 26, 21. ² Thess. 1, 7, 8, 9. ¹ John 3, 6. ^c Mat. 23, 25, 26, 27, 28. ^d Mat. 23, 33.

the woe is to such: how can you escape the damnation of Hell?

God is against you, you proud and lustful, wanton ones, who make it your greatest care to deck yourselves in your proud attire, inventing new ways and fashions to make yourselves glorious in the sight of men, that they may bow down and worship you, and set you above the commands of God;^a but know, that you are but dust, and God will lay such honour in the dust; for he is risen to whom all worship is due; and now wo to all the idols of the world, your lofty looks shall be humbled, and your haughtiness bowed down;^b for now the Lord will exalt the humble and meek ones, that you have trodden upon; he will seek that which is lost, but will destroy the fat, and feed the strong with judgment. Repent, you lofty ones, and turn to the Lord, and humble yourselves before him, that you may be hid in the day of his fierce wrath, lest he take you away, and there be none to deliver.^c

God is against you, you drunkards, who make it your trade to pour in strong drink, abusing the creature to satisfy your lusts, which God hath given to be used moderately, and not in riotousness:^d you should be reasonable creatures, but your horse may teach you, who will not drink when he hath enough. And herein you show yourselves worse than brutes, and they shall rise up in judgment against you, and condemn you. Wo to you that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink.^e Wo to you that rise up early, that you may follow strong drink, and continue until night, till wine inflame you. The woe is upon you that put the cup to his neighbours mouth, to make him drink, that his nakedness may appear, and shameful spewing cover him. And this is your glory, which is your shame, and you tell your companions: you show yourselves to be the children of Ham, the father of Canaan, who was accursed for such practice:^f and the curse is upon you, while you live in this; therefore repent, and live no longer in your filthiness, your healths are abomination to

^a Isa. 28, 12, 34. ^b Isaiah 2, 10, 11, 17. Isaiah 16, to the end. ^c Ezek. 34, 16. Luke 6, 24. ^d Isaiah 28, 1, 3. Joel 1, 5. Isaiah 5, 22. ^e Isaiah 5, 11. Heb. 2, 15, 16, ^f Gen. 9, 22, 25.

the Lord, and you are ignorant of his saving health.—The wants of the poor cry in the ears of God against your wasteful practice, and you must account for your stewardship.

God is against you, you swearers, who make it your practice to take the name of God in vain, and live in open breach of his commands: you who are not ashamed to profane the holy name of God in open streets and houses where you come, the curse is upon the land for your sakes; and because of oaths the land mourns, and God will not hold you guiltless. Repent, repent, the curse is towards you, you profane ones, who regard not the commands of Christ, who saith, swear not at all, but let your yea be yea, and your nay nay; for whatsoever is more cometh of evil.^a How is he your redeemer, and how will you stand before him at the day of judgment, whom you now so openly condemn, in disobeying his commands? O repent, the day is at hand when it will be too late!

God is against you, you scorers, who take delight in scorning your brethren, you show your folly to all, whose children you are, you that sit in the seat of the scornful;^b God doth scorn you, he who sits in Heaven laughs you to scorn. You are proud, and puffed up, and have scornful eyes, you that raise false reports against the simple, and tell them to make yourselves and others laugh, that are scorers like you.^c The Lord will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.^d—Your laughter shall be turned into mourning: wo to them that now laugh, for they shall mourn. You forget yourselves what you are; take heed, be not mockers, lest your bands be made strong, and when you cry there be none to deliver; take heed, repent betimes; how long will you scorers delight in scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Cease your sports and pastimes, ye wanton ones, making yourselves merry in your sins. Your idle profane talking and foolish jesting, your unclean filthy words are abomination to the Lord; and every idle word must be accounted for: your revelling and

^a Pro. 19, 29. Pro. 3, 34. Jer. 23, 10. Zach. 5, 3. Mat. 5, 34, 35. James 5, 12.—
Psalms 9, 17. Jer. 5, 7. ^b Isa. 18, 14, 15, 16. ^c Luke 6, 25. ^d Isa. 14, 11, 12. Isa. 28, 22. ^e Pro. 1, 22. Isa. 57, 3, 4, 5

tioting, carding and dicing, and all your invented sports, sitting down to eat and drink, and rising up to play, which is idolatry, and the wrath of God is against such practice; for man was not made to fulfil his own lusts, but to serve the living God, who made all things for himself, and the wicked for the day of judgment, and they are reserved against the day of wrath and destruction.^a And though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished. Repent, take heed, search the scriptures, if ever the people of God used any such practice, or spent their time after that manner; but laboured to redeem the time, and had their flesh crucified, with the affections and lusts; for they who live to the flesh, cannot please God.

God is against you, you covetous cruel oppressors,^b who grind the faces of the poor and needy, taking your advantage of the necessities of the poor,^c falsifying the measures, and using deceitful weights, speaking that of your commodities which is not true, and so deceiving the simple, and hereby getting great estates in the world, laying house to house, and land to land, till there be no place for the poor, and when they are become poor thro' your deceits, then you despise them, and exalt yourselves above them, and forget that you are all made of one mould, and one blood, and must all appear before one judge, who is no respecter of persons, nor doth he despise the poor;^d and what shall your riches avail you at that day, when you must account how you have gotten them, and whom you have oppressed? Yea, wo to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his own house, that buildeth a house with oppression, the stone in the wall, and the beam in the timber shall cry out against him.^e

The fathers commit cruelty and oppression in heaping together, and the children commit filthiness in spending it upon their lusts: and thus the children eat up the sins of the fathers, and fill up the measure of their fathers iniquity.^f And thus you make an open gap for the wrath of God to break in upon you. Oh! Repent, and turn to

^a 1 Cor. 10. 7. Isaiah 22. 12, 13, 14. Prov. 16. 4, 5. Job 21. 30. Prov. 11. 21. ^b Pro. 11. 1. ^c Isaiah 3. 15. Isaiah 5, 8, 9. ^d Acts 17, 26. Gal. 2, 6. ^e Hab. 2, 11, 12. ^f Mat. 23. 32.

the Lord, that there may be one found to stand in the gap, and make up the breach, lest the wrath of God break in upon you, and burn like fire, and there be none to quench it: for the day of the Lord is at hand, that you must all be weighed in the pure balance of the sanctuary, and nothing will be weight but what is pure and holy, truth from the heart;^a no deceit or hypocrisy will be weight, no idolatrous, proud or covetous, no swearer, liar, drunkard or whoremonger will be weight, no scorner, railer, or false accusers, no murderer, nor envious persecutor, no fornicator, nor unclean ones, nor any that live to the flesh can be weight, but will be found wanting;^b and then woe unto you, for your kingdom must be taken from you, and given to them who will bring forth fruits that God may have glory.

Now all professors and people, consider your conditions; you have long been hearers and professors, but what have your fruits been? Herein is my father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit.^c But now, you fruitless trees, you must be cut down, and cast into the fire; for all mens works must be tried by fire;^d and then wo unto you, who have taken pleasure in sin; repent, and turn to the Lord betimes, that you may find mercy, for your destruction is of yourselves.

THE CURSED CONDITION OF CONCEITED ONES, WHO ARE
WISE IN THEIR OWN EYES.

Wo unto you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight, you that think to understand the spiritual things of God by your carnal wisdom;^e and because God will not reveal his secrets to your serpentine wisdom therefore you speak evil of it where it is revealed, tho' you know it not: your wisdom is of the earth, and seedeth upon dust, and dust is the serpent's meat. By your wisdom you can over-reach your brethren, oppress the poor to get riches, to make yourselves great in the earth, and thereby lord it over your brethren;^f by it you can go to law, and begger your brethren for trifles, to fulfil your own wills; by it you can deceive the sim-

^a Dan. 5, 25. ^b Rev 22, 13. ^c Mat. 3, 10. ^d 1 Cor. 3, 13. ^e Isaiah 5, 21. John 14, 17. ^f Jude 10. ^g Isaiah 65, 25.

ple and harmless man, and make him your laughing-stock when you have done; by it you can contrive mischief on your bed, and when the morning is come you put it in practice against those whom you envy.^a

And do you think that ever God will reveal himself to this wisdom any other ways, than in wrath from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of this wisdom? Nay, the secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him, but there is no fear of the Lord where this wisdom ruleth:^b but you are puffed up in your vain mind, and think you know much; whenas you know nothing yet as you ought to know; for (saith the apostle) who is a wise man amongst you, and endued with knowledge, let him show out of a good conversation, his works with meekness of wisdom.^c Your works that proceed out, show plainly what kind of wisdom is within, that wisdom which brings forth pride, scorning, lightness and wantonness, swearing, lying, covetousness, self-love, envy, hatred, deceit, backbiting, slandering and evil-speaking, lust and excess, strife and contention, persecution, or any other unclean or filthy practice, doing to others that which you would not have them to do to you,^d that wisdom is of the devil, and not of God.

Now this is the wisdom the world drives after, and so highly extols, and by which you think to attain to the pure and invisible things of God. And thus the wisdom of the serpent, which riseth out of the earth, and feedeth on earth, would be climbing up to the hidden things of God, and so would be heirs of two kingdoms. But saith the apostle, if ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.^e

This wisdom descends not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devilish: for where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But that wisdom which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy.^f Now you who think you are the men for wisdom, try your wisdom by these marks set down by the apostle, whether it be given

^a Micah 2, 1, 2 3. ^b Rom. 1, 18. ^c James 3, 13. ^d Job 14, 4. ^e James 3, 14, 15, 16
^f James 3, 17.

you from above, or it be of the serpent, arising out of the earthly part within you: is it such a wisdom as shows forth of a good conversation, the works of meekness? Is it pure? Is it peaceable? Is it gentle and easy to be intreated? Is it full of mercy and good fruits?—Without partiality and without hypocrisy? If it brings forth these fruits, it is from above, and God will own it, and reveal his secrets to it, even the hidden things of God. But on the contrary, if it be that wisdom that brings forth bitter envyings and strife, and every evil work, vain glorying, and lying against the truth, the apostle saith plainly, it is not of God, but is earthly, sensual and devilish;^a and this wisdom must never enter into the kingdom, but is of the serpent cursed above all creatures, more subtil than all the beasts of the field, eating the forbidden fruit, the judging of good and evil by carnal knowledge, creeping into the earth and earthly thing, are all for the belly, feeding on dust, and delighting in things that perish and fade away, painted on the outside, decking thee with pride, curiously invented (serpent like) by his wisdom, and feeding thy lusts with curious devised dishes, Dives-like, devising and plotting to get riches right or wrong: so that you can but keep within the compass of the laws of the nation, never regarding to be guided by that pure law of God within, written in the heart, which would lead you in all things, to do as you would be done by.^b

But the wisdom of men is not subject to the law of God, neither can be, for it is death to it; and you deceive yourselves, who do think to find out the mystery of the things of God by this wisdom, for God hath hid it from your eyes.^c And the world by wisdom knows not God, for God hath turned their wisdom into foolishness; and, saith Christ, I thank thee, O father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes.^d God hath hid them in Christ, and none come to Christ but babes, such as are of the new birth, not flesh and blood, but of water and the spirit; such only enter into the mystery—

^a James 3, 15. ^b Heb. 10, 16. Rom. 8, 7. ^c 1 Cor. 1, 20, 21. ^d Mark 11 25. John 3, 5, 6.

of the kingdom, by the door in all, the strait way through the cross, where your serpent's wisdom would not willingly come;^a for if it do, it must be slain, and you must become fools for Christ's sake, that you may be wise; you must enter as a little child, or else you cannot come there, for it is revealed to babes only.^b Your wisdom that you so much boast on, must be crucified and die, and a new wisdom must be given you from above, which begins with the fear of the Lord; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to practice it is understanding. And when you once come to own this true wisdom, which is of God, then you shall see the world, who did so highly applaud you for your wisdom before, will now call you fools and madmen; for that wisdom which they do applaud shall be cast behind thee: and then thou shalt witness the scripture fulfilled, when God hath destroyed the wisdom of the wise, and brought to nought the understanding of the prudent; where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world? For the world by this wisdom knows not God, nor ever shall do; for God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and weak things to confound the mighty.^c And then thou shalt see that wisdom not to be of this world, neither of the princes of this world, which come to nought; but the wisdom of God, which is a hidden mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew: for if they knew it, they would not persecute it where it is. But the knowledge of this mystery is the free gift of God, given only to them that fear and love him, given without all natural helps whatsoever; for the natural man receives not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned:^d but the spiritual man judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man; for he that is in the spirit lives above all the earth and earthly wisdom, and sees all the world, where they live, but no carnal wisdom shall ever see where he lives, for his life is hid with God in Christ from all vultures eyes, and venomous beasts.^e

^a Luk. 18, 17. ^b Job. 8, 28. ^c 1 Cor. 1, 19, 20, 21. 1 Cor. 1, 25, 27, & 2, 6, 7, 8. ^d 1 Cor. 2, 14, 1e5. ^e Col. 3, 3.

A LAMENTATION BY ONE OF ENGLAND'S PROPHETS, OVER
THE RUINS OF THIS OPPRESSED NATION.

To be deeply laid to heart by parliament and army, and all sorts of people, lest they be swept away with the besom of destruction, in the day of the Lord's fierce wrath and indignation, which is near at hand. Written from the movings of the Lord in JAMES NAYLER.

O ENGLAND! how is thy expectation failed, now after all thy travels? the people to whom oppression and unrighteousness hath been a burthen, have long waited for deliverance, from one year to another, but none comes, from one sort of men to another.

Hast thou looked for reformation, but all in vain? For as power hath come into the hands of men, it hath been turned into violence, and the will of men is brought forth instead of equity. And this they seek to establish by a law, to which all must bow that are under them, or they must be judged as offenders: so that which should be for the deliverance of the simple from the hand of the oppressor, is turned into a snare to entrap the righteous, and he that turns from iniquity is made a prey to the wicked, and none lays it to heart through the nation; for all hearts are full of oppression, and all hands are full of violence. Their houses are filled with oppression, their streets and markets abound with it; their courts, which should afford remedy against it, are wholly made up of iniquity and injustice, and the law of God is made altogether void, and truth is trodden under foot. And plainness is become odious to the proud, and deceit set on high: and the proud are counted happy, and the rich are exalted above the poor, and look to be worshipped as God; which if they refuse, a snare is laid, and bonds and imprisonments are appointed for them, as not worthy to breathe in the air; and no law, equity or justice can be heard for their freedom.

And this is not done by any open enemy; for then it had not been so strange unto thee; but it is done by those who pretend to be against oppression, and for whom, under that pretence, thou hast adventured all that is dear unto thee, to put power into their hands; and now thou criest to them for help, but findest none that can deliver thee. O foolish people! When will

ye learn wisdom? When will ye cease from man, who is vanity, and the sons of men, who are become a lie?

Are not these the choicest of thy worthies, who are now in power? Hath it not been the top of thy desires and labours, to see it in their hands? And are not they now become weak as other men, and the land still in travail, but nothing brought forth but wind? How is the wisdom of the wise turned into folly, and the understanding of the prudent hid? How is he who seemed valiant for general freedom, fallen into a particular earthly interest, and hath no power to help himself? would any have believed that these should have fallen in the pit, and stuck in the mire, as they who were before them, whose names are made a reproach in the nation? How have these cried out for the kingdom of Christ to bear rule in his church and consciences of his own, above the wills of proud oppressing tyrants; yea, and have been instruments to execute God's decree upon such as have withstood the freedom of the righteous seed? But now, what is brought forth by them more than words? Do not the members of Christ lie still under the power of the oppressor, cast into holes and prisons for the truth's sake, and are denied that liberty they allow to thieves and murderers, though the breach of no just law can be laid to their charge; neither will they let them come to trial, lest by their own law they should be forced to free them, and how long some have lain upon this account, you are not ignorant?

Wo is me, for you rulers! How are you fallen from what you have professed, when you yourselves were sufferers under such bondage? And now is it nothing to you, that your brethren, that have been one with you against oppression, now perish under the hands of the same men, from whom you are set free? And do not the same men judge us now for offenders? And doth it not concern you, to see what is the cause, why they thus vent their envy against the innocent? And their lives and liberties are taken away in close holes and dungeons, when it is your duty, and in your power to see them have justice, according to the law of God,

which you profess, and not after men's wills. And if you know the offences for which they thus suffer, how is it, that that which Christ doth command, and the saints did practice, is now become such heinous offences, that nothing will serve but perpetual imprisonment in close holes, without hearing or trial?

And that you may see for what these despised ones do suffer under you, consider their crimes; whereof the greatest of them is, that some of them are moved to go into the idols temples, to dispute and reason with them who uphold the idols worship; and to call the people out of it unto the worship in spirit. And though this seem a heinous crime to you, yet it was the practice of the apostles and saints, as is in plain scripture.

Others suffer, because they cannot break the express command of God, to give that worship to proud men, which God Almighty hath forbidden to give to any creature in heaven or in earth, but only to himself. And here may all the heathen rulers condemn you, who never imprisoned or fined Christ nor his saints for this; though the scripture saith, they respected no man's person, nor did they bow down, nor give worship to the creature, though the devil, the father of pride, tempted to it then, as well as now.

Others suffer for confessing the name of Christ, and witnessing him in them, in their measure, as they find him manifest in them to overcome sin, the world and the devil, and reconcile them to God. And this is called blasphemy, and so proceeded against, though the saints have always witnessed the same, and it stands in scripture for a witness against you: and saith Christ, he that denies me before men, him will I deny before my father. And thus the practice of the saints was, and is counted blasphemy, by the professors of the word.

Others suffer for denying to swear at the commands of men, after the customs of the world, when Christ saith, swear not at all, for what is more than yea and nay cometh of evil. And the apostle warning the saints, above all things not to swear by any oath whatsoever, which all that have entered into Christ have denied, for he is the oath and covenant of God for ever.

Others suffer, because they are moved of the Lord, to go into the streets and markets, to declare against all manner of sin which abounds there, and to call all to repentance, and to declare the great day of the Lord at hand, and his wrath to be revealed upon such abominable practices; and a snare is laid for him that reproveth in the gate, and they suffer as disturbers of the peace; but what peace is this, which is disturbed by the crying out against sin? But drunkards, swearers, liars, ballad-sellers, are suffered in the streets and markets, and are not counted disturbers of the peace: Is this the saints peace, which stands in righteousness, or the world's peace, upholden by the man of sin.

Others, whom the Lord hath called to leave houses and land, wives and children, fathers and mothers, and hath, in love to poor souls, sent them out, to declare his love to the world, and the glad tidings of the gospel freely. These are taken under the names of wanderers and strangers, because they have no earthly possessions amongst you. Some of them by your law you imprison; some you whip out of your towns; some are beaten, stoned and shamefully treated, though they ask of you nothing, neither are free to receive any thing from the world, if they would give them; but do wait on their father for food, who sends them their journey.

And thus you entertain strangers contrary to the practice of all the saints in all ages, and the commands of God and the apostles, who warned not to forget to entertain strangers, for some thereby have entertained angels unawares. But as the men of Sodom did compass Lot's house, who had entertained strangers, so do these encompass the houses where these are, threatening to pull down the houses, and dash their brains against the stones in the wall. And this is done when such are with them who go under the name of magistrates and ministers, and the innocent are hauled out, and sent to prison, though nothing can be charged against them, but as strangers, who have no habitation among them.

And for such offences as these, do the poor, despised, little ones of Christ suffer the worst sort of imprisonments that can be invented in dark holes, under tyrants,

who will not suffer their brethren to visit them. And all this, while all manner of sin at liberty, and drunkards, swearers, liars and whoremongers, and such like men of Belial, are become the fittest men to be set up to witness against the innocent; and many of those who sit to judge them are guilty of divers of the forementioned crimes themselves.

And thus the wicked are set up, to make the righteous offenders for a word, who are none indeed; nor can they be convicted of the breach of any just law. And this is not done in secret, that you know not of.

Oh, you that bear rule in this nation, ought to relieve, for then might you have an excuse: but it is done in the cities, county-towns and courts, where justice ought to relieve such. And you know this, and are silent; but it is that you may be left without excuse at the great day of account, which is near at hand, even the day of Sion's recompense, which hath long been trodden under foot by the earthly powers. And now will you profess yourselves to be christians, the scripture your rule, or so much as talk of the practice of the saints, when such works as these are found amongst you, which were acted by the heathens and formal professors, against the saints; but never practiced by the saints against any, neither have you any ground for them in scripture. Oh! how will you appear before the Almighty, whose professions and practices are so unsuitable, and justice and mercy is talked of, but not brought forth?

Wo, wo, wo unto you, who have not used your power to relieve the oppressed! Do you thus requite the Lord, who hath set you free from your enemies, and hath set you to rule for him over his people? is this according to your promises made to him in the day of your fears, when you were little in your own eyes? And now that he hath set you free, and you are exalted, shall his poor, simple, little ones suffer in bondage under you, as under the tyrants and bishops before you, and you not once say, they are our brethren, nor your hearts pity them? Are you building your houses, and setting your nests on high, and Sion lies waste trodden upon?

Wo is me for you, you high ones! How are you fallen from the tenderness I have seen in some of you, when you were sufferers with the people of God? but now the sufferings of the saints are made a talk at your feasts, to fill your mouths with laughter; and you can eat and drink, and rise up to play, and stretch yourselves upon your beds of ease; but the afflictions of your brethren are not laid to heart.

Wo to you that are at ease, while the simple are ensnared by their enemies! God is highly displeased with you, and he will not establish you, who have neglected mercy and justice: hearken, O ye priests! and give ear, O house of the king! for judgment is toward you, who have been a snare upon Mispah, and a net spread upon mount Tabor, to catch the innocent. You have not been careful to relieve others, when you had power, neither shall you deliver your own selves at that day. You are seeking to be high, but you shall find one above you, who is angry with the proud, and will bring down the mighty from their seats, that he may relieve the oppressed, and let the prisoners go free, and the lamb shall take the kingdom.

How are you deceived, who have sometimes been the wisdom of the nations, that you have pulled down others, and set yourselves in the same height? How has your judgment failed you, to think, that all this shaking and overturning hath no further end, but to set up flesh, and to exalt one man to rule over the conscience of another, by his own will, where Christ should reign as king forever? Do you herein, as you would be done by? Do you not act contrary to the scriptures, and practice of all the holy men of God, who durst never sit in the throne of Christ, persecute or imprison any for conscience.

Oh, that you had taken counsel at the fear of God! Then had you stood in your places, and should have known his secrets; and that his intent is, only to exalt his son in spirit, in the fall of proud flesh. So should you have used all your power to make way for his kingdom, and you also to have cast down your crowns at his feet. So should you have been established in his power,

a terror to the wicked, removers of oppression, and makers up of the breach, and your names a blessing to generations. But now that oppression is found with you, inasmuch as the poor, despised, little flock of Christ hath suffered under you, as under those whom the Lord removed before you, when it hath been in your hands to relieve them; and you have not done it. And you that have so much cried up the kingdom of Christ in words, and yet have been bold to limit him in his kingdom (the consciences of his saints) therefore above all the rest, you shall not escape unpunished: for the Lord looked, that you, who have seen his love and pity to you, in setting you above your enemies and fears, should now have had pity on your brethren, and walked humbly before him. And for that end he put power in your hands, and removed those that were before you, and left none to oppose you, that you might freely act in mercy, and judgment, and righteousness. But seeing you have forsaken the Lord and his work, which to you-ward was good, and are become exceeding high, and cruel as others, and the poor are not delivered by you from the hand of the oppressor, and him that is too strong for him; neither have you cheerfully gone on in unity in the work of the Lord, and his will, but stand up in your own wills, opposing the deliverance of the righteous seed: therefore now will I arise, saith the Lord, who have long holden my peace; for I am full of jealousy for Sion, who is trodden upon, and I will appear for her in the midst of her enemies; and I will gather the outcasts thereof, who have not been regarded, but have been scattered by you, as the off-scouring of the world. And as you have scattered, and not pitied, so shall you be scattered, and none shall pity you: for the world's outcasts are my jewels, and I will bring them to possess the gates of their enemies; even by the word of the Almighty shall this be accomplished. The day is near at hand.

Wherefore awake, all you to whom oppression is a burthen, whom the proud have trodden upon; and you have been as people without hope; neither have known any way to look for help, for every man hath become

vain. Now arise up out of all your earthly expectations, and stand up to meet the Lord our righteousness, who is risen to deliver his people, the promised seed, who is in covenant with him, and to gather them from among the heathen, and them that have made a prey upon them, because they have not known him, who will save them.

And now look no more to the arm of flesh for freedom, for therein hath been your woe; but wait for the deliverer out of Sion, the ancient of days, and God of Israel's seed, who hath let you see the emptiness of all created helps, to which your eyes have been looking, that you might return, and complain to him only, who is the fountain, from whom all his find pity.

And now a word to the wise amongst you; forasmuch as the Lord hath showed me, that there is a seed amongst you, whose hearts are not wholly hardened, nor have wilfully stopped your ears against the cry of the oppressed, nor have been consenting to the cruelty that hath been acted, and is intended against the innocent. To you I say arise, and deliver yourselves from the guilt of oppression, and cruelty of these men, and humble yourselves before the Lord, that you may receive wisdom from him, and boldness to declare against all violence and injustice. And set yourselves to deliver the oppressed to the utmost, that you may be hid, and have a sure house, and be established.

Take heed that you walk not by example of others, but in the light of Christ, which guides the conscience; and that will keep you tender hearted, in bowels of mercy to all. And let it not seem strange to you, to see others wholly set on mischief, but consider, could ever any of your cruel oppressors believe, though God hath always sent to warn them before the judgment come, that thereby he might leave them without excuse, and be clear when he comes to take vengeance. But they have hardened themselves against all reproof; and marvel not to see it so at this day: for the seed of the proud is but one in all ages. Wherefore mind the fear of God, and his laws, and consent not to any thing because of a multitude, but for righteousness and equities sake. And

having righteousness before you, fear not the face of any, nor the reproach of men; but be valiant for the truth, the glory of God, and freedom of every oppressed one; and victory is before you, if you be faithful.

And the Lord God almighty bless, prosper and guide all the faithful among you, to keep clear out of all the consultations of the wicked, that you may never consent to any thing but what is of God, warranted in the scriptures, and practised by the saints; that you may no longer rest in a profession of what the saints were, and act the contrary, but that you may come to be guided in all things, by the same spirit, kept out of all the wisdom of the world, and the fear of God be amongst you.

Written from the movings of the Lord in one that pities the ruins of the nation, for want of righteousness, justice and mercy.

JAMES NAYLER.

Westmoreland; the 9th month, 1653.

A FEW WORDS OCCASIONED BY A PAPER LATELY PRINTED, STYLED A
DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE QUAKERS. TOGETHER WITH A
CALL TO MAGISTRATES, MINISTERS, LAWYERS AND
PEOPLE, TO REPENTANCE.

Wherein all men may see, that the doctrine and life of those people whom the world scornfully calls Quakers, is the very doctrine and life of Christ. Written for the sake of the simple minded ones, who are willing to follow Christ under the cross, and to deny all things to be his disciples.

By a servant of the Lord, reproached by the world, and carnal worshippers, under the name of a Quaker.

JAMES NAYLER.

TO THE READER.

Friend, meeting lately with a printed paper, styled a discourse concerning the Quakers; and finding many things in it deeply reflecting on the spirit of the Lord, sent into the hearts of men, to reprove and convince them of sin, and reproaching his holy people, whom he hath called out of the world; and that it was scattered abroad into many hands, and so might prove a stumbling-block to weak minds: I was moved to send it to a friend in the west, who for the simple ones sake, hath given forth a few things, that truth may appear.

And if there be any, that by reading this, shall be brought to discover truth from error, or to lay to heart

their conditions, and how they have hitherto trifled away their precious time, there is another paper, now in the press, from the same hand, which will show forth the true light that guides to God, and opens the scriptures. removes the doubts about the great power of the Lord, manifested in shaking the earthly part of those he brings to himself, plainly declare the deceits of the false prophets of the world, and let the magistrate see the bounds of his authority.

There is another paper come forth, by the author of the former discourse, occasioned by something write in answer to it, by one who saith he is none of those called Quakers;^a and yet the discourser chargeth all things he saith on them. But the paper sufficiently betrays the author's weakness, and its own folly.

Read without prejudice, that thou mayst receive instruction, and not increase thy own misery. A. P.

A PAPER being come to my hand, which is full of deceit, under pretence of religion, and a form of profession, striking at the life of all religion, which is obedience to all the commands of God in the spirit: and under pretence of the letter, which he calls the word, he goes about to reproach and scorn, and slight the teachings of Christ in the spirit, whereby he rules in the consciences of his saints, and by which light he reveals the father in them, and thereby declares himself to be the eternal word and witness within his: which word first was known within them, a free gift of the father, without any letter or human learning, and then declared out in the letter.

But they who (as the jews) think they have salvation in the letter, are enemies and persecutors of them who have the eternal witness of salvation in the spirit;^b and from that spirit hath this paper its foundation; for God having put the enmity between the carnal and the spiritual seeds, there can be no agreement.

Now, though I abhor striving for masterhood in words or writing; yet for the sake of the simple ones, who not

a G. Baitman's answer, 1653. b John 5. 39. Gal. 3. 29.

yet having the true judgment and salt in themselves, to discern the spirits, are subject to take great swelling words of man's wisdom for the power of God unto salvation:^a I am therefore moved to lay open some of the deceits in this paper, that where truth and simplicity is in the heart, it may more clearly judge of truth from deceit.

The paper is intituled, "a discourse concerning the Quakers."

It is no new thing, for the dearest servants and children of God to be a discourse, a reproach, a taunt and by-word, a wonder and a scorn to fools and wicked men;^b and to have the belly-god and drunkard to make songs for their sad and afflicted conditions, and to be called by nick-names, such as it pleaseth Ishmael's brood to cast upon them, to be called devils, deceivers, hereticks, franicks, madmen, quakers, and such like.^c—But it is that the same scriptures may be fulfilled in the saints, that were in Christ their example; as they have done unto me, so will they do unto you. If they keep my sayings, they will also keep yours. If they have called the good man of the house Belzebub, how much more then of his household.^d

Thou sayst, it's plainly foretold, that in the last days shall be the greatest deceivers, and worst of hypocrites, men extraordinarily inspired with a spirit of lies and delusion.

It is above sixteen hundred years since those were foretold, and they have had so long a time since, to broach their deceits and strengthen themselves in the earth, that the deceit is now grown a monster, and hath got many heads and horns;^e religions and forms one at war with another, striving with words and weapons, who should be greatest. But now that Christ is risen in his saints to reveal this man of sin by his light, and to destroy him with the sword of his mouth, all forms of religions, the beast and the false prophet, gog and magog are joined together to strike at this light.^f And no wonder, for that deceitful spirit knows, that that light which

^a 1 Cor. 2. 5, 6. ^b Psal. 69. 12, 31, 11, 22, 6. ^c John 10, 20. ^d Luke 23, 31. ^e Rev. 13, 1. ^f 2 Thess. 2. 7, 8. Ezek. 38. 18, 19. Acts 4. 26, 27.

discovers him in one form, will discover him in all. And now the devil would pass judgment upon that light, which is come to judge him where he is, and so set any whom he can prevail in, to cast reproach upon it, under many odious names, that so he may keep people at a distance from so much as owning it;^a for he knows if any own it, there he is discovered, and disowned.

And this is his way in all in whom he speaks, to cry out against those that walk in the light in general, calling them deceivers, hereticks, hypocrites, deniers of scriptures and ordinances,^b and many such words, as he thinks may make the truth most odious to others, but not once show in what particular: such walk contrary to the scripture, for the deceit knows that if it come to trial, itself will be found that which walks contrary to the scripture; for the same light that gave out the scriptures, leads not contrary to it.

And now who will be the greatest deceivers? whether a poor, despised, persecuted, reproached people, whom God hath called out of the world's ways, words, works, worship, riches and pleasures, and so are become strangers and wanderers to and fro, seeking a city whose builder and maker is God, Heb. 11. 26, 27, 28; and for this their obedience being counted the off-scouring of the world, 1 Cor. 4. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. and suffering all with patience, as the saints did, who declared this in scripture; or they who profess that scripture which witnesseth these things, but still are in their lusts, pride, covetousness, exaltations over others, living like fat swine in the earth, differing from the world in nothing, but only in notions and long prayers, whereby they appear to be greater deceivers than the world, who profess nothing but what they are?^c And for the worst of hypocrites, for they who profess the highest things, and most like to saints, which they live not the life of, nor are sanctified as they were, whose conditions they profess. These are the worst of hypocrites.

And for the great train thou speakest on, wouldst not thou have been offended at those many thousands

^a Luke 6. 22. ^b Acts 24. 14. & 6. 13, 14. ^c Tit. 1, 16. Mat. 23. 11, 14.

that followed Christ and his disciples, when they preached the same gospel, if thou hadst lived then?" They who were of thy spirit were as much disquieted at it then, as thou art now.

Thou sayest, it hath been an old project of the devil, to destroy the letter, the supreme authority of the scripture.

Thou art blind, who sayest that the letter is the supreme authority of the scriptures;^b for that which gave it forth in parables to the serpents seed, and opens it again in the saints, as they grow in their measures, and opens the scriptures in and to all, is the supreme authority of scriptures, which is not the letter, but the spirit, 2 Cor. 3. 6. And they who wait to have the scriptures fulfilled in them by Christ, go not about to destroy the letter, but to establish it.

And for the judgments of men thou talkest of, what is their judgments worth? Where the practice is wanting, God is not served with words. There are two sorts of people, which thou conceivest to be most odious to all people; and thou wouldst rank these whom thou wouldest reproach, amongst either of them; but come to trial, and thou wilt find thy self far nearer either of these than they.

And first for papists; which of the idolatrous worships and traditions of the papists, or that are ordained for popish ends, do we practise? But it may be, thou thy self art yet in the idols temple, builded by the papists for idolatrous worship, never commanded by God; and for such worship is kept up and used at this day, if thou be not yet in many popish customs, as observing days, and times, and seasons, and persons, and outward traditions of men, not commanded of God, which we whom thou reproachest do all deny.^c And the papists are one with thee in reproaching, and scorning, and persecuting, to their power.

And for those thou callest ranters, is there any people in the nation that more differ in practice from us than they? And if thou wouldst look at thy own pride, ful-

^a Mat. 14. 21. ^b John 14. 26. ^c Gal. 4. 10.

ness, and the satisfying of thy lust, thou wouldst see little difference between thee and them, but in judgment.

And thou art offended at the knowledge of Christ within the saints: art thou not ashamed to profess the scriptures, and deny what they testify? Which of the saints did witness any other knowledge of Christ after his ascension, but as he was revealed in them?—And all that know him in spirit, know him within them. And is there any Christ but one? because thou sayst, they know no other Christ, but a Christ within them; and thou that knowst no Christ but without, ye know him not, but by hearsay: and then art not thou that notionist thou speakest on? Read this in the margin, and see who denies the scriptures, and the saints conditions.*

And thou sayst, that their quakings are either counterfeit, or come from the power of the devil.

How! art thou not afraid to speak against the holy ghost? Search the scriptures, and thou shalt find, that God hath said, all flesh shall quake and tremble before him. And the holy men of God do witness, that the way by which they come to know God was, through quaking and trembling, fasting and weeping, which thou that art in the flesh, and the earthly part in thee stands unshaken, knowst not, and therefore scornst it.^b But it is no new thing for this generation, to render the works of God to be of the devil.

Thou sayst, they will go in rags; dost thou now speak truth? How many hast thou seen deny whole clothes, to go in rags? Art not thou inspired with the lying spirit, thou spokest on before? But it may be thou art displeased that they pull off their pride, as gold and silver;^c that which they do in obedience to God, thou wouldst render it only as a show. But see what spirit that is thou speakest from.

And why art thou offended at a mean diet, or punishing the body, as thou callst it? Did not Daniel refuse all pleasant meats for three full weeks.^d And David afflicted his soul through fasting, and it turned to his

a Gal. 1. 16. Col. 1. 17. 2 Cor. 13. 3, 5. John 14. 10, 15, 4, & 17, 23. Gal. 2. 20, & 4, 19. Ezek. 38, 19, 20, & 22, 18. b Hag. 2. 6, 7. Amos. 8. 8, 10. Psal. 110. 24, 25. Ezra 10. 1. Mat. 12. 24. c Isa. 2. 20. & 31. 7. d Dan. 10. 2, 3.

reproach with such as thou. And why art thou offended? They should care for no more than meat, drink and clothes, when Christ forbids his to care for so much. And the apostle exhorts, having food and raiment, be therewith content. And why art thou offended at self-denial, and taking up the cross to their own lusts? Doth not Christ say, he that will be my disciple, must take up his cross daily, and follow me?^b And had not the saints the lusts of the flesh crucified by the cross? why wilt thou profess the scriptures, and not own the practice of them, but wrangle with them that do.^c

Thou sayst, they are above ordinances, above scriptures, and cry down all as forms.

But what ordinance of Christ are they above? It is the traditions and inventions of men they are above, as those you call ordinances have been often proved, and will more appear upon further trial. And for being above scripture, if thou wert not blind, thou mightest see them live in the life of scripture, in their measures, as they did to whom it was given.

Thou art offended, that they should own an infallible light in them; which the light of Christ is, whoever hath it. Now thou that canst not witness an infallible light, how wilt thou be a guide to others? And what hast thou to do to judge any? But he that hath the light of Christ, hath an infallible light, which whosoever follows, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. And as this light ariseth, judgment is brought forth, for all judgment is given unto the son: and in that light all his see light, and are led into all truth.^d And this light shows all things in measure; and ten thousand being gathered by this light, and not run before it, shall be all taught one way, be of one heart, mind and soul: but all who stumble at this light, are in darkness, confusion, and at a jar among themselves.

And whereas thou wouldst make people believe, that this light they walk by will not endure the light of the word; that is deceit in thee, for it is the word which is

^a Psal. 69. 9, 10. ^b Matt. 6. 31, 32, 33, 34. ¹ Tim. 6. 8. Heb. 12. 5. Luke 9. 32.—
Gal. 5. 24. ^c Col. 2. 20. ^d Mat. 12. 8, 20. ¹ Cor. 2. 15. Isa. 42. 3, 6, 7. John 8. 12.
& 1. 9. Psal. 36. 9. Mat. 5. 14. Ephes. 5. 13, 14. ¹ John 5. 6, 7.

nigh, in the heart and in the mouth,^a and doth not oppose itself, but is one with scripture, as all they are who walk in it; only it opposeth all the twinings, and wresting of the serpent, whereby he would wrest the scripture, to deceive with.^b

Thou sayst, the saints have a glorious light in them, but imperfect.

Is there any glorious light, but the light of Christ? And thou that callest that an imperfect light, art blind, and not able to judge of light.^c It is true, the light is but manifest in the creature by degrees, but the least degree is perfect in its measure, and being obeyed, will lead to the perfect day,^d and is perfect in itself, and leads up to perfection all that perfectly follow it. And thou that so often wouldst put the external letter, that had a beginning, instead of Christ the eternal word, by which all things were made, and who dwelleth in the saints, and liveth in them, and enlighteneth them, dost sufficiently clear thyself, that thou knowst him not in thee.^e

And whereas thou talkest of trying the light by the letter; if thou knewest him, who is the eternal witness within thyself, thou wouldst see thou needest not to try the inward substance by the outward declaration; the living by the dead. The apostle saith, the word is powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, &c. And this thou twinest to deceive the simple, and sayst the scripture is so. Why wilt thou wrest the scripture to thy own destruction? Thou hast long had the bible by thee; but what hath it cut down or divided in thee? or, hath it discerned the thoughts and intents of thy heart? thou and thy sins are not yet divided.

Thou sayst, owls fly the light: but see who do not own the light, and they are such who love the works of the night. And thou that speakest lightly, vilely, or accursedly of the light of Christ in his saints, speakest evil of that thou knowest not, and shalt account for thy blasphemy.^f

^a Rom. 10. ^b 2 Pet. 3, 16. ^c Eph. 4, 18. Eph. 4, 7. ^d John 17, 23. ^e Rom. 2, 29. John 12, 46. ^f 1 John 5, 10. ^g John 3, 20, 21. Jude 10.

And thou deceitful spirit, that gatherest up the working power of Christ in the saints, wouldst attribute it to the letter, art about to make poor, ignorant people believe, that the letter is the spirit, and that the letter is the word, which is but a declaration of the word, and itself saith plainly, Christ is the word;^a but the letter is not Christ. And this would make people believe, that he that hath the letter, hath the spirit; when both thou, and many more, may have the letter, and persecute the spirit, and blaspheme against the holy ghost, as was in the Jews, and is at this day.

Thou speakest of the word of God, in which Christ and the spirit speaks: and thus thou wouldst make them who are blind, believe it is the letter; and to prove it thou bringst these scriptures, Heb. 1, 2. But was that the letter, by which God had spoken to them, which he calls the son of God? is the letter the son? and that in Rev. 2, 17, he doth not say, hear what the letter saith, but hear what the spirit saith; or that in Eph. 6, 17, is it there called the sword of the letter, or the sword of the spirit?

And thou wilt make people believe, that God doth all in the hearts of his people by the letter without. Thou sayest, by it he sanctifies, enlightens, comforts, seals, witnesseth, teacheth, &c. which if thou meanest the letter, which thou callest the word, then the letter itself shall witness against thee in all these, that it is not the letter, but the spirit that doth all this, where they are indeed.^b

Thou sayest, without the word he doth nothing in us, speaks nothing in us, in the highest revelations: it is the ground of faith, and without it faith cannot act, and the faith hath no bottom but the word.

Which if thou meanest the letter of scripture, I answer, wherein thou sayest in us, here thou shewest thyself a stranger to the works, word, revelation and faith that the saints did witness, as is plain in the letter; for they witness the works of God in them in spirit, and not in letter; the word from God's own mouth in spirit,

^a 2 Cor. 3, 6. Rom. 7, 6, & 2, 29. John 1, 14. Rev. 19, 13. ^b Jude 1. John 14, 26. Eph. 4, 30. Rom. 8, 14, 16. 1 Thes. 4, 10. 1 Cor. 2, 10.

and revelation in spirit, but never any in the letter. And thou art ignorant of Abraham's faith, and the ground of it, which had a ground when there was no letter, and acted when there was no letter:^a but they who are of Abraham's seed, witness Abraham's faith, grounded on the promised seed, which is Christ, and is acted in him, and not on the letter; which works, word, revelation and faith, I witness in me in the spirit, and not in the letter, and that faith which is in Christ, stands not in volumes.

Thou sayest, this is a more sure word of prophecy, and to prove it, thou quotest, 2 Pet. 1, 19, where the apostle speaks not of the letter, but of the light of Christ, shining in the dark hearts, to which they were to give heed, that by it they might be led to the day. And this is in their hearts, and not in the letter; which light thou scornest, and callest it an ignus fatuus, a satannical fallen light: but thou yet knowest not what thou speakest, that blasphemest the true light that is come into the world, and lighteneth every one that comes into the world;^b yea, them which never saw letter, which is the condemnation of those who obey it not, but love their evil deeds.

Thou settest down many benefits the saints have in the word, which is true; but thou that wouldst ascribe them to the letter, knowst them not, but in the notion.

Thou sayest, that those that have more glorious discoveries and revelations of Christ to boast on, than ever any of those men knew; yet do cast down the glory of their light before the scriptures, and are in subjection to scripture and ordinances: And thou dost instance the disciples who saw Christ ascend.

I answer: whether is it a more glorious discovery and manifestation of Christ, to see him appearing in them the second time in the spirit, without sin unto salvation, or that to see him depart in the flesh, seeing Christ tells them, it is necessary that he go away, in the flesh, that he may come in the spirit?^c Thou dost sufficiently de-

^a Gal. 1, 12. Eph. 1, 17. Gal. 3, 6, 7, 9, & 3, 16. ^b John 1, 9, & 19. ^c Heb. 9, 28. 2 Tim. 1, 10. John 14, 28. 1 Cor. 15, 8.

clare thy ignorance, measuring others who witness him, with thyself, who knowest no more of him, but what thou hast found of him in the letter.

And for that subjection to the scriptures and ordinances, and waiting thou speakest on; did they wait in the letter, and in those forms, and customs, and idols temples that you wait in? They waited together for the appearance of Christ in spirit, praying in that measure of spirit they had received.

Thou goest about to make people believe, that the light of Christ, which is given to enlighten every one that comes into the world, is a natural or fallen light:^a but if thou didst know, own and obey it, it would lead thee out of the fall; and for that end art thou and others so often checked and reprov'd by it, for your pride, covetousness, envy, scornfulness, and other sins;^b which though you now disobey, as a thing too low for your high notions, yet this light shall remain for an eternal witness against all that hate and disobey it. And whereas thou wouldst scandal this light, to lead into exorbitances, deceit and miscarriages, and many such things, they are falsely cast upon this light; for all these are amongst you who hate the light: but whoso obey and love the light, it discovers these, and leads all who follow it into one mind, heart and soul;^c and if ten times ten thousand that are guided by it, yet not a word of dispute, but all speak the same things.

And thou callest the scripture, a standing rule, but it is not so to you, who cannot believe that ever it shall be fulfilled in you, as it was given out by the holy ghost; neither will you so be tried by it, but you will rest and twine it, to make it meet your wills, where your profits, pleasures and lusts will not suffer you to take up the cross, and come up to it. But if it be a standing rule, let it stand as it is, not confounded with the serpents wisdom, and then prove thyself by it, and those people thou reproachest and miscallest, whether thou or they own it in practice.

Thou callest the word of God, the son of truth, and yet thou wouldst make people believe it is the scripture

^a Acts 1, 14. ^b John 8, 12. ^c Acts 4, 32.

letter. Is the letter the son of truth? May not all that look on that see thee in Baylon?

Thou sayest, how could it be known that there is a God, and Christ, and holy ghost, with their works and worships?

I answer; if thou knowest not the father, son and spirit, one God, and the way of his worship otherways than thou hast found in the letter, thou knowest but that in letter and notion, which all the saints of God knew in spirit and power;^a and thou worshippest in letter and form thou knowest not what, who dost not know and worship in spirit; and herein thou shalt have Christ, and all the holy men to witness against thee.

Thou sayest, the holy ghost interprets scripture by scripture, and reveals Christ, the father, the holy ghost, the souls union with them by scripture.

I answer; the holy ghost, where he is, needs no scripture to interpret scripture by, who gave forth all the scripture, and opens it again; for the holy ghost did not give out the scripture in parables to its own seed, but to them that are without:^b and as that spirit ariseth, it opens and brings all that is spoken in scripture to remembrance, and leads into all truth, in its measure.^c And when any, in whom the scripture was, have made use of scripture in such like cases, it hath not been to open the meaning to themselves, but to convince others, who had not the spirit, or would not own it.

And for souls union, which of the saints had the witness of their souls union, to seek in the letter?^d But he that believeth, hath the witness in himself, in spirit, and not in the letter. And for trying and judging, it is not the literal, but the spiritual man that judgeth all things, and no visible thing can judge him.^e Thou wouldst have them to suspect this light, those who have no light to walk by, but what they, by their wisdom and learning, have gathered out of the letter, have cause to suspect it, but they who have the infallible light of Christ, by which all is tried, and judged, and discerned, and judgment brought forth into victory in themselves by

^a 1 John 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. John 4, 22, 23, 24. Phil. 3, 3. ^b 2 Pet. 1, 21. John 14, 26. Mat. 13, 10, 11. ^c John 16, 3. ^d 2 Cor. 3, 3. ^e 1 John 5, 10. Rom. 8, 16. 1 Cor. 2, 15.

it, they have no cause to suspect it, but wait to walk in it.

Thou art offended, that they should say, they pray always, have the baptism of fire, eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ; that they were once as others, hypocrites.*

Now why wilt thou thus wrangle, that the commands and promises of Christ should be witnessed, fulfilled in the saints now, as they have been in scripture witnessed? Doth not the apostles exhort, to pray always without ceasing? And are any baptized into Christ, who are not able to witness the baptism of fire and the spirit, for water-baptism avails not unto salvation? And doth not Christ plainly say, that whosoever eats not his flesh, and drinks not his blood, have no life in them? And have not the saints witnessed a time, wherein they were in the world without the true God?^b

And thou sayest, they can give no scripture account of the estate they are now in; and yet dost blame them for owning the scripture fulfilled in them in these things; but that nature could never be satisfied with Christ, nor any of his, nor any account from them; though they could not convince them of sin, yet they would tempt, hate, and persecute even till death, if they had power.

Thou wouldst make people believe, that these deny the rule of the gospel, and the divine inspiring of the holy ghost, the infallible rule of all obedience and worship, and judgment of all actions: but come to trial, and see, whether they that own the light of Christ in spirit, and follow it, or they that call it an ignis fatuus, deny the rule of the Gospel? And whether they that witness the same spirit, and the inspiration of it, without human helps, letter or learning, as the saints in all ages have done, every one in their measures, of that free gift given to profit withal;^c or they that would make people believe, that all such divine inspirations and gifts of the spirit were now ceased, and now the letter is all the spirit they must look for, deny the divine inspira-

a 1 Thess. 5, 17. 2 Thess. 1, 11. Mat. 3, 11. John 6, 53. b Rom. 6, 21. c Rom. 8, 5, 6, 7, 9. 1 Cor. 12, 4, to the 14th ver.

tions of the holy ghost, the infallible rule of all obedience and worship, and judge of all actions?

And for the denying of ordinances, thou so much chargest them with, if it come to trial, they will be found only to deny your traditions, temples, and human inventions, never commanded by Christ, nor practiced by any that ever he sent, and Christ never annexed the promise of his presence to that which he never commanded.^a

Thou art offended, that they should be set free from, or have sin taken away from them.^b

Now thou shewest plainly whose kingdom thou wouldst uphold; and thou sayest, that by denying sin to be in them, they overthrow repentance; but here thou shewest thy blindness: for he that forsakes his sin, doth establish his repentance; but he that returns unto sin again, overthrowes it.

Thou tellest of being godded with God, but see what spirit that is thou art led by, who darest take the name of God so scornfully in thy mouth, to cast as a derision upon others.^c

Thou art offended, that those should witness perfection; and is it not the end for which Christ came into the world, suffered, and sent out his ministers into the world?^d And why dost thou profess Christ, and the scripture, and thus oppose the end of his coming; and what he did work in his saints, which is, to set free from sin, and bring to perfection, which Christ commands, and which the scriptures witness in the saints? But there is nothing more opposed by the devil and his instruments, than to have the work of man's redemption perfected.^e

Thou sayest, the many ridiculous practices of their frantics, would be too much to relate.

And hereby thou wouldst render them as vile as thou canst to others; but the ways of Christ were no worse for such as thou saying he was mad: for the ways of God have always been counted madness and folly to that generation. What thou intendest in that word

^a Mat. 15, 9. ^b Rom. 6, 2, 7, 18, 22. ¹ John 3, 8, 9, 10, ^c Heb. 6, 8. ² Cor. 7, 10. ^d Heb. 10, 14. ^e Eph. 4, 11, 12, 13. Col. 1, 23. ^c Rom. 8, 10. John 17, 23.

many, I know not; for where nothing is mentioned in particular, I cannot answer. But for those thou namest are these:

They will not put off the hat to any, not to a magistrate. That they think it a special badge of their profession to say and write thou and thee, and by no means say sir or master to any; and that some will not answer, or speak to any question: and thou quarrelest at some for forsaking the world, and giving over their callings.

I answer; when wilt thou cease wrangling at their obedience of the commands of Christ, witnessed in the scripture? Hast thou nothing among all those many ridiculous practices thou tellest on, to charge on them, but what are according to scripture? Where doth God require putting off hats, or worshipping any creature, magistrate or others? And why may it not be a badge, if thou so callest it, of their profession, to use the scripture language? And where dost thou find any other language in the scripture, but thou or thee to a particular, whatsoever he was that was spoken to?^a And no wonder that thou stumblest, that any should witness the authority of the scripture, when its taken for such an offence with thee, to witness the outward language, which all holy men of God have used in scripture; and yet thou callest the scripture a standing rule; but thou wilt neither make it thy rule, nor suffer them that would.

And for refusing calling master, is it not the command of Christ?^b And dost thou deserve the name of a christian, who wouldst make it an offence to obey his commands, because it crosseth thy pride?

And for their silence; is there not a time to speak, and a time to be silent? And, was not Christ asked many questions, and answered nothing. And doth not the scripture say, answer not a fool according to his folly.^c And when Christ did answer the tempters, it was either with silence, or contrary to what they would have had.

^a Mat. 4, 10. Jam. 2, 1, 9. Psa l. 40, 4. Job. 3, 10. John 5, 41. ^b Mat. 23, 7, 8, 10.
^c Eccl. 3, 7.

And for forsaking the world; must not all that will come to Christ forsake the world? And were they not in their calling, who left their ships, their fathers, and receipt of custom, and wife, and children, and lands to follow the commands of Christ?^a O thou enemy of all obedience to Christ! Dost thou reproach that which thy carnal heart will not suffer thee to follow? thou shalt find it true, that whosoever will not forsake these for Christ's sake, cannot be his disciples; but it seems the nearer to Christ that any come in obedience, the greater is thy malice to such, thou shewest thy generation. And art thou not ashamed when thou hast done, to charge these with disclaiming scripture light? Thou lovest to talk of the scriptures, but art an enemy to the walking in them.

Thou sayest, of these unclean birds, thou hast heard of none that have returned to the ark.

By which, if thou meanest your temples, or carnal ordinances, I tell thee, they make a bad return, who have known the Lord in spirit, and worshipped in spirit, if they return into forms and customs again to be made perfect.

Thou sayest, separate not between word and spirit, between graces and ordinances: but the apostle doth separate between the ministration of the letter and of the spirit;^b and he that cannot distinguish between the graces of God's spirit, and your outward forms you call ordinances, he knows but little yet as he ought to know.

Thou tellest of praying, and mourning for sin, bewailing the heart, reading the word, and meditating in it night and day; and thou sayest, it's impossible for such an one to fall into this condemnation of the devil: but I tell thee, though these may be done, and in as much zeal as the pharisees did them; yet if there be pride, envy, covetousness, self-love, exaltation, slandering, false accusing, deceit, dissimulation and hypocrisy, and such like which are the works of the devil, all thy outward pretences shall not keep thee from the condemnation of the devil; for it is that which leads out of the works of the devil, that brings from under the condemnation of the devil.

^a Matt. 27. 12. Luke 14. 26. Matt. 10. 37. ^b Gal 3. 3. 2 Cor. 3. 6.

'Thou puttest much upon church ordinances, but see if thou art distinguished from the world, otherwise than in notion and thy own conceit, which will deceive thee, and all the covetous oppressors in the world in the day of trial: therefore prove thyself, if thou be a saint, sanctified, come out of the world's pleasures, riches, ways and worships, and fashions, as they were whose conditions thou talkest on;^a or else thy crying the temple of the Lord, will but stand thee in little stead: which, if thou dealest plainly in, and lettest truth speak in thee, thou wilt see a great distance between a saint's life and thine, as between a saint's spirit and thine, which is plainly discovered.

Thou sayest, it is observable, that where churches are, these owls dare not appear.

These reproachful names beseeem that spirit from whence they come; but which of them have refused to come, where they have been sent, for fear of your churches? Or what corners are they in, except it be such as you have shut up in prisons or dungeons? Do not these that are at liberty meet in the midst of common streets and fields, where God calls them, and many of the most conscientious of your church own them, and frequent their meetings; others who have the fear of God before them, dare not persecute them in word or deed? But the day is come that all spirits must show themselves.

Thou advisest to do all according to scripture.

It is good advice; but dost thou, that teachest another, teach thyself?^b Dost thou as thou wouldest be done by in all things? Dost thou forsake pride and covetousness, which is idolatry, and not to be so much as named among saints? Dost not thou seek great things for thyself? Having food and raiment, art thou therewith content?^c Art thou out of love with the world, which is enmity with God? Dost thou not take thought for to morrow for food and raiment? Hast thou crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts, and put off the body of sin? Art thou not a scorner, reviler and

a Jude 1. Joha 17. 9, 14. b Mat. 7, 12. c Jer. 45, 5. James 4, 4.

false accuser? Dost thou feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and let the oppressed go free? Hast thou forsaken all to follow Christ? Art thou hated of all men for the name of Christ? Hast thou denied to be called master? Art thou come to yea and nay in thy common occasions? Dost thou love the brethren with the same love Christ hath loved his withal? Art thou set free from thy sin and rash passions? Dost thou hold thy faith in a pure conscience, void of offence towards God and man?^a Dost thou walk as Christ walked? And many other the commands of God, set down in scripture, in which the saints walked, as is plain in scripture; which if thou walkest in, there thou dost all according to the scripture: but if thou takest but some part of scripture, given out of the holy ghost, and pervert the same to fit thy form, and please thy own will, and not cross thy lusts, profits and greatness in the world; and for the rest, either let them stand by, or wrest them by subtil meaning and exposition, to bring them to bend to thy disobedient mind.^b Shall not God find thee out, and plague thee for thy adding and diminishing, altering and changing that, which was perfectly given forth to be read and fulfilled as it is?

And whereas thou wouldst change the light of Christ, shining into the conscience, which teacheth into oneness, to be the cause of all the errors in the world, it is false; for the light of Christ is but one, and all that are led by it, walk after Christ as he walked: but the cause of all such errors comes from the serpent's subtil twining and wresting the scriptures, every one for their own forms, ends and carnal traditions;^c but none of them will own it, to live the life of it as it is, and so have it fulfilled in them, as it was in those that spoke it forth.

Thou sayest, be sure the Christ, the faith, the hope, the baptism, the worship be that which is in scripture.

Now that Christ, which the saints witnessed in scripture, is the light of the world, given to enlighten the gentiles, and lighteneth every one that cometh into the world;^d which light is in the saints, and whosoever walks

^a James 1. 27. Mat. 15. 10, 11. & 23, 8, 10. & 5, 37. Rom. 6. 18. 1 Tim. 1. 5, 19.—
^b Acts 24. 16. 1 John 2. 6. ^b 2 Pet. 3. 16. Rev. 22. 18. ^c Rom. 8. 14. ^d John 8. 12, 1, 9, & 1. 7.

in it, hath fellowship with God, and one with another, and thereby are cleansed from all sin, in which light all the holy scriptures were spoken forth: which light thou deniest to be equal with the scripture, but scornest and reproachest with nick-names, as *Ignis fatuus*, a natural light, making it plainly appear, that thou art one of those the scriptures speak on, who hate the light.

And the scripture faith is that by which the saints overcome the world, sin and the devil, and gets the victory:^a which faith thou, in this paper canst not own, but deniest, and wouldest reproach it in them, in whom it hath overcome sin, and brought up to perfection.

And he that hath the scripture hope, purifies himself, even as he is pure.

And the baptism of Christ is with the holy ghost and with fire; which thou in thy paper speakest scornfully of in others that own it.^b

And the scripture worship is not in idols temples, forms and letters, but in spirit and in truth;^c and God seeks such to worship him.

And thou rankest up a number of ranters, notionists, papists, and such like, that are most odious to people, and with these thou puttest in those called Quakers, and tellest of their opinions; but those thou so callest, deny all their opinions, and live in the light and practice of the scriptures; but thou, when thou art proved, wilt be found more in opinion than practice: and thou that deniest the infallible spirit to be in thee, art but in opinions at the best.

And for the purgatory thou speakest on, thou that sayest, none can ever be perfected, and set free from sin whilst they are here, thou talkest like them that own a purgatory; but they who are redeemed, and set free from sin by the lamb of God, own it not, but have received the earnest of their eternal inheritance.

And for the word baptism, which is with water,^d (but not that of the spirit, the answer of a good conscience) and observing of holy days, first clear thyself, and then find fault with them that deserve.

^a John 3. 20. ¹ John 5. 4, 5. ^b 1 John 3. 3. Mat. 3. 11. ^c John 4. 24. ^d 1 Pet. 3. 21.

Thou talkest of pitying and praying for these; but the spirit of scorning, slandering and deceit, and the spirit of pity and prayer, cannot stand in one; and where the first is, I cannot own the latter to be.

Thou sayest, praise the Lord, that hath delivered out of the snares of satan; and it is true, they who are so, can delight in nothing else but praises, but whilst thou committest sin, thou art in his snares, and a servant to him.^a

Thou sayest, work out your salvation with fear and trembling,^b but scornest quaking, and sayest, it is from the power of the devil; but is in this as in all thy paper, thou wilt own the scripture in notion and letter, but scornest and persecutest the power and practice of it.

And now friend, a word to thy present condition, as thou art revealed. Thou art in the world, in thy fleshy will, pride of heart, and rash anger, exalted above thy brethren, and the spirit of persecution acts in thee; thou deniest to walk answerable to a light in thy conscience, which would lead thee out of these things up into obedience, love and meekness? And thy love to the deeds of darkness, makes thee hate the light. I speak to that in thy conscience, which shall eternally witness me at the great day of the Lord, when all secrets shall be laid open, where thou shalt account for all thy hard speeches, against the spirit of God in his people.

Wherefore repent, and take heed how thou speakest evil of the things thou knowest not, or oppose the spiritual kingdom of Christ in the consciences of his own poor despised little flock; but turn in thy high mind, and see what thou hast been doing, and who thou strivest against: if he fall upon thee, he will grind thee to powder. Let not thy high mind scorn that which may be for thy eternal good. Search the scriptures, and see if any of the holy men of God ever acted such things.—Now thou hast time, prize it, lest thou harden thyself against God, and so be for destruction eternally. Thou knowest not what spirit thou art of; thy name I know

^a James 3. 11. ^b John 3. 9,

not, but where thou livest I know, and what spirit acts in thee: Oh, that thou knewest in this thy day, the things that belong to thy eternal peace!

JAMES NAVLER.

A CALL TO MAGISTRATES, MINISTERS, LAWYERS, AND
PEOPLE TO REPENTANCE.

O MAN and woman, how art thou fallen from thy Maker, and from the estate wherein thou wast created?^a—And how dost thou lie in the loss and in the fall? How long will it be ere thou enquirest after the Lord, who is holy and pure? And you people of England, how long will it be ere you leave off your outside formal customary worships, and seek the Lord in truth of heart, bringing forth fruits of righteousness and holiness, according to what you profess;^b that the Lord, who hates dissembling, may be honoured not in words, but in life, power and practice? Doth not your actions declare against you before men and angels, that you are out of the way, and in the curse, children of the night, and bring forth the fruits of darkness and death, and not unto God?^c—And you who say, you are the teachers of the nation, how long will it be ere you look at your own ways? Is not all manner of filthiness amongst you, which you should lead the people out of?^d Is there not among you drunkenness, gluttony, whoredom, and sporting, sitting down to eat and to drink, and rising up to play: swearing, lying, backbiting, false accusing, railing, slandering, contention, strife and envy? Yea, are not the best of you given to pride and covetousness, which is idolatry; fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness? Are not you hirelings, and teach for the fleece? Do not you contend for money with your own hearers, and sue them at law for it; yea, although they cannot satisfy your demands, without sinning against the light in their own conscience, and so sin against God?^e Are you not bitter, and persecutors of any that come to discover your lewdness, crying out to the magistrate to uphold you in

^a Gen. 1. 26, 27. ^b Rom. 1. 2, 3. ^c Jer. 28. ^d Isa. 56, 10, 11. Jer. 6, 13, 14. Exod. 3, 4. ^e Isa. 9. 15, 16.

your beastly ways, and to stop the mouths of all those whom God hath sent to witness against you? And many more works of this nature is amongst you, which the pure all-seeing God hath showed unto his people, to be amongst you, and therefore it is that they come out from you, lest they partake with you of your sins and plagues. But are not you blind, leaders of the blind, when you neither see these to be the works of darkness, nor those that follow you. Woe unto you that devour souls for money and gain, the day of your account is at hand. O repent, the blood of souls is upon you. Did ever God send forth such a generation of teachers amongst his people, who are not taught themselves by him to forsake such ways as these which you walk in? How are you examples to the people to follow? The leaders of this people hath caused them to err, and they that are led by them are destroyed; and hereby priest and people are at a distance from the Lord.^b

O you rulers of the people, who are set up to judge between a man and his neighbour, ought not you to judge for God, and not for man? Ought not you to be men fearing God, and hating covetousness, not judging for gifts and rewards? Ought not you to countenance and encourage them that do well, and be a terror to them which do evil?^c Justice is so. And he that is of God, and bears his sword, turns the edge of it against all sin and wickedness, injustice and oppression, and so sets up justice and judgment in the gates, that the poor may be delivered from him that is too mighty for him, and that the cause of the fatherless, widow and stranger may not fall, but hath an ear open to the cries of the poor and helpless, who hath but little money, and few friends; that a poor man may not be afraid to appear in a good cause, against the greatest oppressor in the nation.^d

And ought not you to judge without respect to persons, or without seeking respect to your own persons, worship or honour from men, but only to advance justice, equity and righteousness, which is of God, that so

a Exod. 18. 21, 22. Rom. 13. 3, 4. Micha 3. 11. Prov. 21. 3. Isaiah 1. 23, 24. Jer. 5. 28. Isa. 3. 14. James 1. 2, 8, 9. b Job 13, 10. c Luke 20, 21. Prov. 28, 21. Exod 18. 22. Rom. 13, 3, 4, 5. d Prov. 29, 2. 14. Prov. 10. 6. Isa. 5, 4, 7.

you may be honoured by the Lord;^a for true humility is honour; and he that honours the Lord, him will he honour: and such have been honoured in all ages, though they never sought it from men. And when justice bears rule, the righteous rejoice, and the land is in peace, and wickedness is made to blush and be ashamed, and the wicked are scattered from about such rulers.^b O you that rule in the nation, is it so? Nay, is it not quite contrary? O what a height is iniquity grown unto? Doth not all manner of sin abound even in open streets; as swearing, drunkenness, covetousness, and oppression? Can you pass on the streets, and not hear the cries of it? and although there have been laws for restraining of some of those abominations, yet how are they slighted, so that poor people get not the benefit by them? Nay, is it not too plain, that they who should restrain others, are many of them guilty of the same themselves? Shall not the Lord visit for these things?^d The cries of the poor oppressed ones are come before the Lord, and he is risen to avenge him, of him that is too strong for him.

O when will you see? Hath not want of justice cast kings from their thrones, and overturned nations?^e And is not the Lord *overturning, overturning, overturning*?—O return to the Lord, and have a care to use your power so, as to make a way for purity and holiness, that the kingdom of Christ may be set up, and reign, and that the seed of God may have free liberty to come out of Sodom and Egypt, to serve the Lord, without fear of man, out of all forms, and customs, and magician imaginations, into the power and purity of the spirit. Cease from persecuting and imprisoning the innocent, for crying out against the abominations of the times, and letting the guilty go free, lest the decree go forth against you, and the wrath of God burn like fire, and there be none to quench it.^f Hath God put power into your hands to oppose his own work? And you lofty ones of the earth, who have gotten much of the creation into your hands, and have thereby set your nests on high, and are become Lords over your brethren. Were the creatures

^a James 2, 9. ^b Prov. 15, 33. ^c Prov. 22, 4. ^d Isa, 2, 21. ^e Isa. 5, 28, 29. ^f 1 Chron. 16, 21, 22. ^g Jer. 4, 4.

made for that end, to set your hearts upon them, to heap together out of the reach of the poor and needy;^a and he who can get the greatest share, should become the greatest man; and all that have little, shall bow down and worship him, and so break the command of God, which saith, thou shalt not bow down nor worship any creature in heaven or in earth?^b Are you not fallen from the estate wherein you were created? for it was not so from the beginning; for he who made all things good, made all men of one mould, and one blood, to dwell on the face of the earth; and gave them power over the work of his hands, not to heap them together, to set your hearts upon them, but to use them to his service, who made all things for himself, and the wicked for the day of evil.^c

You that live in your pride, painting yourselves in your costly apparel, inventing new ways and fashions, to make you seem glorious in the carnal eyes of others, that they may worship you;^d for this is that which the heathen worship, who know not God; and this is that you look for, which angels dare not take to themselves;^e but Haman-like, you rage if you have it not, and bear an evil eye to them, who cannot give that to you, which belongs to God alone.^f But the hand of the Lord shall be upon all the idols of the world;^g you have forgot that you were but dust, and must to dust, and God will honour himself, in laying all honours in the dust, which men seek to themselves, and is not of God alone.^h You lustful ones, which live of the fat of the earth,^{aa} whose care is only to satisfy the flesh, and the lusts thereof, your curious devised dishes, Dives-like; is this the end for which you were made?^{bb} You are fitted for destruction, your day is coming, the cry of your iniquity is gone up before the Lord;^{cc} the cries of the poor which you have oppressed, whose labours you have spent upon your lusts, the rust of your gold and silver doth witness against you. Repent, repent, cast off your gorgeous apparel, and gird you with mourning; let your songs of

a Psal. 62, 9, 10. b Exodus 20, 5. c Gen. 1, 31. Gen. 1, 26. Prov. 16, 4. d Isa. 28, 1. e Gal. 4, 8. Acts 17, 23. f Esther 3, 5. g Isa. 2, 18. h Psal. 7, 5. John 5, 44. aa Ezek. 34, 3. bb Nehem. 8, 10. cc James 5, 4, 5.

music be turned into howling; your banqueting and feasting, into fasting, for the Lord is wrath with you, and the fire is begun already.^a Break off your sins by repentance, and your iniquities by shewing mercy unto the poor; and turn to the Lord with all your heart, from all your evil doings, if so be that you may find mercy; that you may be hid in the day of his fierce wrath, which is to come upon all the workers of iniquity:^b for he will bring down the mighty from their seats, that he may exalt them of low degree. O take heed how you contend with him; did ever any do it and prosper? shall the clay strive with the potter? If he fall upon you, he will break you to powder.^c

And you lawyers, ought not you to plead the cause of equity, between man and man for equity sake, without respect to yourselves or others, but only to truth itself, that a just cause may be owned in whomsoever it concerns? but is not the justest cause sure to fall, if the party have not money to satisfy your demands, which are many times very unreasonable;^d and you who should instruct people in the ways of truth and peace, do not you by your wisdom teach them lies, and strife? Do not you advise your plaintiffs, as you call them, to declare in bills, things that are not true, and make small offences seem very great by false glosses; for say you, we may declare what we will, and prove what we can,^e so that you, and they who you act for, know before hand, that scarce one thing of ten can be proved, neither is true? Is this the way to make up the breach, and preserve peace and truth amongst people? O miserable fall from God, when that law which should before preserve in peace, is used to aggravate offences beyond truth, and so make differences greater. And do not you delight to fish in troubled waters? and the greater dissention amongst the people, the more is your gain. Are not your purses filled, and your estates raised in the ruins of the people?^f And are not those laws which ought to be used to preserve people from oppression, by abusing, made the undoing of whole fam-

^a Amos 8, 3, 10. ^b Zeph. 2, 3. ^c Jer. 18, 6. ^d 1 Tim. 6, 10. ^e Luke 11, 46, & 52. ^f Ezek. 18, 12. Mal. 3, 5.

ilies, impoverishing towns and countries. The law, as it is now used, is scarce serviceable for any other end, but for the envious man, who hath much money to revenge himself of his poor neighbours, which may be never did him wrong.^a Is there any appearing for the poor against the rich, although his cause be just, but by deceit, delays, and expences, the remedy is worse than the disease, so that they are made to sigh and groan under oppression, and their cries are come into the ears of the just God, who is now arising to avenge them.^b

And now, woe to you that seem to be easers of peoples' burdens, but make their oppressions greater, even grievous to be borne;^c and by increasing of contentions, have taken away the key of knowledge: for what knowledge hath the workers of iniquity, who devour the poor to satisfy their own lusts?^d the woe is upon you, for the just God hath shaken his hand at your dishonest gain;^e woe unto him that coveteth with an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high. Woe unto him that builds his house by oppression, and establisheth the city with iniquity; how are you gone out of the right way, and how is the cause of the poor bought and sold for money.^f Were you thus made at the first, are you not in the inventions, is this the end for which we came into the world, are you not in the earth, and in the fall, and in the curse, and at a distance from the pure God, who is wholly and just, and loves righteousness. How long will it be ere you will enquire after the right way, or loath yourselves for your filthiness. O repent, return to the Lord, from whence you are fallen, for what will you do in the end thereof.^g Shall not justice from on high take hold on you, who have slighted justice upon earth. Your day is at hand; shall not the judge of all the earth do right. Why will you destroy your souls for money, and what will you give in exchange for your souls, or shall all your gain redeem you. Do you act according to the law of God, which saith, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.^h

^a Isa. 1, 17. ^b Isa. 5, 5. ^c Jam. 5, 4. ^d Hab. 2, 9. ^e Jer. 22, 13. ^f Ezek. 18, 30. ^g Rev. 2, 5. ^h Mat. 19, 16.

Do not you prize the accursed things, before the love of God, or your neighbour. Let your practice witness.

And you people of the nation, that have seen the hand of God against the prince and people for these and the like abominations, and you yourselves are escaped, as brands plucked out of the fire;^a have you at all turned to him who hath smitten you, or are you bettered by correction, or have you made your peace with the Almighty. Although you have seen war, and the sword reaching to the very soul, are you not every one to your own power, gathering fuel to that fire, which hath been burning in the land, and hath consumed thousands, which should have been as a warning unto you, who are escaped, to return to the Lord from the evil of your doings;^b but are not you still making the breach wider between God and the nation, as though you were left for no other end, but to fill up the measure of iniquity that is yet behind, that the just God may sweep the land with the besom of destruction. O when will you cease to provoke the Lord by your sins.^c Where is your redeemer you have professed so long in words and forms. Can you witness him in your works, and what hath he redeemed you from. For saith he, why call you me Lord, and do not the things which I say.^d Is he your Lord, and you servants to all manner of filthiness. And notwithstanding that you have seen his wonders in the nation, yet do not you exceed all that ever went before you, in pride, covetousness, drunkenness, swearing, envying, quarrelling, backbiting, slandering, false accusing, self-love, and deceit in all manner of merchandize, and trading; false weights and measures, sayings, protestings one towards another, in your bargaining speaking things that are not true, and hereby to overreach your brethren, and get dishonest gain.^e How many false oaths, and idol words are spent about every bargain in your markets, and open streets, without blushing, or being ashamed; yea, it is able to break the hearts of any who know the pure God, to know it, and hear it;^f for it is come to such a height of

^a Jude 23. Zech. 3, 2. ^b Hos. 14, 1 2. ^c Isa. 14, 23. ^d Luke 6, 49. ^e Mich. 6. ^f Psal. 31, 17.

deceit, that none can trust his brother; for lying, swearing, and for-swearing, it abounds in the nation; and yet you will profess yourselves to be the members of Jesus Christ: and had Jesus Christ ever such a body as this; nay, all that are members of him, are of one heart, and one soul.^a

And you talk of a communion of saints; had ever the saints such a communion as this, to defraud one another for money;^b and profess a redeemer, and are servants to the devil, and your own lusts, in all the motions and temptations thereof, and are led captive at his will. But what redemption is this you witness, so long as sin, the partition wall, is between God and you, stands still whole in your wills; you will be drunk, swear, lie, and commit adultery, dissemble, and satisfy your lusts in all things, and say we are redeemed to commit all these abominations, and live in them, under a pretence of a profession, and going to the idols temple once a week:^c did ever Jesus Christ redeem such a people, or dwell in such a people. Those whom he hath redeemed, he hath freed from the servitude of sin, by separating them from sin, and reconciling them to God, from whence they are fallen by sin; for God and sin cannot dwell in one. And to such he saith, be ye holy, for I am holy:^d and as he is the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world: now see, how is your sins taken away, when the kingdom of darkness doth wholly rule in you, and leads you into works and ways of darkness. Are you reconciled to God, and have you fellowship with him. Are not you yet strangers to him, and worship an unknown God; for he that commits sin, hath not seen him, neither known him, and so worship they know not what, in formal and superstitious worships.^e

O blind people, who have eyes and see not,^f how long will it be ere you turn your eyes within, and look into your own standing, or rather into your fall, and how you sigh under the curses and wrath of the Almighty; and how far you are from purity and holiness, and that

^a Phil. 1, 27. ^b Jer. 32, 29. ^c Rev. 21, 27. ^d John 2, 22. ^e I John 3, 6. ^f Psal. 115, 5.

estate wherein you were made in the image of God; and wait to see that renewed in you, and you brought up out of the fall and a separation, to be one with God and Christ, that you may know what you worship, and find acceptance? But are you not so far from that, that if the image of God seem to be renewed in any, and they begin to turn from these, and the like abominations, to serve the living God in purity and holiness; and they refuse to partake with you in your pride, covetousness, drunkenness, and excess of riot, and deny your vain heathenish customs, fashions, and worships; are not such objects of your envy and hatred? and are they not abused by you, buffeted, scorned, mocked, stopped, and called most reproachful names, even in ways and markets, and in your streets, when you meet with them, though they never speak word to you, but bear your reproaches with patience? So that he that departs from iniquity, makes himself a prey to this generation.^a

Do not you plainly shew forth the serpent's seed in you, which is at enmity with the seed of God, wherever it is brought forth; and so you shew yourselves to be actuated by the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning. And when the judgments and wrath of God appears in the land, is it not because of your iniquities? Do not you like wicked Ahab, charge an innocent people, who cannot partake with you in your wickedness;^d declaring, that those who are harmless, to be a cause of troubles in the nation, and say, they are about to raise a new war; but never look at your own abominations, for which the land mourns, and the wrath of God is against it, ready to destroy it, but still harden your hearts in your wickedness?^e And as though all this were too little, have you not added this wickedness now, that God in mercy hath called some out of all these evil ways, and sent them to declare against these abominations which the world lives in, both priests and people, not only in word, but in life and practice, and hath given his power to go along with them:^f and are not these called by you devils, witches, sorcerers, conjurers, Je-

^a Gen. 1, 27. ^b 2 Pet. 4, 3, 4. ^c Isa. 59, 15. ^d John 8, 44. ^e Hos. 4, 3. ^f 2 Pet. 1, 4, 5, & 16.

suits, and the like? Are they not some beaten, some stoned, others shamefully entreated and imprisoned? Are they not brought before rulers, and governors, for the confessing the name of Christ? And all this you do unto them, not for any evil you can charge upon them; but for the name of Christ and his power that goes along with them, in shaking down the kingdom of the serpent, and bringing his elect out of all the heathenish customs and worships, to worship God in spirit, and him only, and not men, nor the idols of the world.^a

And now, are you not blind, who have professed the scriptures so long, and cannot see them fulfilled now in this generation? Are not those of the same brood, who called the good man of the house Belzebub?^b and how can they do less to them of his household? Do not this generation beat some, stone and shamefully entreat others, that bear witness to the heir?^c And hath not Christ said, ye shall be hated of men for my names sake. They shall speak all manner of evil of you falsely; they shall separate out of your company, reproach you, and cast out your name as evil; and you shall be brought before rulers, for a testimony against them, and for my names sake:^d and the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulations ten days; yea, the time comes, that they that kill you, shall think they do God service:^e and these things will they do unto you, because they know not the father, nor the son: and the scriptures must be fulfilled; and those who have eyes to see, may see them now fulfilled, and fulfilling, and they who see it, have share in it, and rejoice, and witness God faithful, and his word;^f but wicked men, and persecutors, have been blind in all ages; for the God of this world hath blinded their eyes, and hath thereby made them fit for his own work, and his work is to oppose the Lord in all things.^g

Now, all people, see where you are, and what you are doing;^h where you live, and whom you serve; for if you

^a John 4, 23, 24. ^b Mat. 10, 25. ^c Mat. 10, 22. ^d Rev. 5, 10. ^e Mat. 24, 9. ^f 2 Cor. 4, 4. ^g Rom. 1, 8. ^h Gal. 4, 29.

live to the flesh, you cannot please God; for as always he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit; even so it is now.^a O be no longer deceived, see whether ye be in the first birth, or born again: that which is of the first is of the earth, earthy, and minds earthly things, feeds upon dust;^b and this is the serpent's seed; and here are all your envious haters, persecutors, covetous, scoffers, and such like;^c and here will you be found, your actions witness it, you cannot deceive God; you are under the curse, and they be the cursed fruits you bring forth, and they are for the fire.^d But the second brings forth no such fruit; for he that is born again, is born of the spirit, and brings forth fruits of the spirit; he is born of God, and brings forth fruits unto God, fruits of love, meekness, gentleness, patience, temperance, and such like: there was never a persecutor of this birth, for they are called out of all occasions of strife, contention, and persecution; for that is all about things of this world, and forms, and customs that perish. But they who are brought into the substance, cannot contend about shadows;^e for there all disputes and vain janglings cease; for as they are ruled by one spirit, so they are led by one spirit, into one God, where God, Christ, and the saints are one eternally; but this godliness is a mystery to all the world. Now try yourselves, for by your fruits you are known, and shall be judged; wherefore all people look within, and judge yourselves, reform the inside, looking without to be seen of men keeps you hypocrites, and you have your reward:^f but the true seed of the Jews, who are of the circumcision made without hands, in the heart, such seek not praise of men, but of God;^g neither are they known of carnal minded men, nor owned of them, nor have fellowship with them, but are raised up out of the fall to God, to live with him in joy, and peace, and righteousness, which men talk of who live in the flesh, and in the fall, who are not reconciled to God;^h and there can be no reconciliation to God, while sin stands, which made the first separation: O people be not deceived.

^a John 3, 31. ^b 2 Pet. 3, 3. ^c 1 John 3, 9. ^d 1 John 5, 7. ^e Jer. 10, 3. ^f Ephes. 2, 18. ^g Col. 2, 11. ^h 1 John 1, 3, & 6, 7. ⁱ 1 Cor. 15, 20.

THE STUMBLING BLOCK REMOVED FROM WEAK MINDS.

O YE raging priests! who have set yourselves against the mighty power of the Lord in his own, whereby he is manifesting his works, his strange works; his acts, his strange acts; making his servants signs and wonders amongst the heathen, and them that know not God, nor his power, whereby he is choosing that which seems foolishness, to confound the wisdom of the wise; which you who stand in your own wills and wisdom, know nothing of; but in this, as in other things, out of your envy against the truth, take occasion to lay stumbling blocks in the way of others, wherein you plainly appear to be in that generation, who will neither enter into the kingdom yourselves, nor would suffer others. You who take occasion to preach and print against the truth, because the Lord hath caused some of his servants to go along your streets in Kendal, and Kerby-steven, as signs of his wrath to come upon that pride and fulness that priests and people live in; and this, you who never knew what it was to obey God, contrary to your own reason and wills, (for who act such things, act contrary to their own wills) cry out on us a delusion and madness, thinking thereby to make the truth odious to others: but it is that the scriptures may be fulfilled upon you, as it hath been on your generation before you, who counted always what the prophets, Christ and the apostles did madness, and called them mad fellows. But now all you who fear the Lord, and believe his word, take heed of the deceit of these men, and mind not what they say. who have set themselves to speak evil of the things they know not; but search the scriptures, and there you shall find, that the mighty God, (who hath power over all flesh, and what he commandeth none must dispute by their reason (though it seem never so foolish, and against their wills) but must obey) hath always before his great judgments, which he has been about to bring on a people or nation, made some of his dearest servants to pass and act as signs to such nations of what was to follow, and was so usual among the prophets, and them who knew the word of the Lord; that the prophets Isaiah

speaking in the name of the Lord, saith, behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel, from the Lord of hosts which dwelleth in Mount Zion, Isa. viii. 18.

And if ye search the scriptures of the prophets, you shall see in what strange and foolish things to the wisdom of the world they were acted in; as in Isa. xx. the prophet was to go three years naked for a sign what the Lord would bring upon Æthiopia and Ægypt. Now had these men lived in his days, they would have cried that up as a delusion and madness, and not as the word of the Lord, as they do at this day; for they neither know the Lord nor his word, who stand in their own wills.-- And read the 4th of Ezekiel, and see what a sign he was to both the houses of Israel and Judah; a strange thing to the wisdom of man as ever was. Also read the 5th of Ezekiel, and see what a sign he was to be, and what folly he was to act as to their wisdom, and that in the midst of the city. Likewise Ezekiel xii. to 17, 18, and 19 verses; and xxiv. 16. to the end of the chapter; and many other of the dear servants of God, who were not only to declare the word of the Lord from his mouth, but also to be signs to them to whom he was to prophecy, that so he might leave them all without excuse.

Now those who then were priests, and should have been teachers and leaders of the people to fear God, and hear his word, and observe his signs, and repent, that the judgments might be prevented; they were the only men that hated, reproached, persecuted and called the prophets, Christ and his apostles, madmen and deceivers, because of these things, which into their wisdom could not enter, and stirred up the rulers and ignorant people against them, that they might put them to death, as it is at this day. But these in our days are more inexcusable than all that ever went before them; inasmuch as they had no scripture to show them that the Lord had commanded such signs formerly; but these have the scriptures that witness to the same thing; which scriptures they make a trade on, and cry up in words, but are ignorant of that spirit by which they were acted

that gave them forth; and envy and persecute that obedience that was acted in them, in whom it is now acted; and they might as well cry out against Isaiah for a madman, because he went naked at the word of the Lord; and the rest of the prophets and servants of God for acting such weak and foolish things to their wisdom, as they did, as against these for obeying the Lord in the same or the like things whatsoever, for God is not tied to any rule to walk by, but his own will, and where he commands, no, wo to him that acts in his own will, and saith it is the word of the Lord. Wherefore all ye that fear the Lord, take heed of being stirred up by these men to speak evil of that you know not, but consider that the priests have been always the movers and persuaders of the people against Christ and his kingdom, and power in his saints; and instead of being forward to speak evil of the things you know not, turn in your minds into the fear of God, and mind the light in your consciences, that will let you see what sins you are guilty of, which these signs are threatenings to, that you may repent of them, and escape the judgment, and find mercy, as they did in the time of the prophets, who feared the Lord, and escaped the judgment; but the envious, scorers and fools passed on and were punished.

And know this, that a wise man's eye is in his head, and such an one hath his guide within himself, and will not be hasty to follow others, though they be multitudes to do evil; and such know it is better to be silent, than to speak evil of the things they know not; and when was there ever any truth of God brought forth, but it always suffered the violence of the proud and haughty, where the seed of the serpent reigns and shows his enmity; and 'tis the same now, for that which hath been, is at this day; but it is that the power of the Lord may be seen, in carrying on his simple truth against all the wisdom and power of the world, and plotting of the serpent; yea, and he will carry it on to his praise, and to the confounding of all his enemies, who must stumble at the stumbling stone, and be offended at the rock that must break them to pieces. Wherefore be silent all flesh before the Lord, whose foolishness is more than thy

wisdom; and whose weakness is more than the strength of all the world; who is a defence to his poor despised ones, in the midst of all their enemies. Eternal praises to thee, who art our wisdom, for ever. J. N.

CHURCHES GATHERED AGAINST CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM:
OR, A PETITION ANSWERED.

Wherein is plainly showed how the petitioners go about to take Christ's kingdom, care of his servants, and propagating of his gospel out of his hands, and would put it into the hands of the powers of the earth, contrary to the words of Christ, and practice of all the saints in scriptures, laid open, that all who fear the Lord, may search the scriptures, and withdraw from the tents of these wicked men, and their covetous practices.

Also a word to those to whom this petition is preferred, that above all they meddle not in the kingdom of Christ, for all that have done it, or shall do it, shall be broken to pieces, for he alone will reign, and all flesh shall cast their crowns at his feet; even so *Amen*.

Written by one whom the world knows by the name of JAMES NAYLER.

Isaiah liv. 15. Behold they shall surely gather together, but not by me, whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

TO THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF THIS NATION, THE PARLIAMENT OF
THE COMMONWEALTH OF ENGLAND: THE HUMBLE PETITION
OF DIVERS CONGREGATED CHURCHES IN
THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES,

SHEWETH that our consciences bear us witness in the sight of God, how often we have poured out our souls on the behalf of this present parliament, and how we stand still waiting at the throne of grace, to hearken what the Lord will say unto us (for truly our hearts tremble for the ark of God.) And seeing divine providence hath called together so many of his precious servants, who have so oft made mention of his great name, we had almost said, more deeply than ever any other parliament hath done, we are carried out with the greater hopes, that God will at last work out some eminent thing for his glorious name and gospel, and that our eyes shall never see the contrary: for this end, most honourable, we had been your petitioners long e'er now, had not too much fear of presuming given a check; but now, least our continued silence, should be interpreted as a consent to the manifold clamours of too many, not well affected

to the godly ministry and their subsistence, we dare no longer hold our peace, but are prest in our spirits to take humble boldness, to acquaint your honours, what it is that makes your petitioners lament before the Lord and you.

1. The swarms of horrid errors arising out of the bottomless pit, that infect and even darken this our horizon, flying in the face of Christ himself, his person, his offices, his merits, his scriptures, his ordinances, his sabbaths, his saints, and whatever is dearest unto him; and all this without controul, carried with a high hand and a daring brow, affronting the godly ministers and faithful servants of Christ, in their holy worship: the least of which errors in time past, would have made our hearts to tremble, but now the commonness of them hath almost bereaved us of all sense.

2. The heaven provoking profaneness, the hideous atheism abounding in the land, and in some of these dark parts, running apace to flat heathenism; one main ground of all which being (as we humbly conceive) the want of able and painful ministers, the continuance of the old ignorant profane ones, and the bold intrusion of scandalous ones, ejected by the late commissioners for propagating the gospel in these northern counties, for whose godly endeavours we have cause to bless the Lord, but their commission expiring, they are boldly now re-entered, as the unclean spirit in the gospel, after his ejection, more wicked than before.

3. The subtil undermining that soul-saving ordinance of the ministry, and crafty designs against the most able and faithful messengers of Christ, who are now made signs and wonders in Israel; and this not only by the baser sort of men, which doth not trouble us, but by some of eminent place, whom God and all good men expect should rather be their protectors; and that which is yet more observable, the more zealous and eminent such ministers are, they are by men of corrupt minds the more opposed and shot at, when the generation of idle drones, and scandalous ones round about them, are never molested: and how long the jealousy of our God will bear this contempt, for what is done to his faithful am-

bassadors, is done to himself; we humbly leave to your wise considerations.

4. And that the ephah of these servants of Christ's sufferings might be filled up, their daily bread is also grudged at, threatened to be taken from them; though these are the men (your honours well know) who break unto us the bread of life: and if it were only their personal livelihoods which is endangered, it were more tolerable; but we could say, it's their wives, it's their poor children that must in this case suffer; not only whilst the minister himself lives, but be exposed to extremities when he is dead. Do not all men see, ye rulers in Israel, that the widows and fatherless of ministers, are commonly left poor enough after their decease, even now when they enjoy all their present means, how much more when it is diverted or shortened? And yet this is the time when all other men's properties with an height of tenderness, as things inviolable, are pleaded for; and must only the minister's propriety be struck at, which not only the law of man, but the Lord Jesus himself hath appointed as a just reward of their work.

Thus your petitioners having as your children, opened the burthen of their hearts into their fathers bosoms, do humbly crave leave briefly to tender these few suits following.

1. That abominable errors may not go up and down with an whores forehead, and thus affront the Lord Jesus and his truth, but that some speedy and effectual restraint be made of that bold vending, printing and preaching, whatever the prince of darkness shall blow into corrupt minds; shall the father of lies have as much liberty to dandle his brats, as the father of light to promote his God-born truth? Remember ye honourable servants of the Lord, what terms of detestation the blessed holy ghost himself gives to such like errors, calling them gangrenes, cankers, deusions, damnable heresies, pernicious errors, doctrines of devils. O let your holy zeal be kindled against such deadly things, as destroy the faith of some, smite Christ on the face, and give him the lie; God can make you wise to divide between errors that destroy faith and holiness, and some smaller differences among the saints.

2. That a speedy course be taken, that idle, profane ignorant men may no longer abide in the ministry, and lead souls along to hell with themselves, but be cast out as unsavoury salt, fit for the dunghill; the spade and the flail being fitter for such men than pulpits; and that godly and able ministers be invested in their places, and bold intruders already ejected, there being too many of such in these parts, may with some frown of authority be deposed: and for these ends, may it please your honours that the some godly and approved commissioners, with the assistance of some able gospel ministers may be appointed for propagating the gospel in these dark northern counties; for the late parliaments commission in like case, proved the greatest blessing that ever the north had, the happy effect whereof we taste more and more daily, and had not their commission so soon expired, all places might have been well provided for e'er now.

3. That the ministry and the truly zealous and faithful ministers may be owned by you, as the Lord owns them, that all the world may see your cordial and resolved adherence to Christ's case in them, for he holds the stars in his right hand: consider we beseech you [most christian assembly] their work is displeasing to flesh and blood, the ministry having ever been known to be the bulwark against the inundation of error and profaneness, and this sets the ungodly world with so much spite and venom against them, the more need have they of your tenderest encouragement, as their nursing protecting fathers. It is well known to your honours, that these faithful witnesses prophesied in sackcloth all the time of the late prelates cruel persecution, it is but a very little time since their yokes were taken off, and now again to be so soon forced to their old mourning attire, will seem harsh in the eyes of all them that love the gospel: remember who it is that saith, he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and how God hath thrown to the ground here in England before your eyes, that proud and lofty generation the prelates, who so ill intreated his faithful ambassadors.

Lastly, seeing the Lord himself of old made such certain and plentiful provision for the priests under the law, and Christ himself affirms the labourer is worthy his hire under the gospel, and the great apostle so largely and professedly disputes for it, 1 Cor. 9. And seeing ministers must be men given to hospitality, and therefore must [besides their necessary maintenance] have wherewithal to do it: and also lest the want of sufficient maintenance should lay them open to the contempt of their persons and doctrine, and put them upon temptation to hang upon the favour of their carnal people, in a man-pleasing way, or be forced off their gospel employment to attend on food and raiment: and lastly, lest their poor widows and fatherless be driven to extremities when they are dead, they being able to lay up nothing for them while they lived. It is therefore our humble suit, that special and sure care be taken for their certain and comfortable maintenance, and not so much to attend to the loudness of the cry of such as call for removing the present way of maintenance, as to try the strength of their reasons, and the scope and end that many drive at; for when men are once disaffected to the ordinance itself, it were too gross to cry down the ministry and ministers in plain terms; and therefore such a taking and plausible way as this, must be presented for the unsettling their maintenance, which in time will destroy maintenance and ministry both at once: but God can make you wise as angels of God, to discern of persons and things.

So your petitioners shall humbly pray.

THE ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING PETITION.

A few words to you who call yourselves churches, that you may see in this petition how far unlike unto the churches of Christ in the gospel you are: and that you may see the foundation whereon your church standeth, who are crying out to the earthly powers to uphold you, your church and ark from falling, which the churches of Christ never did, but stood in the power of the Almighty alone, who had gathered them and called them out of

all the worlds love and protection to himself, and had their foundation on the rock, against which the gates of hell could not prevail; wherein you make it plainly appear, that you are not on their faith nor foundation, who look for safety from the hills and mountains, lest you and your ministers should perish: and also that you may see how unlike the churches of Christ you act in the things you petition for; such things as the churches of Christ did never petition to any earthly powers for, as in the scriptures they shall witness against this your practice.

And you say the things that make you dare no longer hold your peace, is the manifold clamours of some against the godly ministry (as you call them) and their subsistence.

Now where did ever any church of Christ petition to the magistrates to prevent the clamours of the world, but have looked on such sufferings, as their portion from the world, and therein have committed the keeping of themselves to God in all things; and if these you call ministers, were of the same spirit, they would be of the same mind; but all are not ministers of Christ, who are so called; but those who are of the same spirit and mind with him in his ways and sufferings.

And therefore he seeing that many false teachers should arise clothed like sheep, and come in his name, and should deceive many; and lest any of his own should be deceived by them, he gives them a sure way to try them, and that is, by their fruits, saith he, you shall know them.

Now you that call yourselves churches, and these you petition for godly ministers, to you I shall according to the rule of Christ and his apostles, lay down some few of their fruits, whom Christ and his apostles did deny; that if you find the same fruits in these you call godly ministers, you may no longer call them godly, whom Christ and his apostles deny as ungodly; and for shame never call yourselves churches of Christ, if you will not give up yourselves and ministers, to be tried by the rules of Christ and his apostles, not in words wrested, but in life and practice.

Christ bears witness against such as brought forth these fruits, that were hirelings, and them that were called of men ministers, them who said and did not, that laid heavy burdens on the people, that had the highest place in the assemblies, the chief names at feasts, greetings in the markets, clothed like sheep, but raven and devour like wolves. Peter bears witness against such as had hearts exercised with covetous practices, that could not cease from sin, that with fained words made merchandize of the people, who had forsaken the right way, and run greedily after the way of Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, who promise liberty to others, but they themselves are servants to corruption. Paul bears witness against such as were lovers of themselves, covetous, proud, boasters, blasphemers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce despisers of them that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; and they led captive such as were laden with sin, and divers lusts, ever learning of them, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, for they resist the truth, and are men of corrupt minds. Jude bears witness against such as speak evil of the things they know not, but what they know, they know naturally, as brute beasts, who are like Cain for cruelty, and Balaam for covetousness, feeding themselves without fear, murmerers, complainers, living in lusts, and their mouths speaking great swelling words, having mens persons in admiration because of advantage, as these do who flatter great men for self-ends.

Now if you find these fruits brought forth, by these whom you petition for with so much zeal, then judge whether you be guided by the same spirit, by which Christ and his apostles did see these, and give warning of them; or by that spirit that did uphold these, whom Christ cries woe unto; and though you and they may think light of these things, through a light mind, yet these are marks which Christ and his apostles did discover deceivers by; and they who see by the same light, know them by the same fruits now; for the devil can

profess righteousness, but live the life of it he cannot; and if you will believe Christ, you must know such by their works, and not by their words; and if you uphold such, you fight against Christ, and it will avail you but little to call yourselves gathered churches, when you are not gathered into his will, but strive to uphold what he comes to cast down; for they that gather not with him, scatter abroad.

Another thing why you petition, is the swarms of horrid errors, which you say have darkened your horizon.

But now take heed you that are so soon darkened, and are so far mistaken in calling them godly ministers, who upon trial are so far unlike God in their practice; I say take heed lest you be as far mistaken in that you call errors; for truth hath always suffered under the name of error, by such professors as have run to the earthly powers to fulfil their envy, as it is at this day, and will plainly appear upon trial: but suppose they be errors indeed, yet see how far you err from the practice of all the churches of Christ, who never cried to the earthly power to excommunicate errors, but in the spirit and power of the Lord did they proceed against them, and did separate from them; and Christ did never leave it to the magistrates to judge of errors and blasphemies, but hath reserved it to himself, and them in whom he is, even the judgment of all spiritual things, that concern his kingdom; and he bindeth and loseth at his pleasure and will, and not at the will of men, nor earthly powers; for he alone is king in his, and will cast out whatever offends.

And whereas you say your godly ministers are affronted in their holy worship; I answer, where the ministers are godly, and the worship holy, there the spirits of the prophets, are subject to the prophets; and if any thing be revealed to one that sits by, the first must hold his peace, and not forbid him to speak, and such count it no affront; for who speaks by the spirit of God, it will abide the judgment; but they who speak lies in the name of the Lord, would have a law made that none should discover them; and none but persecuting priests

did ever go about to stop the mouths of any that God had opened. And though you call it an error to dispute and reason in the synagogues against the false worship, yet the apostles used it as a means to bring out of error, and so it is at this day, as many can witness, and none but such as live in, and teach errors, will cry out against it; for truth will abide the light, and defend itself in the face of all the errors of the world, without a shelter from earthly powers.

Another thing that moves you to petition is, profaneness and atheism abounding in the land, and you conceive the ground is, want of able and painful ministers, and the bold intrusion of scandalous ones. I answer; if you will own none for able ministers, but such as turn their hearers from profaneness, and are not scandalous, that is, walk not contrary to Christ and his apostles, for such as do are scandalous, then must you deny all the parish teachers in England, as doth plainly appear both by priest and people, to all who are not blind; and that the magistrate needs no restrain profaneness in the church of Christ, was never known in the gospel. And how the teachers in this nation have deserved what they have devoured, let any wise man judge; who have their hearers yet in profaneness, and stand in need to be restrained by an outward law, whom they say they have baptized into Christ and his church, and call them christians and believers.

And you that talk of propagating the gospel, by commissions from men, are enemies to Christ's authority, who hath and will propagate his gospel himself by his own power, and whom he will give commission to, and not leave it in the power of men; neither did ever any of his seek to the magistrate for any such thing. And here let all the practices of the churches of Christ witness against you, who, Uzzah-like, dare not trust God to uphold the ark of his covenant with his church without the arm of flesh.

And for the great good, which you say the north received by the last commission for propagating the gospel, and what reformation it hath brought forth, the north can witness (though some love to praise them-

selves) and though you call it their godly endeavors, yet I am sure none of God's ever endeavored the like.

Another thing that moves you to petition, is the undermining of that soul-saving ordinance [as you call it] of the ministry. But what a ministry you petition to uphold is plainly shewed before. And for those you call ordinances, there is not one of them that is practiced by you as they were practiced by Christ and his apostles, and therefore are no ordinances of Christ, nor is the soul saved by them, where priest and people live in sin. And whereas you say, the more eminent the ministers are, the more they are oppressed. I answer, the more zealous and eminent any are in a way contrary to Christ, the more they are to be declared against by the servants of God.

Another thing you fear is, that the daily bread of these you call ministers should be taken from them, and you say these are they who break unto you the bread of life. Now blush for shame to call yourselves churches, or to say that these break unto you the bread of life, who are afraid to want food for their bellies; for they whom Christ sent to break the bread of life, are commanded to take no thought what to eat or drink, or what to put on, but have the fathers care for them, which whoever knows, doth not fear want: but these make it they neither know him, nor live on his care. And all may see what a God these men serve, who dare not trust him for daily bread.

And whereas you say, that all may see, that their wives and children are left poor enough after their death when they enjoy all their present means. Here be witness against yourselves, how unlike to the ministers of Christ these be, who had no certain dwelling place, but these can spend one or two hundred pounds a year upon pride and fulness, and leave their wives and children poor when they die, when many of them, who are forced to maintain them, have nothing but what they labour hard for their wives and children: but he is blind who cannot see the curse of God upon what is forced by violence from the poor, to feed their lust. And whereas you say, it is their propriety which Christ Jesus

himself hath appointed them. I answer, that is false; prove where ever Christ appointed tithes, or any set or forced maintenance, or any thing from the world, as by help of earthly magistrates; but they who reaped their spirituals freely, did give them carnals freely, and not by constraint. And here it appears to all, what seed these have sown, who have nothing to reap, but must famish for bread amongst their churches, unless the magistrate help to compel them. Now whether these be the churches and ministers of Christ, or of the world, let all who read the scriptures judge, and bear witness against you, and your ministers and churches.

And now your fruits are these: first, that printing and preaching, and venting of that which you call error may be stopped. A way by which your forefathers did long uphold their beastly kingdom, and the papists before them: for if none might print or speak against it, then all your deceit might go for truth undiscovered, as it hath done many years: but the day is come, and you cannot be hid any longer, blessed be our God for ever: and here witness against yourselves, that you have not that truth that is able to defend itself against all errors printed and preached whatsoever, which did never seek to the powers of men to protect it.

And whereas you say, shall the father of lies have as much liberty to dandle his brats, as the father of light to promote his God born truth. I answer, all is not lies that you call lies, but he that is of the truth will do as he would be done by; then let others have the like liberty with you to preach and print, and so the lies will come to light, and be discovered by the light; for God is able to defend his truth, and discover the devil's brats.

And for damnable heresies, and doctrines of devils, gangrenes, cankers, and such like words, as you use, and would cast them upon others; let those who abide not in the doctrine of Christ, and practice of the saints in scripture without wresting, bear these names (for to them they belong) and it will be found among yourselves..

Your second suit is, that the gospel may be propagated by commission from men. And now let all the scriptures and the practice of the saints witness against you, who are about to take the propagating of the gospel out of the hand of Christ, and would give the power to men. Oh! blush for shame to call yourselves churches, and would thrust Christ out of his kingdom, and give it to men, when it only belongs to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers, and to propagate his own gospel. Here you are they who smite Christ on the face, and give him the lie, who saith, he alone will be king in his own, and will be with them to the end of the world. O blind people! where would you have him to have his kingdom, when you would have the magistrate to limit him, whom he shall send to declare his will? and so would have ministers made by the will of man, which all the holy men of God did ever deny; for no prophecy of old ever came by the will of man; and the apostles said they were not made ministers by the will of man, but by the will of God. Here you are against Christ, the prophets and apostles, and have not any ground in scripture for what you desire, but the whole scriptures witness against you and your petition.

Your third suit is, that the ministry, and the truly zealous and faithful ministers may be owned by the parliament, as the Lord owns them, and to shew their adherence to Christ's case in them, for he holds the stars in his right hand. I answer; the truly faithful ministers are owned of the Lord, and disowned of the world: nor did they ever petition the powers of the world to own them, for they are not of the world, nor can the world own them. And here is Christ's case clearly seen in them, whom the world could never own, and such stars he holds in his right hand, and they fear not that any should pluck them out of his hand; but for such as you call faithful ministers, who dare not trust the Lord for bread, and who walk contrary to the commands of Christ, and practice of all that ever he sent (as hath been shewed concerning these) such the Lord owns not, but denies; and such run to the hills for safety, and are upholden by earthly powers, and the case of

Christ is not seen in them, who seek to the world to own them; nor doth he hold such stars in his right hand, for they wander from him, his commands and protection, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever; and not being able to see the power of Christ in keeping his, they dare not trust him.

And whereas you say, that these ministers have always been a bulwark against errors and profaneness. I answer, let the open profaneness that abounds in the places where they live witness against them; and if they be the bulwarks against these things, then why do you cry out to the parliament to stop error and profaneness? And whereas you say, that these faithful witnesses prophesied in sackcloth all the time of the late prelates; I answer let all the nation witness, which of them have not prophesied in as great livings as they could get, and in pride few exceed them.

And for the late bishops you speak of, these are in the same nature with them, inveighing the poor servants of God, that witness against their deceits, stirring up the powers of the earth to persecute as they did. And as these are found in their steps, so shall they fall as they did; for God hath seen the pride and oppression these have used to his people, and he is come to visit them, and to free them out of their hands, and you shall not escape.

Your last suit is, that special care be taken for a certain and comfortable maintenance for these you call ministers; and your reasons are these: 1 From the provision for the tribe of Levi. 2 From the words of Christ, the labourer is worthy of his hire. 3 From the words of Paul. 4 Because they must be given to hospitality. 5 Lest want of means should lay them open to contempt of person and doctrine. 6 Lest they should be put to hang on the favour of carnal people. 7 Lest they should be forced off their gospel employment to attend on food and raiment: and lastly, lest their wives and children should want when they are dead.

To the first I answer; Levi was one of the twelve tribes, and had no other profession among his brethren; for the eleven tribes had the profession divided amongst

them, and therefore must needs provide for their brother, or he must perish, and God commanded he should have it for the service he was to serve: but there is no such command concerning these, who have their possessions, and liberty to improve them as others have. To your 2d. Christ did not speak this to any hireling, but to those who were to teach freely, and were to take no thought what to eat or drink, or wherewith to be clothed; and to such he said, the workmen is worthy of his meat: but they who can take not only for their own lives, but also for their wives and the generation after them, have shut themselves out from these words, and from the care of God for them, and have betaken themselves to their own care. To your 3d. For shame take not Paul to plead for your forced maintenance, who coveted no man's silver nor gold, nor did eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with his hands, lest he should make the gospel chargeable: nor had he any certain dwelling place; and none are more unlike Paul than those you call ministers, who would have their maintenance from the world by a law, which Paul never did, nor any other that ever Christ sent.

To your fourth, because they must be given to hospitality. I answer, God hates robbery for burnt offerings; you that would have a law to take by force from the poor, that which is their own labours, under pretence to put into the hands of your ministers, to give to the poor; who when they have it, spend it on their pride and lust, till they leave nothing for wives and children. The Lord judge between the poor and you, and deliver the poor out of your hands. And for these you call ministers, they love the poor like Judas, who would first have all in their own bag; and how they would relieve the poor out of it, may appear by the poor that are sued by them for their tithes, and set maintenance, who suffer the spoiling of their goods, and are in wants, but the priests live in all fulness.

To your fifth. Let all people judge, if these be not they who bear rule by their means, when their riches must keep them from contempt in their persons and doctrine: and let all judge if their doctrine be that of the

prophets, Christ's and the apostles, who were poor men, and did never maintain the authority of their doctrine from contempt by their means, but by the power and spirit of God. And here let all the scriptures witness against you, and your doctrine that stands in outward means.

To your 6th: All may see what spirits these men are of, who would rather be maintained by force than favour: and see what ministers these are, who preach up their people for saints and believers, but dare not trust them for a livelihood, but then call them carnal. And all see, if these walk as ministers of Christ, who never asked any maintenance from the world, nor carnal people; but did first sow spirituals, before they reaped carnals.

To your 7th: The apostle wrought with his hands to supply his wants, and yet did not leave the gospel employment; nor did ever any whom Christ sent leave it for want of food; but covetous men and belly-gods dare not trust God, though none ever wanted that did.

To your last: Let all judge, how these walk in the commands of Christ, who saith, take no thought for to morrow, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof: but these hold it not sufficient to care for their whole lives, but for the generation to come. And here you are rased out of the care of God, the command of Christ, and practice of all that ever he sent forth: and these are they who never knew God in spirit, who dare not trust him for their bellies. And in your conclusion you say, that unsettling their maintenance, will destroy maintenance and ministry both at once: and you say, God can make them, to whom you petition, wise to discern on persons and things. I answer; there is but little wisdom of God in them, who cannot discern by what spirit this petition is carried on, though it go under the name of gathered Churches; and also what ministers these are, who are resolved to stand no longer than settled maintenance: but blessed be the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is discovering you and your foundation, and hath raised, and is raising him up such as will declare his will to all to whom he sends them freely, whom he

hath set free from earthly pleasures, and hath showed them a better inheritance that never fades away; praises to his name for ever! And all you who are delivered from the covetous practices of these men, and their deceits, and are come into the teachings of Christ, praise the Lord for ever!

A WORD TO THOSE TO WHOM THE FORMER
PETITION IS PREFERRED.

AND now a word to you rulers, to whom the petition is preferred, that you may not [through the flattering of men of corrupt minds, who have men's persons in admiration because of advantage] do any thing against Christ or his kindom, in the conscience of his saints.—And forasmuch as you are resolved to make a declaration to give fitting liberty to all that fear God, and for preventing speaking evil against magistrates, and magistracy, and for preserving peace among such as fear God, among themselves, without imposing one upon another: and to discountenance blasphemies, damnable heresies, and licentious practices: first for them that fear God, they have a liberty purchased for them by Jesus Christ, which the world knows not, and they use not this liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but in the service of Christ; and take heed how you judge of this liberty, or the fitness of it, by your wisdoms, for they have it given of God, and not of man; and woe to them who go about to restrain it: and for the speaking evil of magistracy, he that bears the sword of God, none that fear God dare speak evil of such dignity, but are subject for conscience sake; for he that rules in that power that is of God, is one with that in the conscience, and that in the conscience owns him, and bears witness to him that it is the power of God, and for conscience sake he is subject; and they who fear God, need no law to forbid them to speak evil of such a magistracy! But if you continue in place for magistrates such as rule not by this power that is of God, but by their own wills, and contrary to the mind and law of God, punish them that do well, and let the guilty go free; and you think to make a dec-

laration to limit the spirit of God, that it shall not declare against such, and declare his wrath against such oppression and injustice; then take heed what you do, that you be not found fighters against God to your hurt.

And consider, did ever any prevent the judgment of God, by going about to stop the mouths, or persecute them whom the Lord sent to declare it, but have hastened on the wrath, till there was no remedy? And can the true prophet of the Lord speak any good concerning Ahab, but evil, though 400 false prophets flattered him, to his own destruction? Nor could any wicked rulers believe till the judgment came, and it was too late; and such as love their sins, which is the cause of wrath, hate them whom the Lord sends to forewarn of it, and so hasten on their own ruin.

And for your persevering peace among them that fear God: let it never be said that such fear God, who are not at peace among themselves, without an outward law to compel them, for such are in the flesh, and carnal, and the law is for such; but who live in the spirit and fear of God, against such there is no law, for they are guided by the pure law of God written in the heart, which keeps them at peace, out of the lust from whence all strife and war ariseth.

And whereas you say, without imposing one upon another: I answer, those who fear God, will not impose one upon another; but take heed that under this pretence, you go not about to stop the mouth of any whom God shall send, to call out of the idols worship, for now is Christ arisen in his saints, to discover the man of sin, who sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God, whom Christ must discover by the brightness of his coming in his saints; and woe to them who go about to oppose him in his work: for though gog and magoge may gather together, yet the power of the Lord shall break them to pieces. And for your discountenancing of blasphemies and heresies, be not too forward herein, since you know but in part: but consider it is not long since what you now own for truth, went generally under the name of blasphemy, and heresy, even by those who are now petitioning against others, and by many of them

it is holden so yet, and know that God doth not always reveal his secrets to wise and great men first, but to babes. And you know not how soon some of you may own and suffer for that truth, which you now think to be blasphemy and heresy, and then it will not seem evil to you, that you have forborn to persecute it: but when you see men break out into licentious practices, then you have a sure ground to go on to suppress them.

This I am moved to write unto you, not that you or all the powers of the earth shall be able to stop what God is bringing to pass, but that you may be warned not to do that against the truth, under the name of blasphemy, which you may repent afterward, when it is too late: he that is wise, let him be warned, and happy is he; but some will not, but are for confusion. So in love to your souls, I have cleared my conscience, and the will of God be done, who is blessed for evermore, *Amen.*

The condition and portion of the people of England, who have long flattered themselves with the church, ministry and ordinances; but upon trial, are found to be the synagogues of satan, persecutors of the truth, and enemies of the gospel of Christ.

The lion hath roared, tremble all you beasts of the field; the trumpet hath sounded, let the beast prepare himself to battle, for the great day of Sin's recompence is at hand, and woe to all her enemies.

I HAVE heard a voice of woe and terror to come upon all the inhabitants of the earth; repent all you inhabitants of the earth, the sword of the Lord is furbished against you, to make a grievous slaughter. Howl, woe and misery all sorts of people, who have preferred your own wills, lusts, and pleasures, before the pure law of God. Howl you Sodomites, and belly gods of the earth, who have given up yourselves to fulness of gluttony, and all excess of riot, feeding without the fear of God, sporting in the day time, living like fed horses, spending the creatures upon your lusts, which were never made for that end. Woe unto you ye fat swine, the sins of Sodom are found among you, and the plagues of Sodom are nigh at hand. Woe unto you, for now is the Lord come to require his corn and his wine which he gave to

feed the poor and hungry, which your lusts have devoured, the wants of all poor in the nation cry out against you, you have exceeded all that ever went before you, and you shall exceed in misery. Woe unto you proud lustful and lofty ones that are lifted up in your own eyes, and have set yourselves above the fear of God, which teacheth humility; you plainly appear to be children of the devil, who is the father of all pride and self-exaltation, you bear the image of the serpent, you speckled ones, who have painted yourselves in the various colours, to make yourselves seem glorious in the eyes of others, that they may bow to and worship you. Woe unto thou that hast set thyself in the seat of God; thou art weighed and found wanting, thy pride is for the fire, and thy honour for the dust, for now is the Lord coming to enquire after his wool and flax which he gave to clothe the naked of all sorts, with which thou hast decked thyself, and spent it upon thy lusts, thereby to set thyself in the seat of the almighty. Woe, woe, woe unto thee, thou that art exalted as high as Heaven, yea as into God's throne, but thou shalt be cast down to Hell, the lamb is risen to rule the nations. Woe unto the covetous cruel oppressors, who live upon dust, you grind the face of the poor, and oppress them that are fallen; your measures you have filled, and you have heaped up abundance against the day of wrath. The fire of the Almighty is kindled, and it shall never be quenched till it hath devoured and burnt up you and your heaps, and made you a curse to the generations that shall come after. Woe unto the envious serpents that seek to devour the innocent, that make a prey upon them that depart from iniquity; you are the brood of the serpent, that are fulfilling what is spoken of you, and you now show the enmity that God hath put between the two seeds; now thy rage is seen, and the seed is manifested, whose heel thou art bruising who shall bruise thy head; thy time is as short, as thy rage is great.—Rejoice all ye that suffer it, that the scriptures may be fulfilled. Woe unto you scorers, you sons of Hagar, you sons of bondage, to the works of the devil, scorning, backbiting, false accusing, slandering, and evil speaking;

you are brought forth by the Egyptian woman, and are in Egyptian darkness, and you cannot see that you are in the works of the devil, and by him you are put on to act against Christ in his saints.

But now is the son of the free woman brought forth, to whom the heritage belongs, and you shall be cast out among the heathen, and ungodly, and judgment is coming upon you, in which you shall not be able to stand.—

Woe unto you swearers and liars, under whose tongues lies the poison of asps, which you vent out as you are moved by your father the devil against the holy and dreadful name of the Almighty, the land is filled with this generation, and hath long mourned because of you: who can pass in streets or markets that fear the Lord, and their hearts not be broken to hear it? Do not all places abound with vain oaths, and lying idle words? Was ever nation like to this in these things? So that any who will not use these idle words and oaths, is known in the streets as they pass, and not esteemed worthy to live in the nation; and thus not only with the common sort, but also with many that are in place of authority to punish such things; and yet those are not afraid to call themselves christians? Shall not the Lord be avenged on such a people as this? Woe unto you that live upon deceit in your weights and measures, by your slighty words arising from the serpent's wisdom, which makes a prey on the simple; and when you have got great estates, you say God hath given you them; you are set up above them who are made poor by your means; now is the Lord come to search you out, and you shall restore for your theft four fold. Woe unto you that have had power in your hands to restrain these things; but instead of using the sword to scatter the works of iniquity, have turned the edge of it against such as the Lord hath called out of these things, and sent them to call others out, lest they partake of the plagues that are to come upon those who are found in them. Woe, woe unto you blind guides: who have called yourselves Christ's seedsmen, and now that the Lord of the harvest is come to look for fruits, here is no better fruit to reap but such as these, and that among such as you call saints, and the churches of Christ.

And now that the heir is appearing, you are stirring up the powers of the earth how to destroy him, least you be called to account for your great care to feed your own bodies, and heap up carnal things, and the little care for the souls of Christ's flock. Now shall you not escape, your day is near at hand. Who could have believed that England would have brought forth no better fruits than these, now after such deliverance, as no nation else can witness. O tell it not among the heathen, lest you strengthen the hands of the enemy, and occasion the wicked to blaspheme the name of the God of hosts, who is reported to be amongst us, and hath subdued all our enemies, and delivered thus us far. Awake, awake, all sorts of people, can you say you have not had power in your hands against these abominations, but now that you have not proved faithful in your promises to the Lord in the day of your fears; therefore is the Lord coming to call to account all sorts of dissemblers and oppressors, and by his own right hand to get himself the victory.

And now woe unto you that have known to do well, and had it in your power, but have not done it: woe unto you that have taken counsel at your own wisdom, and multitudes, and not at the spirit of the Lord, and have strengthened yourselves by your riches. Woe unto you, fruitless trees, you have long been digged and pruned, but no fruits brought forth, you have long cumbered the ground. Woe unto you that are at ease in Sion; howl, woe and misery; tremble ye women that are at ease, strip you, make you bear, put off your pride, and put on ashes; turn your music into wailing, your feasts into fasting and bitter lamentation, and meet the Lord, if there may be hope for your souls in the day of his fierce wrath that is coming upon the earth. While you have time, improve it.

J. N.

A word from the Lord, unto all the faithless generation of the world, and to all who desire to know what faith and hope we live in, and what faith and hope we deny.

THAT faith we own and witness, is that which stands in Jesus Chris, the everlasting covenant of light, who is the light of the world, and hath enlightened every one that cometh into the world, and this light we believe and follow; and by this are we led out of all the ways, works and worships of this dark world, and the effect of this light we witness by faith; and by this faith we deny all who say this light is not sufficient, without the teaching of man to guide in all the ways of God, and all such we deny, for those are they who know not the voice of Christ, and therefore hear a stranger and hireling, who heap up teachers having itching ears who cannot endure sound doctrine; and in this Christ we believe, who is our life and salvation; and all them and their faith we deny, who say they have faith, and their lives is not the life of Christ, but live in sin, and worldly pleasures, and say they cannot be saved from their sins in this world but in part, and this faith we deny, and them, for these deny the end of Christ's coming in the flesh, who cannot believe he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto him; and this faith is reprobate, and these deny the Lord that bought them, and have made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and make the blood of Christ of no effect to them who are not cleansed by it: and all them and their faith we deny, who say they believe and know the will of God, but they have not power to do it; for is not that Christ in which the saints believe, the great power of God unto salvation in all that believe; and who hath this Christ, hath power, and in him we have power to do the will of God; but these are they that know not Christ nor his power, but run into notions and forms, but deny the power, and from such we turn away; for such know not him in them, who is greater than he that is in the world; but are willing to serve sin, and be led captive at the devil's will, not minding the light and power of Christ to be guided by it, and then would seem to cast the fault

on God, as though he had given a Christ that was not able to set free till after death; and these put him to open shame, whose faith and profession we deny.

And we deny all who say they have faith in Christ, and yet their righteousness is not perfect; but this faith we witness, which receives the righteousness of God, even the free gift of righteousness by Jesus Christ; and this is perfect, which is the righteousness of faith: And all who have not this righteousness, are in the false righteousness, which is not perfect; and these are short of the righteousness of God, and would establish their own righteousness.

And these are the boasters, who would justify themselves and despise others; but by the righteousness of faith is boasting excluded: and here is no justifying of self, but denying self and self-righteousness, and exalting the righteousness of God, which is perfect, which is in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us righteousness and sanctification. And by this faith we deny all who say they have Christ, and have not this righteousness: but whose righteousness is imperfect, that righteousness we deny, and witness that Christ, in which we are made the righteousness of God in him: and this Christ is our righteousness and perfection; and this faith we own and witness, which is not a talk of faith, as the world's professors, who say they have faith, but are dead in sin, and cannot witness the work of God in them; but that faith we own, which is lively, by which the work of God is witnessed in us, working out sin, and by which we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. And this is our faith, by which we overcome the world, and the devil: and all you we deny, who have a profession in the world, and in whom the works of the devil are brought forth: and their faith and hope we deny, who say they hope to be saved, but live in sin, making a profession. And this is the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish, and not the hope of Christ; for he that hath this hope of Christ, purifies himself, even as he is pure: and this faith and hope we own, which purifies the heart, and enters into the place of holiness within the veil; but that which is without ho-

liness, we deny, which is not in Christ but in a vain mind. And we deny all who say, they have faith and Christ, and yet their word and light are without them. And the word we witness, which is nigh in the heart; and this is the word of faith which the apostles preached; and he that hath this faith, hath the word, which is Christ the light, not in letter, but in spirit. And all them we deny, whose law is only without; and that law we witness, which is spiritual, written in the heart; and this law is perfect, and endures forever: and the changeable laws we deny, and all whose law is without, we see to be in the old covenant of works; which made nothing perfect; and the self-righteousness, which is as filthy rags. And by the light of Christ are we convinced of that righteousness not to be of faith, therefore they whose faith and works stand here, them we deny, and see them all worshipping out of the new covenant, in the oldness of the letter, whose law is without, their light without, their church without, their baptism, prayers and singing without, their righteousness without, and so their faith without; all which we witness in spirit, in which we worship in newness of life: and by this spirit we do see all that are without God and his righteousness, to be in the world, and strangers to the covenant of grace, whose faith and worship we deny, and God denies; for he seeks such worshippers as worship in spirit and truth. And this faith and worship we own, not known to the world, and therefore hated.

J. N.

TO ALL THE WORLD'S PROFESSORS AND PEOPLE, THAT YOU
MAY SEE WHERE YOU ARE, AND REPENT.

THE word of God is not known to the world, nor worldly wisdom; he that hath the word hath life, he that knows the word, knows God, and here's life manifest, and the word hath quickened him, and raised him out of death and dead works; he that hath but the letter heareth the sound, but knows not where or what it is; and as he received it in the air, he declares it, and death speaks light words without power. and dead

works and lightness is brought forth, and the power of death reigns, and the life of that is but an imitation, and not the life itself; the chaff (but not the grain) tossed in the wind, and the prince of the air is fed, and ruleth, and here vanity is exalted, the light mind is fed with airy notions, who would be wise, but the wild nature is at liberty, not subject to the yoke, but kicks against the pure, and the obedience is not, and the cross is despised; but the nature who feeds here, whose end is for destruction, and for the fire, for that nature knows not the living word, but the letter, and is without God in the world; but he who hath the word, hath God, and is come into the covenant by which all things stand; for he is come to that which was in the beginning, out of the fall, to the first fruits, and witnesseth the word spiritual, invisible, powerful, pure, and sharp; a divider and discernor, by it he is sanctified and made clean, by it he is established, and unmoveable, and is fed daily, it is his life, joy and delight, and the word is not to be fetched from above, nor from below; neither is it to seek it in a chapter, or a steeple-house, but is nigh in the heart, and in the mouth, by which he is kept at all seasons. It is his counsellor, and he enquires at it, as at an oracle, and thereby he is brought to live in the life of godliness, and from which is spoken words of life and power to others, and he speaks not his own words, nor brings forth his own works; but hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his, and is entered into his rest, and is come into the eternal sabbath, and is comprehended into the word which is Christ, and is no more his own; for now Christ speaks in him, acts in him, and works in him the will and the deed; now Christ and he is one, married to him, and Christ is his head, and husband; and now the head speaks, prayeth, and praiseth, and prophecies, and is uncovered; and here is the church of the first-born, the pillar and ground of truth, where the woman must be covered, and kept silent, and is not to speak in the church, is not to usurp authority, but is to be in subjection; and if she would know any thing, let her ask of her husband at home, and he is to her a covering of the eyes forever.

Now all you priests and people that talk of these things without you from the letter, this is a parable to you, and you read the outside in the letter, and from that you imagine, and so set up a form or likeness, or image of those things; and here you worship, and for this you contend, and would compel all to worship your image you have set up, and you go about to persecute and destroy all that will not worship and bow down to it with you; but it is the form you have, but not the substance, and you put the dead letter for the living word, and your meaning of it, arising from the brain, and wisdom from below, and natural learning. Thus you declare and call it prophecy, and put off your hats, which is carnal, but the head you know not; and it is the woman that speaks, and the head is covered, and so you dishonour your head, and honour yourselves; neither are you subject to your head, but your own will rules in you, and you live in the pleasures of the world, and are become wanton, and have set your eyes upon many lovers, and you are adulterated from your husband, and live not with him, nor is he a covering to you, neither can you witness him in you, nor you in him; nor is the pure seed of God brought forth in you, but the seed that is accursed; neither is the pure language brought forth in you, but as to God you are smitten with barrenness, and bring forth nothing but words, winds, shews and shadows, imitations, inventions, imaginations and conceptions, and you never look to bring forth better fruit, neither come to holiness and perfection, and your first fruits, and that estate wherein you were created; and you will not know you are departed from your first fruitfulness, and have lost him in whom your life stood, and in whom your fruits were found, and are become widows, and desolate, as to your first husband, and have been running after other lovers, and worshipping under every green tree, and the holy faith is departed from you, and you are doting upon the Egyptian and the Assyrian for wisdom and strength, whose flesh is as the flesh of horses, and have been as fed horses, living in the lust of the flesh, as it is at this day.

Now, all people, stand still awhile, and see from whence you are fallen, and the cause of all your unfruitfulness, and return to your first husband, from whence you are fallen, that you may bring forth your first fruits; for till then, all you do is abomination unto the Lord, and he cannot accept it: for what you bring forth is the seed of the adulterer, and of the whore, a generation of evil doers. And yet you make a profession in outside, as to righteousness and holiness, but the power to act righteousness you have not, but in your actions brought forth the image of the devil: for all sin bears his image, and he is the father of it. Let no man deceive you through fair words, he that sins is of the devil, and is doing his work: and upon this image, where it is, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven in flames of fire. Here is your portion, you workers of iniquity.

J. N.

A BRIEF MANIFESTATION OF THE GROUND UPON WHICH WE
STAND, TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO KNOW IT, WITH
A DECLARATION, WHY WE CANNOT
REPAIR THE IDOLS TEMPLES,
NOR GIVE DAY-WAGES
TO A CLERK.

To those who are called Papists, (and others) who desire to know our ground.

The ground on which we are, is that upon which the prophets and apostles, and all the holy men of God ever were; and on that foundation are we builded, Jesus Christ himself, who is the light of the world, which hath enlightened every one that cometh into the world, being the chief corner stone: which light of Christ is one in all consciences, by which we are led out of all the ways of darkness into the light of life; which life is in the spirit, contrary to all the former lusts and pleasures, which we lived in while we walked in the flesh, after the course of this world, following the corrupt practices and precepts of men. And in this light, which leads us out of all our own ways and wills, is the cross of Christ revealed, who came not to do his own will,

but the will of him that sent him; which cross is not carnal but spiritual, contrary to that nature which makes carnal crosses, who are out of the light and doctrine of Christ in their own wills and imaginations, whose life is in the world, and their worship in these carnal things and rudiments. But by this cross are we crucified unto the world, and all carnal worships, and they to us: so we being dead to that wherein we were held, viz. the rudiments of the world, by this light and power of Christ are we raised up, to serve the Lord in newness of life and spirit, not in the oldness of the letter. And this light of Christ, by which we are led into this spiritual knowledge and worship of God, is the condemnation of the world, who walk contrary to it, notwithstanding all their carnal worships; and this light is that in all your consciences, which shews your evil deeds.

CONCERNING THE REPAIR OF IDOLS TEMPLES.

Is this your reformation, you that rule in this nation, who say you have denied the pope, and put down the bishops? And are you repairing the idols temples, which your forefathers have consecrated to their idol gods? and not only so, but are you forcing your brethren, whom God hath called out of them, to return back with you, to repair what God is about to destroy; and if they cannot join with you herein, you take the spoil of their goods by force: and yet you say you are reforming, and the scripture is your rule. But what command or example have you in scripture for these things? When the Lord commanded a temple in the old covenant to be built, were any forced to that work, but whose hearts he stirred up freely to offer themselves? And will you force the believers in the new covenant to repair your high places, which God never commanded? Here you are out of the rule of the scripture and saints practice, who never did such a thing; nay, which of the heathen did ever force the believers, after they were come out from their worships, to repair their idols temples? And herein ye exceed the heathen in your will-worships; nay, do you act herein as men of reason? Is it not

reason, that Baal's worshippers should repair Baal's temple? Or, would reason compel them to repair with you, who cannot worship with you? And is this your zeal to your God, to offer a sacrifice to him of other mens cost? This the worshippers of the living God would never do; for he hates robbery for burnt-offerings, and accepts nothing but what's of faith, and not of force. Is he a God you worship herein? And hath he no way to uphold his house, but by a carnal law, and taking mens goods by force? Let your God plead for himself against Jeru-baal, who hath thrown down his altars, and will not repair his temples: for we that worship the living God, are brought to worship him in temples made without hands, whose maker, builder, and upholdor is God, and not man: and here they that freely receive, freely offer.

And now you that say you are crhistians, honestly consider these things; first, as christians, have not others as good ground both from scripture and in conscience, to force you to repair the houses they meet in, as you have to force them to repair your high places, which God hath forbidden? Secondly, do you as you would be done unto by others, when you spoil their goods to repair your idols temples, which they cannot do; nor worship therein, but sin against God? Thirdly, do you deal like christians, to force them to repair your idols temples, when you will not allow to speak a word of truth therein from God, but beat, shamefully entreat, and haul them to prison? Fourthly, did ever any believers, after they were called out of the Jewish synagogues and temples, return back again to repair them, or worship in them because of conveniency? Fifthly, if Jeroboam the son of Nebat made Israel to sin, in drawing them from the temple at Jerusalem, which was but the figure, to worship at his high places, then how far do you exceed him, who draw people from the spiritual substance, the temple made without hands, to worship in your high places, which Christ hath forbidden?

CONCERNING CLERK'S WAGES.

WHEREAS we are sued at law for clerk's wages, which they call church-dues, the church of God we own, and what is due unto it we may not deny; but for any such office in the church as a clerk, to say *Amen*, or to learn people to sing David's experiences, prayers and tears, &c. we find no such officer appointed by Christ, ever maintained by his saints in his church; but have been set up since by the pope and bishops, both which we deny, and all their officers, set up in the will of man, contrary to the example of Christ and his church: such we dare not maintain. And though we suffer the spoiling of our goods, yet it is not as evil doers, but following the example of Christ and his church herein, denying the pope, bishops, and all their rabble of officers they have set up without Christ, and contrary to him in their inventions. And it is not the love of money or riches that moves us to it; the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; nor do we it in opposition to any authority, but in obedience to Christ we do it, and dare not maintain such as he never set up; for we find in the scripture, when he ascended he appointed officers in his church, and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, and those were for the perfecting of the saints; but we find not that he gave a clerk: and therefore may not own what Christ never gave, nor add officers to his church, which he never appointed; but if either the magistrates, or ye who call yourselves ministers, or your clerks, can instance in the scripture, any such officer in the church of Christ appointed by him, or his apostles, or any that he ever sent, we shall willingly own and maintain them: but not being convinced by the law of Christ, or from the scripture, we choose rather to suffer the violence of men, and follow Christ, than to make shipwreck of faith and a pure conscience; and so deny Christ for pleasing of men, and saving our estates.

TO OLIVER CROMWELL,

Into whose hands the sword of justice is committed, that under thee all may be godly and quietly governed; a terror to the evil doers, and for the encouragement of them that do well; and to the army, and to all that are in authority, that you may more set up God in your hearts and consciences, and give liberty to that of God in all consciences, that his people may serve him, without force or fear, freely in spirit and truth; that the Lord may bless you, and establish you, and you may be so far honoured, as to perform what in the times of your troubles you did then promise in the presence of God, that his people should have liberty of conscience. To you all I am moved of the Lord to write, as followeth.

It being a matter of the greatest concernment to every man's conscience that loves Christ, not to uphold any ministry, under any pretence whatsoever, which is not sent by Christ.

Therefore take heed, as you tender a pure conscience, to give liberty herein, that there be no forcing to uphold any one soul that say they are ministers; but that every one herein make proof of his ministry, and so shall every man's reward be as his work. And you magistrates shall not need to meddle in this thing, seeing God never required it at your hands, to force a maintenance, neither under a law nor gospel.

But if any say this will open a gap to all sin, and make men heathen; I answer, it will be the only way to cut down sin, as will appear to any reasonable understanding. First, a law being made to punish sin without exception, this takes hold of the heathen, and the hypocrite shall not escape, under what form soever; and liberty of conscience being given, you will presently see into whose hands to commit the execution of that law; for who hath not a principle of God to guide his worship without constraint, can never execute any just law for God, but for self-ends. And so you should choose men fearing God, and to bear the sword of God. And till then, make what laws you will to preserve innocency, yet by them the innocent is sure to suffer; for how can he whose conscience is forced as to the worship of God, use a good conscience towards men, or own a pure conscience in another, to preserve it, who hath made shipwreck of it himself.

And for making heathens, I say it will but discover heathens that are hid; for he that hath not a principle of

God in himself to carry him on in his worship, without forcing is a heathen, and knows not God, and his worship and prayers are abomination to God, and he that forces him, is guilty with him, for such were never forced, but admonished, till they came to be won by the word, or without the word, by a godly conversation, and till then to be ordered, or forced to the law of the magistrate made for such, is in vain, till the promised seed be owned to guide in the works of the spirit, for without that, the law or parish preaching will not order such, as is manifest in the nation, and hath been for many years; and such being declared to be heathen, would be ashamed, and being convinced in their own consciences, might come to be saved, which now pass under the name of a profession.

But if it be said this is the only way to root out the ministers of Christ, I answer: It's the only way to manifest the ministers of Christ, from the ministers of Antichrist; and it will root out none but such whose care is first for their bellies, who mind earthly things, whose ministry stands and falls by carnal things, who would be sure of wages before they do their work; yea many of them have taken wages these forty or fifty years, but yet no work done, nor any brought out of sin; and these cry the workman is worthy of his wages, and call for wages from such as for whom they do no work: But these are none of Christ's workmen, who seek for their wages from the world, who never asked any thing of the world; but first planted a vineyard, then eat the fruit of it; first sowed in hope, and then were partakers of their hope; and when they had sown spirituals, and the seed came up, there they reaped carnals, and so lived of the gospel, and not of the world.

And I demand of any one who owns the scriptures, to prove a forced maintenance either under the law or gospel, but they were freely to bring it. But who art thou that sayest the times are not so now? Thee I deny, and thy ministry, which follows the times, and not Christ, nor the saint's practice in scripture; stop thy mouth forever being counted a minister of Christ, who art not content with his allowance, as his have always

been, for God is not changed, nor his worship, nor worshippers. But if you say this will soon bring the ministers to be poor, I say you know not God, nor his care for his, who so argues; for never was the righteous, nor that seed begging bread; against that desponding mind do I bear witness, who was sent out without bag or scrip, or money, into the most brutish parts of the nation, where none knew me, yet wanted I nothing. In prisons, in beatings, in stonings, in mocking, my joy I would not change for all the parsonages in the world, nor shall any hireling partake of it.

And you that would have others forced to maintain your teachers, but would not be forced to maintain others who differ in judgment, though nearer the scripture than yours, how do you fulfil the law of Christ, in doing as you would be done by? What is this but to lord it over the conscience of your brethren?

2. That there be no forcing any to uphold the high places of the nation, seeing that many that truly fear God, cannot worship in them, without sin; but that liberty be given herein, and that every people may repair their own meeting-places. I know many out of a blind zeal to those places, will be offended; but what is that, by which you would not do to others, the same that you would have them do to you; is that reason, equity, or conscience? Woud'st thou be content to be forced against thy conscience to repair the houses of others, which they meet in who differ from thee in judgment, and that upon good ground from scripture, who meet in private or hired houses for conscience sake, refusing those places which have been consecrated to idols.— And if you look upon such as brethren of free-born subjects, is there not the same reason in it? But if you say, must the house of God go down? I answer, houses of God they are not, convenience is the best you can plead for them; and of all men, you who stay in those houses, have least cause to find fault with such as go out, seeing they leave you the houses you so much esteem of, wholly to yourselves, with all that belongs to them, and you have them for repairing, and they that go out, betake themselves either into the fields, private houses, or some convenient place, not chargeable to you.

3. That there be no forcing any to swear, who make conscience of an oath, seeing the plain commands of Christ and his apostles do so often forbid it; which some dare not break for all the world, who are come unto the everlasting oath and covenant of God, and into the practice of the saints, which never used any such things.— But if any say, how should true evidence be had in matters of controversy between man and man, that true judgment may be given? I answer, God appointed witnesses in such cases, but never forced them to swear.— In the old covenant, where swearing was an ordinance, how much more now, when Christ hath said, swear not at all? But if any say men will not matter what they say, if they be not forced to swear; I answer, such will not matter what they swear neither, were it not for fear of an outward law; but if you make an equal punishment of false witness, as unto imprisonment, punishment, and taking away life or estate, or whatever should by the law befall the person accused, (which is but just) you shall soon have them more afraid to lie, than ever they were to forswear, and hereby come to cleanse the land of all false accusers, and accusations; swearing, and forswearing.

Thus in faithfulness to God, and in love to you, with whom I have served for the good of these nations, between eight and nine years, counting nothing too dear to bring the government into your hands for the liberty of free-born men, as many can witness with me herein. And now my prayer to God for you is, that you may lay down all your crowns at his feet, who hath given you the victory; that so the Lord being set up as a king in every conscience, all may be subject for conscience sake; and so God may be honoured by you, and the hearts of his people praise him on your behalf. And so to you I have unburthened my conscience herein, and let none be rash in judging, but search the scriptures, and see if I have not laid before you the saint's practice, by the same spirit by which they were guided.

JAMES NAYLER.

A WORD TO YOU MAGISTRATES WHO SHOULD RULE FOR GOD IN THIS NATION; WHICH YOU SHALL WITNESS AT THE DREADFUL DAY OF ACCOUNT, TO BE LOVE TO YOUR SOULS.

THAT you all wait on the Lord, and in his light, the spirit of judgment, to receive from God who hath set you in your places, that with it you may come to discern and judge of the things that differ now in this day, when God is getting himself a name in the earth, that so you may be one with the Lord in his work, and not against it, that you may answer the end of your calling, and so come to give your account with joy, and receive your reward with such magistrates of which you reap in the scripture, who never used their power against God, nor his work.

That you all take heed how you believe reports from self-ended men guided by corrupt principles against the truth, who would render it odious, to establish their deceit wherein they live, and so you be found fighters against God; you having seen what he hath done to those who withstood him before you, and they are taken away, and you are set up: (Oh! that you saw the hand by which it is done.) Now this God requires at your hands, that you stop not his work, nor hinder his spiritual kingdom, thereby thinking to establish your own, for which you see he hath overthrown kingdoms; neither think to stop the truth, by putting the bodies of such where it is risen, into holes and prisons, for hereby you shall but (Pharaoh like) make it faster to grow, and increase your own plagues, which all that love God, would have his creatures to escape.

But if any of you do so much own justice, as with an honest heart you say, you would not have a hand in oppressing the truth if you knew it, but what you do is to stop error; and you hear many loud cries against this way, and it's every where evil spoken of; and some say we are sent from Rome, that we are Jesuites, Franciscan friars, and the like. To such magistrates I say, you have us in the nation, and our accusers, and we have done nothing in corners; let us be called before you, and our accusers, and if so we be proved, let us suffer, but if

not, why should this reproach lie upon the truth, to be a stumbling block to you. But if it be said, though we be free-born, and have been friends to the truth, and to the commonwealth, yet now we are turned seducers, and teach errors, &c. To that I say, you have the scriptures, which show the saints lives, wherein they taught and walked, wherein errors was judged. This I say without boasting, for clearing the truth; let us and our accusers come face to face before you, and he that cannot own the scriptures, and the saints practice therein declared, as they stand, without resting, thereby to be tried, their life, and their doctrine, therewithal let him be condemned; and let the life of Christ, and all that followed him, recorded in scripture, be witnessed against such, that they are erred from the doctrine of Christ, and the practice of the saints, and therefore are antichrists, and their sayings shall not cover them. So may you come to see the truth cleared, and that time not evil spent.

But for those of you, who are so set in your purposes against us, as that you will not give liberty to innocency to clear itself before you, and so keep you clear of innocent blood, and that because of hats, and bowing, and such things, as godly magistrates never required, nor they that follow the lamb cannot perform, but depart out of the faith, and defile their consciences; and which things are not against justice, righteousness, mercy, the well-being of the nation. I say to such a magistrate, the day is coming on apace, that thou shalt see and confess to the everlasting words of Christ, that it had been better for thee that a millstone had been hanged about thy neck, and thou cast into the sea; than to have been one of the number that is risen to oppose the kingdom of Christ, and to offend his little ones; though all thou canst do, shall not hinder his work. He that can receive it, let him.

J. N.

THE ROYAL LAW AND COVENANT OF GOD, WHAT, AND WHERE
IT IS, AND WHO ARE IN IT; AND WHO ARE
REPROBATE TO THE FAITH.

As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God, who are begotten of the royal spirit, not of the earthly, but of the heavenly, a seed separated from the world, to serve in spirit, who have the royal law written in their hearts, and the royal worship in spirit, and power, which are of the royal priesthood, of which the spirit of the world makes an imitation, from the latter, the words spoke by them who were of the royal seed, but know not the spirit, therefore set up the earthly spirit to worship, contrary to the royal law, which is spiritual and pure forever; and this spirit would rule over the spirit of God, which makes a profession of the words given forth by the spirit of God. And such are you as make laws which stand in respect of persons, where self is eyed, and would be honoured. And by the royal law are you condemned, which denies respect of persons, and leads to do to all men as they would be done unto; and upon this foundation stands all the law and the prophets.

So you who profess the law and the prophets words, and set up respect of persons, by the law and the prophets words you are judged, and your partial evil thoughts, James 2. And your profession shall arise in condemnation against you, and from all that have the faith of Christ are you condemned; which faith cannot be where respect of persons is, John v. 44. James 2. because it stands in God, who respects no man's person; so from the foundation of God you are found out, and by the royal law are you condemned.

And all you that count the proud happy, and despise the poor, are against the royal law: and all you who do not as you would be done unto, are against the royal law. And all you that say and do not, whose heart teacheth not your mouth, are out of the royal law, and not guided by that spirit, nor of that priesthood, nor doth those lips preserve knowledge, but all such darken counsel by words without knowledge, and know not the

royal law of God. And all who take the saints words to plead against the saints life and practice, are against the royal law, and the royal priesthood, and by it are judged and condemned; and by it are seen to be perverters of the scriptures; using them to draw into the imitations and traditions, thereby making the royal law of none effect; which law is written in the heart, which is before tradition was, which law you make void, who receive not your law-giver, whose law is spiritual, and so is his priesthood, and so is his judgment, and his kingdom royal, and who are united there are the royal diadem, joined to the Lord in everlasting covenant, married in the spirit, where is no dissolution, but fruitful forever.

But all you who respect persons, cast the royal law of God behind your backs, and trample it under your feet, and make it of none effect. And all you that respect persons, are transgressors, and committers of sin, and judged with the royal law of liberty, which saith, so speak, and so do, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; and if you do so, you do well; but if you do respect mens persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors, and you that respect him that wears the gay clothing, and gold ring, and despise the poor, ye are the partial, and the judgers with the evil thoughts, and such are not heirs of the kingdom of promise, but the poor despised, rich in faith; who are in the law of liberty, respect no man's person, but it convinceth all that do. And who are in the faith, without respect of persons, for who are in respect of persons, are out of the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; and such are reprobate concerning the faith, being filled with unrighteousness, professing they know God, but in works they deny him, worshipping and serving the creature, more than the creator.

JAMES NAYLER.

TO ALL VAIN JANGLERS, IMITATORS, AND LICENTIOUS PERSONS, WHO ARE
NOT GUIDED BY THE SAME SPIRIT THAT GAVE FORTH THE SCRIPTURES,
THE OLD SERPENT'S VOICE, OR ANTICHRIST DISCOVERED,
OPPOSING CHRIST IN HIS KINGDOM.

By one who desires the redemption of souls out of satan's wiles, JAMES
NAYLER.

CEASE your vain janglings, you that take the scriptures to contend with against the truth, but live in your lusts; with a vain mind do you contend about the scriptures and saints conditions, but you have nought to do with them, you unholy ones; for holy men of God spake them forth, as they were moved by the holy ghost; and the kingdom of God consists not in words, but in power. Now all you who talk of the scriptures and saints conditions, but live not in them, you are shut out of the scriptures and kingdom of God, and are in the kingdom of the world, whose kingdom is in words, but not in life and power, who saith and doth not.

You have long covered yourselves by talking of the scriptures, and professing other mens conditions; but now the truth is appeared, and your deceit is laid open, and your covers are too narrow, for words can no longer hide you, for the righteous judge is risen to reward every one after their works, and not after their words. And you workers of iniquity of all sorts, you are shut out of the scriptures and kingdom of God, you that live in your hearts lusts, and in your own wills. And you unholy ones, what have you in the scriptures? they belong not to you, for they were holy men that spoke them forth. And you that are led by your carnal wisdom and reason, and not by the movings of the holy ghost, what have you in the scriptures, for they were given forth by the moveings of the holy ghost; and they condemn you and your ways, who are not guided by the same spirit that gave them forth.

And you who take them to plead for sin, and live in it, what have you to do in the scriptures, who use them quite contrary to the end for which they were given forth? for they were given forth by holy men, from the holy spirit, for holy ends, and they condemn you and

your practice, and you are shut out of them, who would use them to uphold the devil's kingdom, and your own lusts. You envious scorers, backbiters, and false accusers, you are shut out of the scriptures, and they condemn you. Swearers and liars, the scriptures have shut you out, and by them you are condemned. You drunkards, gluttons, whoremongers, and unclean persons, what have you to do to talk of the scriptures, which holy men gave forth, they witness against your filthy practices.

You covetous and proud oppressors, you are out of the scriptures and saints conditions, and are found amongst the heathen: you fighters, quarrellers and violent persons, who live in strife and contention, suing one another for carnal things, you are condemned by the scriptures, and shut out of them. You wanton lustful ones who live to the flesh in your sports and pleasures, you are witnessed against by the scriptures, and have no right in them: and you hypocritical professors of all sorts and forms, who have got the saints words and worship in notion and form, but live not the life of saints, nor led by that spirit that gave forth the scriptures, and by which the saints were guided and sanctified, you have nought to do with the scriptures, they were not given out to imitate and jangle upon, but to be fulfilled: not to talk on and live in the world's ways, words and customs, and fashions in your own wills, lusts and pleasures, for they that spoke them forth were come out of the world, and did witness against all the ways and worships of it; and they did not trade with other mens words from the letter, as some of you do; nor did they worship by imitating other mens practice, but by the eternal spirit were they guided into the spiritual worship, and by that spirit did they speak forth the scripture to the world, to formal professors, and to such as had denied the world, and had given themselves up to be guided by the holy spirit in holy ways: and they spoke their own conditions, and their own measures, holding forth to others, what they had received of God, and not what others had received; and their kingdom stood not in words, but in power.

And here are you shut out of the scriptures and their conditions, who say and do not, and your kingdom is in words, and not in life and power; you hypocrites, and formal imitators, who worship by what you imagine and conceive from other mens words, but have it not from the same spirit that they had, you are shut out of the scriptures, and they witness against you and your imagined ways and worships. You that preach, and pray, and not by the movings of the spirit of God, you are shut out of the scriptures, and your invented words and long prayers are condemned by them to be heathenish; and all your ordinances, your singings and sacraments, which are not in the same spirit, are condemned by the scriptures; and whatever you do in your worship to God, and not in the power and guiding of the same eternal spirit, the scriptures witness against you and your worship, and declare you to be led by the contrary spirit, which is not the same, and you are among the heathen, who worship in vain, and receive no acceptance from God, for you receive for doctrines the commandments of men, and your fear towards God is taught by the precepts of men, and not by the spirit, and what you have is by tradition; and here you are shut out of the scriptures; wherefore cease your tattling of other mens conditions out of the scriptures, and see what right yourselves have in them; and mind to see what you are, and what the saints were, and apply your own conditions to yourselves, and not other mens, nor the promises that belong to others. And cease your stealing, you thieves, that have found out other ways to climb up, and not in at the door by which the saints have always entered, for all that come in at the door witness against you; and your stealing words and forms, and by that spirit that leads in at the door, are you discovered to be thieves, and judgment is coming against you, and you shall restore four-fold for all you have stolen, and shall be brought to poverty for all your riches, and your first, shall be last of all.

And your hirelings and parish masters, who bear rule by your means over your hearers, what have you to do to talk of the scriptures, as to declare the statutes of

the Almighty, since you hate to be reformed, or to come into their condition that gave them forth: you trade in the letter for gain, but are not conformable to them that spake it forth; it was not given forth by any that made a gain of it for carnal ends to get riches; no, they that gave it forth bare witness against your generation, to be hirelings, covetous, proud, boasters, greedy dumb dogs, idol shepherds that could never have enough, belly-gods, such whose teachings never brought any to the knowledge of the truth; ravening wolves in sheep's clothing, who had the form but not the power. Now what have you to do with the saints conditions in the scriptures, to talk them over to people for money, you are shut out of them; cease your stealing that which was other men's, and take your own in the scriptures, which are the woes and plagues pronounced against your generation, by them who gave forth the scripture, and sell that to your hearers, for the saints conditions you are strangers to, and you have no inheritance in them, but are found without, amongst them who professed the letter, but were enemies to that spirit that gave it forth; and you are found doing the same works now, stirring up the powers of the earth against them in whom that spirit is manifest; as did your fathers, so do you, and fill up their measure, that upon you may come the sufferings of all the holy men of God.

And here you are shut out of the scriptures, and are ignorant of that spirit that gave them forth, and the ends for which they were written; and you take those promises that were given to holy men, and you apply them to such as live in filthiness; and those scriptures that were written to warn people from sin, you take and wrest to make people believe that they shall never be set free from sin while they live; and thus being ignorant of that spirit that gave forth the scriptures, you are led by a contrary spirit, and so contradict the holy spirit; and God in wisdom hath hid the mystery of the scripture from that spirit that acts in you, and hath shut it out, and you with it. And hence it is, that when you meddle with the scriptures, you are in such confusion, and set one scripture against another, and then twine

and wrest, and add to your own invented meanings to reconcile them again; but they who are guided by the same spirit that gave them forth, see your folly, and that the scriptures are at unity, and so are all that come into them, to live the life of them in their measures, but you are without the life of them, and your kingdom stands in words and not in power, and therefore is confused, and you lead into confusion all that follow you. Wherefore all you that fear the Lord, mind not words, but the power, and believe not men, because they run rambling up and down the scriptures, but see what right they have in them, which is no more than they live the life of them, for while you follow these, you are kept out of the kingdom of God, and feed upon words and wind, but the kingdom of God consists not in words, but in power and life. J. N.

THE OLD SERPENT'S VOICE; OR, ANTICHRIST DISCOVERED, OPPOSING
CHRIST IN HIS KINGDOM.

I am the light of the world, saith Christ, he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life; that is, the true light which enlighteneth every one that cometh into the world.^a

Saith antichrist, Christ is not the light of the world. nor doth he enlighten every one that cometh into the world, for that light which lighteth every one that cometh into the world, is not the light of Christ, but a natural light, and is not sufficient to lead out of darkness into the light of life.

Saith God, I give thee for a covenant to the people, for a light to the gentiles, and to them that sit in darkness, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth.^b

Saith antichrist, the gentiles, and they that sit in darkness, have not the light of Christ given to them, nor doth this light reach for salvation to the ends of the earth, but only to such as have heard the gospel, (which is the letter) and whom I have taught to understand the meaning of it by my study and learning.^c

^a John 8, 12. ^b John 1, 9. ^c Isa. 42, 6, 7. ^c Acts 13, 47.

Saith John, he that commits sin is of the devil, and for this purpose was the son of God manifest, to destroy the works of the devil.^a

Saith antichrist, you may commit sin and be of God, for sin (which is the work of the devil) is not to be destroyed in this world, but in the world to come, for all must have their failings while they are here.

Saith Paul, Christ gave himself for his church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, and that it should be holy without blemish.^b

Saith antichrist, that's error for any to witness to such attainments in this world, that any should be holy, glorious, sanctified, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, for all must be subject to sin while they are here, and be made holy and glorious after death.

Saith Paul, Christ hath by one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified, and that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; and for that end did Christ gift and send out his ministers for the perfecting of the saints, and to bring them up to his measure and fulness.^c

Saith antichrist, Christ hath perfected none, nor never shall any be made perfect while they live, for perfection cannot be attained to till after death in another world.

Saith John, he that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also to walk even as he walked; herein we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world; and as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

Saith antichrist, that's error for any to witness that holiness that was in Christ; for its sufficient that he was holy in his own person before he ascended, and if you can but believe in that holiness and profess it, though you never come to possess it, yet its sufficient to cover all your sins past, present, and to come, and it were high presumption for any to seek to be partakers of that

^a 1 John 3, 3. ^b Eph. 5, 25, 26, 27. ^c Heb. 10, 14. Col. 1, 28. Eph. 4, 11, 12, 13. 1 John 2, 6. 1 John 4, 17. 1 Pet. 1, 15.

holiness that was in Christ, or to be like him, for he was the son of God, and do you look to be sons of God? That were high presumption, for you must bear the image of the first Adam while you live in this world, and you must be conformable to the image of Christ in another world after death.

Saith Christ, God is a spirit, and he will be worshiped in spirit and in truth, for he seeks such to worship him. And you (that contend about places and forms) worship you know not what. And saith Paul, the word is nigh in the heart within, and God, whom you are to worship, is within;^a and Christ [the ordinance whom the father ordained for the way to his worship, and of whom all the outward ordinances were types] is within, and is the substance of all ordinances.^b

Saith antichrist, you must come to the house of God which is the church, for it's convenient, and was builded for that purpose; and the letter is the word in the bible, and not in the heart; and expounding and preaching this letter, by the help of learning, and sprinkling infants, and singing David's conditions in rhyme and metre, putting off your hats when you sing, these are the ordinances, and this is the worship, which is without, in forms and customs, and not that which is within in spirit.

Saith Paul, you may all prophecy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted;^c and if any thing be revealed to one that sits by, let the first hold his peace, for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace; and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, as in all the churches of the saints.

Saith antichrist, that was the order in the primitive times, but that prophesying is now ceased, and none shall now prophesy but such as are men of learning, and have been at the university, and have tongues, and study to fit them for that purpose, and have received orders either from the bishop, or are approved by some appointed by authority: and these shall be masters, and bear rule in every parish, none shall reprove or contradict what they say in public, nor speak any thing till

^a John 4, 21, 22, 23. ^b Rom. 10, 6, 7, 8. ^c 1 Cor. 3. ^c 1 Cor. 14, 31, 32, 33.

they have done, notwithstanding whatever be revealed to any that sit by, for we have a law, and by that law all that do shall be imprisoned, and proceeded against as disturbers of the peace.^a And though it was the manner of Christ and his apostles, to go into the temples and synagogues, disputing and alledging against them, who held up outward forms of worship and idols temples, and thereby gathered people out from them, into the inward worship in spirit; proving that to be the worship of God, and denying all other worship, yet these times are not as those were; for now people are all baptized and believers, and do profess Christ to be come, suffered and ascended, and what need any further? And we do not believe, that any now have the same spirit that Christ and his apostles had, nor the same commands; for they had an immediate call from God, which none now have; and though they have never such a call, yet let them not trouble us in our devotion, but keep them with their own disciples; for we care for no such company; and we do not come at them, and therefore why should they trouble us, and come to draw our hearers from us, and from the manner of worship we and our fathers have lived in these many years; and they are ill suffered in the nation, to sow division between the people and their ministers, by telling of our tythes and set maintenance, and that we ought to preach freely as the apostles did. And thus they seek not only our undoing, but our wives and children after we be dead.

Saith God, I will make a new covenant with you, and you shall not teach one another, saying, know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest, for I will write my law in their hearts, and put it in their inward parts, and they shall be all taught of God.^b

Saith antichrist, your law is the letter without and not in the heart, neither shall any know God, or his will, but by this rule without in the letter, of which I am a teacher, and by my meanings and expositions of it, shall you come to know, all that is to be known of God, and his will in this world, for the immediate teachings of God are ceased, and never any heard the voice of God since

^a Acts 17. 2. ^b Heb. 8.10, 11. John 6. 45.

the apostles, nor need any to look for it any more, for this teaching of mine is all that ever will be, and it is to continue to the end of the world; and all that deny it, or to be ordered by it, are hereticks, and are not to be suffered to live in the world.

Saith Christ, call no man master upon earth, neither be ye called master; for one is your master, even Christ and ye are all brethren; and if any man will be greatest among you, let him be servant to all; for it is the heathen that exercise authority, but with you it shall not be so.^a

Saith antichrist, that was spoken concerning the pride of the Pharisees; but you call me master, for I do not delight in it (in pride) yet it is fit there should be distinctions of persons amongst men, for thereby are people governed; and its the fashion of the country, and hereby you show your breeding and manners; and though God did forbid us to bow to, or worship any but himself alone, or to have the faith of Christ in respect of persons, for their pride of riches;^b yet this is not as theirs was, for this is but a civil respect in our bowing and worshipping, and it's but to differ them that are rich from the poor; and how can they bear rule without it? And it's decent, and of a good report in the world, and the custom of the nation; and it's a reproach for any to deny it.—And as for religion and obedience to God, it consists not in such trivial things as these are, that may be done or undone.

Saith God, thou shalt not covet; and covetousness let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh saints, for it is idolatry; and let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have, for he said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.^c

Saith antichrist, thou must live by thy wits, that God hath given thee, and this is not covetousness, but a provident care; and he that will not provide for his family is worse than an infidel; and if thou standest to wait upon God, and dost not help thyself by thy wits, both thou and thine may be poor enough: therefore first lay

a Mat. 23. 8, 10, 11. b James 2. 10, 11. c Eph. 5. 3. Col. 3. 5. Heb. 13. 5.

up for thyself and children, that you need not fear want, and then take thy rest, and thou mayest have time to serve God, and thy riches need not hinder thee, but further thee in his service.

Saith Christ, no man knows the father but the son, and he to whom the son reveals him. And I thank thee, O father! that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes.^a

Saith antichrist, that was in the time of Christ and his apostles, and then none knew the father, nor the things of the kingdom of God but by revelation, but now all revelations are come to an end, and none need to look for them any more; for it is now only they that have wisdom, prudence, and learning, that know God, and the things of his kingdom, as much as is to be known in these days. And all that would be wise, or religious, or would know any more than their neighbours, must come to them to learn; for they have books and studies, and the judgment of ancient fathers, and philosophers, how they came to know the things of God; and these are more like to know God and his secrets, than babes and fools.

Saith Christ, the harvest is great, but the labourers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the vineyard, that he may send forth labourers into his vineyard.^b

Saith antichrist, that was in the primitive times, when there were but few believed; and then there was no christian magistrate, to take care for propagating the gospel; and then they had their immediate call from God himself, and they heard his voice, and left all and followed Christ, and had their commission from God, and needed none from men; but what a vain thing were it to think for such a call now, as is immediate? That were to look for a miracle; but there is a mediate call now, by which all are called by commission from men; and such are called as are found fitted for that purpose, and have learning, are able to answer school questions, and have logic, and philosophy, and can dispute, and resolve doubts and questions, and they to whom God hath given all the power now, think it not fit to choose or

suffer such as God and Christ did choose, as fishermen, herdsman, and ploughmen, and such like, who have not learning, and the original tongues: for when God did choose such in old times, he furnished them with his own spirit instead of learning; but what a ridiculous thing would it be to look for such gifts now, when all are believers, and here are so many learned men in the nation to choose out of? And here is no need of such extraordinary calls or gifts in these times, as was then; for when Christ ascended, he gave gifts unto men, and appointed officers, and left it them to appoint others; and so one to appoint another to the end of the world: and he himself is set down at the right hand of God in Heaven, and meddles not with it: and so the apostles made bishops, and the bishops became popes, and the popes made cardinals, and they inferior bishops, and those became lord-bishops, and they made parsons, vicars and curates, and they are now become ministers, pastors, teachers; and so my ministers can derive their ordination by succession from the apostles; and what matter is it for the errors of the pope and bishops, that's not as they were ministers, but men?

Saith Christ to his ministers, freely ye have received, freely give; make no provision for your journey, neither take thought what to eat or drink, or what to put on; for the life is more than food, and the body more than raiment; and your heavenly father knows what ye stand in need of; and the workman is worthy of his meat.^a

Saith antichrist, it's true, they that received freely might well preach freely, but those free gifts are now ceased, and none come now to the ministry so easily, but are at great charge, they, or their friends, in learning at schools and universities; and if they must, when they have been at all this cost, preach freely, then who will bring up any to be ministers? And now they come to the knowledge of the mystery of godliness by much study, and they must have abundance of books; and all this cannot be done without preaching freely. And besides, in those times of the apostles they must needs preach freely, for there was no believing magistrates, to

^a Mat. 10. 8, 9, 10. Luke 12. 22, 23, 29, 30.

establish them in tithes, or such benefits as is now ; and if they would have had such things then, there was no law to get them by ; but we have ours established by a law, and by the law of the nation do we demand them, and not from the apostles example ; and whoever denies to pay them, denies the law and the magistrates, and therefore deserves to suffer by the law ; and though such suffer the spoiling of their goods, yea, the treble value of their tithes, yet they suffer as evil doers.

Saith God, thou shalt not add any thing to the words that I command thee, neither shalt thou diminish any thing therefrom ; for every word of the Lord is pure, and he that adds thereto shall be reprov'd, and found a liar ; and he that adds to the words of this book, I will add to him all the plagues written therein ; and he that takes ought therefrom, I will raze his name out of the book of life.^a

Saith antichrist, the scriptures are a mystery, and are given out darkly, and none can understand them as they are given out, for the scripture is not to be taken as it speaks, but according to the meaning of it ; which meanings are known to none but the learned, and are found out by comparing one scripture with another ; and by adding to them, or taking from them, they come to be reconciled, and the meanings found out, which cannot be by any other means ; and therefore they who ard to expound the scriptures, must have the help of learning, books and studies ; and by comparing the judgment of learned fathers one with another, the best expositions of scripture are found out, and owned, and all the rest refused. And this cannot be done but by adding or diminishing ; for none can infallibly say what is truth, but every one must declare it as he conceives and imagineth of it.

Saith Christ, in the old time it was said, thou shalt not forswear, for in the old covenant swearing in truth was an ordinance of God, but I say, swear not at all ; for what is more than yea and nay cometh of evil. And the apostle, who was come into the new covenant, and did witness the oath of God fulfilled, said, above all things, my

^a Deut. 4. 2. Pro. 30. 6. Rev. 2. 18.

brethren, swear not any oath whatsoever, lest ye fall into temptation.^a

Saith antichrist, you may swear the truth, and you will be believed the better; and for petty oaths, it's not so great a sin, and what needs so much strictness? And if God should take vengeance for every oath, who should be saved? And what is become of all your forefathers, who were not so scrupulous? Are they all damned?—And what if you be commanded to swear by the powers of the world, will you disobey them because Christ forbids it? For though the apostle forbids the saints to swear at all, yet Paul saith, men verily swear by the greater, and an oath to them is an end to all strife.

And thus antichrist brings the practice of men, who live in the world's customs, to be binding to the saints; as though Paul, by bringing a comparison from the practice of men of the world, did contradict the commands of Christ, and the rest of the apostles.

And thus the serpent, who deceived man at the first, by contradicting what God had said to Adam, doth still keep man in the fall by the same way; and this is that man of sin, the son of perdition, which opposeth God in what he saith, that thereby he may plead for sin. And thus he letteth, and keeps from the obedience to God, yea, and will let till he be taken out of the way: but he is now revealed by the brightness of the appearance of Christ in his saints, and can be hid no longer, and shall be destroyed by the sword of his mouth.^b

Now consider this, priest and people, that oppose the kingdom of Christ, and plead for sin, some by preaching and printing, some by persecuting with clubs, stones and prisons, some by railing, lying and false accusing, some by mocking and scorning. And now you are discovered by the light of Christ in all who are guided by it, to be those whom the God of this world hath blinded; and you know not what spirit you are of, neither can you see what it is that acts you thus in rage against the appearance of Christ in purity, and move you to stand up for the kingdom of sin, against those whom Christ hath sent out to cry out against it, and to foretell the destruc-

^a Mat. 5. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37. James 5. 14. ^b 2 Thess. 2. 3.

tion of it, and all that uphold it: wherefore repent, and turn in your eye to that in your conscience which is the light of Christ, to let you see what you are doing, and whom you stand for, that so you may be led no longer by that spirit of opposition, but may cast down your crowns at the feet of the lamb, who is now arisen to take the kingdom, lest he take you away with his grievous stoke; for if he fall upon you, he will grind you to pieces. Fear the Lord, ye heathen, who call yourselves christians, but know not God and his power: repent while you have time, now you are discovered and warned.

J. N.

A
SALUTATION

TO THE

SEED OF GOD:

And a call out of Babylon, and Egypt, from amongst the magicians, where the house of bondage is, and the imaginations rule above the seed of God, the cause of all blindness and condemnation.

Also that which is perfect made manifest, even everlasting righteousness, which endures for all generations, who will receive it, and believe therein, which is Siou's glory, Christ with his life and power made manifest in mortal flesh.

With the way to him, set forth mostly for such as groan for freedom from the power of sin; but may be serviceable to all who love his appearance.

Also a testimony from Christ, what he is in this world, and where he is; written to such as are imagining such a Christ as they would have, but cannot receive the same that is from the beginning, and in his own way manifest.

Also a suit to such rulers, magistrates, and governors, as have not wholly hardened their hearts, and stop the ear against the voice of the spirit, that they may hear, and their souls may live, and be established a blessing to the nations.

Written in love to all your souls, by him who is called
JAMES NAYLER.

We have found him whom our souls love;
And greater is he in us, than he that's in the world,

A SALUTATION TO THE SEED OF GOD, &c.

ARISE, shine forth, thou seed of the covenant, to which the promise is, for thy glory is come; and with judgment is the Lord arisen to redeem his chosen, and all that turn to him shall be covered with righteousness, even that which before the world was, and above all the world is, which is perfect for evermore.

Put off your rags you that have covered yourselves with your wisdom, and let that which is imperfect be done away. How long will it be e're you hearken to the Lord, that you may partake of the best, and receive of the Lord freely, that your souls may be satisfied, that no leanness there may be, nor crying out of wants. Can

the Lord be pleased with that righteousness, which that of God in your consciences declares to be imperfect? Or will he accept that which is none of his own? Consider of this, you professors of the nation, who pray, and weep, and seek, but find not that which gives peace, nor reconciles you to God. Without faith in Christ it's impossible to be well-pleasing to God, who is your peace; and that's not faith in Christ that lays hold of an imperfect righteousness, for that's your own: but that's the righteousness of God, which by faith in Christ alone is freely received, and the least measure is perfect. This is the gift that comes from above, which takes up the creature above all other. That which we have received we declare, and we can do no other, for in him is our glory, and this is and will be our boldness in the day of judgment, that as he is, so are we in this world, herein is our love perfected in him, because we are of him, and one with him, in his righteousness; and that measure we have of it is freely ours without upbraiding, and an inheritance we have in it, wherefore we leave all to follow him who is our fulness, and cannot but call to all who love their souls to come to us, knowing his freeness.

And your labour is to no purpose, you who are kindling sparks, with which we have lain long in sorrow, and we know the end of your labour, and your fruit is cursed, though in the sweat of your brows you bring it forth; all you that say you must do what you can, and Christ will do the rest; you must do some, and Christ must do other some; this is your own way, and not the way of God; for here the linsy-woolsy garment is seen, which is forbidden; for in the way of God, Christ is all, in all; but here is part in you, and part in him, [as you imagine] and you are two, and there is sin, for while you live, sin lives, and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and have not the truth in us: but where he alone lives there is no sin; for the life of Christ is the death of sin, as it is manifest, and for this purpose we know he was manifest to take away our sins, and in him is no sin, for by the appearance of his life are we translated into his likeness, which is our boldness, and he that hath this hope, purifies himself even as he is

pure; for we see him as he is, our life, our hope, our strength and way, which is pure, and perfect; and as he is, so he makes our way perfect; and this is our peace, that we have nothing but what we have received, and it is his own, and he cannot deny himself, who is faithful, and with his faithfulness are we made faithful to him; and the least measure of him which comes from above, is present power, and in him we move and have our being, where nothing is impossible. The day of his power is come whereby we are made willing, in whose will his people ever took pleasure; and whatever he doth is good for us, and his wondrous works we see, which have been told of, how with his own arm he takes the kingdom in us, which so much we talked on when we did not know him, nor his power, but [with you] put the good day far off us to another generation, when the Lord was near us, though we did not know him, but looked for the kingdom of God without us, which was within us unregarded, therefore did we sit down in sorrow, being out of that way, where rest was placed, and did not see him who was afore ordained for good works, wherein we should walk, in which by him we should be exercised, therefore we could never come to be satisfied, but our conscience still accusing us, in our best performances, yea, fears and doubtings were our best condition; yet were we like the false prophets speaking peace one to another, where God had not spoken peace in our consciences; thus healing the hurt deceitfully, as the world at this day is doing, crying peace, when the bonds of iniquity are still standing, and you are servants in evil works, where the prince of this world is ruler and guide: and what peace can you have while that kingdom stands, and you in it? And this kingdom must stand till his power be known who is appointed to take it, and bind the prince of it.

Wherefore come out of death all that will have life, and make no longer covenant with it. How can you prevail [who take the serpent's counsel] to overcome the devil's kingdom? And this you do, who search into the things of God with your fallen wisdom; so are you kept in labour to no purpose, never can get from under the

works of condemnation, therefore you conclude, none can ever come to be wholly free while they live, and so make the blood of Christ of none effect, which we do witness doth cleanse from all sin, and he saves to the uttermost all that come unto God by him; the thing which Hagar's seed doth most oppose, and scoff at, but that wherein we triumph above the world, and image makers, that our God is a saviour from that which none can be free from who are without him, though they make many likenesses of him from the letter, the form without the power, 'tis to no purpose.

Take notice you several sorts of worshippers, who worship a God afar off whom you know not; which if you did, there would not be so much contention about him, what he is, and the way of his worship: nor can you know him till he be revealed in you; nor can he be known in you, but as you come to be cleansed, for with him dwells no uncleanness. Thus you that plead for your sins, plead against your own souls, which cannot be satisfied but by his presence, who is not seen present where sin is standing.

And by unbelief do you cut your souls off, while you say you can never be cleansed till after you be dead; here hath the devil deceived you, and so far prevailed with you, to enter into covenant with him, while you live to serve him. And being blinded, this you know not, that you have made covenant with hell and death, which by God is cursed and troubled: that I know and own, that troubles your peace, and sets you on seeking; but the way you seek is from another principle, which is selfish, and shall never obtain peace for you.

He that troubles all that's out of his way, guides and gives peace to all in his way; the same is a spirit the world knows not, blows where it listeth, therefore never found but in his own way and will: you who seek him in the will of man, there cannot find him; nor can your ministers made by the will of man tell you of him, where he is, or the way to him; for the new birth is not born of that generation, nor of that will, nor of that seed is it begotten, therefore not known to them; therefore they themselves, with all their seeking, not having

found him, can do no less than tell you, that he will never appear more to his people, that which is written is all the word, and what others have seen is all the knowledge that any need ever to look for, while the world continues; and what others have done, that's all you have to talk on for your righteousness.

And thus the way of God's walking and working in his people, is wholly excluded from the face of the earth. And a faith you have devised and set up besides it, if not wholly against it; so that now to witness good works is counted popery, [though all that come to God are fore-ordained to walk therein, and to that end new-created.]

Thus are not men afraid to deny the work of God and his righteousness, and yet say you are his workmanship, and that you are in God and Christ, but out of his works, and must be in the works of the devil, yet God is your father; yet in this confusion none must tell you, that you are in Babylon, for then you say they judge you; nor that they that teach you thus are ministers of antichrist, for that you call railing; though to such the spirit of Christ hath ever used it.

Thus hath the devil set up his work, and fenced it with the name of the highest faith in the world; and who is under this faith, though they sin, yet they say, they can never fall finally, nor totally, [though the whole man be found in the action] nor is your sins like others, because you say you are believers, though both they and you are in one action and nature. So that faith which you profess is become a defence for sin: but our faith is that which overcomes sin, and so to the good work is not reprobate. And thus you set up a profession without power. But did you mind the light of Christ that never changes, by it to be taught in spirit, these deceits would soon be discovered, and you could not walk in darkness, by which light we see that he that commits sin is of the devil, and is fallen from God, whatever be his profession; and there can be no greater fall than to fall [from that which should keep him] into the devil's power, to act according to the devil's movings, and to bring forth his begetting, and such we know are his children.

With the light we see that he that is in the way of God is in holiness, and he that is not, is in the way of the devil; and that he that's in God, is out of self, and there sin is blotted out and forgotten; but he that's a self, is in sin, though he be praying, or ploughing: with it we see the life of Christ is pure, and who lives any other life it's polluted, though never so finely covered: with it we see the way of God is perfect, and you, whose way is sinful, are in the way of condemnation.

With the light we see him that hath not the word abiding in him, hath not life, though he knows the letter and can preach it; and that he that hath not that faith that overcomes sin (in its measure) hath not the true faith, and that he that hath not heard his voice knows him not, and he that hath not seen him, hath no fellowship with him, and whose heart is filthy can do neither.

With the light we see that who is in the work of God, is in the good work, and he that is not, is in the evil, and whatever he doth is abominable: and that he that hath not the righteousness of God hath his own, which is imperfect; but who hath that of God, hath that which perfectly satisfies both God and man, so faras with it the creature is covered.

With it we see him that hath faith, without this work, to be as a body without a spirit, which can do nothing, and that faith is vain that's without power. And as we see with that which is eternal, so we judge, and the world receives not our testimony, because the carnal mind is enmity, and cannot be subject, nor can the natural man receive the things of the spirit; only those who mind the light of the spirit, discern and own our testimony, and receive our witness and his power who is true, and so become willing to follow that truth that leads to freedom.

How long have you talked of being a willing people in the day of his power? but do vain words save you while you are in the power of darkness, and your own wills standing? Are you a willing people for God, when you see with the light of Christ in your hearts, what you ought to do, and what you ought to forbear, but your own wills withstand it, and lead you into cove-

tousness, pleasures, and wantonness, and selfishness, contrary to it? And what power is this which acts you in these ways of unrighteousness, for which your hearts condemn you? This is the power of darkness, which the light of Christ in your consciences bears witness against.

And thus you have got words instead of power and life; and you think salvation is in them, crying the ordinance of God. But did God ever ordain a talk without power and life? Is not Christ the ordinance, and the end of all ordinances, who is the way, the truth, and the life? Is there any ordinance without him in the gospel? Or will he accept your performances which ye have taken on you from imitation of others which he leads not to in spirit? Is not he that commands and he that gives power one, who in spirit give out his will to every generation, which they who followed imitations only would never own, nor could he ever own their service, whose fear and worship is taught by the precepts of men, and not by his spirit within? Is not he the sabbath, circumcision, baptism, the supper, &c. are not all these in him? And doth not he minister all these in spirit to every one that comes to him? and so the shadow is swallowed up in the substance the end of all shadows, which is life indeed, but the figures are not the life, nor can any have the life but who comes to the end of them; for the outward makes nothing perfect, but the inward doth, all that come unto it, and abide in him.

When will you be weary of your vain imaginations? Of a day to come wherein you must have power? How long have you been deceived with these vain thoughts? Was not this it you talked on, twenty, thirty, forty or fifty years since, yet now farther off from it than ever. And are not these vain words, though you cannot bear it to have them so called? When will you be ashamed of your vain profession, you that run to seek God in the high places amongst the hirelings, running from God, to seek him where he is not? And is not this vain profession when nothing is brought forth but wind, nor is he found by you in that wherein your fruit is? Those who

had the form and not the power, could never find him therein: then how should you speed any better that join with them who have neither? For in such a form you worship as in which God never appeared, but Christ and his ever witnessed against, and doth to this day, yet will not you be instructed but in your own wills and ways you will stand, though you find nothing but emptiness in it; and yet you talk of being a willing people in the day of his power? But when will you have it present who abide in that way where both will and power is rejected. Free will thereto, you have not, but to follow satan, who hath begot at will in you that God never created, contrary to God in all things; and where that will rules, it will not own his power, therefore is the day of his power put afar off from you; but the will of the devil and his power is present, and acts you at his pleasure, and you are offended that any should witness being set free from it.

Thus you are suffered to please your vain minds, the day to talk on, but the night and deeds of darkness you must walk in, else your old master is highly displeased; and if any call you to the light, he says it's delusion: and as for freedom from sin, or the way to perfection, that's most dangerous heresy and delusion.

And thus he makes you most afraid of freedom, least any of you should believe in the son which leads to it; for the devil knows, if he can but keep you from believing it, you are sure from ever coming to it; for as is every man's faith, so shall be his freedom. Thus you stand afar off, and cry take heed of delusion and deceiving, when you have nought but your sins to be deceived of; nor can you say you have ought in you that is pure, but that which you deny in your conscience, which is a witness against you; and this is the cry of all who are, deceived already, in all forms in the world: but these who have the spirit, that can try all things, wax bold as a lion, and will not receive nor hold fast any thing but that which is good, that none can take from them.

The heathen were ever afraid to be spoiled of their idols, and so are you of your images you have set up,

and formed from others, every one according to your own wills. If shadows and likenesses could save, then would it be found in these nations, who have of all sorts, and statures, tall and with heads of gold some of them, which you zealously worship, and compel others also who know no better. And this is that they serve for, but they cannot save you, only they serve you to contend about, and keep you doing, least you should wait upon God alone, and be saved from your sins, and then the devil's kingdom would be broken, wherefore he feeds you with a profession, and form without power. And of likenesses you may choose from one to another, yet all in his kingdom of sin and imperfection, as long as you live, that's his limit, and for no less time will he have his covenant; and you are willing to enter into it with him, and plead for it, exceedingly mad against any that break it, or believe in him that redeems from it, nay so blind and deaf are you, that if any have found freedom, you cannot abide to hear them declare it; and the end of Christ's coming must not be preached, nor his covenant that is pure and without sin, as he is that made it; and so each covenant is like its master.

And this we do witness and see now at present, which you know not, who look not for it till after death, therefore sin must stand in that covenant, because you obey not the covenant of light, as God hath ordained. And the light is in the world where all are sinners, but none have the life, but who receive the light and join to it, and are led out of the world by it; to such sheep Christ is keeper, who follow him out of uncleanness, and for such he is become an undertaker, the strong man to bind and cast out, who believe that he will do it for them; but the swine he keeps not, the shepherd they will not follow, there the devil enters and hath power, and into the sea must they run headlong.

Take heed carnal professors, whose religion looks downward into the earth, the sea is next, and the place is steep. And you have nought to keep you, who deny the life of purity and perfection, which we have in the holy God, as all ever had who lived in him, and in him is truth and freedom; but a lie there is in all your likeness-

es, and you are blind and will not see it, all you who have a God and Christ, and a worship which doth not make the comets thereto perfect, nor set you above the devil, nor overcome his temptations. Your God and king we know, which keeps you in the earth, which you will curse if ever you look upward; your peace we know, and the end of it, your kingdom with all its glory; when from this world you are taken, there is your parting, when he shall break your covenant whose covenant you have broken, and would not hear him, though you pretended still to see him.

That's his call, which in your consciences lets you see you have lost him; which, did you wait in it, would lead you to him, but erring from it, you are out of his way and counsel, and all other ways art to no purpose. His light is that which searcheth your hearts in secret, nor any other judge you in private; yet from that you will be running, to ask counsel of them who know not your conditions; so instead of God you confess to men that cannot judge you, nor help you; while you go to the natural you leave the spiritual, and so with natural words you feed the natural comprehensions, but the spiritual man feeds not at that fountain, for it's the spiritual that thirsts, which not being minded, the natural runs and feeds above it; and this being above, you cannot receive the food of the spirit, therewith to be reconciled and quickened to God: nor is that fed that death hath passed over, nor out of death is it raised; but that which lives in you is for death, and by feeding on that wisdom the vail is thickened, and the eternal is out of your knowledge; yet you say, God is a spirit, and teaches in spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit; but you cannot endure to hearken to any thing of God within you, nor turn to that spirit.

How blindly are you led with your blind guides? Is not that which is spiritual within? Or, can it be known any where else? Is God known by hearsay? Then who is it that knows him not? Can the carnal eye see God, or the carnal ear hear him? Then should not his ministry be to the spirits in prison, to open the blind eyes, and to unstop the deaf ears, yea, where the carnal

is open? But this you know not, who have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, and hands which never handle the word of life; yet would you be teaching others that which you never saw nor heard, and to this teaching you would limit others.

Paul was sent to open the blind eyes, yet was he sent to those who had eyes as you have, with which they could see to stone and whip him, and ears to hear him, and call what he said heresy and blasphemy, as you do, and as ever the carnal judged of the spiritual, who have not an ear to hear what the spirit saith.

O unwise people! You have but one thing that lest you see your evil, yet will you not turn to that for teaching; that eye you love not which lets you see your darkness. You cry, you have nothing that's good in you, yet will you not own that which lets you see it is so.— And thus you keep covenant with darkness, though death and destruction be the end of it, but the light which shines in darkness you regard not, that's far beyond your comprehension, nay, it's the least seed in you, which we know is the seed of the kingdom, trodden under foot by the kingdom of the world: therefore nothing else leads out of the world, but that whose kingdom is not of it, and with this seed is the covenant; which seed you know not, who take pleasure in the flesh, that's of another kingdom, to which is no covenant but death and hell; yet you talk of Abraham, and his covenant and promise, but that in Abraham, in which the covenant was established, was that which led him out of the world, wherein he became a stranger and wanderer, as that seed ever is, which you call vagabonds, persecute and imprison, you that have rule in this world, shewing that you are not of that seed that entertains strangers, nor in that covenant, where all are strangers and pilgrims in this world; nor do you own that which would divide you from this world, being uncircumcised in heart, which to be is the seal of Abraham's faith. And so you whose life is in the earth, are far off from Abraham's bosom, faith and covenant, which is only to his seed, not to the seed of evil doers; not to the seeds which are many, but to one, which is Christ. So in the world, out of

Christ: and out of Christ, out of God's covenant; for his promises are all yea and amen to them that are in Christ Jesus, but not to them that abide in the world.

They who own him as king cannot want the promise, neither can you have it who abide in the world; therefore you apply the words, but want the life, which is the power; nor can your literal promises suit your condition, nor save you from satan's power; but as all others, who think salvation to be in the letter; so do you deny the leading and guiding of the spirit, in which the power is, therefore the light you will not follow, neither can you believe it to be sufficient; and he that denies the light, cannot own the Lord of life. So you are ignorant of God and his way, in which he makes himself known to his people: and so take up your rest in outward observations, set up and upholden in the wills of men, and for such traditions you are zealous, and strongly contend for them, but the law of God written in your own hearts you make of none effect, while you deny to be ruled according to it: yet you say, we are in the new covenant, when you are in the old traditions; and what you know is from others. But the least in that covenant knows him and his presence, and witness him true according to his promise, ever manifesting his power, to undertake for us against all our enemies, a present help in time of trouble, and we know him in whom we have believed, where he is, and the way to him, having seen the glory of his kingdom, and the powers of the eternal world, the house wherein are many mansions, yet the lowest place is pure, for which the Lord alone prepares his people and their way, which the creature cannot do of himself, only Christ doth it where self denied, and self will; for by the will of man comes no promise, nor obtains that will any performance.

So he begets both the will and the deed, which you know not where your own wills are standing, by him not forgotten, who in your wills make a profession, and in the same wills contend for it, with which you can fight, and sue, and trade in the world, and heap together, and what you will you pray and ask for, and grudge if you be not satisfied. But if you compass your desires in

that will, the lust catcheth the gift, but you forget the giver. So that mercies become a curse to you, which to those who in the will of God stand are a blessing; which will of God is to keep the heart and eye to the creator and giver: and if you receive not the giver, the gift is nothing that satisfies, because the virtue and fulness is wanting, whereby the gift is sanctified.

Thus is God prized and praised in his own will, a sacrifice forever accepted; therefore Christ must not be offered up in his own will, but in the will of the father, Matth. 26. 39. And in that will he had power to lay down his life, and to take it up again. Thus he is become our example, whom we delight in the same will to follow; which you that read this in the scripture with your own wills cannot: therefore to you the cross is preached, which must be taken up e'er you can follow the example of Christ.

This is the stumbling stone and rock of offence God hath laid to prove you, who say you love God, and say, thy will be done in earth, but love your own will better, as your practices witness to your face daily, when his will is your sanctification, but yours is pollution, and to live in uncleanness, against which he hath given testimony, witness that in all your consciences which is pure, declaring daily to your faces that he consents not to your sins, nor takes delight in your destruction; and here God's love is tendered, and your love is tried. God so loved the world that he hath given his son a light into the world, that whosoever believes and follows him, shall not abide in death and darkness, but shall have the light of life. And this we know, who love his appearance, and that he hath loved us first; and in that love we follow him, and call to all to come to it. But how do you answer this love to his, who abide in the love of the world, where the father's love dwells not, nor with this light will you be led out of the love of the world, to where his love dwelleth, thereof to be partakers; yet you will talk of it where it is not; and these vain words cannot save you.

God is light, and in him is no darkness at all, and if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, then have we

fellowship with him, and the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. But what's this to you who walk in darkness, not cleansed? Nor do you believe that ever you can be whilst you live; yet would not you be called unbelievers, though that faith that purifies the heart you do not own: yet, say you, we believe we shall be cleansed after we be dead, in another world: so your faith must work hereafter, but is dead at present; such a faith as never was professed by any true believers you read of in the scriptures: but that faith we witness which overcomes this world, and this is present power, as the saints have found it, and born witness of it, that God was faithful, who had given them a measure, above which no temptation befel them; but your gift is to come, so temptation prevails for the present, and you cannot own them where it does not. Thus you put far from you the good day of the Lord, and his power, which now is present where he is received and believed; and by such he is praised. who by faith are redeemed from the pollutions of this world (the strange land wherein they were captivated) into freedom, where Sion's song is sung, which you cannot learn whilst unredeemed.

And here see your praises, which arise from a vain mind in your own wills and imitations, but not from a soul redeemed, quickened, and set free from the power of sin and temptation: so your praises are not living praises, nor from a living principle of the living God, but from that principle where death reigns, and the seed of God is in prison; so you praise you know not what, who are still unredeemed from bondage: but where redemption is witnessed, there that seed is raised, the bonds of death are broken, the way of life is found, and this being known in the life, then with understanding God is praised, and with the same spirit which he hath raised, which only with God is accepted, without respect of persons: and here the works of God praise him, and in his saints he is glorified, and admired in all who are raised above the graves, who are in him, and see his work. And this church is rightly gathered, who out of sin, death and darkness is brought into God, who is holy, with whom dwells no unclean thing.

Here are the pure praises, where the sons of God sing together, having the psalm given of the father; these praises are pure which from him come, and to him return freely, but this is not known to the sons of bondage, nor believed by you; therefore you sit down in the shadow empty, and form without power, and the presence of God you know not, who take your rest in fleshly forms, that eye cannot see him, nor know him. Thus in your sins you perish, for want of his knowledge, who is our life eternal, and to you is freely tendered, but by your unbelief denied, and so his love rejected.

All you that are in the world, who lie in wickedness, God so loveth you, that he hath sent his son into the world to you, a witness against the world, and the deeds of it, that they are evil; but all that own and follow him into the good work he leads them, and out of the evil he keeps them; and that by his light, which in your consciences shines in the midst of darkness, which you comprehend not with your dark minds, nor sensual wisdom, yet a faithful witness is it against your deeds of darkness, declaring your end, and death upon your life, and sorrow and howling upon your laughter, condemning your vain pleasures and inventions, with which you spend your precious time, which should be redeemed, and not spent unprofitably, which with the light the saints and redeemed ones are led to, to redeem the time. And this is our diligence and delight in; but yours is to spend it, shewing a contrary nature and leader, a contrary delight in a contrary kingdom, with whom you are joined, and to whom you are fashioned according to the course of this world, and the prince and power of it, which rules in his children, where disobedience is born and brought forth.

And thus you are united into that nature which the devil is the prince of, and wrath and woe the end of, and so God is justified herein, that you who despise the riches of his light in Christ Jesus, should be left in darkness, therewith to be guided, and in chains reserved till the great day, in which you shall be judged by the light now denied, with your carnal reason, prudence and wisdom, from which God hath hid the things of his kingdom, in

all generations, and that is darkness, even your wisdom, and prudence which you judge withal, which is most sought and prized by you who deny the light of Christ; and this wisdom when it speaks calls light darkness, and darkness light; so did they ever who with it judged.

And this is your condition who deny the light of Christ, and say it's not sufficient, but prefer your comprehensions and imaginations above it, and that was ever it with which people resisted the counsel of God against themselves: and this is his counsel, and all you know of him, that which is manifest in you, which moves against sin and wickedness, and would lead out of it if you did it follow. The same that condemns you for sin when you have done it, the same would lead out of it, and prevent it before it be acted, and so keep out of condemnation.

And now honestly consider, if you have not such a counsellor, who is with you at all times, and faithful to you in shewing the evil, to which you are unfaithful, when you forget it, and turn from it to your self ends; and the righteous pure way he shows you with the light in your conscience, which you reject for earthly pleasures, and know when you do it; yet will you pray that God will show you his way, and make you wise to salvation: but when he hath freely done it, you will not walk in it, nor own such wisdom, because it comes contrary to your own wills; yet you will say, the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, yet will you not own that which is foolishness to the world, to guide you out of it, though there be nothing else appointed to do it, but that which is contrary to it; thus in words you confess him, but in works deny him, and his counsel: yet you say, wherein do we deny him? Do not we profess his name and covenant, and wait for his righteousness thereby to be saved? I say, it serves you to talk on, therewith to cover you, while you are serving the other master, the devil, and the world; but his covenant you put far from you, his name, and his righteousness whereby we are redeemed.

What covenant have you, who deny the light of Christ to guide you? Was not he given for an everlasting

covenant of light, both to Jew and Gentile? And in his light all that knew him were guided, according to the several administrations both of law and gospel.— And when they turned from his light in spirit, to mens teaching from the letter, then they set up carnal worships instead of spiritual obedience, then they became wise in their own eyes, and zealous for their customs, but by him was rejected, who is worshipped in spirit. And with you it is the same now, though you cannot see nor believe it no more than they did when they were told of it by them who in the light walked, and stood in his counsel, which all errors discover; they made the law of God void through their tradition, walking after their fathers; so do you that law God hath written in your heart, by following your companions and learned rabbies; they said, and did not, and so do you also; nay herein you exceed them, who have a higher profession, but less practice: they did not believe him come, who is to fulfill all righteousness for and in all that believe and follow him; but this Christ you profess, and the scripture that so witnesses of him, yet are you farther from it than ever they were, both in practice and opinion; they kept to the letter in forms of their worship, though they had lost the life and power, but you have left the letter, and lead one another in your inventions: so that you have no plain scripture for your worship performed by you in your idols temples. And for your opinion of God's righteousness you far exceed them: they put it from them to another generation, waiting for him to come who was appointed king of it, asking when it should come, shewing a desire to see it; but you have put it wholly from you into another world; and if any have found it, and its power and purity, and bear witness of it, whereby the body of sin is destroyed, and the soul freed, and the creature redeemed from committing sin, your faith believes it to be the greatest blasphemy in the world; nay, you dare not come near it, lest you should be infected, but consult how to banish it out of the nations, as an error not to be tolerated in the world.

Thus you profess a redeemer, but he must be a man whose redemption must be of another world, and there

must he work his work, but the old work of the devil must stand in this world; yet the more to blind you, and that you may the more blind others, he sets you on talking, that Christ is your righteousness, when you never knew him so in you, who is stronger than the God of this world to bind him, and take you out of his kingdom, and break that covenant, whose faith is, that you must be subject to him whilst you live in this world, which is such a faith and covenant as none ever professed who believed in the name of Jesus, at which every knee bows who hath his name, and he that bears that name departs from iniquity, and bears testimony to his righteousness, here in this world, in the midst of the untoward and unrighteous generation of this dark world, that so God may be glorified in his creatures, by his light shining, and his righteousness reigning, above the unrighteous principle of the devil, which he hath begotten in the untoward nature; but in such the devil is denied and disowned before the world, where God is obeyed; and such are his servants, sons and daughters, who obey him and wait upon him, that they may bring to light what he works in them, even that which none else can work but he alone that is pure, nor can any bring it forth, but by his power. And thus his works praise him in the gates of the wicked, where the floods of ungodliness do most swell and rage, even then in his people doth this kingdom stand in righteousness and peace, and joying in holiness.

And this we witness to be that covenant, and that power by which we are entered into that inheritance which is eternal, and are made partakers of the divine nature; which nature is righteous, merciful and just, meek and patient, faithful and diligent to the obedience of the cross, long-suffering, full of love, moderation and temperance, and in all things thereby are transformed into his holiness, so far as we are entered into, and abide in this covenant, so that we can truly say, here he is all, and self is nothing, but abhorred because it is polluted, the eye being now open that's only taken with affection to that which is holy; and with this eye we see you, your name, your covenant and your righteousness,

all which lie under the power of darkness. Is not that light which is in you become darkness, who have your way to seek without you? What name is in you, when the serpent's seed is still unbruised, who is head and rules in you? Where the name of Jesus is, the devils tremble and bow, as God hath appointed, and they that know his name do witness. What is your righteousness, who bring forth that which is imperfect, which with the light of the covenant is condemned? Is this the righteousness of Jesus, which doth not satisfy God and man, being witnessed by that in the conscience?

And now you may see what it is you profess in this world, and in what stead it will stand you in the day of evil, which is condemned already with that in your consciences: but you use to say, that the righteousness of God you look for hereafter, to be covered with it at the day of judgment, but not in this life. I say then, what's this you are now doing, which you are here preaching, pressing and practicing, whose is this righteousness? Is it either God's, or your own self-righteousness? Which if it be God's, it endures forever, but if not, it's abomination, whatever it seems to you, whose eye is blinded, and so profess, and practice, and press an abominable sacrifice, and know not that you do evil; for this I say, better no righteousness than that which is not God's for such is spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, and the long prayers of such are abomination, and they receive the greater damnation, and of such Christ saith, publicans and harlots take the kingdom before them. But you say, must we not pray then? I say, wait for the spirit of prayer, which only is heard, and without which none know what to pray for; and with that prayer which helps the infirmities, and gives the understanding: only such are answered in what they pray for. What effect hath thy prayers which are abomination? Doth God hear a contrary spirit? Thou that delightest in wickedness, God will not hear that prayer, that's out of the covenant, and thou art in that nature that God hath cursed from him, and it's in vain for thee to bless it. And this is the cause why nothing you do is accepted, because it is performed in the diso-

bedient cursed nature, and there is Cain's sacrifice, and Esau's prayers and tears. And you that abide in that nature, are of those who said, why have we fasted and prayed, and thou hast not regarded? You call, but receive no answer: but did you but mind that in your conscience which is pure, you would see how often he hath called to you, and checked you for sin, but you have not answered: there might you read the cause why you call, but he doth not answer; as he hath said, because I called, and you would not answer, therefore when you cry, I will not answer.

And thus it is with you who observe the outward worships, but mind not the spirit which is given to profit withal in the worship; and though all have a measure, yet you that hide your talent, cannot pray with the spirit, nor with the understanding; and so your fellowship is with the form, but not in the power; with men in words, but not with God; and so your times are in your own hands; and you have resolved them before hand; and you have a time to pray, and a time to play; a time to abstain from your lusts, and a time to fulfil your lusts; a day to abstain from the world, and a day to conform to the world; and thus not being guided with that spirit which is before all, to lead and bring you out of time, you are still in observations, and your times of religion, and your times in the world; your customs in religion, and your customs in the world, are both in your own will, and corrupt nature, and so your prayers are abomination, and your ploughing sin: but the times of sons and daughters are not in their own hands; and this we have learned of Jesus in spirit not to please ourselves, nor be men-pleasers, but to be obedient to another principle, which moves contrary to the will of men, for him we witness, who is not born after the will of man, but which the fleshly will of man could never own, who by the wills of men ever suffered, where he is born into the world; and the same this day is manifest, a seed contrary to the seed of evil-doers, and a righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the world, that which is amongst the greatest professions; and this is that holiness without which none shall see God.

But, say you, this is that righteousness we believe in, and by which we are justified, by that blood which was shed at Jerusalem, and by that obedience that was in him, and by that holiness; but that the want of his righteousness in us, or that want of Christ or his blood in us can hinder our justification, that we deny, and look upon it to be heresy and false doctrine; for it is Christ without us that hath satisfied for sin, and not Christ in us; and his blood without us, and his righteousness without us; and his faith and patience, meekness and sufferings, hope, and love, and obedience, &c. it's these without us that whoever believes in shall be saved, and by this faith the ungodly is justified.

To which I say, he that believes not in Christ who suffered at Jerusalem,* and his obedience and righteousness, and that he bare our sins in his own body on the cross, and trod the wine press alone, and alone was well-pleasing to the father, and that in him alone redemption is placed, and wrought by him, with much more which may be truly said of him;^a I say, whosoever believes not this, cannot be saved, neither can he, without faith in him, ever come to receive Christ within him, working and witnessing the same in spirit, as is declared in the letter: nor can he come to witness him that's greater in him, than he that's in the world, giving him victory over the devil, sin, and the world, because God hath placed all power in heaven and earth in him; and without faith in him who is that power, none can come to it, nor receive it, but in him whom God hath freely given it; nor can any have him, and be without it, all the promises of life and salvation being in him yea and amen.

But now you that make the receiving of him to stand in a bare confessing with the tongue, when the heart believes not unto righteousness, and that this is that faith, a persuasion from the letter, or from the knowledge of others, that Christ died at Jerusalem, and rose again, and from thence conclude, that all shall be saved, and are true believers, that profess this faith, though

*Where known:
a Mark 16 16,

they come not to the fellowship of his sufferings and resurrection in themselves, nor to witness his life manifest in their mortal flesh, nor the body of sin put off, nor to be washed with the blood of Christ, nor baptized into his death, to be dead with him to sin, and alive with him to righteousness, and true obedience to the father, as true believers witness in their measures.

I say, you that say that a bare persuasion or outward confession is that faith that justifies the ungodly without Christ in them; then what are you doing when you say, stand off me, for I am more holy than thou, and are gathering from them, who all believe with this faith as well as you, only they differ from you in other practices, and some open sins, and the like? And why have not the greatest drunkards, and swearers, or whoremongers, as good right to Christ and church fellowship as you have? Or why do you hinder them from that which you call the seals, or sacraments, seeing that faith in Christ is the ground of interest in him, to all that belong to Christ?

Do not you according to your own principle exclude believers even of the same faith with you? And who are those unbelievers you tell on who are condemned? And to whom do you preach faith in these nations, seeing you can find none in them who are come to understanding, papist, nor protestant, but they believe this with you, that Christ died at Jerusalem? If hereby they be justified before God, how dare you charge any thing upon them, or separate from them, if God have owned them? Also many hundred thousand pounds a year may be spared, which are spent under this pretence, as to make people believers, when all they preach to are believers already, and have that faith that justifies the ungodly in your opinion? And whose is the righteousness people are exhorted to bring forth? If the righteousness of Christ that's necessary to salvation be only without them; then whose is that you call for within them?

But if you say, they must have some of the righteousness of Christ within them, and the rest without them, then why do not you describe a measure, that people

may know how much to look for within, and when they come to an end of their labours; and how much they must do before Christ will undertake to do the rest? Or, if Christ hath done all, how much of it must they do over again before they come to their rest, and to be accepted; and distinguish what it is that must be brought forth from within, and what must be believed without, but not enjoyed within, that so people may come to see what is Christ's and what is self-righteousness, and where they are, that they may avoid the one, and receive the other?

But thus you lie in confusion; from which by that faith which stands in Jesus, we are freed, and have received his righteousness to which we are obedient, by which we are purified, by bringing forth that which he begetteth, as formerly we were defiled by bringing forth that which was begotten by the devil, and so through obedience of the spirit our souls are purified, and we become conformable to him that's gone before us, who received light and obedience, and power from the father, and so became the first fruits unto perfection and holiness, through whom we receive power for obedience, grace for grace, by which we are saved, and our life is in him, and our obedience, and he is all in us, which we receive of the father, who hath wrought all our works in us, and so ordains peace for us; yea beyond all that you know, or can believe, who know not Christ in you. So you have set up a reprobate faith, that you cannot but be servants of sin while you live in this world, and so are to every good work reprobate.

But you use to say, you have that, which Christ did in his own person, evidenced to you, that he did it for you particularly, which drunkards, swearers, and the like have not. I say your evidence is but in words and conceit, who know not Christ in you, no more theirs is: you are persuaded and hope it is so, and so are they also, but neither of you bring forth the fruits that are his.

But you say, you bring forth better fruits than drunkards and swearers. I say, the best fruit that's brought forth in either, which is not the work of God by Christ

in you, is but self-righteousness, and all your self-actings on performances in your own will is no better. But you say, you do what you can, and God accepts the will for the deed, but so do not those who are openly wicked. I say God accepts no will but his own, and this he begets by his spirit in all that wait upon him in the light of Jesus, and with such he that begets the will, begets the deed also, and it is no more what we can, but what he will, with whom all things are possible, and we can do nothing, neither do we desire to do any thing, of ourselves, yet can we do all things that he wills, through him that is in us, so the will of God is done in us by his power (in our measures) as it is in heaven, and this is perfect righteousness, where Christ is all, and the creature nothing.

And as for your doing, and others not doing; I say every one hath that opinion of himself, that he is not so bad as others, and with this the devil deceives you, to keep all in his kingdom. And by this opinion of yours none is to be condemned, who hath any worse than himself in his doings; for this must needs follow from the best to the worst, unless you describe how far it must go, and no farther; and then must you needs shut out some who have endeavoured as much against sin (in their own strength) as ever you did in yours.

I have known a drunkard shed more tears, set stronger resolutions, and make more vows against that filthy sin of drunkenness, than ever I knew the greatest professor do against his secret covetousness, which is idolatry: nay, the highest professors can plead for it (though not under that name) and make a trade on it, which the other is ashamed to do for his drunkenness.

Now if God had placed righteousness and acceptance in doing what one can of himself, then why should not the first of these be accepted as well as the latter; seeing he prays, and weeps, and doth what he can [without Christ] to overcome it? And thus many people in the world, who know not Christ and his strength in them [which alone is appointed by God to overcome sin for all that receive him] I say, you are all in confusion, labouring to no purpose, one condemning another, thereby

to get peace to yourselves, but all under the curse, and so is the fruit you bring forth, because it is not in Jesus, and he in you, in whom the father hath placed fruit and acceptance, peace and reconciliation, to whom all shall confess forever.

And now to all honest hearts, in whom a seed of God hath place, who are thus scattered in this body of confusion, having lost the way of truth, peace, and righteousness, so that you cannot come to that which makes perfect, but are at a loss with all you can do, and are condemned with that in your conscience, that you are not covered with the righteousness of God, but are found naked and miserable. I say, that which condemns you who are out of the way, is the light that leads to the way, for whatsoever makes manifest is light; so that which makes manifest your darkness, is that light that shines in darkness, to lead out of darkness, that condemns you while you are in it. But that which cries peace in darkness, is the prince of darkness, to keep in darkness. That which condemns the world, is the light of the world, given to lead out of the world all that believe and follow it; and such are justified by the light, that their deeds are wrought in God, and by him; which light reproves the evil deeds not wrought by him.

I say this is the light of Christ given into the world, that whosoever believes and follows shall not abide in darkness, but have the light of life. Now read all the scriptures and see if there be any other covenant but this covenant of light, and this is the life which is the light of men, which darkness comprehends not, nor the world knows not, in which alone the power is placed, which whoever receive, become the sons of God, as the father hath appointed, which he will not alter, the covenant, for all the world: therefore all that are out of the light, are out of the covenant where God hath placed his power. And if you would give your goods to the poor, and your bodies to the fire, it's to no purpose, because you are out of this love of the father. Therefore all are first called to believe in the light e're they can be accepted: for without faith it is impossible to please

God, or be found in his work, or receive his power; so all your labour brings not forth that which is accepted, but with the light is condemned, that it is not perfect, and so you sit down in sorrow; notwithstanding all your labours which are out of the light, where God hath promised no peace, nor power; for God doth not manifest his works in the darkness, but in the light, that all the children of light may see and praise him who doth all for his own glory, which the children of darkness see not, who are out of the light of Christ. So such talk of what God hath done, and what he will do, but know him not at present, nor his power, working all their works in them.

Therefore this I say to all who desire to know him, that you stand still in the light of Jesus, that you may come to see the life and its movings, and the power of death, and its movings; that you may see what spirit works obedience, and what spirit works disobedience; so shall you see what's done in the body, if the eye be single, then is there no place for darkness, but it is discovered. So with the light you come to discern each spirit, and each principle, and their several workings; and that the one is the power that works in the light, which works to obedience; the other is the power that works in darkness, and works to disobedience.

For the devil the power of darkness, who works in the children of darkness, that they all may be damned who will not receive the light, but God hath reserved the light pure, and therein placed his power, that so none may fail who believe in it; and here is the blessing and the cursing, the election and reprobation, the light and the darkness; both which the light discovers as it arises in all who in it believe and wait. And if you abide in the light, you will see none can curse what God hath blessed, nor bless what he hath cursed. For as the one of these leads up to the life from whence it comes, all that believe and follow it, so the other down to death all that abide in it; for none in the light did ever perish, nor out of it was ever saved, whatever is their profession.

In the light is the power, and the power in the light, for this is one in Christ Jesus; and in this light if you keep waiting, with it you shall see the motions of sin which are after the flesh, working in you, drawing your minds after them to obey them; and you shall see at the same time the motions of the spirit in the meek principle, drawing you to the contrary. So that if you be not rash to follow the motions of the flesh, but of the light take counsel, you shall see every word and action discovered to you, in the light, of what sort they are of, from what root they arise, and what they tend to; and here you come to the knowledge of sin, and who begets it in the creature, and the knowledge of righteousness, and who begets it in the creature; and here in plainness you come to see your father, and whose children you are, even his whom you obey; for if you bring forth the works of the devil, which he begets in you, then are you his children; but if you deny the works of the devil, and bring them to the light, then God gives you power to bring forth what he will beget in you in the light, and men seeing that work of God brought forth into the world, thereby is God glorified: and this is not only a talking of God, but a living to him in your measure, and here shall you grow up (in the obedience) in the knowledge of Christ, and learn him of God, and the way to him; so every one that hath learned of the father cometh to me, John vi. 44, 45. And none can come to me, except my father draw them; so shall you see the law written in the hearts, which discovers lust and uncleanness; even in your hearts in the first rise of it; and you will come to see that this law is pure and must be fulfilled, and when you see none of themselves can fulfil it in its righteousness and purity, then is way made for Christ; and so the law is the schoolmaster to lead to him where the righteousness is placed, and power to fulfil it, who is the end of it for righteousness to every one that believes.

And as your minds are kept to this law that God hath written, to show sin and evil, you will come to see the power that sin hath got over you, and that you are wholly polluted and sold under it; then will you see the

great transgression, and the fear of God will appear in you, and so your hearts will grow tender in his fear, which is but the beginnings of the knowledge of God and his wisdom: and so waiting in the light, you will come to see openings and breathings after Christ Jesus, in which abiding and waiting low in the fear you will come to see some openings and promises of the father's love to that seed which is breathing in you after him, and some hopes of pardon of sin in Christ Jesus, and so come to see the law and the prophets prophesying, which condition many have come to, and then have lost their condition by the minds getting out of the fear, and flesh exalting into the promise, and so come to get the wound healed before death be slain, and so lose that little communion they had with God afar off, but never come so far as to the washing thoroughly, nor to the marriage, but the light mind gets into this, and tattles it out to others, and calls it experience, yet never came so far as to see Christ and the Father, yet after these doth the world wonder, notwithstanding they live in the same filthiness as they did formerly; yet say they, I have assurance so many years since, and the promise of God is sure, and his covenant cannot be broken, but cannot see that the condition is lost, and the seed is buried under the earthly pleasures, to which the promise was; for the promise is to the seed which is one, not to the seed which is many, Gal. iii. 16. Not to the fleshly man which is now got up, but to the spiritual seed, which is meek and lowly, which God teacheth and blesseth, and the creature that turns to it is blessed, because of that meek spirit into which they are turned, and should be forever, if in it they did continue; for to it is the covenant which cannot be broken, therefore all that depart out of it, it will not follow, for then should not the covenant stand sure in that seed which is but one, one heart, one mind, one soul, one spirit; and whosoever receives this unity of faith, shall find this covenant sure: but this was never placed in the worldly seed, but in the spiritual; so the carnal is death and hell, that's its covenant; but the spiritual is life and peace, that's its covenant; and each covenant stands sure to them who are in them.

So that creature who was sometimes tender and lowly minded, and that seed awakened to which is the promise, not waiting in the promise till it be performed; the creature turns into the world where the curse is, and there inherits, yet is the covenant sure to the seed, and all that abide in it; and this all witness who have waited in their measure, though he that turns from it is condemned.

And if you abide faithful waiting in the light, you will be so far from turning into the liberty of the flesh, that you will see every vain thought and imagination judged, in the first motion, and the ground of all sin you will see laid open, and so come to see the axe laid to the root of the corrupt tree, that hath brought forth evil fruit, which is John's ministry, and the baptism of repentance, and so be led on to him who fulfils all righteousness? And that kingdom you will hear preached at hand, which consists not in words, but in power; then vain babblers you will come to see and avoid, and be brought only to press after righteousness, and so see your light grow and spring up to the burning and shining, 'till the day-star arise in your hearts; then will you cease to put God and Christ afar off you, and wait to see Christ in you the hope of glory; and so come to see Christ in you the light, the way, the truth, and the life; and not to have your light and life to seek in a book without you, nor from men, but Christ your life in you, made manifest your mortal bodies; and so coming to the son, and to see him revealed, by him come to have the father revealed also, and so come to the knowledge of God, which is life eternal, even God in his temple, where he is worshipped in spirit and truth; and this truth in you, and this God in you, then shall we know that your bodies are the temples of the living God, as he hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, 2 Cor. vi. 16.—And that the spirit of God dwelleth in you, 1 Cor. iii. 16. By which spirit he is worshipped, and by the same spirit you are taught, and this is not known by hearsay, nor got by imitation, nor taught in the imaginations, but through death it is learned, only in those who in the light are guided, and by the spirit kept, in the fire, and

in the water, where death is slain, faith purified, and the body cleansed and purged from its dross and filthiness, patience given and proved, and all the gifts and graces of God which vain minds talk on, but know not but in words, these to be waited for in the light, received in the faith, and proved in the patience, to the bringing the creature wholly to rely upon God in the worst condition, even at their wits ends, when all the world fails and becomes enemies, then to fall into the defence of God alone, or when the world tempts with the greatest pleasures, then to deny all for the love of God; this is soon talked on, but none can have it, but who have received it in the same way of obedience that Christ hath gone before, and leads in spirit and power all his after him, who believe in his light, and follow it: then may you say, follow us as we follow Christ, and walk as you have us for examples; till then you are but imitators, and out of the life and power, and so lead one another into forms and traditions, but deny the power which should give you victory over sin in this world; and so you get the saints words, but their lives you have not, that you look for in another world, but in the mean time go on to fill up the measure of evil, and so go to the grave in fear and torment. And all those calls and reproofs of the spirit of light in your own hearts, now by you slighted, are by him recorded, and remain a testimony against you till that dreadful appearance of the righteous judge, and heart-searcher, shewing his love tendered, and his desire to save from sin and condemnation; which love being rejected, there is no escaping condemnation.

And you that have formed a notion of Christ in your own imaginations, so as your pride, lust, riot and oppression may be exalted, and you in them; and now your eyes are abroad, expecting his coming without you in observations of days, years, persons and forms, loe here, loe there, and the time and manner of his reign you are jangling about, and what a one he shall be, and which of you shall be greatest at his coming, and such like conceits without you, hath the enemy set up amongst you, till you have wholly lost the favour of Christ within, and can neither know his appearance in yourselves, nor

believe him to be in others, in whom he is spiritually come, nor know what a one he shall be: what a Christ is this you are looking for? Is he the same that was from the beginning, whose kingdom is not of this world? And do you look for him after another manner than he hath appeared? Is he not the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever? How hath the enemy of your souls deceived you, and kept you spending hours and days talking of him what he was, and what he will be at a distance without you, but know not him at hand what he is, so that when he would appear in you to lead you out of the world, you know not his voice, nor will you obey him in spirit, because he is not come in your form, nor teacheth after your will, and in your way, so is he now as much set at nought by his builders as ever he was, and you cannot receive him in your hearts, nor is there any room for him in the inn, farther than to take on and express as a covering for your pride and earthly pleasures, let that of God in your consciences be judge, betwixt God and you herein, how you receive the son of his love, the despised one, search your hearts therewith and see: can you receive him who is set as a sign every where to be spoken against? Will you bear his marks in your body? Will you take up his cross daily, and bear his reproach? Will you own him in whippings, stonings, mockings, and temptations, and to be counted the filth of the world and off-scouring of all things for his name sake? Can you be willing to be accounted fools, that his wisdom may be manifest in you? Will you bear his reproach in stocks, and prisons, and dungeons, and to be numbered amongst transgressors? Will you confess him before men to the loss of your estates, and to the casting out of the synagogues? Will you own him in leading you through the loss of all your unjust gain and oppression in your tradings, or will you follow him to yea and nay in all your occasions? Shall nothing separate you from the love of God in him who is rejected of all the world? This is our Christ, and this is his condition in this world as ever it was, and this is his glory to carry his people through all these things, and above all these into the eternal kingdom of

the father, and them present perfect without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and this is he whom the world cannot receive, nor all you are in the world's pleasures can see any comeliness in him, nor beauty, that you should desire him; that eye is blind that jangles about him afar off in the carnal comprehensions and sensual wisdom, it's the eye of faith that seeth him present (in the measure) and leads to follow him, and he that believes hath the witness in himself, wherewith his glory is seen in the eternal the same to all generations that will receive him who is the light of the world, yet not of this world nor its glory, from whose root springs righteousness, mercy and judgment, who is meek and lowly, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, who takes no pleasure in unrighteousness, to set up pride, but shakes his hand at the gain of oppression, who strikes at your life in all unrighteousness, and that's his witness in you, which calls you out of these vain things, that with his light he might lead you out of the world, there to commune with you about your backslidings, and show your transgressions, and the everlasting covenant of the father's love, even the eternal inheritance which none can come to, but who receives his witness in the light, a cross to all the world's lovers, and its glory. So if you can receive him you may, if not, this I say to you, your expectation will fail, who look for his appearance in the worldly glory, or after your imaginations, who judge him to be like yourselves, or such a one as you would have him, who have changed your glory for fading things, and so imagine of him also.

Do you think the lamb hath changed his glory, because the beast is got up into his seat? Nay, his glory is the same, though you have changed your God, and have bowed down to the prince of this world, and his glory, and hath committed adultery therewith, yet God is the same and changes not. Wherefore come down you painted harlots, you adulterers and adulteresses, whose minds would uphold carnal delights, and yet profess the name of the Lord Jesus, you are an ill Saviour to the nations whom the Lord is about to gather, who say you are the people of God, but live worse than the

heathen, you are the enemies of God, and your profession stinks in his nostrils; will he accept your words, when your lives preach rebellion openly, and have begot a faith in one another to believe that God will accept you herein, and a Christ you look for conformable to your kingdom of pride and worldly glory, self-worship, and respect of persons, whither you have followed the heathen into that principle where man errs, thither are you gone out of the faith of Christ, which stands not in respect of persons, neither can you believe who receive honour one of another, so your hope shall perish, and your sorrow and your end shall come upon you in one day, except you return, though now you put it afar off, yet shall you see that vain words shall not save, where light and life is denied.

And you whose unity stand in the visibles, and by them are gathered together, and there you receive and know one another, and that you make the door to receive into your church, and without it no communion, whose knowledge is outward, and your worships outward, as in words, or water, bread or wine, or any carnal perishing things, though good in their time and place, to them who in their place could use them; yet were they not given as the substance, but as the shadows; not in the place of God, but in way of obedience to God, as many other carnal things, which in their place and time were not to be omitted; as temple, circumcision, sacrifices, brazen-serpent, which were good, till set in the place of God, and till they who had them, set them up against truth and righteousness, and became as bad, if not worse than they that had them not, yet blessed themselves in their evil ways, because of them, and excluded all else. Then the Lord departed out of them, and left them empty and desolate, and his next appearance cried them down without, and set up the substance of them within, so that God hath pulled down what he himself did set up, though good in their time; yet if carnal, the carnal mind would get into them, and adulterate from the maker; as you may read in the scriptures how many things he hath laid waste upon that account, even at his appearance in some of his sons

and daughters, even such things as he had said should be signs forever, yet their abuse caused the servants of God to cry them down: so you call things wherein God and his power, and righteousness is not, your setting them up instead of Christ, makes them odious to all that know Christ, and they cannot see that which belongs to God given to any creature and be silent: but you will say, they are commands of God, and there is no scripture for taking them away; I say, those carnal things are but commands, as circumcision and the pass-over were, and many other, yet were they taken away without letter, by that spirit that gave them, when they were abused; what letter had Hezekiah to take away the brazen serpent, and break it in pieces? What scripture had Paul to cry down circumcision when he saw it abused, though he had circumcised? What scripture had Paul to deny that he was sent to baptize, when he saw them abuse it, and setting it up above Christ and many other things which by the spirit of God was removed, when idolized; for which the literal observers who denied the spirit's teaching, counted them blasphemers, as you do now; and so by such they suffered for holding forth the substance, and denying the shadows, to such as idolized them, though otherwise the shadows had been lawful: nor do I judge any that do it in obedience, and so come up above it; but all you that stick in these outward things contending about dipping, or sprinkling, but neglect the power and life; you are the Jews of these days, who strive about outward washings, some for young, and some for old; but in the meantime, all out of the power, and in the world, in your own wills and worldly pleasures and profits, pride and covetousness; some for free will, others not, but all in your own wills: and thus while you are about these things received by tradition, the law of God written in your hearts is made of none effect, nay you cannot own it, that there is any thing there to guide or give the knowledge of God; so you have a form of God, but the world hath power over you, and in you, and so are become a reproach to religion; wherefore come out of the world and the power of darkness, and come to the guide

of the spirit of truth, that you may be set free to the Lord, from the rudiments, which God is departed out of, and follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth; then shall you see him separating you from the world in the substance of truth, in mercy and righteousness, before you be hardened in your wickedness, and your forms be left to you desolate, and a strange thing come upon you, which is seen concerning some of you, who will not now own his appearance who before all form is? Will it not be a strange thing to see you, who above all have cried out for liberty of conscience, and against persecution, who have been persecuted for conscience sake, to see you become the most subtil persecuters that ever were in the world? You in this generation, be not grieved to hear of these things, for God is bringing strange things to pass, which you will not believe, though it be told you; but when it is come upon you, remember you have been told, for the Lord is gathering his seed out from the heathen where it hath been scattered, and who will not be gathered, shall be scattered; and who will not come into the kingdom of the lamb, must be left amongst the beasts; and when man denies the spirit of God to lead him, he is no better; who hath blinded that eye that foresees the evil, shall fall into mischief ere he be aware.

And you rulers, magistrates, and governors, who have the sword of the Lord in your hands, to rule in righteousness and judgment, there is one thing needful for you to mind, that you know the Lord to be your judge and law-giver in particular, without which you cannot rule for God, nor as deserving the name of christians: the heathens exercised lordship in their own wills, and there is but one thing that differs you from them; if you rule for God, and after his will, so as to give way that he may set up his kingdom in the soul, who hath set you up to rule amongst men: and you cannot rule for God, unless you be ruled by him; but if you have received his law written in your hearts, and his judgments there, and his power and authority, and your souls subject thereto for conscience sake, even to that power that is of God, to come under it, and the principle of

everlasting judgment and righteousness, to reign in you, and rule you, and with that power and authority upon you, and with you, you go forth to judge his people, and the heathen: then you rule with God, and for God; and with his power and authority which you have received, and to which you are joined, are you justified before the Lord God, for whom you judge; and his law in every conscience shall answer to your judgment, that it is just and of God; and so to that power of God and his authority shall every soul be subject, not only for fear, but also for conscience sake, so you become ministers of God to others; but if you depart out of the counsel of God and the leadings of his spirit, and get up into the seat of those that went before you, and take counsel at yourselves and your policy, to establish your wills as a law, and have not respect to the law written in the heart; but contrary to it, set up respect of persons, and places instead of judgment and righteousness, then it must needs be that all who have respect to the everlasting law and power of God in spirit, must suffer by you, as witnesses against you, as the prophets, apostles and martyrs have done against your forefathers, till the lamb's testimony be finished, and ended against you also; yet are not we despisers of authority herein, no more than they were, who in subjection to that power ordained of God, suffered by the wills of men, who should have defended them, by that power, from the wills of men, who are not subject to that power of God; so by men who deny that power that is ordained of God, to rule in them; by those do such suffer as obey that power, yet are the innocent ever accused, to be against the power, who are but against men's wills, in obedience to the power, and this is no new thing in this world: but our judgment remains sure, and to that power we appear, which no man's will can alter; to which all shall confess, and every knee bow, when he shall judge, who now suffers. And if they shall depart into everlasting punishment, who doth not minister to him in prison, then what will your doom be who cast him into prison, now that he is come into the world? And if the not knowing of him will not excuse such as do not minister

to him, then what excuse for you who call him vagabond, stranger, deceiver, devil, &c. and think no place bad enough to cast the body into, in whom he is? And if into everlasting fire with the devil and his angels they must go, who do not visit him in prison; then what way will you escape, who will not suffer any of his brethren or servants to visit him, though they be moved to come from far to do it? And though you may read all this in the words of truth, from his own mouth, Mat. 25. yet I know you that are in your own wills, can no more believe these words, than the Jews and their rulers; though you know it is he that spoke those words, and confess it to be the word of the Lord, which the Jews did not know, so your guilt is greater.

And though our freedom in the Lord, and we look not for it from men; nay, though some of you the more you be warned, the more you harden yourselves against God; yet while we are moved of the Lord we cannot be silent, if by any means some of you might turn to the light, and search your ways therewith, and so be joined to him, and established in his power, which is the desire of our souls for you. That with the honour of God you may come to be honoured, which none can have who seek for honour from men. So you who desire to see into the ways of God, consider these things following.

Did ever any that ruled for God, seek for their honour from men, or doth God honour such; or did ever any want of honour, who sought the honour of God only, and not their own?

Is not the spirit of meekness, justice, and mercy, without respect of persons, the spirit of the living God, which being in a magistrate, he is most like God, which makes him everlastingly honourable here, and hereafter; which is true honour and authority?

Is it not want of this spirit that hath made rulers contemptible, and laid them open to plots, murders, and the lusts of seditious people in all ages, which the spirit of God keeps out of, and makes their latter end a blessing to following generations?

Was not persecution ever blind, or did ever the princes of this world know the Lord of life, by whom he hath

suffered in all ages, though they have been always warned of it before they did it; or did ever the innocent suffer but under the pretence of offenders?

Was not Christ and those in whom he was most seen, pilgrims and strangers in the earth, such as you now call vagabonds and wanderers, whip and imprison, though they ask you nothing, nor ever are beholden to the world, wherein their rest is not; which God foreseeing, hath commanded all that own him, to entertain strangers; and made a law for it, which you have a law against? Levit. xix. 34. Heb. iii. 2.

Is it not the principal end of magistrates, to judge the cause of the strangers, poor, and helpless, to relieve the oppressed, and set the prisoners free, &c.

And how you do this, let that of God in your consciences judge for him, till he appear to plead the cause of him that hath no helper in the earth.

LOVE TO THE LOST,

AND A HAND HELD FORTH TO THE HELPLESS, TO LEAD OUT OF
THE DARK.

Wherein is plainly held out Divers particular things, as they are learned of Christ; and are most needful to be known of all, who profess godliness. Set forth chiefly for the directing the simple into the living way of truth, as it is in Jesus Christ the righteous, that therein they may come to the life and power of that which the world hath in words; which being received, satisfies the weary soul, and makes the creature well-pleasing to his maker.

By one that sought the redemption of Zion's seed, and a lover of the creation of God, who was called in derision by Ishmael's seed, a Quaker, JAMES NAYLER.

We have found him whom our souls love.
And greater is he in us, than he that's in the world.

A TABLE OF SEVERAL PARTICULARS FOLLOWING.

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Concerning the fall of man. | Concerning good works. |
| Concerning light and life. | Concerning election and reprobation. |
| Concerning righteousness. | Concerning the new birth. |
| Concerning the word. | Concerning the baptism of Christ, |
| Concerning worship. | from that the world so calls. |
| Concerning error, heresy, &c. | Concerning the Lord's supper. |
| Concerning faith. | Concerning redemption. |
| Concerning hope. | Concerning justification, sanctifica- |
| Concerning love. | tion and mortification. |
| Concerning judgment. | Concerning the law. |
| Concerning perfection. | Concerning Christ Jesus. |
| Concerning government, or magis- | Concerning the ministry of Christ. |
| tracy. | Concerning free will. |
| Concerning obedience. | Concerning the resurrection. |

LET HIM THAT READS UNDERSTAND.

FRIENDS, the things following, which I have declared of, are not things of man, nor by man did I receive them, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, which is contrary to the wisdom and will of man; nor to the wisdom and will of man do I commend them to be received, for the natural man's wisdom receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, therefore would devour that which is born thereof: so to that wisdom I appear not, being a light thing to me to be judged thereof: but if any one knows the gift of God, and a measure of that spirit which openeth the bosom of the father, and reveals his secrets unto babes, the least measure of that [if not clouded with the imaginations] will favour these things, and to such they may be profitable. So to the light of Christ, that which changeth not, in every one, I appear to be judged and discerned, which is one in the male and in the female, for therein alone both these things, and all other that proceed from that root, make for gathering creatures together into that one name and seed wherein all the nations of the earth are blessed, as therewith they are gathered into the one word of faith, and power of life, to believe and speak the same things in the godly conversation, which leadeth to the end of all rents, schisms, heresies and errors, sects and divisions, to be baptized into that one name, where the fulness of God is, blessed forever.

So whoever thou art who shalt read these particulars following, or any thereof, and shalt find any thing which for the present thou canst not receive; be not hasty in judging that which yet thou knowest not, nor kick against that which comes contrary to thy will, lest thou put far from thee in thy will, that which therewith thou canst not call again, and the day of thy visitation pass over unawares, and in the evil day thou be made to cry out, how have I hated instruction, and resisted the day of healing!

And this know, that no prophecy of old ever came by the will of man, nor by the will of man could be

received; but by those that stood in their own wills was ever resisted; and so will it be in these things, unless with the eye that never changeth thou readest them, which if thou knowest such a thing in thee, and standest single therein, in the meek spirit, not lifted up above thy measure, thou wilt come to feel how that of God in thee answers to the things of God, as face answers face; and find them to agree with the life of the scriptures, though for the present some things appear darkly; for to that seed [which is not of this world, which favours spiritually, and judgeth not according to outward appearance] is my service. And to that of God in every conscience am I manifest, if therein I be received; however a good savour am I unto the Lord, in them that are saved, and in them that perish, at that day when it shall appear that I have not handled the word of God deceitfully, though with the swine that feed on the husks, this may be trampled on, and I sought to be rent, if to such it come, to whom I send it not.

CONCERNING THE FALL OF MAN.

IN the beginning God made all things good, so did he man, whom then he made in his own image, and placed in him his own wisdom and power, whereby he was completely furnished with dominion, power and authority over the works of God's hands, knowing the nature and use of each creature, by that image God had placed in him of himself who in that state was the son of God, whose seed was in himself. God also placed the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and both of these were good in their place, but the tree of knowledge not good for food; therefore did he that made it, forewarn of feeding upon it, as that wherein death was, as in the other tree was life. And herein was the blessing and the curse, the life and the death, the obedience and the disobedience, election and reprobation; and these were good in their place, whilst man stood in his place, guided by that which placed him in the good, and forewarned him of

the knowledge, and gave him power against it, whilst he stood in that will which had set all these things in their place, which will was free from God, and from sin, and the will of God and the will of man agreed, and so at unity with all the creation. But when man looked out into the other, where he prevailed who abode not in the truth, wherein the disobedience was received in, of that which was contrary to the will of God to feed upon, then he joined to that which was contrary, wherein the weakness was, and the death, darkness and blindness, as to the things of God, and to that which freely man had received of God, but when he grew subtil within himself, and wise to do evil, he lost the will that was free to wait upon God in his wisdom and counsel, freely to be carried forth by him; and so from the uprightness and innocency, and pure wisdom, and spiritual power, which God hath placed in his heart, he fell, and into the self inventions which he had chosen in the contrary will, and so entering into the forbidden things, became accursed, lost the sense of the measure of God's grace, his honour and likeness, in which he stood above the creation, and so became brutish in his understanding, and as to the things of God, for the sense of the seed he had lost, wherein the election, the wisdom, the authority, and all happiness, present and eternal, did consist; and so became led by another seed, wherein God had left emptiness of himself, which was raised up for dishonour.— And here it is that man hath lost his dominion over the devil, by letting him in, which otherwise had never power further than to proffer or tempt, which now being got in, with a show of God and godliness, into the temple of God, the principal part in man, and man having joined in with him, now is become his captive, in whom he makes havoc, beguiling him of the life of simplicity and godliness, and perverting his ways, as to the end for which man was made; yea, the mercies that God gives to that creature, he being above and ruler in the heart, are turned to the lust, that is carnal and self-ended;* and to that lust and self-ended things, the man's become a

*The fall of man in general, as well as the particular is touched in this part of his book.

servant, yea, hath so lost his dominion, as he is brought to serve the creature, over which he was ruler. Hence it is that men become servants, and are captivated, some with covetousness, some with pride, some with lust and many other several things, which are become lords in the heart of man, whereby he is hurried with all eagerness out of all moderation, hunting after vanity and folly; yea, what vain toys and foolish trifles hath led away the heart of man from the pure wisdom of his God, till he scarce knows any end of running after changeable things, gluttony and excess in diet, yet not satisfied; foolery in apparel, without all stay or stop, being wholly fallen from that which is unchangeable (the true satisfaction and honour) and the further man goes in this state, the more emptiness and darkness comes in upon himself; and being fallen under the earthly principle, he is covered with thick darkness, so that the mind of God he knows not, nor his own woeful state he sees not, the God of this world having blinded the eye which should shew him his misery, and the ear being stopt, which should hear the voice of the souls shepherd, whereby he should be quickened, his eye and ear being led out to carnal things, and those captivated, so that the voice of the spirit he knows not. And so being become heart blind, cannot receive the way in spirit: and whatsoever is spoken to man in this state, in love to the soul which lies in death, the serpent being above upon the earth, seeks to catch into the imaginations, and the creature being led to consult with him there, in the flesh, he beguiles the creature of the simplicity, and so keeps the creature in self, that he regards not the seed of God, which suffers under all this death and darkness, so long as the creature will but harken to him, and his lying promises, he will lead him from one thing to another in things without, but never to see that from whence he is fallen. Therefore to all in this state, Christ and all his ministers preached repentance, that all might turn their minds from these dead works to the living God, who is a spirit, known in spirit, and so worshipped, whose kingdom is within, and whose light is in the midst of all this darkness, though the darkness comprehend it not; but as

many as repent of their following this way of self-wisdom and knowledge, and come to stand still, to such he shows his salvation, and his kingdom near at hand, which the serpent, whilst they follow him, doth put afar off. And as the mind is staid to wait for the kingdom of God in spirit, the God of the world comes to be denied and resisted; and as the mind is staid in the light, from hearkening to the earthly, so that soul that lies in death, comes to hear the voice of the son of God, and to receive life and strength from the word, whereby it is raised out of the grave, and appears above the earth, to receive from the father the dew of Heaven, whereby it is nourished and refreshed. And as man beholds the seed growing, so he comes to see the new creation, and what he lost in the fall, and so is restored by the power of the word, the son of God, into his dominion, power and purity, made able to resist the devil, to choose the thing that is good, and delight in it, as before he delighted in the contrary: so comes man to be reconciled to his maker in the eternal unity, beyond what is to be expressed; the wisdom and power received from above, whereby the heart is set free from corruption, and made able to escape the pollutions of the world, and to run the pure ways with delight, which is the glorious liberty of the sons of God, the resurrection in Christ from the dead in Adam, and the entrance into the everlasting rest.

And now all, who find yourselves fallen from your dominion, that measure of God which he placed in man, from which he received power and wisdom over the evil one; and now find yourselves led captive with the evil one, into the ways of death sin and evil, so that corruption hath got dominion on you, and over you; never look to be restored by that which leads out, for that which acts in the flesh is only evil, and will lead you from mountain to hill, and so keep you doing without, in self, without life and power, healing yourselves in false persuasions, which will not stand in stead in the evil day, nor reconcile to God, to be accepted in any thing you do; for that is the first man with his righteousness: but to that from which you are fallen must you look, and return into that from which you are gone out, that by the light

that's in the midst of all this darkness and death, you may be led in again by the blood of the cross, through the fire and sword, into the garden of God, where he plants and feeds, into which the old man, with his will and works, cannot enter, nor he whose leader is any visible thing: for by the spirit from whence man is fallen and gone out, by the same must he be led in again; and that seed which man hath sinned against, must make the atonement, or perfect peace, to which the said promise is, which is free, and sets all free, as they are born thereof: so that which leads out into the knowledge is the fall; but that which leads into the simplicity of life, which is manifest in the spirit, and not in the knowledge of the first man, that leads to the resurrection of life; for it is the hidden wisdom that God ordained before the world unto glory; so to the hidden man of the heart must you look to find it, which is not corruptible.

CONCERNING LIGHT AND LIFE.

God is the life of every creature, though few there be that know it, for the darkness sees him not nor his life, though the children of darkness have got words in the scripture (which were given forth from the light) to talk of, yet such know not God present; for the first beginning or appearance of God in the world is by light; God said, Let there be light, and it was so. And this light God saw that it was good. That which was in the beginning with God, was the word, by which all things were made and seen, and without this was nothing made that was made, nor any thing seen to be good; and darkness was over the face of all the waters, till the light, which from the word came, who is the life, which life is the light of men: So none can see the life but with the light, which from the life comes, which to the life leads all that come. So this that was in the beginning is given to keep in order all the creation; that is good, but the darkness comprehends it not, though it shine in it; so all that abide in the darkness are destroyed, not discerning the life, to order and govern the creation in the light.

So all that go out of the light, go into darkness, and there the life and image of God is lost, and there is the fall; and all who there abide, are reserved in chains of darkness, not knowing the life which breaks the bonds and chains of iniquity, and opens the grave and prison door. And here the soul being in death, breathing after the light, but darkness is got above; in the darkness is the creature led into sects, opinions and errors, after the imaginations to seek life; but further, it runs here to the sensual wisdom, further into death and darkness, till the creature be so blinded in the understanding, that he thinks and imagines he doth God service, when he is acting against the life of God, both in himself and others; so comes the creature of God, and his life, wherewith God did furnish him to do his will, wholly to be lost, and the gospel hid that should recover him again, the God of this world having so blinded the mind, and thereby so far alienated him from the life of God, that he neither hath power and life to do the will of God, nor receives the light to know where to have it. In this condition of death, and without the life of God, shall the creature never be without profession, or some conceit or other, to keep in a vain hope of salvation.

And here is the sole ground and cause why we have so many sorts of forms, and opinions, and ways to worship, but none that do good, nor live in what they say, because all have lost the life of God, which is only able to bring forth the righteousness of God. And self having got the form, into the imagination, above the life, cannot receive the light that's hid and condemns it. So all the world lies in darkness, yea, thick darkness is upon all the seas, and the great depth is covered with gross darkness; and from thence is the imagination spread over all, so that none can witness the work of God, neither know the beginning nor end thereof; and this is the cause of condemnation, and it rests upon all who are out of the life of God: and no other way there is appointed of the father, to come out of this condition, but Christ Jesus the light and life of men, who is the light that is in the world, though the world know him not; which light shines in darkness, but cannot there-

with be comprehended; which light is the revealer of darkness, and manifests the deeds thereof: and the first appearance of this in the creature, shows the darkness, and captivity that is in the darkness; till which the creature never comes to see the wretched condition that man is in, who is without God the life; nor till then will the creature be willing to stand still to see God's salvation; but is full with vain hopes, conceits, and imaginations, and the vail is over the heart, and what God hath there written is not seen; and so being whole, needs not the physician. And with this blind heart the creature reads the scriptures, and steals the promises that the children of light spoke of, who had the life, whereby the seed was raised out of the grave, to which the promise is; but neither know law nor gospel; neither came so far as Moses, yet boasting of Christ.

But when the light is minded, the creature comes to see death reigning, and self alive without the law with that light which was given to keep out of the pollution and defilements, and so to keep clear and unspotted. With that light, this is seen and judged, which hath passed over life and defiled man, and that which hath gendered to bondage is seen, and the hardness of heart cometh to be felt, and the cause seen, even the great transgression of the pure law; and so comes the fear of God to take hold of the man that hath lived out of the life of God, and taken pleasure in unrighteousness; and the creature then finds trouble within, even where the strong man did keep the house in peace and abiding in the light, the cause and end of it is seen; and dwelling in the fear, wisdom is received from above to depart from the iniquity, and in departing from the iniquity, there is a coming near to God; so the light grows and springs, as there is a coming nearer to the just path of life. And as the light ariseth the creation is seen, and how the enmity hath spread over, and how the lust hath defiled it, and how that which was planted as a vineyard, is become as a wilderness for barrenness, grown over with thorns, and briars, sturdy oaks, and tall cedars, for want of the vine-dresser; and where the lilly should grow, it's grown over with weeds.

thistles, and nettles; so that God walks not there, because of the great abomination; and that is the cause of all your woe, even his absence.

And when you see this, the lamentation begins in the house of laughter, even after him from whom you have fallen; and as you follow the light, and come nearer to the Lord, from whence it comes, you will see that is only your own wills and ways that have separated you from the holy one. And with the light you will come to see how often you have been moved by the spirit of light, from your evil ways; and that the cause why you have been thus long in the fall, hath been in self-will and worldly pleasures, whereby the life hath suffered; never till then come any to see him whom they have pierced, nor to lament over him, nor to see what it is that oppresseth the just; nor to hate that which God hates, and love that which he loves in any measure; but joins with that which destroys the soul from the life; and it makes a profession, a prayer against it in words, and that's the pharisee and hypocrite, who with the words destroys the life, who makes a profession above the life, but not in the life; and this is he that climbeth up some other way, then the life, which is the door, to which the light leads, and in this state are all the high-minded lofty ones, whose mouths speak of great things, swelling words of vanity [for so are words without life] empty brass, giving a pleasant sound to the carnal ear, but cannot evidence the life, and the words of it; who have the saints words present, but their righteousness is as far off as Judea, Corinth, Thessalonica, &c. And these are they, who in words confess, but in works deny him; who have a large faith in words, but to the good work reprobate; for none can be of any true judgment concerning the work of God, who are strangers to the life that works it.

CONCERNING RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THAT righteousness, which God accepts, is but one, which is his own, perfectly fulfilled and manifest in the world in Christ Jesus the light and saviour thereof; which righteousness is not of the world, nor manifest to

the world, nor in the world received, nor can the world inherit it; but only they who believe in the light of Christ, which God has given into the world, to lead out of the world, to Christ, where God's righteousness is.— Though there be many talkers of this righteousness, yet none inherit it farther than by faith they receive the son of righteousness; and with him his righteousness is freely imputed, being put into the creature, a free gift from the father; and with this righteousness is the creature made righteous, even as he is righteous, even as the measure of light from Christ is received, and no farther; and whose life is kept in the measure of him, as he is, so are we in this present world, and not of this world, even as he is not of this world; and herein is boldness in the day of judgment, in that which is perfect: and all that is against perfection is self; and with the righteousness of Christ, denied in the light; which condemns all self-actings, under what pretence soever.

So who abides in that righteousness, abides in that which denies self, and the world; and so lives in obedience to that which is contrary to mens wills, and so every where evil spoken on; for the will of man worketh not the righteousness of God; but this righteousness is wrought in the creature, in that obedience which is contrary to the will of the flesh: and in the faith by the eternal spirit, is the new begetting, both of the will and the deed; and so the new is born both of the spirit and life. And so far as any have this righteousness, he doth not lie under sin, nor give place to the devil; but it is as a breast-plate against all assaults, on the right hand and on the left; and all who have not this, are they who have that which will not stand in stead in the evil day. So you that say, your righteousness is as filthy rags, why do you abide in that? God's righteousness is not so; wherefore cease from that, and own that which is perfect; even that everlasting righteousness, in which all his saints have been gathered into himself; who can receive nothing but what's his own, and it must be yours also, else can you not be received in it. In vain do you blow wickedness, and sow iniquity, and think to reap righteousness.

So with the light you may see what works in you, and to what you yield yourselves servants, to that you bring forth while you live, that will go with you: but if you own no works in you, but what God works; you shall have no righteousness but what is perfect, even the least measure of it.

And as you obey unto this righteousness, you shall see the spiritual man raised, and living, and the bonds of death broken, and that living which gives power over hell and death; then may you say, the spirit is life because of righteousness: and your dead profession will be judged with the life, as it arises, and is seen to be fruitless.

But this is blasphemy in your own eyes, who have made Christ's righteousness a cover for your abomination? What wickedness now is so vile in these nations, but the righteousness of Christ is made a cover, and men bless themselves therewith in the greatest abomination? And this hath its beginning at the head of the deceit, and is gone over all the whole body. For to cover your wickedness, pride and covetousness, have your teachers invented this faith, that it's sufficient to believe in a righteousness you read of in the letter, (though you be not obedient to it in spirit.) But you that are not servants of righteousness, are no servants of Christ's, and his works; and your faith, without his works, will be little worth to salvation; and even as it saves you out of sin, so will it save you out of condemnation, and no farther. And this, that in your conscience will witness, if you take counsel at it: no further than you find the power of his righteousness working in you, and you owning it in obedience and subjection, and joining to it against all unrighteousness, no more of it you can inherit, nor be made the righteousness of God in him.

And at that day when he comes to separate the precious from the vile, then will you see in what stead your notions of righteousness are, when the worker of iniquity is found, and judged with Christ's righteousness, of which you have been boasting in words, without the power of it: by the power and purity of it shall all the

workers of iniquity be judged and condemned. So deceive not yourselves, he that works righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous; but he that talks of this, and commits sin, is of the devil, and with him must inherit, by whom he is acted and guided; for God's righteousness will not mix with, nor cover deceit, nor was it ever given for that purpose; but as it is obeyed, it reveals and destroys man's righteousness and unrighteousness, as it is revealed from faith to faith, by which the just live, and the unjust perish and pass unto death. And all who have Christ's righteousness can witness this effect, to kill and make alive, as by faith it is received; and this is Zion's righteousness that goes forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth, that the gentiles may see it, and its glory, and the heathen be ashamed of their abomination.

Be ashamed you heathens, who have hid the Lord's righteousness; who have exalted the idols of the world, and bring forth to the oppressor, who have bowed down to the God of this world and his begettings are in all houses, and assemblies; and the name of the Lord you have polluted before all the world; yet will you lean upon the Lord, and say, the righteousness of Christ; in that you have more dishonoured his righteousness, then all that ever were before you; and the name of a christian is become a reproach in all the world, because of your unfaithfulness to his righteousness.

For this will be plead with you, and will take from you the covering, that you may appear and he will bring forth his righteousness to your confusion, and his own shall witness him in the gate, and his work shall praise him openly; so shall all sinners be afraid, and fearfulness surprise the hypocrite, and when God shall openly own his own righteousness, and judge the wicked after the works of their hands.

CONCERNING THE WORD.

The word is that which was in the beginning, and was the beginning of all visible things, and that by which all things were made, but itself is invisible; which

though it be the upholder of all visible things, yet can no visible thing reveal it; yet doth it reveal the ground and use, and end of all visibles. And as without it, was nothing made that was made, so without it, is nothing seen, as it was made, nor any thing can be guided, nor used in its pure place; but whatever man meddles with, not having the word in him, to guide, order, and sanctify, the same he defiles, and it is polluted as to him. Nor can this word be comprehended in heaven, or earth; without this word can no holy scripture be read with profit, for it opens the scriptures of truth, and the scriptures declare of it, yet cannot the scriptures, nor all the writings of the world comprehend it, nor declare the depth and extent of it, which is beyond all generations; yet it is the teacher and guide of his own in all generations; and in all generations of saints hath been known in measure, more or less immediately, though it hath no place in the world's profession.

So hearing of a word, but not knowing it, men say the letter is it. But who hath the word, hath that which comprehends death, and hell, and the grave; that which binds and chains satan, overcomes the world, gives issues of life and light, whereby the new creation is known, wherein dwells righteousness; and this every one hath, so far as he hath the word abiding in him; but so hath not every one that hath the letter. Nor can any man's will change the word, for it is contrary to all men's wills; nor can any man's wit open or expound this word, which confounds the wisdom of the wise, and brings the understanding of the prudent to nought; that hides from the wise and prudent, and reveals to babes; and the word grows and increases within the babes, but so doth not the letter: and it's a fire and hammer to all that have it, but so is not the letter: it is quick and powerful, to the dividing asunder the joints and marrow, the soul and spirit, wherever it is, so is not the letter. And the word is a reproach to every carnal mind, even to them who only profess the letter. Whosoever have the word, with it are washed and cleansed, and translated from the world, and con-

formed to God, so far as they have it; and it reconciles to God all that have it; but many have the letter, who know not God, but are in the unclean customs, and fashions, and ways of the world, not changed, nor reconciled.

None can keep the word, and his sins both, but the letter without he may, for wherever the word is known, the new creature is witnessed, who is created to walk in righteousness; and who hath the word, sees all, who say they know the word and walk not in righteousness, to be liars, and do not the truth; and with the word of truth are such cast out, and judged to be those who dishonour the word, as though it were a polluted thing, or could dwell with pollution; which is a fire to burn up all uncleanness, wherever it is; and where sin stands, the word is not known.

But such, reading of the word, (which came to the saints, in obedience to which they were washed and purified, in which they were begotten again) they finding that the saints had this word, but such readers only not knowing it, they say the letter is it, which doth but declare of it: and so their word hath not power in them, to overcome the devil, and break the bonds of wickedness; whereas the word of God is not bound, but free and sets free all that obey it, and have it abiding in them, which breaks down the seat of sin, and raises up and quickens the seed of God, which lives in the life of God, (which through sin, death hath passed over) and also quickens the mortal body to newness of life. So that the old life and the word cannot stand together in one body; nor doth the old man, who lives in that life know any word, but the letter; and the life of that he knows not; but in the imagination searches with the fallen wisdom for that which God hath in his wisdom hid from it; and in this is all the darkness; to this man the scriptures are spoken as a parable and mystery; which in that disobedient wisdom cannot be found out: so is the simplicity deceived with meanings, addings, and wrestings, which are all in that man that cannot enter, in whom the word dwells not, nor can any thing such do, be accepted, because it is not from the word, for all that

comes not from the word, by the word is condemned not to be the work of God; for all that God made, he made it by the word; and it was seen in the light, to be good, which was made with the word. And here all stood in the reconciliation to God; but when man went out from the word, then he went out from the good, and so with the light was seen to be in the evil, and so was accursed from the same word, against which he had sinned; and so long, as out of that word he acts, all is accursed, being self, and not God that works it.

And so man being gone out into the world, the light of the gospel is preached to turn man again to know the word, that coming to the knowledge thereof in his heart, and having his mind stayed thereto, in the light, he may come to see the power of the word working in spirit, working out the unclean nature, and the rebellious will, and working in the pure nature in the cross, slaying the carnal man with all his affections; and so through death thereof raising up the new man, making a new creation, in Christ Jesus, with power unto good works from the eternal word: and this God owns when he is the mover thereof, and worker also, and the creature only servant therein, in the same power.

And this is not a self-taken-on performance from the letter, but is in the eternal counsel and strength of God, commanded, moved, and performed in God's will and time, and contrary to the will of the flesh, whereby the will of all flesh is subdued, even all that is come in since the beginning, till all be seen in the light to be good, and the work of God; and so his works praise him, from a good understanding of the spirit and power of the living God. And with the living word, is the living soul witnessed, and the life of Christ made manifest in the mortal body, and the creature comes to have fellowship in the life, and is transformed thereinto, and united in one; and this is the word of reconciliation, which unites God and the creature in spirit; which whoever knows, needs not go forth for wisdom, counsel or strength, against all the powers of darkness, nor wiles of the enemy, but by diligent taking heed to the word which is nigh in the heart, from thence finds the issues of life; spiritual

strength, and power against the spiritual wickedness, which all who run out for help, lie under and become servants of.

CONCERNING WORSHIP.

THE worship of the true and living God stands out of man's will, and knowledge, wisdom or prudence, as in the natural; for God is a spirit, and in spirit he is worshipped; not with men's hands, nor with bodily exercise, farther than by the eternal spirit the body is exercised; nor doth it stand in meats and drinks, nor divers washings, nor carnal ordinances taken on by tradition, or imitation of others, but as every creature is moved by the spirit of the living God, who is that spirit, who will be served with his own alone, not with any thing in man, which is come in since the fall; so the imaginations, thinkings, and conceivings are shut out; all man's ways, man's times and forms, national customs, man's decency, and orders by men devised and added, are all shut out, and condemned with that spirit in which God alone is worshipped, and his people taught his worship, and the manner of it; and the times are in his hand, whose the worship is.

So that before any can rightly worship God, they must wait to know his spirit, that leads to know him and his worship, and the matter, and manner; for all who do the same thing only as to the outward performance, do not worship God, because they worship not in the spirit and power of God himself: so that all who would so worship him as to be accepted, you must know the light, and in it wait to know what God calls for at your hands: for it is not what men appoint you to do, or not to do, that will acquit you before the Lord. For this know, that God made man for himself, and for his service, and the living God is not as the dumb Idols, that people should imagine a way to serve him, as may best suit with the fashion and custom of a nation, or a people: But he that hath made man hath given him a life for himself, to improve it in his service; and a light hath he given wherewith to see the movings of this spirit of life, which

ever moves after the will of God, because it is of him; and so where it is awakened, it ever draws the creature towards God, the mind, will and affections, and love of God is in it, and who walks in the light, sees this; but the creature running before this, or without this, there comes all the dead works and worships. And the ground of all this, ariseth out of darkness and disobedience; for when the creature hath been out, in the world, and unrighteous ways thereof, doing that which is evil, then that in the heart condemns for the evil, and neglect of good; then the same mind runs to act a worship to get peace, when both the evil and the worship is in one nature, and so the prayers become abomination, as the other was, for he that regards the iniquity, God will not hear his prayers, nor accept his worship; that's Cain's sacrifice, and Esau's prayers; but either must your worship be performed in one that never sinned, or it cannot be accepted with the pure God.

So that the way to be well-pleasing to the Father, is to wait in the light, till you see something of the spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, moving in you, and then to that join, in its power to worship; and that being of God, he cannot forget himself; and that is done in the name of Christ, which is done in his light, and power and wisdom, and strength; and whatever is done in his name, is not denied of the father; and so far as any are in him, so far sons, and so far accepted in him, without whom you can do nothing, nor be respected; nor did ever any worship in this nature, but they found acceptance, and the knowledge thereof; and you who know not this to lead and guide you in your worships, are worshipping you know not what, nor with what; and though you say, that God works all your works in you, and that it's his work and worship you are about, yet when it comes upon trial, he will not own it for his, which the worker of iniquity hath wrought. For the evil worker hath not only his hand in the deceitful works of the unrighteous mammon, but in the deceitful works of worship too. For did he not deceive in worship, to hide his wickedness, with pretence of godliness, and long prayers, he could not keep people in any peace in

his wicked ways. So they who join to him herein, receive the greater condemnation: for the false worshippers were always greatest enemies to Christ, and so to their own souls; and woe to him that hideth his sin thus.

So all who desire to worship in truth, you must know the truth, even the spirit of truth, to lead into all truth; which spirit of truth takes of Christ, and testifies of his life, and power, in the creature worshipping, who believes in the light; and such know they are in him, and he in them, who is true, in whom they worship the father of the truth, and so God is served with his own; and no farther than this is known, can any worship God in spirit, which the light doth manifest. So you having received a light from Christ, in that wait, till therein you find the spirit's leading, acting and ordering; and here the least in the light, is in God's service, when on him you are waiting in spirit, and such as abide in the light, waiting upon God, in the light, are kept from serving the prince of darkness, and having your loins girt, and your light burning, you are always ready to know the voice, and answer it with obedience, and then you serve God, and not men, when you have a command from the living God, not taken by tradition from men; for in vain do all worship, whose fear and service towards God is taught by the precepts of men; for all the children of the Lord, are taught of the Lord: and they are the sons of God, who are led by the spirit of God. And such hearken to the Lord and know his voice; and what they see and hear, that they do, and do not offer the sacrifice of fools.

But do not you offer the sacrifice of fools, who have been worshipping all your time, and yet have his worship to learn? And are but still asking, if this be the right worship, and have it yet to dispute? (if not confident in a false way, which is much worse) and such are you who are fighting and contending for such a manner of worship as Christ never ordained, nor his own never practised; as you may see if you compare your national worship with the saints practice; which is changed in every particular, and that by men and councils, under

pretence of decency and conformity, or something that stands in mens will, which God never commanded. But you may long worship here, and call it God's worship, e're he own it by answering you; yet was Nebuchadnezzar never more zealous for his image, than you are for this, if you had but his power; yea, them who have found the everlasting way of Christ, and an answer from God in it, such would you force to bow to your imaginations, where you know not God nor his presence with you therein; nor can you ever find God in that way which is not his own, nor is that his own, which generations of men and councils, have altered, and added to, and changed from time to time, as may most suit their customs and countries; so that each nation hath its different manner of worship, but all out of the council of God, agreed on by the councils of men.

And all you who are gone out in any thing from Christ the true pattern and example, you are gone into the imaginations of men, and so are become servants of men, and not of God, herein. For God is pure, and so is his way and worship, and without his command cannot be changed in the least jot, but by him is denied, and is become will-worship, and not God's worship: For it is not the name that makes it God's worship, for all pretend to worship God; but it is the nature of it, which must be in the spirit and will of God, contrary to the will of men, and their wisdom, wherein men in all ages have performed the idolatrous worship, and set up likenesses instead of true worship, though being heart-blind did not know it, but ever looked upon all to be out of the way, but themselves. And this is your work, who at this day set up an imitation from the letter of what other men have done, but have not received your command and power in spirit from the Lord, and to you it will be said, Who hath required these things at your hands? For all the saints have their commands in spirit, and all that know the command in spirit, know it is life eternal, and gives life to fulfil the command, and so the worship is spiritual; and the heart, and the mind and soul is united in it; and so being in one there is no idolatry, nor likeness, but in one is the command, pow-

er, life, will, way, and worship; but all you who have taken on the saints practice to perform the like, but not called, commanded and furnished in spirit, you want power, and life, and so even in the time of your worship your hearts are going out after carnal things, and there is the spiritual idolatry: For whatever your minds are in, that is your God you worship, and the pure God owns no such; for it's truth in the inward parts he seeks for, wherein none of you can worship who know not the living word in your hearts, to keep them up to God in your worship, that worship is not in the will of God.

CONCERNING, ERROR, HERESIX, &c.

It is not error to forsake the opinions of any natural man whatsoever, nor to withdraw from the church of Rome, as they call it, nor from any who have reformed some things since the time of popery, but yet are not come to the true foundation of the apostles, though they call themselves national churches, or gathered churches whatsoever. But the error is to err from the spirit of God and his teachings, and that church which by his teaching alone is gathered into God, out of all the ways, worships, sects, and opinions of the world, convocations and councils, that are not in God. And the church so gathered into God, is the pillar and ground or stay of truth, where the spirit alone is teacher; and all that are gone out from this church, and teaching, are in error, where all the sects, and opinions, and false ways and worships are, and their teachers, who have erred, from the spirit of Christ, and the saints teacher and their practice; and are gone after their pride, and covetousness, and filthy lucre: Here lies the world's teachers, though they do not know from whence they are erred, because they never yet came in the right way: nay, who never yet came so far as Balaam, who had the word of the Lord from his own mouth, and knew it, and yet his heart erred after gifts and honour. So these preach against Balaam, but cannot see themselves in the same error, ever since they were promoted to honour, and gifts, and masterships, and great livings, by the pope, who

received his power from the beast, and gave of it to all his adherents, to call such as dwell on the earth to worship them; but such whose names are written in the book of life, who have suffered to this day, and do suffer, because they cannot bow to that power, nor worship it, nor according to its likeness; and under pretence of heresy and error do these always suffer, by such who are erred, and with the spirit of error do judge, which spirit hath shed all the innocent blood since Abel to this day, though the error was ever in the persecutor.

So that there is no error but in going from the spirit of Christ and his teachings, and all who are gone from that, are gone into error, whatever they pretend. And that which leads from that spirit is the mother of confusion, and vain janglings, and contention, disputing about the things of God, but are gone out into the world, where all the deceived ones are, antichrists and seducing spirits which deceive the nations with enchantments and witcheries, which none can see, till to the light of Christ, and his spirit they return, which only leads out of all errors, as it is believed and followed. For no spirit can lead out of error, but that spirit which never erred; and whoever is led out by any other, is erred already, though unknown, to them who are so deceived. For error could never truly judge of error, nor darkness of light, though it will be doing, to shew enmity.

So error cries, Take heed of being deceived, which is deceived already; but the spirit of light searcheth out that deceit: But who walks not in the spirit and light of Christ is blind, and knows not by what he is led, nor whither, and stumbles at the light which should judge his blindness, and become his leader; and such an one, though he be in error, yet knows not whence he is fallen, who never knew the right way; as many at this day, who are talking of blindness, but themselves in the pit, and must be, till they own the light to lead them out of it, which never erred, which is of God, even as they who received it are of God: And they that were of God, knew that all that would not hear them had the spirit of error; and thereby they knew it, and the spirit of truth.

And whatever that be which leads out into the world's conformity, and pleads for it, or any thing that is come in by the fall, that is the spirit of error: But that spirit which testifies against all that is in the fall, and convinceth of it, and leads out of it, that is the spirit of truth, and comes to testify of the redeemer Christ Jesus, who is to set us free from it; which all that live in, live in error.

So all who desire to know the spirit of error, you must turn to the spirit of light, from whence you have erred; for no other thing shews the error, but that which reprove the fruit of error; that which reprove for sin, is that from which man has erred, the faithful and true witness, which is the beginning of the creation of God, to which all must give an account, and which alone is appointed for a light, and leader of the people that sit in darkness, to shew the darkness and the way out of it: So to that which was in the beginning all must come, that with the light, from which man hath erred, you may know the ways of error, and the way of truth.

CONCERNING FAITH.

He that has living faith, which is in Christ lives by it; and the life that he lives is above all the world, and the powers of darkness; and the least measure of that faith is perfect, and hath present power against all the assaults of satan, if in it the creature abide faithful, and run not to other helps, and so lay himself open to distrust; for it is the gift of God, whereof whosoever receives a measure he hath a measure of the son, above which the father will not suffer any temptation; for the true faith lays hold upon God's righteousness, against which no unrighteousness can prevail; which righteousness is received by faith in Christ Jesus; wherein the creature so believing stands armed against all the fiery darts and temptations of the devil, with God's righteousness, seen in the light, and wrought in the spirit, whereby the creature becomes God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, by which he becomes free from the evil; dead to sin, but alive to God's righteousness,

waiting in faith, to see it revealed through obedience thereto, from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith; and this is living faith, which purifieth the heart, unto the life of godliness, and so reveals the righteousness of faith for an inheritance, everlasting righteousness, ever growing and springing, whereby the creature grows into the knowledge of God, with him to walk by faith, out of the knowledge of all the world, translated out of the pleasures and kingdoms of it, into the kingdom of the son of God, where the reproach of Christ is esteemed great riches; laying hold upon the invisible, which the world's faith cannot reach, which carries them no higher than visible reasonings and consulting with sensual wisdom, and carnal helps, and so brings nothing to perfection, because it sees nothing that is perfect; but the living faith sees him that is invisible, and lays hold on the measure of God made manifest in spirit, which measure of the spirit is that which in the faith works out the old, and works the new, both will and deed, whose work is perfect, to kill, and to make alive.

But the world's faith is not of this nature and power, who hear a thing with the outward ear, and so set themselves to believe, or not to believe it, in their wills or outward persuasions, from others, or in their own imaginations; and as their imaginations, thoughts, and conceiving change, so their faith changes also: and so it cannot be steadfast, because it stands not in the measure of God known in the heart, which changes not; and this faith serves not God, nor can it please him, nor doth it see him that's invisible. And so not standing in that which is contrary to the will of man, and power of sin, it lies under the wills of men, and power of the prince of this world; and as the world and time changes, so doth that faith, but can never lead out of the world, and all time, up to the redeemer of the soul.

And to all who are in that nature, the living faith that stands in that which is of God in a pure conscience is a mystery, not known nor received, and so cannot be improved, which is the true faith, which is the gift of God, which none can receive but in spirit. So the faith

of Christ, and the faith of the world, are two, and have their several effects, and fruits; the one professeth freedom and redemption in the imaginations and comprehensions, but is a servant of sin; and the other hath the living faith which gives the life of freedom, and so as is their ground and root, so is their fruits and effects; and the one of these is against the other.

For that faith which stands in Christ, believes in purity and in perfection, and holiness, and stays sin, and by that faith alone the just live, and justice and righteousness is brought forth to light in the godly conversation; but the faith which stands in the imaginations and wisdom of man, which believes salvation without holiness of life, that stays the just, and keeps alive the unjust; and this faith they had, which believed the scriptures, and the words of the prophets, and that God was their father; but not having the word of faith in their hearts, these shew the son of God, and set the murderer free: and as that faith, which is dead, works death, so that faith which is living worketh life. And a profession of faith without righteousness, is like a body without life; and like as a living man is known by his actions, so is the living faith by its fruits. And as the man cannot live without action, no more can faith in Christ without righteousness; these are unseparable, therefore it is called the righteousness of faith; where the heart believes unto righteousness, there the mouth confesseth to salvation, without hypocrisy or self righteousness.

And so God's righteousness is received in the heart by faith, and by obedience thereto brought forth into the world, a witness against all the unrighteousness of the world; and so the righteousness of God is preached through faith, in all whose faith stands in Christ Jesus: but that is a dead faith which brings not forth the life of Christ into the world, and that's the reprobate faith which is to the good work reprobate; and he that errs from the righteousness, errs from the faith also which is held in a pure conscience; and he that makes a shipwreck of a good conscience, and puts that away, makes shipwreck of faith also.

And in the eternal light is all your faith seen and judged to be without Christ, and without foundation, who are out of the light and out of the life. And your faith is seen to be the same with the scribes and pharisees, who believed the scriptures, and thought to find life therein, but did not believe in the light, and so would not come to Christ, that they might have life. So all your faith, which is out of the light, which from the letter you have formed, is a faith set up in your own wills, and not that which is given of God: for that faith that is the gift of God, believes in the light, and follows it, and so leads to the life; and this faith that stands in the light and life, is the living faith, and never without works, which works are love, meekness, patience, mortification, sanctification, justification, &c. The works of God in Christ Jesus, in which God's workmanship is seen in the new creation, received in the faith, and in the obedience, to which the soul is purified, and victory witnessed over the world, sin and death, but you who believe not in the light, are enemies to this faith, and yet you get the words of the scripture, given forth from the light, and so your faith stands in the wisdom of words, into which you have been searching with your wisdom, but not in the power of God and his work: so you are they who say and do not, whose practice could never suit your profession.

CONCERNING HOPE.

HOPE is a gift of God, and is pure, and stands in that which is pure, shewing the purity of God, and his righteousness in Christ Jesus, the beholding whereof stays the soul from joining to the wicked one, when he tempteth, because he sees in the light a better work to serve; so that until the time of that work being fully manifest, the hope is as an anchor to stay from following the unclean one, and so keeps out of the sin, and so makes not

ashamed, even then in the time of want it hopes against hope. When that life of Christ is not yet seen in its full power, yet it is evidenced in the hope, which is wrought in the patience and experience, whereby the love appears and the faith works, whereby God's righteousness is revealed, and the son is seen, who is the redeemer; and he that hath this hope in him, purifies himself even as he is pure. And this is that hope that enters within the vail, into the holy place, where the life and immortality is brought to light, which the mortal eye nor carnal senses cannot approach to. And this is the living hope, which hopes to the end, that Christ and his righteousness may be revealed, to take away sin, and to save from it, and out of it; and in hope of this, the children and babes of Christ wait in the obedience of the spirit, not fashioning themselves after the lusts of ignorance; but as he who hath called to that hope is holy, so in his holiness is their conversation who are in his hope.

But the devil hath begotten another hope in his servants who believe him, and are acted by his spirit, which stands in another ground, and brings forth another fruit, and that is, that though they be servants to sin (for that must be concluded in all his covenants and graces) yet there is hopes of salvation; and such hopes as may not be judged false nor questioned, although the witness of God in the conscience doth testify to the contrary, yet it must not be heeded, lest they be deluded. So that where the devil is become teacher, a tender conscience is to be resisted, as the greatest error and foolery in the world: and that, to wait for the testimony or witness within, is to deny Christ at Jerusalem, and the greatest blasphemy that can be spoken of; and to wait for that mystery that hath been hid from ages, (to wit,) Christ within the hope of glory, is to deny the person of Christ, and his blood and sufferings. And many such imaginations hath satan begot in people's brains, to scare them from minding the light of Christ within, that so he may keep the heart in darkness, and his seat there undiscovered.

So he sets them to look for the kingdom of Christ without them, and a spirit without, and a light without, and a work without, and righteousness without, and in that to hope; while he dwells in the heart, and there in darkness upholds his kingdom of sin, and seat of unrighteousness all their life, and feeds them with a hope after they are dead, by a profession without power, and life and spirit, and truth in them, to order them and their conversation aright, towards God and man in their generations. And this is the hope of the hypocrite, that must perish in the end, and come short of salvation, whose hope is not in God, nor gives a being in righteousness; but he hath a hope, and lives in the world without God and his hope. And this not the hope of Christ, which lives in sin and hopes for salvation; but this is his hope in Christ that hopes for freedom and perfection, which never comes short of its end, in all that wait in it. And this hope only is it that maketh not ashamed; but you may be ashamed of your hope, who are found in your sins, and encouraging yourselves therein, that you shall not die.

That's the devils hope, which hopes not freedom from sin, as much as freedom from hell. And with this hope would he make God a liar, and partial like himself, that he should find some in sin, and save them, and others in sin and condemn them. But who knows Christ, and hopes in him, hopes in righteousness; and therein to stand in the day of judgment; and therein to live in this evil world above it, and all the unrighteousness of it: and the end of the lively hope, is no less than God's righteousness to attain, and live in, as it is received; and only such can give a reason of that hope that is in them, who sanctify the Lord God in their hearts, and have a good conscience, and suffer for well doing; which unreasonable men, who live in the unreasonable nature, cannot do, whose hope is not an helmet of salvation against sin, yet would have it for salvation against hell. And this is the unreasonable hope in unreasonable men, for which they can give no reason, but in their own wills and imaginations: for is there any reason why you should hope to be saved by Christ, who will be the devil's

servants, to yield your members servants to, and delight in his wickedness while you live, and yet be saved by Christ's righteousness when you die? This is a hope that serves you to talk on, to feed yourselves in your vanity; but will be in the end like the giving up of the ghost. But who is begotten in the lively hope, are begotten into an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, whereunto they are kept by the power, in hope through faith, unto salvation from sin, the thing that he that's begotten of God longs and hopes for: which hope shall not fail.

CONCERNING LOVE.

THE love of God is but one, and in one, nor can any receive it, but who receive that one, the son of God: And this cannot stand with self, or any changeable thing; for God is that love, and none can dwell in it, but as he dwells in God: so it's pure and perfect. As the creature comes to live in God, as he is, into his image and likeness; so with the pure light his love is seen, and shed abroad in the heart, whereby the power of faith worketh, to the overcoming all that is contrary to God. So the love of God abounds, and who dwells in it worketh no ill; but the work of love fulfils the law of God, which is upon all that's gone out from him, into the world and self ends, which hath been received in the love of carnal things, and so are gone into the enmity against God, setting the affection on changeable things; for whosoever will be a friend to the world, is the enemy of God; for the world's love arises from the spirit of the world; but the love of God is a fruit of God's spirit, and none hath the love of God, but who hath that spirit from which it springs, which is eternal, unchangeable and above all carnal things, nor can time or carnal things quench it, for it endures forever. And herein it differs from all the world's love; nor can any one have this love, but from the fountain of love; even the mani-

festation of God's love shed in the heart, wherewith he first loved the creature. And this being known and seen in the light, from thence is the spring of love, which runs out to the whole creation of God, and for the same end; for as the love is one, so the end is but one.

Now God so loved the world, that he gave his son into the world, a light to condemn sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of God might be fulfilled in the creature, in walking after the spirit, and denying the works of the flesh. And this is the love of God to sinners, to condemn sin, and take it away by the light and life of Christ; and to all that love with this love, this is the end of it: but with this love is all your love condemned, whose love stands in fashions and customs, feastings and riotings, sports and vain pleasures, or any thing in the flesh that's in the fall; and in flattering one another in your evil ways, or in respect of persons, or any other thing that hath an end, for the love of God is without end, in love to the soul and body, as God hath made it, but in hatred to all that is come in since, which hath defiled it.

So that this love of God consists of reproofs, judgment and condemnation against all that defiles the creation, and against the creature who yields to that pollution; and this is pure love to the soul, that deals faithfully therewith, in declaring its condition; and that was the great love Christ shewed the Jews, when he told them they were hypocrites, blind guides, liars, and said, wo unto ye, ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? And many such plain true words he spoke in love to them. And that was the love of God in Paul, which said to Elymas, O full of all subtilty, and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? For all the love that can be shewed to any creature is to deal faithfully and truly with them, as they are seen in the light; and he who doth not so, loves neither God nor them (as will be found in the day of judgment) and so are out of God's love. and imagining a love which is of

another nature, and with this love, you who are out of the love of God, flatter one another in your evil ways and changeable opinions; which love is grounded in carnal things, and stands in your own wills. And therewith, when you will you love, and when you will you hate; but neither know love, as it is in God, nor hatred, whose love and hatred stands in changeable things; so your love and hatred perish, which stand not in God. But who knows the love of God, tramples upon all your love and hatred, and sees an end thereof. And such see your blindness, who say, you would have all won by love, but know not whereof you affirm; whose ways are not God's ways, nor your thoughts his: for, saith he, I will redeem Zion with judgment, and with the spirit of judgment and burning will I wash away the filth thereof: but you who are in your filth would have all flattered therein.

So that love is seen to be filthy which spares filthiness, which defiles the temple of God; but that is pure, which purges away the filth, and condemns the unclean, and all that love it; for the love of the devil may be won with serving of him, and flattering him in his ways, in them in whom he is; but what is it worth? So may one have the love of all the world, and their friendship, but woe unto that friendship which is got by sparing God's enemies, that is enmity against God, therefore, saith God, let love be without dissimulation; abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good; and that love is it, which uncovers sin, which condemns sin unto death, and covers it with righteousness; otherwise, (saith the scriptures) he that covers sin shall not prosper. And saith James, Jam. 5, 20, He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul, and shall hide a multitude of sins. And saith Solomon, open rebuke is better than secret love: such wounds are precious to them that know what love is; but he that spares mens wickedness, hates God's righteousness. And so with the light is seen God's love, and the devil's love; and each loves his own works, and so do their children in whom they reign; for whoever loves

the one, hates the other; and he that serves the one, hates the other; and so the servant pleads for his master, whom he loves.

CONCERNING JUDGMENT.

TRUE judgment (as it is known to men) is a gift from the spirit of God, set in the heart of every one who dwells in the light of Christ; which judgment passeth upon all that's in the creature, contrary to the life of God: and so as it is received, springs up with light and salvation, to the redeeming of the heart from all uncleanness, condemning all that which is contrary to purity, that God may be seen in his dwelling-place with his righteousness. And so he is said to redeem Zion with judgment, and her converts with righteousness; and to purge away the filth of the daughter of Zion, with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning. And if there be a dwelling in the light, this judgment ceases not, till the throne of Christ be established in the heart in peace; for this is his judgment, and is upon all that stands up against his kingdom. And this is the cause why the enemies of righteousness love it not, but have turned it to gall and wormwood; which the righteous delight in and love, who are redeemed and saved therewith, and know it to be the promise first to be received: for, saith the Lord, I will make judgment to rest for a light of the people; which being received, his righteousness is near to be revealed.

Therefore his judgment must pass before, upon all that's unrighteous, and none can have his righteousness, but who receive his judgment. Therefore, saith the Lord, I have hewed them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth, and my judgments are as a light that goeth forth. And for this end is judgment given to the saints of the most high. And, saith the Lord, the righteous man shall judge them after the

manner of adultresses, and after the manner of women that shed blood, because they are adultresses, and blood is in their hands: thus will I cause the lewdness to cease out of the land. Therefore is Ezekiel so often commanded to judge them, and cause them to know their abominations. And Jeremiah was full of the fury of the Lord, and he was weary with holding it in. And Micah was full of power, by the spirit of the Lord and of judgment, to declare to Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin. And so in all ages he placed his judgments in his servants, who are to judge the heathen, and such as know not God, therewith; and so many as did believe it, and receive it, did repent and found mercy, and the rest were hardened. And this judgment is eternal, and shall stand in heaven, as it is passed upon earth. And this was committed to the apostles as a doctrine; and whom they bound, were bound; and who by it they loosed, were loosed: therefore did all the saints love judgment; for it is the ministration of Christ. ministered out upon all that's against Christ, and that which is against Christ, is against the soul: so this judgment must begin at the house of God; but where the devil keeps the house, he rejects it; and saith Solomon, the ungodly scorneth judgment, and evil men understand it not; so saith he, there is that is destroyed for want of judgment; and he that hath not judgment is blind, and sees not that this enemy reigns, which will reign till judgment be brought into victory, and set in the earth; but when judgment is laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, then the covenant with hell and death must be disannulled. So all that are in this covenant, love not that which breaks it.

And this is your case, who hate reproof, who when you are told of your evil hearts, where sin lives, and your cursed crooked nature, you say, who made thee a judge? And many say, you could like what we say, but we judge people. So you are they that hate judgment, and would not have the ministry of Christ to go on; for who hath the spirit of Christ, hath the spirit of judgment; and who serve that spirit, must suffer it to speak and judge in them; and all that oppose it shall

be condemned by it. Therefore said David, the tongue of the righteous talketh judgment, the law of God is in his heart, his steps shall not slide; but the wicked seeketh to slay him.

So, for uttering the judgments of God against the wicked, have the just ever suffered; and for the same do you now hate them, and condemn them; and you are in the same nature and covenant that your forefathers were in, who shed the innocent blood; and you would have joined with them had you lived with them, whatever your deceit may say to the contrary. And you are found in the same opposition to the utmost power you have, against the spirit of judgment now, as they were then; and the cause is the same now as it was then, both they and you living in that which is for judgment, fire and condemnation; therefore you cannot receive their testimony, who have judged and condemned that evil, which you love and live in. And for this cause Cain slew his brother, and so do all his generation. And with that which you hate shall you be condemned, and shall not be able to stand in judgment, which is the saints delight, in which they are united to God, as he hath said, I will betroth ye unto me forever, in righteousness and in judgment; which righteousness and judgment must condemn the wicked. So who hath Christ, hath him in judgment and righteousness, and love him, his judgment and righteousness; but who is married unto the world, cannot love that which is his condemnation for so doing.

• CONCERNING PERFECTION.

God is perfect, and so are all his works and all his gifts; and whoever receives his gifts, receives that which is perfect. And by receiving and joining to that which is perfect, is the creature gradually made perfect. And no further than the creature is in this perfection, can any

be united to God, nor appear in his sight, nor be blessed, but are gone out from what was in the beginning, and so are not delivered out of the fall, nor redeemed, and have no more of Christ, than what they have of perfection; for perfection is of Christ, and imperfection and sin is of the devil. And these are two contraries, and come from contrary grounds, and bring forth contrary fruits; for he that is of God is of perfection, and believes perfection, but who is of the serpent cannot own it, nor believe it, being blinded by the God of this world.

God sent his son into the world, to preach perfection, even the perfection in the image of the father, that all who will believe may inherit it; and all that believed him, believed perfection. And when he had left a perfect example in all things, he ascended, and gave gifts to men, several sorts of gifts; all for the perfecting of the saints, that all might come up to one faith, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature, and of the fulness of Christ, that so he may be an everlasting redeemer, perfecting the work of God in every generation of them that believe in his work and follow him.

And this all his ministers improved to the same end, and preached and prayed, that they might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus from whom they had received the gift. And all that believed them, believed perfection, and pressed after it, as the end of their faith; knowing nothing less than perfection could give them perfect rest and redemption.

Now since the mystery of iniquity entered, there is another ministry gone out into the world, who hath taken up an imitation instead of gift, and have begotten another kind of faith in the world, wholly reprobate as to perfection, preaching against it with all the power they have, holding it for blasphemy, and calling it a doctrine of devils, and the like. And these would be called the ministers of Christ, that so they may not miss of their end; for did they come in his name, whose work they uphold, he knows they might run in vain. Thus they deceive all, who receive them by their words; but who mind the end of their work, may easily see as

much difference as is betwixt Christ and Belial. The work of Christ is, and ever was, to renew man again to his perfect state; but the work of antichrist is, to withstand it, and each hath his ministers suitable to their ends intended. Christ's end is to perfect, the devil's is to keep imperfect, and in sin. And each minister hath their faith, hope, and other gifts suitable, one pure, the other polluted. And according to each faith, so it is to all that believe them and follow them; for the faith of Christ is a shield, and gives victory over uncleanness, sin and evil; but the devil's faith lets in, and believes it must be so: for had not the devil first brought man to believe him, rather than God, he could not have polluted what God had perfected. And the same way he takes to keep up his work, by which at first he wrought it.

So none can come to know a new creature, but who believe perfection in Christ; nor can any come to God, nor Christ, nor God's righteousness, but who comes to believe perfection attainable in Christ. For all who are in the imperfect and polluted righteousness, are in your own righteousness; for the least measure of God's righteousness is perfect, and all come into perfection who become true servants to it, and thereby become free from sin. So by your unbelief you destroy your souls, who are in your own works, which make nothing perfect.

And so, measuring yourselves with yourselves, cuts you off from Christ, and measuring your faith by your own ability; so standing in that covenant which makes nothing perfect, but the coming in of a better hope doth. And this all know, whose faith stands in what God is, and not what we can do; in everlasting righteousness, not in what we have to work: the one being righteousness by faith revealed, a gift put into the believer; the other, an imitation of the same in works, but not the power: and such are you, who read a verse, and see therein what the saints did, and then set yourselves to do the like, but know not that righteousness, revealed in you in the faith which they had, which was wrought in them by the Lord, before they brought it to light; and so did not work of themselves, but believed on him who worketh the will and the deed of his own good pleasure,

who alone is well-pleased with his own work, and with all who are servants to his work, to bring it to light to his praise, whose workmanship such are. And they who are found herein, have his witnesses in the light, to prove their works, that they are wrought in God, and not of self, self-will, nor for self-ends, nor in self-time, nor in self-power. And all that know this perfect will and acceptable work of God, know it begotten and brought forth in self-denial, in all things; and not of us, but of him that is perfect: and so makes our way perfect. And this is the covenant that makes perfect all that come thereto; and self being denied in the work, boasting is excluded by the law of faith, which receives the free and perfect gift.

And for this cause the first covenant was found faulty and disannulled, because it made not the comers thereto perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, nor did exclude boasting; no more doth your imitations from the letter, for the light in your consciences witnesseth your imperfection therein, and your works are condemned before they be wrought, and your ministers tell you your righteousness is not perfect, yet they call for righteousness, and yet say, your best is but as filthy rags: and they call for prayer, and yet tell you, that you must be sinners while you live, and that the prayers of the wicked are abomination to the Lord. So the abominable sacrifice is preached, and performed; and perfection denied by all those priests and people who have not received the gift for perfecting. And of this sort, are they who have their preaching to study and to seek at other mens mouths, or from the letter, but have it not from the mouth of the Lord, freely given, the perfect gift for perfecting the saints. So what they get, that they sell; for none can give freely but who so receives; nor can any perfect others, who have not the perfect gift themselves.

So you that talk of perfection, you must first know a free gift from above. Perfection is not from below, where you have your carnal imaginations, and reason, and wisdom, and prudence, gotten by your learning and studies, whereof you boast, and wherein you exalt yourselves above your brethren, for that self exaltation came

in by the devil, and perfection is hid from it, and all that live therein; neither can it be bought or sold, nor procured with all the industry of man, only such obtain it who wait in the light, till they receive the free gift of righteousness, and be indued with power from above: not they who hear a thing in the notion and then declare it; nor who see a work done, and go to do the like; for none were more like to have been able ministers than the apostles in this, who had seen the mighty work of Christ, and heard him and his doctrine; but these were not fit for perfecting the saints, till they had received the same spirit from above: therefore were they commanded to wait at Jerusalem till therewith they were indued; and then they were made able ministers, not of the letter, but of the spirit; and their testament in the spirit, and not old in the letter, for that of the letter kills, but the spirit perfects.

And so all that ever bear the testament in spirit, preach and believe perfection, but that testament of the letter being without, cannot perfect the comers thereto: for the light, faith, hope, love, patience, &c. are gifts spiritually given for perfecting, and cannot be had any other way but in spirit, freely given, and freely received, which gifts you know not, nor the effect of them, who are in the literal ministration; but in your vain imaginations and comprehensions, are judging you know not what, and limiting the spiritual covenant of God to the literal; and because you who are in the letter, searching with your wit, can find no perfection, therefore you will judge the spiritual covenant also: that so the devil may forever keep people from the coming in of the better hope: for if the first covenant made nothing perfect, nor the second neither, what hope is there for people, seeing no imperfection nor uncleanness can enter into the kingdom of Heaven?

CONCERNING GOVERNMENT, AND MAGISTRACY.

THERE is no just government but what is of God, and in whomsoever he (having called them) placeth his power and authority; which is just, and righteous, received in the light, and from the anointing of Jesus, and the subjection to his spiritual power in the soul, whom the father hath appointed king and governor of all things in Heaven and in earth: and none can deserve the name of christian governors, but who by him are governed, and do receive his authority, with subjection thereunto in spirit. Therefore saith the apostle, let every soul be subject to the higher power. And he that will rule for God, must first see that his own soul be subject to the higher power, and must know one higher than he; and so himself coming under that power, then with that power and authority upon him he goes forth to rule with God, for God; and having set up his kingdom in his heart, he goes to make way that his kingdom may be set up in others; that all may bow to his authority wherewith he is anointed from above, and to which he is become subject for conscience sake. And so his government being according to that in every conscience, every one that minds that in the conscience, shall witness him and his government to be of God, and so he that resists, shall receive to himself condemnation, witnessed by that in the conscience: and all who own not that in the conscience which is pure, to obey the Lord therein, the sword of the Lord in the hand of his minister shall be upon such, and that of God to which he is subject, even the anointing he hath received, shall instruct him in the spirit of meekness, wisdom, and judgment, to find out the transgressor, and lay the sword upon him; and such shall not bear the sword in vain, but a terror to the evil doer shall be, without respect to the persons of men, or any other thing, but only to the law of God, which is one with that in the conscience.

So is Christ honoured as a law-giver, and judge, and king; and with this honour he honoureth such rulers in

the consciences of all his people, and before all the world; and though the world knows not the authority of such, nor from whom they have it, yet all that fear God do; and are made to confess them before God and man: and so Isaiah was made to confess to Cyrus, whom others counted a heathen; for it is the authority in the person that is honourable, wherever it is placed. So Moses was dreadful in this authority, though otherwise but a shepherd, and the meekest man in the world. And Samuel a poor man, yet this authority made the elders of Bethlehem to tremble at his coming when they heard thereof. Nay, it is too much to instance in particulars; for all that ever honoured God in this, he honoured them, whose names are a blessing to this day, and their memorial shall not rot, for when such reign, the people rejoice that delight in righteousness; the just are bold, and righteousness flourishes in the open streets, and wickedness is ashamed, and is hid, and the innocent clap their hands for joy that the Lord reigns, and their governors are of themselves. When Christ ruleth in all, then he makes his officers peace, and his exactors, righteousness.

But if it be said, must not men own wicked magistrates? I say, they are to be owned and obeyed in all things, as they are appointed by God; for God limits them, and hath set bounds to them, though they know it not; and so far as they command the will of God, they are to be obeyed for conscience sake; but when they are contrary to God, and command that which God forbids, and forbid what he commands, then God is to be obeyed, and man denied for conscience sake; for none can be obeyed for conscience sake, who command that which is contrary to the law or light of God in the conscience; though many do deny the Lord, and conform to such; yet who are guided by the spirit of God, which keeps the conscience clean, never could, but in all ages have suffered violence from such, to keep their consciences void of offence; for so it must be when rulers themselves deny obedience to God in spirit, then all who walk after the spirit, must needs suffer by them.

And here is the ground of all persecution that ever was, when governors are out of the fear of God, and stand in their own wills, and walk after the flesh, then that seed rules, which persecutes him that is born after the spirit, and so the enmity getting up, snares are laid for the innocent, to make him an offender for a word, who is none indeed: and from this ground have the lambs been devoured always as evil doers, but ever innocent, yet never wanting accusations, as hereticks, ring-leaders of sects and seditions, blasphemers and the like: that so the devil may the more blind the world, least they should see his envy, and their innocency.

And in the time of such governors hath the lamb borne testimony in much patience, meekness and long-suffering, bearing all the venom and envy that the serpent could cast out upon him (where he was manifest in the creature) for a witness against all such rulers; that his long-suffering might lead them to repentance, and leave them without excuse in the day of his wrath; and against such is he finishing his testimony at this day. And a blinder generation never was in any age, who have run from all tenderness, so far into that wisdom, that many are grown wholly past feeling; imprisoning, whipping, and torturing their brethren.

And as every generation of that seed grows more subtil, so (in the things of Christ) more blind and deaf. So that it's rare to find one, who hath an ear to hear oppression; but not one, whose heart is perfect to deny the world's favour, to bear witness against the ground of oppression: So the just man perisheth, and none lays it to heart; nor can any lay it to heart, whose hearts are filled with selfish passion, and self-will; for none can rule for God, whose heart is not ruled by God; but when the Lord rules in the heart, then the just reigns, and the cause of the just is heard, and he that rules for the just, rules for God, and with God, over the unjust; first in himself, then in all the world; otherwise though an unjust judge may hear the cause of the poor in some case, or time, yet it is not for God, nor from obedience to the spirit of judgment, which is of God, the heart being filled with self-ends.

So that he that is a self-lover, or proud, or covetous, or respects gifts, or rewards, cannot rule for God, nor can he that respects persons rule for God, nor with God, who is no respecter of persons, but only hath respect to such as walk in obedience to that just principle of himself: nor can such as seek for honour from men, rule for God; for such are out of the faith of Christ, and in the unreasonable nature, seeking the praise of men, and so cannot have the praise of God; for the friendship of the world is enmity with God, and he that seeks the one, loses the other. And such as are out of the fear of God, cannot rule for God, for such are subject to be drawn with fear or favour of men, from the just principle of God, out of which none can rule for God.

And herein is the clear difference betwixt heathens and christians. The one exercises justice, and judgment, and righteousness, which is of God, and in his will, whereby they rule over all unrighteousness of men of corrupt minds, and principles whatsoever, and stand in the authority of God, a terror to the evil doer: the other exercise lordship over men's persons, in their own wills, which they set up in their selfish principle, in carnal policy, who lay the sword upon the just, as on the unjust, if he bow not to their wills; which who stands in the will of God may not do; and so they that abide in the fear of God, do ever suffer by such as are out of his fear. And though these be set in their places by the permission or appointment of God, yet not knowing him, who ordereth all things, to order them, though they are restrained from evil, or made to do his will, yet have they no reward, nor share in it, not doing it in obedience of God, nor from a principle of equity, not knowing Christ guiding and leading them therein; they are no christians, whatever they may call themselves.

And to such as these who mind not that light or law of God to govern withal, hath God sent his servants to testify to their faces of their departure from the just principle, [and so cannot please God with his government, yet did they never plot against them, nor murmur] which if they did hear, they rejoiced to see them established as a blessing to the place and people, which

the people of God, ever seek to God for; but if they hear not, then they are made to mourn that God should be grieved, and his creature lost, especially in such a place by which God may be so dishonoured, and a nation or town plagued from the Lord for his sake who hath the sword of God in his hand, and suffers sin, but punishes the innocent, both which the Lord will revenge; and seldom but the place where it is done tastes thereof, which such as rule with God, and for him, prevent; yea, by such the peace hath been lengthened after the judgment hath been pronounced. So when the righteous reigns, God is honoured, and good men rejoice; but when wickedness gets up in the magistrate, then the Lord is dishonoured, and the glory departs.

CONCERNING OBEDIENCE.

SPIRITUAL and living obedience, is not that of man's way and will, wherein men and women (in the first birth, and wisdom therein) read the scriptures, and there find what the saints performed in the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus, and from that set themselves on work to do the like; and so make an imitation instead of obedience, and set up self-works instead of Christ's works; and obey self-righteousness, instead of God's righteousness; and so cover themselves with filthy rags instead of everlasting righteousness. But all who will know true obedience, must first know a measure of God's spirit in the light of Jesus, and therein moving and drawing towards Christ Jesus, wherein the faith is, which lays hold on God's righteousness which is in Christ Jesus, and by the moving of his spirit in the light, the truth is seen, and the obedience that is one in Christ Jesus the second Adam. And as the creature is joined in the light to that spirit of Christ, and in believing, there is the life of Jesus made manifest, quickening the body unto that one obedience, which is contrary to the will of man; and the mind being kept spiritual in the

measure the seed is raised, and the new is born, of that spirit; to which seed the promise, and power is, wherein the creature is joined heir with Christ Jesus, who is God's righteousness; and so in the faith is the glad tidings of good things preached to the soul, and by the power of the gospel preached to the creature; the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, and the just lives in that faith, and Christ is manifest for obedience to the faith: and all that are in this faith, are in the one obedience, which is in Christ Jesus, which he learned of the father for us; that in that obedience many may be made righteous, and all that learn Christ, learn his obedience; which was not what he saw or heard from men, but what he saw and heard of the father; not in his own time or will, but in the father's, could he do any thing, but what he see the father do, in that work he was found, doing the same, as he was taught of the father in his obedience to him; not what the scribes and pharisees did, though they sate in Moses' seat, nor what the world approved, but what was contrary to all the world, and contrary to his own will; only submitting to the moving of the spirit of the father that dwelt in him, by which alone he was guided and furnished to every good work.

And all that believe in him, and follow his light, he leads them by degrees into the same knowledge and obedience, out of all carnal knowledge, power, and obedience; and by faith the creature is made partaker of his obedience, and the power thereof from faith to faith. And all that have learned him, as he is, so are they in this present world, both in love, and life, and power, and spirit; and in all this in the measure as he is learned; and as any come to the unity of the faith in him, to a measure of his fulness, so the obedience is but one, the power one, the way one, and the son one, and the father one. And this is not any thing from without, but in spirit it is learned and obtained, and the mystery of it is hid from all who are without, and the ministration of it is spiritual within, whereby that obedience is known, which is to the truth, through the spirit, which is in life, and not in imitation; but in the will of God, and not in

self-will; which obedience stands not in any thing seen from man, or by man done, thereby to imitate or do the like, but it stands in Christ Jesus, and in his own obedience to the father, seen in the light, and in the faith received, whereby the believer is made one in it, and it in him; that as the same father calls for the same obedience in spirit, so in the same spirit doth the believer offer up himself, and all he hath in the same power and obedience in Christ Jesus: and so as the creature by faith partakes of that one obedience, in the second Adam, he is made righteous and no farther; even as all are made sinners, as they partake of the disobedience of the first Adam, and no farther.

And who knows to partake of this obedience, knows the eternal spirit in which all the children of God have been taught, and enabled to this one obedience, in their several measures, ever since the world was, which is not works by them done, but the everlasting righteousness of God, obeyed in that spirit, according to the motions thereof seen in the light of Christ, which none know who are heart-blind, and who minds the motions of the flesh, and obey them, their mind being gone out to carnal pleasures, the call to this obedience is not by them heard; nevertheless the same carnal spirit that leads out into the world, teaches to make an imitation of this obedience, and so deceives the simple, by setting up a likeness without life; and so glories in appearance, but not in heart. And the witness of God in the heart or conscience of such, testifying to the face of such, that their obedience is not perfect nor accepted; they conclude, that there can be no perfect obedience attained in this world; they not knowing the mighty powerful working of God in spirit, which worketh in them perfectly who believe and walk in the light; whereby such become his workmanship in Christ Jesus, wrought into his obedience, and his obedience into them, in their measure, till they become of one heart, one mind, one soul, one spirit, one flesh and bone, and blood, and one obedience, and one life, that it is no more we that live, but Christ that lives in us; and the life that we now live is by faith in the son of God. And though the fulness of this

obedience is not attained at once, yet the least measure of it is perfect, and accepted; and so accepted in him, in whom it is wrought, as the obedience of a child is as pure, clear, and willing, as the strong man's; even so is the new birth in Christ Jesus, according to what God requires thereof, who never requires, but what he gives; and never gives, but what is perfect, and what he perfectly accepts, which gifts are all in his son; and in him, the least is accepted; and every one that therein exercise themselves without mixture.

CONCERNING GOOD WORKS.

As there is but one chief good, so there is but one principal worker of good in heaven, and in earth, who by the word of his power, made all good in the beginning; and in this good work and will was man made in the will of God; in his image and goodness he stood; but falling from this steadfastness that was in God, and betaking him unto self, thereby to become wise, he became subtile and prond in himself, seeking to be as God, for which he was cast out from God, his power, love, and goodness, and being fallen into the dark imaginations of his own heart; and finding himself under the curse (whereof the light of Christ in the conscience is a witness) he hath set himself to make a likeness of God, and Christ, and God's worship, and good works, faith, hope, patience, love, &c. but being under the powers of darkness, neither knows God, nor his work; but is deceived by the prince of darkness, and so doth please himself with an imitation of God, and his work, but without power, and so, as he imagines, is doing good: but the testimony of God in his heart, bears witness against him, that his work is not perfect, nor accepted.

He also imagines that he is redeemed, but is still under the commanding power of satan, led captive at his will; who that he may the more strongly bind him, he leads him sometimes into a seeming worship, that so he

may not so much suspect his way, nor be too much troubled at his other unrighteous practices: so that the worst of men in this state, have a worship; and each sort think they are right, though there be but one way, and they all without it; and each in their thoughts, are not so bad as others; but have their several pretended good works, though there be but one good work to make men good, and they all out of it in their own works.

And it is no small work to deceive the least of these who are thus conceited, though men of greater wit and parts (as they call them, which is but a higher deceit) may lead them from one deceit to another; yet all the world's wisdom cannot bring them into the good work, nor the way wherein it is wrought. Only such who mind the light of Christ in their dark hearts, which manifests to them the evils deeds, and reproveth them for them, and can believe it to be the light of Christ, and thereto take heed to follow it out of the world, and carnal-mindedness, and in that light wait, till the living word they come to receive in their hearts, only such come into the good work and will of God: for without the word was nothing made, nor without it can any be redeemed: for it is the word of the Lord, heard and received, that quickens the dead, and raises to life that which is dead in the trespasses and sins; and the spiritual man being quickened, the power of the word brings forth in him the work of God's righteousness, which was from everlasting; which, in the measure thereof, confirms the creature unto God in righteousness, who lost his image in unrighteousness; and so is the creature renewed in the spirit of the mind, and inward parts, to receive wisdom and power in the hidden man, how to escape the evil, and resist it, and to bring to light what God begets in the heart, and so the new creature is seen created in Christ Jesus unto good works, to walk therein, as was fore-ordained of God.

And as the believer is found diligent in the light waiting, and in the spirit obedient to this work, in this work he comes still more to learn God's power and teaching, and Christ's obedience, and God's wisdom and care

over him, in leading into the sufferings, and tribulations, trials, and temptations, and the faith and fellowship with Christ therein; in which, if the creature stand, not a hair can fall, but he is sure to come out more pure than gold; and so in all this work, he grows in the knowledge of Christ, and his sonship, toward the measure, and stature, and fulness of the perfect man, into the likeness of God: and thus the saints were made conformable to God, by his mighty working, whereby he wrought powerfully in them, after his good pleasure, contrary to their fleshly pleasures. And what is thus wrought, is good, because it comes from the fountain of all good; and this is not a new work, but the everlasting good work of God, manifest to the creature, and through the creature to the world, by which God is glorified, who is the father and author, and finisher thereof in every one that truly believes.

And this is no self-work, nor can it be wrought in any but where self is denied, and a cross to self taken up; so boasting is excluded, the creature having nothing but what he hath received, neither by his own will nor deed, but by believing in the light, and in obedience of faith. And with this faith and work are all the world judged, who are in their own works; and all that are without works, whose faith is dead, are to every good work reprobate: and whose works are their own, their prayers are abomination; where the works come not from this one everlasting work and workings. For though there be many works, as to the creatures obedience and measure, yet they all complete but this one work of the creature's redemption, and God's praise therein, the beginning and end of all.

And of this work of God is all the world ignorant, who are preaching, pressing, and acting their good works, (as they call them) but all their works do not manifest a power that brings them out of sin, and the world's conformity, and service thereof in his ways and worship; but every good work of God in his saints, who become obedient to his working, as they subject to bring forth the good work and will of God; every work begets the creature nearer to God, and into his likeness

and nature, and this is the reward of good works to every one who are exercised therein, that thereby they are wrought out of the world's likeness and conformity, and so out of their friendship, till they suffer all manner of evil for the name of God, and the nature of his works that is in them, which is opposite to the world's works, and the world to them. And so their name being cast out as evil among men, they are received into the love of the father of the work, for which they are hated of the world; and so the reproach of the world becomes great riches to all who love God, and are obedient to his work, which none who stand in their own wills can inherit.

And so self-works, and God's works are manifest in the light. The one is, that which men see, or hear, or imagine, and so set themselves to imitate the same in their own wills and ways, which they have conceived in their fallen wisdom, and earthly minds, not in spirit. new born, but in the oldness of the letter, or tradition from men: but God's works are those which are from everlasting, before the will of man, or the world's customs, and therefore must conform to neither: but every one who into this work will come, must deny the world. and their own wills, and all that is in them must bow, and conform to the motion of the spirit, and to its workings, which is seen to such as in the light dwell, and in its way and time must bring forth the fruit of the spirit in due season; not the works of the flesh, nor to the flesh; but the working of the spirit to God, in the sight of God; and the praise of such is not of the world. who bring not forth to the world; but of God, who bring forth to God, and the world praises its own.

CONCERNING ELECTION AND REPROBATION.

This is that doctrine which is sealed from all the world; nor can any one know it, or receive it truly who

are in the reprobate state; though many be disputing about it in the dark, which none know but the children of light. So as one who had obtained favour to have this mystery revealed, I shall according to permission write a few words, as it is received in Jesus, yet can be received by no man's wisdom, nor any who only are born after the flesh; but who knows what it is to walk in the spirit, shall witness me herein.

And I deny all of that spirit who would foolishly charge God to have concluded the condemnation of some persons before they come into the world; and though they seek after God, yet they cannot be saved, because God hath purposed the contrary: and on the contrary, some are concluded to salvation, though they live and die in their sins. And this is the spirit of the world, which knows not the secrets of God revealed in spirit, and therefore judge carnally from the letter, from the figures, and shadows, but know not the uprightness that lies in the mystery; for being without, so they imagine. But none know the purpose of God, according to election, but who come to see that the election and reprobation are in the two seeds, that after the flesh, and that after the spirit; and he that can judge of these two, he knows the two vessels, ordained to honour and dishonour: and as every one is found in these, so is God's purpose touching them.

Now in the fall all are in the dishonour, and so children of wrath under the curse, and heirs thereof, and so without God, or the promise; and so not having the in-dwelling of God, no vessels of honour, but reprobate concerning God. Now in Christ Jesus is the election, and the elect seed, in whom the election is obtained, and in whom alone it is established; and in the midst of all the dishonour his light is tendered to lead out of the dishonour, the curse, and the fall: and whosoever he be that will believe in his light, without respect of persons, he leads out of the world, and to the cleansing and purging the body, soul and mind, till the vessel be changed, from the oldness of the will, and affections and lusts of the flesh, till the newness of the spirit be witnessed, and so the creature in heart and mind is brought

out of the flesh, wherein the dishonour lodges, and which is prepared for dishonour; and is brought to live in the spirit, where the lusts of the flesh are not fulfilled, and so the vessel of honour is witnessed, prepared for the master's use; who while he lived in the flesh, was prepared for dishonour, and fitted for destruction, not knowing the master, nor his use; though God with much long-suffering endures such vessels, that he may at his pleasure shew his wrath thereon, who will not own the mercy shewed in his son. And for this purpose had he long endured Pharaoh, suffered his oppression, till he was fit to shew his power upon him, who had long been setting himself above the seed of God. As also he did the Amorites, till their iniquities were full; and so do many at this day, who proceed to one wickedness after another, till they fill up their measure, that he may make known his wrath upon them that will not own his seed.

And so shall it be with all, who own not the light of Christ, and whose day of visitation is past; such have a measure of sin to fill up in the other seed, which they shall not pass. And for this purpose is that seed raised up, and prepared, that he may shew his power upon him who doth not retain the knowledge of God, that they all might be damned, who take pleasure in unrighteousness, serving the creature more than the creator, whose hearts are filled with all lasciviousness, and fleshly lusts; and these are the vessels of dishonour. But if any man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work, which they who live in these things are to the good work reprobate, to God, and to the faith of God. And so here is the election and reprobation, they that are after the spirit, and they that are after the flesh; and they that are after the flesh are not the seed, but they that are after the spirit are accounted for the seed, and these have obtained, but the rest are hardened.

And so there is no unrighteousness with God, but the unrighteousness is with men, who reject the counsel of the Lord against themselves, and choose to abide in

that which God hath cursed, and wherein all that continue will be hardened to their own destruction, notwithstanding all their endeavours, and labours, prayers and teras that are in this nature, it's not accepted: this being the seed which God hath put the enmity betwixt it and his own seed, it cannot be well pleasing to him. For against this he hath placed his displeasure, but in the other mercy, wherein he is well pleased for his mercies sake: so it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of him that hath shewed mercy, and this mercy he set above all his works; so he that stays in the world cannot obtain it, but the light which leads out of the world, leads up to it; and whosoever comes unto him, he will in no wise cast off; but who comes not to him, are cast off already, because they will not come to the light of life.

So read your condemnation you vain babblers, who spend your time with disputing about election with your reprobate minds. When ye find that the light of Christ condemns you for your lusts and earthly delights, and the spirit of God moves in you against your evil deeds, but you will not be obedient thereto; but you still harden your hearts against the light, that is the reprobate state, and that is the spirit of God that strives in thee against it, which would not thou should'st die in it; then let that of God in thy conscience, judge if thy destruction be not of thyself, whose way is reprobate from God; and let that of God in thy own conscience, which reproves thee for thy wickedness, be a witness against thee that God delights not in thy destruction, but rather that thou shouldest repent: and so hath given thee his light to reprove thee, and lead thee to repentance, shewing that he hath not concluded thy condemnation before thou wast born: and let the same light which checks thee for thy sin, and lets thee see in thy heart, that the righteous God hath appointed a day wherein all shall receive after their doings, be a witness against thy vain thoughts, that God hath not concluded to quit thee in thy wickedness; nor do thy selfish imaginations make thy sins any less in God's account. And so the righteous judge of all the earth will proceed to do right-

cousness: and therefore to make way for the same, hath he placed his pure light in the heart of every one that will mind it, which will clearly show you all, whether you be in the elect seed, or in the seed of evil-doers; and this light is that which being believed, and followed, doth reveal the electon and reprobation; and without it, none know who is elected or reprobated, nor can judge thereof: but if the light be minded, it will reprove the reprobate and his way, which is contrary to God in his own heart, for his own works, but whose work is wrought in God, with the light is justified.

CONCERNING THE NEW BIRTH.

THERE is the old man, and a new man, which are known in the light, and their several births, and their several natures, and kindreds according to that whereof they are born; that which is of the earth, earthly, fleshly, carnal, and corrupt; this is the state of the old man, and all that are in that state are fallen from God, and his covenant, and are in the curse, and wholly blind in heart, as touching the mysteries of God, yet in the sensual wisdom of the flesh, make profession of God and his gospel: but being heart-blind, neither knows God nor his power, but is alienated from the life of God, and led captive in the dark at his will who is the prince of darkness, and whatever he doth is cursed in this state. And in this state did Cain sacrifice, but could not be accepted; for he was out of the state of well-doing, or well-being, yet would have been accepted. And in this state Esau sought the blessing, and wept for it, but could not obtain it: and in this state came Nicodemus to Christ, but could not enter into the kingdom in that state, nor knew the new birth, though he loved Christ, and believed him to be sent of God; and this is that state David speaks of, when he saith, If I regard iniquity, God will not hear my prayer. And in this state you all are, who

are worshipped in your carnal minds, and sensual wisdom in the flesh.

But that which is born of the heavenly, is heavenly, spiritual, eternal, and incorruptible, which is the state of the new man, which of God is begotten of the divine nature; and as is his nature, so is his works; and so his delights are spiritual, as he is spiritual; for as is the man, so are his works; and as is the tree, so is its fruit; and so he that is born of this seed, is born of God; and he that is born of God, sins not, in whom that seed remains, and all who remain in this seed, and it in them, this hath the promise and power that puts off the old man with his deeds, lusts, and affections; and so the body of sin being put off through the body of Christ, the redemption is witnessed; and as the creature passeth from the old to the new, so they pass from the death to the life; for the life is in the new, and so the victory is received in the new, over sin, the grave, and hell, which the world's birth talks of in their fallen nature, but cannot receive the power and victory, whereby to enter into that kingdom, nor to see the glory of it, and so takes up their rest, and delights in visible things, and so encumbers themselves with that, the end whereof is destruction; which those who are born of the spirit tread upon, and cannot set their minds upon, nor bow unto, nor be conformable to such vanities. And so those who are of the heavenly cannot have communion with the earthly, they being contrary minded in all things. So that which is wisdom to the one, is foolishness to the other, and ever was.

So the spiritual seed could never worship the heathen gods, nor can it bow to their imaginations; for that seed which is of God, leads the heart up to God; and that which is of the earth, to earthly things; and so those that are the children of God, are led by his spirit of which they are born; and the children of this world, by the spirit of this world, are captivated into the world's ways, and fashions, and love of it, wherein is the serpent's seat, and kingdom wherein he rules, and wherein his power is seen in all who are disobedient to the light of Christ the heavenly man; so being given

up (because of the blindness of their hearts) to his power, which is always in the dark, in such he brings forth his enmity against the babes of God born after the spirit, children of the light, of the immortal seed, who bear the image of the invisible God, and have the spiritual worship, into which they are led and guided with the eternal spirit, of which they are born; which can no longer stay in any form of worship than God stays therein; but by his spirit is led to follow him into whatever he goes, and out of whatever he departs; which those who are born after the flesh, and see but the out-side, and form, and there abide when God is departed, such are become the seat of satan, where he sits and persecutes such as follow the spirit's teaching, into its several ministrations: and therein hath the serpent beguiled the creature, by getting into somewhat of the form once used with the saints (whilst God dwelt therein) and to that adds inventions of his own, called decency and order, and the like, and with this hath deceived the creatures, so as to serve his ends, to shed the blood of their brethren, under a pretence of error and blasphemy, and denying ordinances, and worships, and as being leaders of dangerous sects and heresies, denying government, turning the world upside down, and the like. So that the children of light have been ever numbered amongst transgressors, but were never so, further than to transgress the wills of men, to observe the will of God: yet none of these did ever suffer as well-doers in the world's account, but as not worthy to live in the world, being born of a principle above the world, which the natural man knows not. So he that is born after the flesh persecutes him that is born after the spirit, as it is at this day, thinking they do God service, because they know not the father, nor the son, but live in darkness, not owning that whereof the children of light are born, so become their enemies.

And this is your state who resist that measure of light that shines in your dark hearts, that shews your evil deeds. So being against the light of the spirit, you are enemies to all who are born of that spirit. And so far as you see the ground and root of your disobedience to

The light in yourselves that reprove of sin, so far you may see the ground of your enmity, and no farther. And until you join to that light, you cannot be one with that seed, but hate it; for that which is born of the will of the flesh, is in enmity to that which is born of the will of God; and that which is born of God, hath enmity against the evil of the world, and conformity to it. And with the light are you judged to be of the flesh, who love the things of the flesh, and mind them, and who conform to this world are of it; whatever you profess to the contrary, the light will find you out: which light leads above all these things, up to the father of lights; which light is one with all who are born in the spirit, but a witness against you who are born of the flesh.

So they that are in the flesh cannot please God, that in your conscience is witness, the light which is the condemnation of the world. But who is born of the spirit, with such he is well pleased, the testimony of their conscience bearing them witness in the sight of God, that they are his children, and born of him, and their envy, and reproach, and suffering from the world, for testifying against the deeds thereof, are as a cloud of witnesses, that they are not of it, for it loves its own, and so the enmity is seen, but between the seeds; that of the serpent seeks a word, or a form without, whereby to murder and destroy the creature which God hath made, under a pretence of serving God, but the seed of God strikes at the head of that enmity, and root of sin, but saves the work of God alive.

CONCERNING THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST FROM
WHAT THE WORLD SO CALLS.

IN the world there be many sorts and forms of baptisms, but in Christ there is but one, and that is that of the spirit; and this is the baptism of Christ, and all that are baptized with it, are baptized into his death, buried with him unto the world, its ways and worships, loves

and friendships, and to all that is in them which would conform or bow thereto; and through this death is the seed of God raised up out of the grave, quickened by the same spirit which raised Jesus from the dead. And all that are baptized with this spirit [and the old man dead and buried] they are raised a spiritual seed unto God, holy and zealous of good works, being begotten again of another nature from above, which is but one; and all, as they are baptized herein, grow into one in God the father, and the son Jesus Christ. And so the saints were all baptized by one spirit into one body, out of that nature in which all differences are, sects and opinions, and so come to put on Christ, which is but one: for as many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, and his love, mind and affections; and such know a further prize than contentions about elements of the world, or washings without; neither do they stand laying again such foundations, as stand in times, and seasons, and customs, and persons as the world is contending about, who are in the many baptisms, and many fashions, some contending for sprinkling infants, some for dipping them; some for sprinkling them over again, and some for dipping them over again, when they are grown; and are in such a confusion of words, and many outward ceremonies, that they keep themselves disputing and jangling about from the letter, in an imitation of John's ministry, calling it the baptism of Christ, though out of the spirit and power of Christ, or John either; yea, so far from the power, as not to come to the form of either.

And this effect this hath taken in all who are gone out into the world, in these imitations and imaginations, that so many baptisms, so many religions and sects; and every sect master and his followers, set themselves against all other in the way they have conceived to be right, and to that way must all bow, or else no agreement, though never so near in other things; nay, so zealous they are for their likeness, that if any come not into it, though the spirit of God be in them, and they themselves confess it, yet he must not speak in that creature in their churches, without bowing to their forms of

water, which are all different one from another; though the spirit of God be but one, and cannot be limited to any visible form or rudiment of the world. And thus the form is set above the power, and not the true form neither; but as men have conceived from the letter, by the counsels of their own brain; some in the popish councils, some since, but none from the mouth of the Lord: and therefore they are scattered in their imaginations and baptisms. But they who are baptized with the baptism of the spirit, are baptized into one body. But all that are without, who are the nearest, are in the error, not knowing the scripture nor power of God herein; for all who have not their law, guide, and rule in the spirit, are in that generation who have erred, and lost the saints guide; and such are scattered, with what they from the letter imagine, into divisions.

And this was that which Paul saw getting in amongst the churches in his time, setting up sects, and the person by whom they were baptized, puffed up for them, and against the other apostles, some of Paul, some of Peter, &c. Which Paul seeing, thanks God he baptized no more of them, and plainly says, Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel, though he could use it, until he saw them make an idol of it, thereby to make divisions and parties, and to puff up one above another, as it is now used at this day, yea, far more, for it is now made the key to let in, and shut out of that they call a church; yea further, some say none can be saved without it, but all that have it are believers, and shall be saved: and so set it in the place of Christ.

But others are more moderate, who finding it practised in the letter, they say it is an ordinance, and that they who practice it not, deny an ordinance of Christ.—To such I say, all that is in the letter, is not ordained there to be taken up by all that read it; for the saints had their call to their particular ministrations in spirit, and not in letter: for else they had not witnessed differences of administrations, but the same Lord: but by the spirit they were led from carnal administrations, and through them, not sticking in the letter. What letter had Paul to deny circumcision, which the letter said

should be as a sign forever? Or, by what letter did he declare, that he was not sent to baptize? Did he deny an ordinance of Christ in either of these, and divers more rudiments, which were commands in the letter, which he preached and practised in spirit, putting an end to the shadows of things to come, and leading to the body, as in plain, Col. 2.

Further I say, if it were so, that all that was done in the letter, was to be taken up, then the form thereof must not be changed, if the letter be the rule: but not any that I know at this day are called of God into the form, as John did it, who had a call from Heaven. So you that have your certain dwelling places, and live in your worldly estates and fashions, are out of this call. But the apostles baptized into the name of Christ Jesus with the spirit, that they might receive the holy ghost. But if you say, some had it not in right form and manner, nor by persons rightly called and qualified, &c. I say, nor can they have that from you, who are not called out of the world, but live in its friendship, professions, fashions and customs, in which the saints never lived after they were called to teach baptizing. So you do but add another false form to what they had before, but still out of the power, nor any change of faith or qualification, only in that thing of water over again, differing in some circumstances, as you have conceived from the letter, but still, with the rest of professions, in covetousness, pride and contention, vain words and heathenish customs, and manners of the nations in which you live; you that can live in lawsuits and revenge; you that swear at men's wills, and so deny the commands of Christ and his apostle, who say, above all things, swear not at all; you that can uphold the high places of popery, which yet remain in the land, and such a worship therein, as Christ never commanded, with tithes, and offerings, and all the rest of popish inventions, whereby Christ is denied to be come in the flesh, the everlasting priest, and something set up instead of his way, like unto the jewish priesthood, which is not in either, but an imagined thing from men of corrupt minds, &c. You who can do these things and much more of that nature, rather than you will suffer

the loss of all things, you are far unlike those you would imitate, or those they baptized.

And was baptism in your manner as great a cross to you now, as it was in the time of the persecuting Jews, or as these other weightier things are now, we should find few to contend for it, as for the other things: for did you know the right ends of that ministration of water, you would know that it was a forerunner of Christ's baptism and kingdom, and a witness to all men, that the Jews ceremonies, and heathenish prayers and worships, wherein they were grown into divisions, were to have an end, and the spiritual ministration and baptism was to be set up in the downfall of carnal ordinances and elements, of all which they were to repent, for the kingdom of God was at hand, even within all that would believe it; who did deny all the Jews worships, circumcisions and ordinances without in the letter, and preached the mystery and end of them in spirit; but your baptisms, which come not to end, of tithes and offerings, and Jewish ceremonies, and gentiles also, that baptism we deny; for herein was the cross of Christ, and the power of God manifest; for they suffered for this all the envy that the Jews and professors could do unto them, who upheld the same in the letter, but denied the power and spirit; which could they but have bowed to their ceremonies outward, the cross of Christ had ceased, and then the power of Christ had ceased also. And the same is now seen of you at this day, and the same cross; for could but those whom Christ had called out now bow to your several forms of baptisms and worships of yours, that are zealous for them, and bow to mens wills, and worship the persons of such as are zealous for their pride, and wilfulness, we should not suffer by you, but the offence of the cross would cease, as it is ceased to all who preach baptisms, carnal ordinances, respect of persons, conformity to mens wills, and the world's customs and manners, who preach up pride, swearing, and imperfection and sin for term of life, &c.

I say to you, who can conform to the ways of men, and please them, the cross of Christ is ceased, and so

the power also; and therefore are you ever preaching against the world's ways and wickedness, but never able to lead out of them; like those whose mind earthly things, who were enemies to the cross of Christ, ever learning and teaching, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, that makes free, to those the cross and sufferings are ceased, and they and the powers of the earth are one against such as take up the cross, to follow Christ in the way of the spirit; and such being without in the letter, are become spiritually blind, and so cannot see that the appearance of Christ was ever cross to all who were got into the rudiments, pleading for outsides, but had lost the power, wherein this generation exceeds, having lost both power and form also.

And to you I say of all sorts of baptisms, as the apostle saith of circumcision, we are the baptism, who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the outward washing, being that we have had it from such as gathered it from tradition, and yours is no more. But this we have learned, that it is not baptism which is outward in the flesh, but that is baptism which is in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God; whereby we are baptized by one spirit into one body; and as many as are baptized into Christ, are baptized into his death, and have put him on, and are become new creatures. And this is that which availeth to save us, not the washing the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus.

And this baptism we witness, that whosoever is therewith baptized shall be saved; but for other baptisms, which men are contending about from the letter, we see the end thereof and what they bring forth. But which of you can shew, that you come in the power and spirit of John's baptism; or have a call from God thereto? For that any have power from the letter, to take up and impose it upon others (yea, though it were the true form) that I deny; for that they who are not sent to baptize, that the leaving the outward water, and going on to the spiritual baptism, is a slighting or contemning of an ordinance of God, that I deny also: for this might as

well have been charged against Paul, who denied it in his time, and preached baptism in spirit in its stead; the same thing for which we are accused (to deny an ordinance of Christ) whom he hath not sent to dip or sprinkle in water, but to preach the gospel of light and life, and the spiritual baptism of Christ Jesus, to the bringing all that receive our testimony into one body, by one spirit, not making divisions about carnal things, for to us the day is come, and the shadows fly away.

And your baptism we judge, and the end of it, which hath not led you out of tithes and offerings, swearing, suing and contention, out of the world's worships, manners and respect of persons, and to suffer the loss of all to witness Christ: that baptism we see to be out of the faith of Christ Jesus, and not worth contending about; for he that is in the world with it, is not much better; for that baptism which preaches not repentance from all the ways of fallen man, and manners there set up, is none of John's; and they who walk in the flesh, are none of Christ's. So with the light of Christ, if you it mind, you will see yourselves out of the true baptism, both as to the matter, manner and the end, who are crying up ordinances in the world, which lead not out of the world; and when the world comes to judgment, that baptism will not save you from the world's portion.

But this I say to those, who would know the truth herein, as we have received, we do not despise any ordinance of God, which he hath called any of his people to in any generation; nor dare we take a tradition upon us, which God hath not required at our hands, lest we keep people in that which God is departed out of; and it be said to us, who hath required it at your hands? But God hath shewed us a more excellent way, the light is come, and therein have we found Christ Jesus, the guide of his people, and the leader of ages, even by the spirit of truth, which leads into all truth, even into all that God requires; the obedience to which is better than sacrifice. And to direct people to this spirit are we sent, that Christ may be all in all, who gives power in the creature to perform what he leads into; that

thereby all that believe in the light, may learn him, who begets the will and the deed also, who is the author and finisher of their faith, who look to him alone, and to his light, that all may see their righteousness to be of him alone.

And by this which we have received of him in spirit, do we all see you, who read what the saints have done by call from God, and from that set yourselves to do the like, to be in the imitation, and self-righteousness, and will-worship both in this, and all other things, into which you are not led by the Lord, and by a call from him: for this I say, that the father hath given his son for a leader and guide to all ages, and into and out of what forms he pleases, in his way and time in every generation.

And therefore it is, that all who know his will herein, cannot endure that any visible thing should be set up, to limit his leading in spirit, or his people from following in spirit. So no form we deny, into which Christ leads in spirit; But all forms we deny, that are imposed by men to keep people from following the spirit; for those only are the children of God, who are led by the spirit of God, to whom they, who are led by the letter, were ever enemies: for it is the spiritual ministration that gives the knowledge of God, and his glory and power, and not the literal; for he that is born after the flesh, hath his way in the visibles, but he that is born after the spirit, hath his food the world knows not of, and therefore becomes his enemy. And in that state you are, who set up the shadow to oppose the body, which is the end of the shadow; and take the letter to oppose the spirit, which is given to declare the sufficiency of the spirit's teaching alone; and so pervert the scriptures out of their place and end, which are set to testify of Christ, the life and end, to set them in the place of Christ, and think to have life in them.

And this is the error of the wicked, who are gone into the world, sensual, not having the spirit. And in this state, wherein the spirit leads not, both scriptures and ordinances, and all the other gifts of God, are abused, wrested out of their places, and made unprofitable.

And therefore you that take up from the letter, cannot bring forth their fruits, who were spiritually called into their several ministrations; therefore your ordinances are left to you desolate, you and they in the world together, out of which God is leading his people in spirit, to get himself a name, in such a way as is foolishness to your wisdom, yet the hidden wisdom of God to the children of light, who have believed therein.

And you that use great swelling words, crying, that we deny an ordinance of God; to you I say, to neglect that which is altered from what God ordained, both in call, manner and end, is no neglecting an ordinance of God. 1. God never called any to teach, but first he called them out of the world, and their habitations there, to follow Christ, as into the wilderness, which were prophets and apostles called immediately. 2. And they did not baptize believers over again with water, who had had it, because they had it not before in their fashion; but they went to disciple unbelievers; neither did they lay it upon all, as of absolute necessity, but could forbear in case it was idolized. 3. Their ministry and end was to gather all into one, out of all the shadows and ceremonies, and fashions of the world, to follow Christ alone, as he walked, bearing his cross daily, suffering the spoiling of their goods joyfully, and their lives unto death, rather than to conform to any but him alone, for whose sake they were hated of all men; which ministry and end, how your baptisms answer, let your pride and pleasures, and conformity to the world, in their fashions, manners and worship, and upholding thereof; at your law-suits, and contentions about carnal things manifest, and your rents and divisions about outward forms of baptisms and worships, and upholding that in others which you know is false, by tithes and offerings, whereby Christ is denied, and the popish inventions held up, with much such like; I say, let these things judge you before all men, and the light in your consciences answer thereto, until the Lord appear to judge your unfaithfulness herein.

CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THIS is the thing that the world's professors are contending about; and indeed, is a great mystery to them who have not yet seen the Lord, for bringing them into one body and blood, mind and heart, and soul and spirit: but since the mystery of iniquity began to work, the world's teachers and professors having lost their indwelling in the body of Christ, are run out into the imaginations, and are so far from the life of this, as that they have lost the form, and the first institution of the shadows, as it was by Christ performed, and therefore are so far from being made one in the blood of Christ, that they are shedding one another's blood about the form, which they are all out of (and have lost it, and the power also) as held forth by Christ, as they sate at meat and did eat the passover, and drink of the cup he gave them; and so often as they did eat and drink thereof, they were to do it in remembrance of him, shewing his death till he came.

And this mystery was that the Apostles received of the Lord, in the purity of the church, before they ran into confusion, they who did continue steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, breaking bread and prayer, daily breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, in the fear and favor of God. And this was to be done a tall seasons, when they eat and drank; in their eating and drinking they were to do it to the Lord, and to have communion with his body, and his blood; and for that end were to keep themselves pure from all pollution: yea, when they were to eat with Gentiles, they were to partake of the table of the Lord as is plain, 1 Cor. x. and therefore they were to keep their consciences pure from things offered to Idols; for they could not partake of the table of the Lord, and eat that which was sacrificed to devils; though, in some cases, they might go to feast among unbelievers; yet whether they eat or drank, they were to do it to the Lord, as at his table,

and not at the table of Gentiles, whose feasting is in the lust, and so their meat they sacrifice to devils, and eat not to God; and so do all who eat to the lust: to keep from which, there is no other thing can, but to eat in remembrance of Christ's death till he come; who, when he is come, he takes the ordering and government of the creature himself upon his shoulders, and so ever keeps them out of the lust in all they do.

And so is the creation restored and reconciled to God in Christ Jesus at his appearing. The apostle exhorted that both in their eating and drinking, &c. they should do all to the glory of God, and warned of the contrary, as Jude, who saw some crept in among the church, who did turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, walking after their own hearts' lusts, whereby they defile the flesh, living in sensuality, not having the spirit to order them, they fed themselves without fear, and these were spots in their feasts; who being once enlightened, and again giving way to the lusts and excess, they became twice dead, plucked up by the roots, yet had they great swelling words.

And of such like, are many examples at this day, who have had something quickened in them to hope for the appearance of the Lord; but fulness and excess having overtaken them, for want of eating always in fear, they are become dead again to any hope of his appearance at the present; and have put his coming afar off into another world, yet are contending about the shadows or figures of his coming, as they have imagined: but are become reprobate from the faith, as to his appearance, and plucked up by the roots.

But the Lord Jesus commanded his disciples, to shew forth his death till he come; and they knowing this from the Lord, gave example and warning to those who were convinced, that in all fear and moderation, they might wait for his appearance; who at his coming would bring to light the hidden things, and manifest the counsels of the heart, and all its deceits, and become the worker in them; and then they should have praise of God; and these things were transferred to the apostles in a figure: so they exhorted the believers, to whom the

Lord was at hand, to let their moderation be known to all men, the Lord is at hand; which they knew, all who get up into the liberty of the flesh, rioting and excess, will put afar off, as it is at this day with many, who are in observations outward, who have a day to go into the idols temple, and there to eat bread, and drink wine in a self-solemnity, once a month, or three times a year, or as they imagine, some affirming the body and blood of Christ to be in the creature after consecration [as they call it] some saying: nay, but it is spiritual after consecration: others saying, it is still carnal, and not changed, because of words; and one imagines the body of Christ real in it, another, not real, but by faith, [as they say:] but, in this they all agree, that they return back into the pleasures of the flesh, and fashions of the world, there to eat and drink the rest of God's creatures, to spend on their lusts; and it will be so with such as do not discern his body in their eating, who is the life and the upholder of all creatures, and filleth all things in heaven and in earth; which they who stick in observations never knew; and with such he is always to come, or past.

But the carnal eye, which sticks in the visibles can never see him present to order the creation out of the lust; and therefore it is that all the creatures of God are turned to feed the lust, in that state, as is seen in all the world's profession, and therefore accursed: the more riches, the more pride, the more fulness, the more lust, in that state where Christ is not discerned present. And so their eating is not the supper of the Lord, nor doth he sup with them in the new, but in the old lustful spirit such become the table of the devil, where the creatures are sacrificed to his use; so he keeps them in observation of a day from the letter, which they think is worship, but he bears rule in their whole lives by his spirit; and so much of the creation as is in their hands, is used at his will.

And hence is all lasciviousness, wantonness, strife, fighting, suits, and violence, sports, and vanities, too many here to mention, all which the creation is spent upon, (given not to that end) for which they shall ac-

count, who are in that state, when shall be required his corn, and his wine, his wool and his flax, which he hath made for his use, and to be ordered by his son, who is the fulness and virtue of every creature, which all know who come to his supper, where the father and the son are come in, and sup with the creature, which all the imitators and observers of times are ignorant of, whose contention is about outsides, and shadows.

And for the sake of such who are lost in this thing, and troubled in mind concerning it, what I have received of the Lord, that I shall declare unto you, which all shall witness to, who come to partake thereof, as the truth is in Christ Jesus. If you intend to sup with the Lord, or shew the Lord's death till he come, let your eating, and drinking, so oft as you do it, be in remembrance of him; and in his fear, that a death you may witness to the lust and excess, which is that which slew him from the foundation of the world; and is the great enmity of his appearance; and that by which he is crucified spiritually in the great city which is called Sodom and Egypt.

For all you that live in pleasure on the earth, and are wanton; you that nourish your hearts, as in the day of slaughter, you have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you; and you must know a death to this, before you can sup with the Lord, or he with you: but if you eat in remembrance of him, and so come to die to that which slew him, then do you shew the Lord's death till he come; and when he comes, he shall not find you eating and drinking with the drunken, nor beating your fellow servants.

And this is known from the Lord in the eternal light, to be the true end of the supper of the Lord, that at his coming they may be found fit to receive him; which they who feed without fear to deny, and crucify afresh to themselves.

And therefore in another place, speaking of his coming, he warns them to take heed, lest at any time in eating, their hearts be over-charged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon them unawares, and so become a snare unto them;

for so it is to all who are in that state, when he should appear unto them, and they cannot receive the day of his visitation, whose hearts are gone out into these carnal things.

And this he knew, that till that man be born, which lives not by bread alone, that man that lives only upon the creatures is soon drawn into them, and so to forget his coming, who is the maker thereof, who is the sanctifier thereof: and so orders the outward food as unto God, and not to carnal things, the mind grows thereby, and so to the pure all things are pure; but where the pure is not, all things are defiled, when they are not sanctified by the word and prayer; and therefore are to be received in fear; and therein remembring his death till he come, who is the word and power, which at his coming restores all things to God, which till then are subject to be used to the lust, which was the thing Christ in tender love to his disciples, before his departure, warned them against, knowing that their nature would draw to the earthward, not yet being fully changed, nor having Christ born in them to keep them, and for all this his warning and leaving this as a sign how soon they had forgot the promise of his coming, till he renewed the remembrance of it, making himself known in breaking of bread again after his resurrection; and so charging them to wait for his coming at Jerusalem, the promise of the father, of which he had told them before his death; which they were to show so oft as they brake bread till he came; and after he was come to the apostles, they condescended for their sakes, who were weak in the faith, to whom he was not yet appeared; and so those did break bread from house to house, and eat with singleness of heart to Christ, and not to the lust; which was another thing than the world's observation of bread and wine, or wafers in the idols temple, where the Lord's death is not showed till he come; where some are hungry, and some are drunken; where the covetous, the proud, the liars, swearers, whoremongers, fighters, scorn-ers, and all evil workers meet, to eat bread and wine so often a year, and return into the corrupt lusts again; which is not to eat the Lord's body, nor his supper, nor at his table, but the table of devils.

And this you shall all know, that you who do this for an hour, or a day, and then feed without fear, not shewing the Lord's death till he come, you are they who eat judgment to yourselves herein: and all your will worship will not be found at that day to be an ordinance of Christ, as you have limited it; nor can you know his coming to your salvation. And of this sort are you who now say, the Lord delays his coming, and have put it unto another generation; if not, till doomsday, as you call it; and so have settled yourselves in your worldly pleasures, and high notions, with the drunken spirit eating and drinking, and beating your fellow servants, mocking, whipping and imprisoning them at your will and pleasure, having forgot his coming; which if you did remember to show forth his death so often as you eat and drink till he come, you should not have been found in blindness and opposition to his coming, (as to yourselves) nor persecuting him now who is come in others; nor should your table have been made a snare unto you, that that day should overtake you unawares, as it is seen at this day, upon whom the words of Christ are to be fulfilled.

CONCERNING REDEMPTION.

THIS is that which many boast on, and glory in, who never knew what it is to be redeemed farther than in words, and imagination thereof; nay, there are few who are come so far as to know what it is to want redemption, and what the promise is to, and wherein only it is seen and received, for there is a seed in which the promise of redemption to the soul is, but thou who takest delight in sin, and pleadest for it, are not in that seed.

Thou that canst take pleasure in the flesh, and fashion thyself thereto, art of another seed, who art at liberty in the world, to conform thyself thereto in thy own will and way, and time, who art at liberty to do what thou list, and when thou list, and as thou list: thou seest no

need of redemption who art at ease in sin, nor physician who are not sick; and so a talk of redemption little changes thy condition in that state, who art of this world, and obtains that thou lovest, and therein takest pleasure; building a seat, and blessing thyself therein, laying up thy treasure here below; he that redeems Israel's seed is no glad tidings to thee, who speaks woe to all in that state.

But if thou findest something in thee, that in all these worldly delights cries vanity, and emptiness, and can find no satisfaction therein, nor can conform to this world, nor take pleasure in wickedness, that cannot plead for sin, but cries woe to thee because of thy wickedness, and mourns because of the abominations of thy times, wherein thou hast followed the world's customs, and foolish fashions; if thou find that in thee, that cannot take delight in decking the outside with pride, nor worship the creature, nor bow to any but God alone, but condemns thee if thou do so: if thou find that which breathes in thee towards God for life and strength against all these vanities, and all other evils, that which would have thee follow God out of all the world; I say, if such a seed thou find in thee, though it be the least of all seeds in thee, yet that is the seed of the kingdom, to which the promise is; and no farther than that principle is raised to reign in thee above all that is contrary to it, no further are thou redeemed by Christ Jesus: for that's the* plant of God's renown, the lilly among the thorns; which with the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and pleasures is choaked, that it may not bring forth to God, who hath placed it in thee for himself, that therein he might teach thee to profit, and from thence thou mightest receive wisdom and strength, yea, all that is needful for thee in thy measure to which thou art called.

And this lying oppressed and availed under thy lusts and pleasures, is the cause thou knowest not God the father, nor the son, for to this birth he is revealed, though

* The seed is mentioned in a two fold sense; the seed Christ who redeems, and the seed of Abraham, i. e. believers, whom he redeems. The children of the promise, are counted for the seed.

thou talkest of redemption, yet thou knowest not God, nor his power, nor life, nor presence with thee to guide thee out of the evil, and to give thee victory over the prince of this world, and his dominion; but art captivated at his will, to do his works, and so under condemnation that he is in; and the talk of redemption doth not deliver thee from his temptations; but into it thou fallest, and committest the sin that is of his moving, and so art of the devil; but that which is of God suffers for thee; death and captivity, and bonds of iniquity being over thee; and so thou canst not have power, nor the promise, nor salvation, which in the seed is placed, which is not of thee, nor with thee, while thou art in these delights, but against thee, and thou sinning against it; and so art not of the promised seed, but an enemy to it, and by thy lusts and pleasures, and self-will, art in Pharaoh's state, and nature, resisting the seed of God, and art in the house of bondage, and dost not pity nor regard the cries thereof, which cries against thy pride and excess, envy and wrath, and all thy wickedness, by which thou oppresstest the seed of God in thee, (in that state where death reigns) for which the wrath of God comes upon the world of iniquity; who are enemies to that seed which is of the covenant; and are not joined to it, but to the contrary, in the contrary nature, to which all who are joined in the light, come to partake of God's love, and life therein by Jesus Christ; who took upon him that seed after the flesh, not the seed of the evil one, nor the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, to whom the promise is.

And all who know this, quickened and raised by the spirit of Jesus, know the plant of God's renown, of God's own planting, in which the fruit is found; and such know where to wait for a supply of all wants, and counsel in all straits; where the law is received that is spiritual, and the righteousness of faith, revealed from faith to faith; from which God's righteousness is manifest in the world, not of self, nor self-works, nor of that corrupt seed, but of the heritage of faith, a free gift.

And in this seed men are redeemed, and the saints have fellowship with the father, and the son in the light.

and all the gifts and graces, whereby that creature becomes free from the law of sin, that they may be married to Christ, in him to serve the living God, set free from the service of sin and satan: and this is their freedom, even their righteousness, which is everlasting, as the soul is redeemed out of the pit of corruption; for where this seed is raised up, there the creature receives from God of his fulness; but where the soul is in the grave, the curse is betwixt, upon him where the sin is, and the trespasses, by which it is slain: but where this is raised, and the immortal birth born, the creature is blessed of God for the seed's sake, throughout all the nations of the earth, for in this is God worshipped, but where death reigns, the sacrifice is an abomination, for they that are in the grave cannot praise God; it's the living that he accepts, and not the dead.

And this I say to all you who find such a thing as is holy, thus moving in you against your lusts and worldly pleasures: take heed, and do not deceive yourselves with a talk of redemption, while this is in prison, and not brought above all your lusts; but in the light of Christ wait, which lets you see this, that you may see his power in spirit to raise this to reign above all in you that is contrary, and so shall you reign with it over all the world, and its wicked ways; but if you have found this breathing towards God, and you have no regard thereto, take heed, lest he that gave this for thy salvation, take it away from thee in wrath, and leave thee to thy lusts without reproof; for his spirit will not always strive with you, and then it had been good you had not been born.

And this hath befallen many after many reproofs and motions to good, who now are left to fill up their measure with greediness; who now glory in their shame, and boast of their filthiness; and this day is coming upon many more, who now little mind the measure of God's grace moving in them, but live in the world's lust, sinning against their conscience for self ends, and yet please themselves with a talk of redemption: as the greatest profession now set up by many, is to make the redemption of Christ a cover for all licentiousness, and fleshly liberty, and say they are to that end redeemed;

which redemption the son of God needed not to come from Heaven to purchase for them, man being thither fallen, by nature subject thereto; but all who know the redemption of Christ, by his precious blood, are redeemed from the vain conversation received by tradition, into the holy conversation of him that hath called them to be holy, as he is holy, and not vain, as the world is vain. And this is the true redemption to all that know it, whereby Christ hath received redemption for us, who were transgressors, even to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. And for this end he gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works: who hath redeemed us to God by his blood, out of kindreds, tongues, and sinful nations, from amongst men, to follow the lamb, and not the worldly lust. And all whose redemption leads not out of this world, will fail you, when you look for another, and this all that are redeemed know; but who live in the lust are blinded with the God thereof, as the light in every conscience shall testify, that he that lives to the flesh is not redeemed.

So with the light of Christ which lets you see your transgressions, search your hearts, that you may see if the just principle that moves to righteousness be not oppressed, and burthened by the seed of the evil doer, and that nature which loveth carnal delights; and so you be led captive to do the works of satan; then what redemption have you farther than a talk? Like a man that hath a conceit of eating, but still hungry: so you conceit freedom, but still serve sin; and while servants of sin, you are free from righteousness; as he that is a servant of righteousness is free from sin; for it is an easy thing to conceit righteousness and redemption; but he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous; but this is not seen, while the seed of God is oppressed, and not regarded.

CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION, SANCTIFICATION, AND MORTIFICATION.

THE wisdom of men in the fall finding these several words in scripture, hath in their imaginations run them into divisions, and separated that which is in one, and cannot be divided in the profession; for it is one spirit that worketh all these, where he is present, according to the measure received. And this is the just one, who by faith lives in the creature, and the creature in him, and so becomes the justifier and sanctifier of all that believe, and the mortifier of that nature which is out of the faith; and one of these is not alone without the rest. For that which sanctifies, that mortifies, and the same justifies; and all that know what it is to have these in the life, know this.

I know there are a people who have a desire to Heaven more than to holiness; and they, lest they should spoil their carnal delights, have in their brain-imagination conceited a justification without sanctification, or mortification; wresting those scriptures which condemn the works of the law, and therewith they would exclude the righteousness of faith also.

And because the scripture saith, God justifies or pardons the ungodly through faith, therefore they conclude themselves justified in their ungodliness by a fancy which they call faith, but are without faith in Christ: for that which lays not hold upon God's righteousness, is not the faith of Christ, but a dead thing; for so far as any have the faith of Christ, so far it reveals God's righteousness without the law, from faith to faith; by which righteousness of God, the just live, and the unjust die; and so justified, as they are sanctified, and mortified, and no further; even as the righteousness of God without the law is manifest, being witnessed by the law, and the prophets, even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all that believe, without respect of persons.

No righteousness, no faith in Christ; but where God's righteousness is unto all, and upon all, there the belief

for our justification: but such who would share in his justification, but not have fellowship in his sufferings and obedience, are such as are justified in conceit, but sin reigns, and the unjust lives and acts in them, and this is self that justifies self, but is not just before God, man being dead in trespasses and sins; but God justifies the living, and not the dead.

Therefore the saints suffered the loss of all things, counting them as dross and dung, that they might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death: these through death came to the power and fellowship of his resurrection, whereby they are justified, being raised with him to newness of life; by faith receiving the gift of God's righteousness, and becoming servants thereto; and thereby became free from sin: And this is true justification, where there is no condemnation, where the deeds of the flesh are mortified, and the creature walks no more after the flesh, but after the spirit: for the condemnation is to him that walks after the flesh, but he that walks in the spirit is justified: for he that walks in the spirit shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, and there is mortification to that nature that breaks the law; and the just is seen who fulfils the law, in such as walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. So, not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. In the first or earthly man's state the law is broken, and there mortification, and sanctification is denied, and there the man would be justified from the guilt of sin, but not from the love and power of sin, but would have his carnal delights in the world, and heaven also, but this is vain hope, and will perish: but in the second man's state, the law is fulfilled, through mortification, sanctification, justification of the spirit. And no man can be justified where the just lives not; for that by which the just lives, is that by which the creature is justified.

CONCERNING THE LAW.

In this thing are many people confounded, yea all who know not the ministration of the spirit; for such going into the scriptures, and finding the ministration of the letter, and the ministration of the spirit, and themselves being under neither of these, but in notion, as they have received it, in their imaginations, and not from the mouth of the Lord, some say they are under the law, and that it continues still: others say, but some part of it, which is moral; others say, nay, but it is done away, and they are not under any ministration of law, but under grace; and so by their faith make void the law, not knowing what they say herein. And this is, all such know, either of law or gospel, who in their carnal wisdom read the letter, and from thence imagine what is law, and what is grace, not having that spirit by which they were ministered to the saints, and by them received, who had the law in their hearts, and grace there also; and such do know that the one of these doth not make void the other, but establish the other; for the coming of Christ was not to make void, but to fulfil the law; and he doth not come to put the law afar off, but to bring it near, that with his light all may see it, as it is written in the heart, by the living God; and he is so far from destroying or taking away the law, that he declares it in its force and purity, saying, that one jot or tittle should not pass till it be fulfilled.

And whereas it was said in the letter, thou shalt not commit adultery, he saith, thou shalt not lust: in the letter it was said, thou shalt not swear falsely, but in the spirit, he saith, swear not at all: in the letter, thou shalt not kill, but in the spirit, thou shalt not be angry; and whosoever doth any of these things is guilty before God, and this is far from making it void, which declares it in its purity, so as they who might seem to be clear in the letter, might be found guilty in the law of the spirit; that by Christ Jesus, who is the end of that law,

is witnessed, and the faith is shewed by the works, which cannot be shewed without the works; for that faith that hath not works is dead, being alone; as the body without the spirit, so is your faith without works, and so is your justification without holiness, and mortification of life.

And you will find in the end, that he that justifies the wicked in you, is the same that condemneth the just, and they are both abomination to the Lord: and this is your state who plead for sin, and live in pleasure, and wantonly on the earth; you slay the just, and holy one, and save the unjust alive; and so know not him that is just; who justifies, mortifies, sanctifies and redeems; who of God is made so to us, that in all things we are and have, we may glory in him.

And although the scriptures mention these three, yet not to divide them so, as to make people believe they may have one and not all; but as to shew the several effects of that one work of man's redemption, all wrought by one thing in the creature. For the blood and spirit of Christ washes away the filth, and so puts off the old man, and mortifies the deeds of the body, and so sanctifies, and justifies; the spirit it mortifies, and sanctifies, and justifies. Now though the saints named both these, it was not to divide them; but being one, they might declare it by either; for none could have the one without the other, and all that have them, are thereby mortified, sanctified, and justified. Yet none of these without man's obedience, being works of faith, and not of self: for by the law of faith is self-sanctification, self-mortification, and self-justification excluded, though they who had received the spirit were called to all these by faith in his blood, yet it is the work of God wrought by Christ in the believer, and in the light are they called to behold the work of God herein, and join to it in the faith and obedience thereto, being the work of God, which he will work in all that believe in the light, that they may receive his son, in whom the promise is, and the power to mortification, sanctification, and justification as by faith he is received, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again

they may come to see their condemnation, and by faith in him, come to be set free, not by the blood of bulls, and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, and carnal sacrifices, oracles, legal temple or altar, or days, or sabbath without in the letter, but by Christ Jesus the end of all these, ministering to the soul, and conscience, to wash away sin, and purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God; which the ministration of the letter and carnal ordinances could not do.

And for this cause is the ministration of the letter done away, because it could not make perfect the comers thereto, as pertaining to the conscience: and the ministration of the spirit preached in its stead, which gives perfect knowledge of sin, and perfect redemption from it, and from all things, from which the law without could not, and the same spirit doth testify it perfectly, in the conscience, which the letter cannot, though the letter may shew a man his condemnation, yet it cannot give life, it can shew the duty, but not give power to perform it; for the letter kills, but the spirit giveth life.

And hence it is that all you who read your duty in the letter, but want power to perform what you read, you set up your imaginations instead of performance: and some say the law is done away, and now none shall be condemned by it; others say Christ fulfilled it in his own person, and to believe what he did sixteen hundred years since, is all we need to do; others say, nay, but we must do what we can of what the scripture commands, and he will do the rest, with his father; others say, that what we do he makes it accepted with the father, as though we did perform all that is required; but none in that state knows his commands in spirit, which give life and power to perform what is commanded in spirit, which none know who read what others did, but want their spirit and power to perform the same; this was the self righteousness, and is the self righteousness which is by the letter of the law, taken on without the spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus.

And here is the weakness of the law taken on through the flesh, but the power of the law, to such as receive

it in spirit and life; for the law is fulfilled in spirit, and not in the letter; and so in Christ, and not in self; and so by faith, and not by works; even by the everlasting righteousness of God, freely given and received by faith, and revealed in the creature from faith to faith in every one that believes; and not by works of the law which the creatures see in the letter, and set themselves a doing, who are carnal, and sold under sin, not quickened by the spirit of righteousness; for the letter of the law gives a knowledge of sin; but the law in the spirit gives not only the knowledge of sin, but the knowledge of God, and his righteousness in Christ Jesus, for fulfilling the law, which is life eternal, according to his promise, I will write my law in your hearts, and put it in your inward parts, and you shall all know me, from the greatest to the least.

So all you who read the commands in the letter without, from thence you may fetch your own condemnation, but from thence can you not fetch power for obedience, to justification of life. From within is the life in spirit, and not in the letter. And here is a change of the law to that which is spiritual, the priesthood spiritual, the temple spiritual, the altar, the circumcision, the offering, the blood, the oracle, the anointing, the washings, and the whole worship, which was without, and could make nothing perfect, changed and become spiritual, and within; to the better hope, being more perfect than that without could be; for he is perfect.

Now the law was added because of transgression till the promised seed should come, of whom it is prophesied in types and figures; which seed is Christ, the end of the law to every one that believes, without respect of persons; and so it is in the spirit.

A law hath God written in the heart, whereby the transgressor is condemned in his own conscience, and this law is upon the first man, who is the transgressor, and hath power over that man as long as he lives, judging, reproofing, and condemning; and prophesying of one that is to come to fulfil the law in every one who minds the light, and so is a school-master, to bring to Christ; and till he come to fulfill it, who is the end of it, there

is condemnation upon the creature; because the pure law of God is broken; and this is testified by the light in the conscience, a witness against the old man and his deeds, which is contrary to the perfect law of God; and so by that which is perfect is he condemned who is imperfect, where the image of God is lost, and death reigns, because of trespasses and sins.

For God did not give a law to condemn his own work, but the work of the devil. And where the transgressor is, there is the work of the devil. And the law hath power over that man as long as the transgressor lives. And all his works are by the law condemned, until the resurrection of the seed, and the image of God be witnessed, and all things subdued to him, who is the end of the law, by whom the fruits of the spirit are brought forth, against which there is no law. And so by his resurrection, and the virtue thereof, that which is of God in the conscience is answered, and so the creature saved from the condemnation of the law of God, which respects no man's person: but hath respect to his own seed, but condemns all who are in death, and where death reigns.

So the law that lays hold upon all transgressors, we witness to endure, spiritual, just, and good; given forth against the first man, and his works good or bad, (as people call them) yea, though he set himself to do the works of the law never so zealously, yet a witness of condemnation the pure law of God is against him in his conscience, until the promised seed and birth thereof be born, which is not of the will of the first man, nor after the flesh, but after the spirit, after the will of God (one with the law) and by his grace, who shews the mercy and glad tidings. Now Israel after the flesh, who received the law in the literal ministration and carnal ordinances from them, was Christ to come, who was made of a woman under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, if they did believe.

Even so now Israel after the spirit, who receive the law in the spiritual ministration written in the heart, such shall witness the child born of the royal seed, heir of the promise, even of God's righteousness, for the ful-

filling of the pure law of God, for that end given forth; whereof there are many witnesses at this day, who have patiently waited in what God hath written in their hearts, seen with the light of Christ; who have therein received the faith of the gospel, and the end of that faith, even God's righteousness revealed from faith to faith, whereby the pure law of God is fulfilled in many, and fulfilling in others, who abide in their measure of faith which God hath dealt to them, walking in the light, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; and so by the law of the spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, see themselves set free from the law of sin and death, and so witness the gospel, which you cannot do, who cast the law of God, and his light behind your backs, and in your vain mind say you are not under it; in the day of trial you will be found under the condemnation thereof, and that in every conscience shall witness thereto, at that day.

CONCERNING CHRIST JESUS.

THIS is he whom the world much talk of, but few there be that know him, though it be he by whom all things were made, who is the life of all creatures, the beginning of all creatures, who was before all creatures, without beginning of days, or end of life, a priest forever, and a king, of whose dominion there is no end; by him kings reign, and dominions are cast down, though they know him not where self is standing, who is hidden from the world's wisdom, and the depth of prudence cannot find him out; yet doth he reveal himself to such as walk in his light, which is contrary to all the dark paths of the world, nor can the will of man walk therein; but who deny themselves, that they may learn the way of the Lord, to such he freely reveals his way for their return, that he may bring them down from the seat of exaltation, and make known to them their beginning, and from whence they are digged, that they may see him

that bears up the pillars of the earth, and hath laid the foundation thereof; who hath set the world in their hearts, so that they who stood not in his counsel cannot find out the beginning, nor the end of the work of God, yet will vain man in that state be imagining touching him, and from whence he had his beginning who is the eternal word, before all time, glorified in the Heavens with the father, who in time was manifest, which word become flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to the death, that he might become a living example to all generations, which no creature could be, the whole creation being in the fall, and having finished the work, and offered up himself for man's redemption, given him of the father to do, and for which he was begotten, he ascended far above all Heavens, to prepare a place for all that follow him by faith in his light; and that from thence all such as wait for him, may see his appearance as a saviour. And only such know him for their redeemer, who know him for their judge and lawgiver, who love him, and keep his commandments; to such he comes, and the father also, and make their abode with him.

And this is he who is the light of the world, and lighteth every man that comes into the world, who stands at the door and knocks, and if any hear his voice and open, he will come in and sup with him; and such know him, and he knows them who hear his voice, by which they are quickened out of the trespasses and sins, and the seed of God raised over death in man, but where death reigns, Christ is rejected, and the wisdom by which he should be known is foolishness.

So, if you desire to know him who is not of this world, but who is before the world was, a witness against all the world's ways and wickedness, then mind that light in you which thus witnesseth; for as Christ is, so is his light that leads to him; for that which bears testimony against the world, is not of the world, even as he is not of the world, and so leads out of the world, to him who is not known in the world; for the world by wisdom

knows him not. And as thou followest the light out of the world, thou wilt come to see the seed, which to the world's wisdom and glory is crucified; to which seed are all the promises, and wherein is all the knowledge of God and Christ. And as that seed is raised, and man born thereof, therein is the father revealed, and his power and godhead in his son Jesus Christ, which in him dwells, and without him is not revealed, but being known is life eternal, and eternal power, and eternal glory and riches, made manifest in the light; for as you know this seed raised by the same spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead; so shall you see him, to whom all power and judgment is committed in Heaven and in earth, and for whom, and by whom all things were made in Heaven and earth, of whom it is said, when he bringeth his only begotten son into the world, let all the angels worship him; who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire, whose flesh is the life of men, and his light is as a law that goeth forth; whereby man is led to his spiritual food, and the sons of men see out of darkness. And this is he who cannot be limited, nor restrained in one place, who filleth Heaven and earth with his presence, and appeareth at his pleasure to his own (though the wise of the world know him not, and therefore limit him only above the stars) who dwelleth in his saints: but as for the reprobates, they know him not so, who have put the good day far from them, and hate reproof, that they may spend their days in folly, and feed themselves with the wind, and fill their hearts with carnal delights. When the hearts of the children of light are established with grace, yet these will be disputing about the body of Christ; but the body of sin rules in them, whereby they are darkened, and become heart blind, past feeling the measure of God's grace, whose hearts are overcharged with surfeiting, and cares of the world, and their minds corrupted with earthly things.

To such I say, cease your imaginations, as to find out what Christ is in that state; for he alone reveals himself in spirit, to such as wait in the light, and love that which is pure; to such his appearance is as the sun, whose

rising is not by the will of man, but for his appearing all the world must wait, if they'll be saved and refreshed with the beams of his glory: and to all who are yet in the night shall he appear, if you look towards the place of his rising, which is not, lo, here, lo, there; but within you, in your hearts. And all who are come to the sure word of prophesy, as to a light that shines in a dark place, to which you do well to take heed, till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts, you shall see the sun arise, where the day-star appears in your hearts, if in the light you wait that shines in the darkness; and you shall feel the virtue and life of him, and receive thereof to live in the same with him; and you shall see him as he is, and know him to be the son of righteousness, whose arising is with healing in his wings, and whose breaking forth is upon all his enemies which over the seed have reigned; whose spiritual weapons are mighty through God, to the pulling down 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 himself, and having in readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

And thus the saints know the son with his light, his power and dominion over all things in Heaven and in earth, who rules in righteousness in the hearts of his people, trampling down satan under their feet, which son of God hypocrites call Lord, Lord, but the devil they serve and obey; and though such have got the words of the Lord, and Christ, and Jesus, yet they know not his light, his power, his kingdom and dominion, over sin and the devil in them, to set them free therefrom, by his light and life; nor this blood of Christ to wash them from their pollutions, and to present them without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. And so you have made the name of Christ a reproach among the nations, who call him a redeemer, but live in your sins: so as such as possess not the syllables of Christ and Jesus, even from a principle of God within them, many of them become your judges as to moderation, faithfulness and honesty.

Nay, it is manifest amongst you, that the name of Jesus, which gives the saints victory over sin, you know not, who have it in words, and therewith make a cover for your sin, your pride, lust and excess. What covetousness, and all manner of unrighteousness is covered with a profession of the name of Christ, which redeems from those things all that know him? For none know Jesus further than they know a saviour sin, and not a cover for sin, and live in it; for the promise of the father is, he shall save his people from their sins. And the children of the promise know this to be so without a cover or meaning to live in sin. And none know Christ, but who know the anointing, and such need no man to teach them, but as the anointing teacheth them all things that are true, if they abide therein, and there is no lie in it.

But who say they know Christ, and are redeemed, and commit sin, not keeping his commands, are liars, and so abide not in the truth and anointing; and so are of the devil, and not of Christ; for he that abides in Christ, sins not, for the name of Jesus Christ is power over all sin, as it is known, and the creature baptized into it by faith. So all that know Christ, know the seed, the promise, the word of life, the covenant, the heritage, the righteousness, the kingdom, the power, the glory which is not of this world, and the father of all; which you that commit sin have not seen. Neither can any say, that Jesus is Lord, but by the spirit; so you whose knowledge is without another Lord ruleth within.

CONCERNING THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST.

'The ministers of Christ are ever called out of the world, and contrary to the world, contrary to their own wills, and the wills of all flesh, for such have the word who are begotten of the word, and such are begotten contrary to the will of man, and through such came the Scriptures, which came not by the will of man, but by

the spirit, and so are of no private interpretations, nor are his ministers of any private call, but of himself, who hath all creatures in his hand, to choose whom he will, to go on his message, nor would he even send by any whom the kings of the earth did choose, nor the powers thereof, but such as they called and set up without his immediate call, were ever the great enemies to such as he sent. And this is evident in all the Scriptures, and in all histories since, that whenever the mystery of iniquity had spread over, and darkness had passed over his seed, and his people had broken his covenant, and lost his word, then he in love to his people sent out some immediately, who had his word in them, to bear witness to the Lord, against all their back-slidings and self-ways, and formal worships, and to such the world's ministers, or rather masters, were ever enemies, and fought to stir up the powers of men against them, to devour them, under the name of blasphemers and hereticks, and destroyers of worship, and peace-breakers and enemies to authority, when they were sent of God to testify against their false worship, and break the peace of the wicked one, who keeps his house in peace till a stronger than he comes. And this you shall find recorded through the Scriptures and all histories of persecution in all ages, and at this day. And you shall never find that ever any of these could join in with the worlds worships, but cried them down, their priests, their prophets, their days, their time, their places, their whole worship, who were gone out into the world, from the word and spirit, for which they were envied of them who were therein, and such as they had deceived thereby; for the world ever loves its own, but he that is of God testifies against the world, and the deeds thereof, that they are evil. therefore hated thereby for the truth's sake.

And as the ministers of Christ are ever called out of the world; and the things thereof, so they are not careful for the things of the world; but he who is their minister, is their maintainer, whom they preach. And so they that preach the gospel live of the gospel: so never any of his sought to the people for means, nor taught for he fleece, preached for hire, nor prophesied

for money, for pieces of bread, nor handfuls of corn, none of Christ's ministers ever lived in parsonages, nor lived upon tithes, nor ever went to law with their flock for carnal things; they never loved to be called masters of their hearers, but servants; they were never approved, or commissioned by men to whom they were to preach, but sent of God to preach to such as sought him not; and amongst such they in all things approved themselves to be ministers of God [that the ministry be not blamed] in much patience, in affliction, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the holy ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and yet live; chastened, sorrowful, poor, having nothing, wandering up and down, having no certain dwelling place. And in this state their care was, that they might keep the gospel without charge, and yet they were ever hated by such as were approved of men, who stirred up such as they preached to for their hire, to persecute them that preached freely; yet must they not cease, but preach freely, to such as are so far from hiring them, as they would rather devour them than hear them, yet will hire and hear them of their own choosing. And this must be, that the grace of God may appear to be free, and he be found of them that sought him not.

And this was ever his way, who will be taught of none, nor shall any choose for him, by whom he shall send, nor shall any whom he sends ever want, nor take care for aught afore-hand, that they may follow their master, and be as their Lord, who shall feed many, but seek to none for food, but what God gives; for it is not like that they should feed others with everlasting food, who dare not trust God for carnal food; for God will not have such as are of his family, and his ministers, to take care for food and raiment, nor wherewith to feed others; for who love the word in them, in which all fulness is,

need not study what to say, nor have a divination to make, what to preach, like them who have not the word in them, but what they steal from another, or to fetch out of the bottomless pit by divination and witchcraft, who can have words in their own times and wills, against whom they will, and to flatter whom they will; who cry peace to such as put into their mouths, else they prepare war against them, who mind earthly things, whose God is their belly, who talk against pride, and live in it; against covetousness, and live in it; who preach against sin, but cannot cease from sin. And such as they are, such are their hearers, who in words confess Christ, but in works deny him. And these are they who for their pride, pleasures and carnal ends, have changed the Lord's worship from what it was, both in matter and manner, means and maintenance, and so have scattered the Lord's people into sects and opinions, forms, customs and traditions in every nation, as may best suit their wicked wills; for which they pretend decency, order and necessity, so that they are not found in the way of God, nor form of true worship, as the scriptures will own without wresting. And now the Lord is appeared in the true way, as Christ left it with his disciples, to gather his own from off all these mountains where they are scattered, all the idol shepherds are gathering against him to battle, of all sorts, not willing to hear of the living way, which is but one, in which there is no rent, sect or error, but Christ in all; nay, one can scarcely grieve a town-teacher worse, than to tell him of the apostles way of preaching, their call, their spirit, their wanderings, their wages, their word, and way of walking in this world, and amongst their hearers, as is declared in scripture without a meaning, or liberty to change it according to the times.

Nay, though all their parish be believers (as they call them) yet can they not believe they shall get their wages from them without a law to compel them, so that though they have begot a larger faith in their hearers than the apostles ever taught, (to wait) that though they commit sin while they live, yet they may be saved and set free when they die; yet have not they so much

faith themselves, as to believe, they will pay them their wages, without it be forced from them, that which none of Christ's ministers ever did, either in law or gospel.—So we may not say that these are ministers of Christ, or like them, if we will speak truth, and take Christ's rule to judge by, who saith, by their fruits you shall know them.

Nor should I have spoken thus much of them in this place, did they but call themselves the ministers of men, made so by them, and so upholden and maintained; but such as call themselves ministers of Christ, and walk so far unlike him and his in all things, I say, to such as are found in these things, your ways testify to your faces, and before all men, that you are no more like the ministers of Christ, than they that walked in your steps before you. So, search the scriptures, and search your hearts with the light of Christ, and know your portion, and count me not your enemy for telling you the truth; however, I have cleared my conscience in love to your souls, though such as are deceived through blind zeal and envy cannot receive it.

CONCERNING FREE-WILL.

THERE is no will free for God, but that which is turned against [and free from] sin, which will man lost in the fall, when he let in the will of the devil, and entered into it; wherein man became in bondage. And all that man in that state knows of the free-will, is by that which moves in him against the will of the flesh and of the devil, which is seen in the light of Christ. And this is according to the will of God, whereby he willeth not the death of the sinner. God calls man to be willing and obedient, and this will of God is manifest, according to the spirit, which is free, always moving contrary to the will of the flesh, which is in bondage to the devil. And this will that is free, only those who abide in the light do feel the moving of it present in the spirit; and

as the spiritual man is quickened by the word of God, and man born of that which is not of the flesh, nor of the will of it; so is that will seen again in man which is free, wherein the creature is made free from the will of the flesh, which is bondage. So the spiritual man hath the spiritual will, which is free, and that is from above. And the carnal man, which is from below, his will keeps in bondage, who is contrary to God in all things; but who is begotten again of the word from above is free-born, when he is born, who is born of the spirit; for where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; but where the spirit of the world rules, there is bondage: for as is the man, so is his will. So with the light of Christ, which shews you the thoughts of the heart, if you diligently mind it, you may see the two motions of the two wills, each contrary to the other; the one after the flesh, the other after the spirit. So whether of these wills thou art servant to, that thou mayst be said to have, and to the other thou art an enemy; for no man hath free-will further than he is joined to it, though he that is in his own will, may feel the will of God contrary to him, and that will he is in; yet can he not come to it, until he owns that which leads him to take up the cross to his own will, and in the cross to his own will is he born, who hath the will of God, wherein God worketh to will and to do of his good pleasure, in the male and in the female, even the plant of God, who hath the will of God, the mind of God, as in measure he it forms in the creature. So man hath not free-will further than he is free born from above, and of the seed that sinneth not, and the growth of that seed is man's freedom; but while this lies under the earthly will and self, thereby it is denied, though the free-will may often move in the creature to holiness, and be felt in the light of Christ, as a tender of healing; yea, and would lead to holiness and healing, where it's minded and obeyed, for that will which is of God only, leads to God; by which will we are sanctified and saved. But you that stand in the will of the flesh resist it, and so you will not come to Christ, that you may have life; for the will of God, which is life, is free, and freely tendered in

Christ Jesus to every creature; and in the light, which reproveth the evil deeds, it is seen: but they that resist free grace, resist free-will; for that's free grace which shows a man his sin, and reproveth for it, which would lead to God, calls to be willing and obedient, and to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and so to live godly, righteously and soberly in this evil world. And that's free-will, which wills not that thou shouldest commit sin, which will is, that thou shouldest not die. So man's destruction is of himself, and self-will, by which he resists the will of God; but salvation is of the will of God which is free, and in the measure of God's gift is this freedom found and enjoyed. So that in Christ I have free-will, but in the flesh is bondage. Therefore the flesh must be denied by all that will own freedom in will or deed; for none have free-will but who in the light of Christ have learned to deny their own wills; and such know, that in the first man is neither will nor deed that is free from sin, nor for God, and his work or worship; for God hath concluded the whole man under sin, that the gift of grace might appear to be free, that all might glory in the Lord, and the whole treasures be found in him, to whom every tongue shall confess, when the glory of man shall come to an end, to his praise who is blessed for evermore.

CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION.

I AM the resurrection and the life (saith Christ) he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Blessed is he that knoweth and believeth in him, who is the first resurrection, for on such the second death shall have no power. Yet the day cometh, in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the judge, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation. Think

of this, you wicked workers, who live and die in your sins, and yet please yourselves with talking of the resurrection, and what a glorious day it will be, a woeful day to you will it be, who are found in your sins, and in the love of the world, you profane Esaus, and cursed Nimrods, and proud Hamans, who trample upon the despised seed of innocency, you must not then stop the mouth of truth any longer, but right must be heard and pass, as to the high, so to the low; you hypocrites, who confess God in words, but in works deny him, what will this be to you, when your fair covers must be taken away, and by your works you must be judged? Will he say to you, because you have been great talkers of me, therefore your deceits shall not be laid open? Or, I will first make you clean before I judge you; but all others will I judge as I find them? You that are pleading for sin while you live, and holiness when you are dead, you will not then find it as you have conceited, but as you are found. A terrible day will this be unto you who die in your sins; and this the children of light know, whom your envious minds are accusing, as though they denied the resurrection, though you see them preparing for it, by casting off the deeds of darkness and works of the flesh, and all the ungodly ways of the world, the pleasures and vanities thereof, and esteeming more of the cross of Christ, and the reproach of the world, counting that greater riches than the present glory of the world, and friendship thereof: but were our hope only in this life, we were of all men most miserable, who have denied all these things for the Lord, that in him we might be found at that day, in whom we look for a better resurrection; which did not we see to be an unsearchable reward, we have an opportunity to return: but a better country we desire, and we know that a city is prepared for us, whose maker is God, a durable habitation in the Heavens, which such who love the world cannot receive: and therefore in your carnal hearts imagine carnal things, comparing heavenly things with earthly, and praising the present world, and conforming to it, loving and worshipping the creature more than the creator; therefore hath God appointed a day, wherein

he will judge the world in righteousness, and give a just recompense, when the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, and the voice of the arch-angel, the quick and the dead to judge, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, as saith the scripture: wherefore blessed are they that die in the Lord, but woe to you who die in your sins at that day, who neither live nor die in the faith of Christ; but you are they who live and die in that faith that you cannot be set free from sin while you live; for this is not the faith of Christ, nor did ever any of his profess it, or die in it, but believed in him that is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him. So as is your faith unclean, so shall you be in your resurrection; for all that die in that faith, die in their sins.

But to such busy minds who are saying, how are the dead raised? And with what bodies do they come? I say, to such the apostles words are very suitable, thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: so to such I say, go to the figure, and read if thou canst with all thy curious wisdom, which is foolishness with God, for to such the parable is, but the mystery is sealed with the sons of God; nor can any ever know with what bodies they shall arise; but who comes to the flesh of Christ, and discerns his body, the sight whereof, in the life, slays the serpent, and opens the mystery, till then cursed is he that, by his earthly wisdom, presumes to reveal that which God hath sealed and hidden from the serpent's wisdom. So you that are wise in your own eyes, you may read 1 Cor. 15. and you may see the apostle speaks plain words to that purpose; and if you cannot understand his speech, neither can you do mine: yet do the sons of God, who are born of the incorruptible seed believe, and in measure understand the incorruptible body that shall never wax old: therefore do give up the corruptible to be tortured by the wills of the wicked and bloody persecuters, for the honour of him who hath called us thereto, by whom the inward man is daily renewed, though the outward man perish, and from whom we have assurance, that when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, we shall be clothed on from above; which clothing we see by faith, not by what the carnal

can see or comprehend; for that which is seen is temporal, but that which is not seen is eternal; and all flesh is not the same, nor are all bodies earthly, for there are heavenly bodies, and there are earthly bodies; yet cannot the earthly reveal the heavenly, nor judge of them; even so is the resurrection of the dead: he that hath an ear let him hear; but flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

And this I say to all, who desire to attain the resurrection from the dead, and to be counted worthy thereof, consult not with flesh and blood about it, nor seek to comprehend it in thy reason, lest thou lose it, and become brutish in thy judgment; but in the light wait, which shews the old man's deeds, that out of darkness thou mayst be led, to obtain the new birth and first resurrection in Christ; and as thou becomest conformable to the image of the heavenly, so shalt thou see the resurrection, the power and purity thereof: but the woeful estate of the wicked, who die not in the Lord, who are talking of the resurrection, but the old man still living, so live, and so die, that resurrection is to eternal destruction. Harken all you busy minds, whose ear is open to mischief.

HOW SIN IS STRENGTHENED, AND HOW IT IS OVERCOME.

THAT sin is in the world, and that all are thereby become children of wrath, is generally believed and confessed by all; but how sin is strengthened in men and women against God and their own souls, or how it is overcome, few there be that have learned or mind to know; yet for their sakes that do, I do here declare somewhat of that which I have received from him, who is faithful and true in all his testimony.

And this I find, that as sin got rooting at first through lust, so till this day it hath its strength, by the desires going forth to affect or lust after something, whether spiritual or carnal, above, before, or besides what that eternal spirit by which man was created, doth communicate to him, or beget in him; for the eye of mankind being blinded by the God of this world, which eye should look unto God for all; there is an eye of unbelief open, which looks into the visibles, and gives occasion for the lust to conceive in the mind, affections and desires, after something which the spirit of God leads not to, for the obtaining whereof, all the power and wisdom that is in man is set on work, and this becomes sin both in the desires and actions; and the more it is followed, the stronger it is; for whatever is hereby obtained, becomes a treasure of wickedness, laid up in the habitation of the wicked one, whereby the lust is increased, and the seed of God burthened and buried, whereby the creature becomes daily more unsensible, of the will of God, and the movings of that pure spirit which should keep the creature alive to the creator, and draw the mind wholly up to the father, on him alone to wait for a supply in all things, both for soul and body.

And every desire that springs from this root being suffered to go forth, defiles the man, and brings in that which oppresseth the just, until by continuance man grows into the nature of the enmity, and the imaginations of the heart be wholly evil, and that which should give the knowledge of God buried, and in many that which should give the knowledge of sin also, whereby

man becomes past feeling, utterly dead in sins and trespasses heaped upon the just against the day of judgment, which becomes by custom as natural to commit, as for the ox to drink water; yea with greediness doth man in this condition hunt after his own destruction, having dam'd up the way of life in himself by often transgressing it, and is become degenerate from the nature of God, having received in, and willingly joined to that nature of satan, which as a leaven hath and doth work into its own nature all that receive it, or yield unto it, whom as they grow therein, there springs up fruits of the same root and nature, which they bring forth in his time and opportunity, with liking and delight, being furnished with all subtilty, to colour them over, and plead for them, being in covenant and agreement with sin, some in one thing, and some in another, every one pleading the allowance of that sin with God which most suits their lusts, pride, profit or pleasure, credit or esteem in the world, or some self-end, and at these they take counsel, and not at the spirit of the Lord, to know what is sin, and what is no sin, but none will believe that they can be set free from all sin by him who testifies against all sin in spirit; and in all this the man of sin hath his kingdom by consent, for they being willing to keep covenant with him in one evil, are guilty of all.

Now the way to evercome all this, and him that hath his power therein, is by faith in Christ Jesus, the light, and life, and way to the father; for without believing there can be no victory; but in the faithful following of him, and patient bearing his cross, and enduring his sufferings, comes the enmity to be slain, and captivity led captive, and man set at liberty in the holy seed, to serve the father in spirit and life again.

And first, Christ as he is the light of the world, must be believed, for so he comes to manifest and reprove the deeds of darkness, and to make a separation between the works of God, and the works of the devil in the mind and spirit of the creature, and to let them see what spirit doth exercise their minds and affections, and the fruits of each spirit, and the moving and working of each spirit severally, without which none can rightly

know what is to be destroyed, and what saved; what to join to, and what to war against; for by this light alone comes man to the knowledge of sin in himself, in the ground and root of it, and every motion thereof; for though the letter, or something without, may show what is sin by its fruits when it is brought forth, yet it is the work of the spirit to discover spiritual wickedness in its first motion, which is the only place to kill it e'er it become sin; and this light must be believed, and diligently minded all along, for such is the subtilty of the enemy, having got power over the will and senses of man, that he will set them to war against the creature, and destroy the creation, rather than that of his which defiles the creature. And this cannot be avoided any other way but by minding the light of Christ, to separate that which is but to be cleansed, from that which is to be destroyed, and this man cannot do without the spirit, it being a spiritual work, though he never so much seeks after it.

And here is the cause why many are kept at hard labour all their time, and never come clear out of sin and uncleanness, even not believing in that which hath the power to separate and lead out of the evil, but without the single eye they are at work in the dark, and see not a clear separation in the body. And hence it is that some destroy themselves, in seeking to destroy sin, not minding the light of the saviour, is led by the destroyer, fighting against that which Christ comes to save, whilst he that comes to destroy lies hid in the dark: but he that believes in that which manifests all things, reproves all things, and judges all things, with that light shall be led what to war against, and what to join with all along in the work, for he alone is the covenant of light, and given for a leader, which whosoever believes and follows, shall not err in judgment or practice, but unbelief therein, is the cause why there are so many blind guides, and many people die in their sins.

And thus he is the way of God, and is to be believed in, to wit, as he manifests the works of the devil apart from the work of God, condemning the one in the flesh, and justifying the other in the spirit: and as he manifests

every spirit with its workings, motions and ends, the ground and offspring, whence they come, and whither they return, that thereby the creature may know who it is that exercises his mind and members, and to what spirit he yields himself in his obedience and service, and so may come to know the use and end of all his works, what to choose, and what to refuse; what to justify, and what to condemn in its first motion, before it be brought forth or formed in the womb, that judgment may be kept on the head of transgression, and liberty proclaimed to the just.

And for want of faith and feeling of this way of Christ, it is that so many perish in sin, and yet seem to strive against sin, even because they cannot believe that to be sufficient to save from sin, which manifests sin in the ground, and condemns it in its first motion, which if they did but in faith join with him to condemn sin in the ground, temptation, and motion, it would die and wither, and not be able long to live or prevail: and if it for a time should prevail in the members, yet not to condemnation, for I have found a great difference between sin condemned in the creature, though not yet wholly dead, and sin lived in, and pleaded for; for if thy life and judgment be in that alone which condemns sin, then art thou dead to sin, and alive to Christ; and it is no more thou that sins, but sin that yet remains in thee, to which thou art dead, to which thou dost not consent, like nor approve of, nor any way add any strength thereto; but thy faith and love, delight and strength is in him, which condemns it: he that truly is in this faith and love; by the working thereof shall all his enemies perish, and by that faith and love shall the just live in that creature, and he in him condemning and killing sin till it all be done away, and the creature of God found alive in him alone, who without spot will present him to the father: for this I have found, that that which manifests sin in its first motion, judges it there, and condemns it there, hath the only power to kill sin e're it be committed, and so hath only power to save from condemnation; for this you shall find, that as Christ doth not live to justification, where he is not believed and justified, loved, fol-

lowed, and confessed, so sin doth not live to condemnation where it is hated, condemned, and denied; for where that spirit of wickedness is seen in the light, and separated from, and judged apart from the creature, the creature joining in judgment with the just, there sin will whiten, and satan flee, for there he hath no kingdom, nor a hiding habitation; for the light being minded, and judgment having free passage and consent, it searcheth out his hidden things, and judgment passeth upon all his deceit, root and ground, with his fruits; so is the strong man spoiled, and his stuff by faith in Christ, and not by strength of the creature, but by believing the just, and denying the unjust.

For according to every man's faith, so shall he receive from God: now he that believes salvation, and that cleaves to, and lives in some sin, and pleads for it, and believes he must do so, his faith stands in an unclean thing, and an unclean thing will live by that faith, and be justified by that creature; and in his justifying any thing that is unclean, therein is the just condemned; and the just being condemned which should give dominion over the unclean, the wild plant hath its liberty to grow until it overspread the plant of God, and cover the man, wholly stop the ear, and blind the eye, and hardens the heart against every motion to good, or check for evil; and let not this man look for good fruit, but after his faith who so believes.

Also, on the contrary, he that feels a strife in himself between the clean and the unclean, and sees the one reprove for sin, and the other plead for sin, and believes in that which is pure, clean and just, which condemns the unjust and unclean, that faith stands in that which is pure, and the mystery of it is held in a pure conscience; and that pure faith being followed, will purify the heart, and cleanse the hands from unjust actions; and by that faith the just lives, and grows and springs, and brings forth, and the pure plant spreads and covers the earth with the knowledge of God, his holiness and purity, and all grace in the heart, which becomes as a working leaven, till it hath wrought out the unclean nature, and conformed the whole man to himself; and this is a work of

the holy faith, which none can receive, but who believes in holiness; for none can bring clean fruit out of an unclean faith.

And this further, for the encouragement of such as honestly indeed would be rid of their sin, and set free to serve God in holiness without deceit, thou feeling in thee the moving of that which is not holy, bearing witness against that which is contrary to holiness, and condemning it, and thee for joining with it in all thy conversation: I say, in that believe, for that is all thou knowest of Christ in thee; and believing and following it, thou wilt feel it making a separation in thy inward man, betwixt that which Christ comes to save, and that which he comes to destroy; for this is he that comes from above, to set before thee life and death divided, that thou joining to the life, and believing, mayest be saved from death: And as thou art faithful to this spirit which condemns sin in the flesh, so thou wilt feel warring against, and working out sin daily, to which if thou clearly join, denying that which it condemns, then art thou one spirit with him in his work, and art no longer in the flesh, nor to be condemned with that sin remaining in the flesh, but art one in him that condemns sin, and self in sinning, till sin becomes exceeding sinful in thy eyes, as it is in the eyes of God; and as thou growest in love and liking with that pure spirit, its laws and leadings, so thou wilt become dead to the law of sin, and it will lose its power in thee, not being minded, loved and served, thy mind, love and fear being exercised in that which condemns it; and here that faith that works by love takes the victory, and not thy striving in thy own strength, only from a sight of sin by the law, for by the works of the law thou canst not be justified, but by the working of faith in Christ Jesus, that spirit; and as thou feelest his working in thee, and thou one with him therein, in his work thou art justified, and by beholding of him in this faith, thou wilt be changed into his likeness by his mighty power working in thee, even by that spirit to which thou art turned: And as he grows in thee, and thou in him, thou wilt feel that power arising which will make thee able to answer a good conscience, and give lasting

peace, and so by his resurrection shall be saved from condemnation, from which thy own works will not save thee, and this work will go on with joy, if thy heart be honest; for seeing him that is holy set before thee condemning sin, and his holiness and beauty in all his motions doth so delight the honest heart, to see such a glory and beauty near thee, that it makes the way easy after him for the joy that is set before thee; for in all thy tribulations, trials, and temptations, this faith will present him before thee; and this made the saints of old endure the cross, and despise the shame, and bear the reproach after him joyfully, following the lamb in all his leadings.

So thou that lovest holiness, it is near thee; power over sin and Satan is near thee; salvation is at hand; go not forth to seek that abroad which thou hast lost in thy own house; he is thy salvation that condemns sin in thy bosom: he that reproves the wicked is with thee: he that is pure is thy peace: he that never consented to sin, but stands a witness against it: if thou have such a spirit in thee, thou hast the spirit of Christ the Saviour.

So take heed unto him, to believe in him, and to mind his leading, and to follow him; if thou part not from him, he will be thy everlasting peace, and over-ruling power to subdue thy sins; and by him shalt thou tread down strength with ease and delight, and shalt be able to say with such as were come to the same spirit, Greater is he that is in thee, than he that is in the world; and only that faith that sees him hath power to overcome the world; for he that beholds his glory, treads the world's glory under his feet; for whatsoever is seen in him, doth so far exceed all other things, that it takes the mind out of all other delights, and leaves them empty; so that things in heaven, and things on earth, principalities nor powers are able to separate thee from the love of him, how much more wilt thou leave thy delight in sin, when thou comest to delight in him! His love will constrain thee, who loves purity, and hath found it, for this is joy indeed, and love unspeakable, when his soul finds that treasure in his own house freely given, which he hath long been seeking abroad, and could never purchase, neither with life nor estate.

And the more thou beholdest him, the more will his glory and love appear; for as thou in the light beholdest the pure motions of the holy one, thou wilt come to see what thou art without him, and what thy wants are, without which thou canst not be happy, and that thou canst not have a lasting peace till with his virtue thou be filled, and with his glory covered, and with his power armed against every temptation; all which he will make the heir of with him, as thou mindest to be faithful, and hearkens to his movings, to obey them in all things, who thereby will lead thee his way by which he obtained all this glory and power, and this inheritance from the father; in which way thou wilt find a cross to all thy own ways, and to the world's spirit in all things; which will be easy if thou keep thy eye single to him who is set before thee therein, his glory, and the gaining thereof: but if thou look back into the world, thou lookest into temptation without him, and there the spirit of the world presents thee with loss, and not with gain, setting before thee what thou must forego, with all the hardships and impossibilities that may be, but no power to bear it; but keeping the eye to him, thou hast always power and peace before thee in thy way, the hope thereof will be as an anchor, and the faith a shield, and the love will give thee life to undergo all the trials for his sake, bearing his cross daily, which must part thee and thy sins, and crucify the worldly spirit with the lust thereof, and kill all that yet wars against thy soul and keeps thee from thy inheritance; wherefore it is called, the great power of God unto salvation.

And as thou becomest faithful thereto, thou wilt feel the fruit of that holy one springing in thee, moving to be brought forth in thee towards God and man, thy faith will grow, and prayers with strong cries to the father; as the spirit sees thy wants, thy love will spring and move in thee, and bring forth towards God and man upon all occasions; which if thou willingly serve in its smallest motion, it will increase, but if thou quench it in its movings, and refuse to bring it forth, it will wither and dry in thee, not being exercised.

And it is the like of gentleness, meekness, patience, and all other virtues which are of a springing and spreading nature, where they are not quenched, but suffered to come forth to his praise in his will and time, who is the begetter thereof, and to the comfort of his own seed, and cross to the world: and if thou be faithful daily to offer up thy body as a sacrifice, to bring forth his image, name, and power before his enemies, then what he moves thee to bring forth shall be thy inheritance, and will daily increase with using; but if thou wilt not give up for his name sake, but would hold the treasure, and escape the reproach, then will it be taken from thee, and given to him who will yield the Lord of the vineyard his fruit in due season; for that which the father freely begets, he will have freely brought forth, that the shining thereof in the dark world may praise him.

What a glory is it to see peace shine in the midst of war, love in the midst of hatred, meekness in the midst of strife, righteous judgment in the midst of wickedness, innocency in the midst of violence and oppression; as a lilly amongst thorns, so is that of God amongst the men of the world; and therein doth his nature and beauty appear in his temple, to which all must confess, and praise him therein.

This is the glorious day which many have talked on, and those only are the children of it, in whom the brightness shines forth; that which God begets in thee is his son, confess him in the midst of his enemies, and thereby is the father glorified, and his son crowned: but if thou deniest him to testify against the world, he will deny thee his life to redeem thee from the evil of it; the breaking forth of the son is the beginning of the good day, when that which so long hath condemned thee for sin, comes to shine forth freely in acts of righteousness, then shall thy darkness be turned into light, thy condemnation into peace, thy sorrow for sin, to rejoice in holiness; and this will be a good day to thee, even the day of the Lord's righteousness and redemption to thy soul, and a witness to all men of the appearance of the just one; which testimony whosoever refuseth to bear,

all his religion will prove in vain, and consists in words without power.

There is a way in which the barren becomes fruitful, and a little is more serviceable to God than he that hath great riches for himself; you that see your wants are nigh it, and the lowly mind will soonest follow it; and for the honest hearted it is prepared, who seek to serve God, and not yourselves. If you take heed to your own ways, and make nothing in your minds, you must not create that which must stand before God, for he will be served with his own begettings in you.

Take heed therefore that you make nothing to yourselves, nor murder that which he freely begets, but let your minds be always heavenly, waiting with patience in that which lets you see your wants therewith, that your hearts may be open always upward towards God the father of every good gift; and you being hid in the heavenly mind from that nature which compasseth the earth in its comprehensions, and would compass Heaven also; and waiting in a cross to that mind, as you come into the patient stillness, you will seal the begettings of the father moving in you to be brought forth, to which you must become servants, setting aside all subtilty, and that which is hasty, and whatever is your own, or hath an end to yourselves, and in the pure mind behold what way this moves its appearance against the worldly spirit, that with your whole hearts and might you may bring it forth in its own image, without reasoning or consulting with any thing of your own, or any thing of this world, for this ariseth in a contrary nature to that which is one with the world, bears another image and fruit, and hath another glory in its appearance, in which the father alone is glorified, even in this his son of his own free begetting; and herein is the father glorified, that he be brought forth with his fruits into the world, who thereby is known how far he is above and contrary to the worldly spirit, both in the ground, root, and offspring.

And whosoever will give up themselves to serve him herein by his increase, shall become rich towards God, and increase in strength daily against the world, and by

bringing forth, and by his beauty in holiness, shall become glorious and beloved in the sight of the father, whose image and begetting they bear, wherein they shall become heirs of the eternal glory.

But if you look into the earthly mind, there the worldly spirit meets you with his counsel, and consulting and reasoning therewith, you take counsel in the night, from which the counsel of God is hid, his work, the end and glory thereof; and instead of that, you will be presented with the pleasure and glory of this world, which stand in visible things, and is pleasing to the visible eye and senses, which glory the god of this world sees into, and leads into, in which his wisdom and knowledge stands, which cannot enter into the invisible glory and treasure. And in this spirit that knows not God, nor his works, but seeks his own glory, will you meet with the thief and murderer, sons of darkness, who will persuade you strongly to murder the pure motion, and not to bring it forth; or else so to bring it forth as that the image thereof may be so mar'd, as not to bear its clear and perfect testimony against the world's kingdom, power and glory: and this you cannot avoid if you look back into his counsel, and consult with your own reasonings, wherein arises thoughts, cares and pleasures out of the world, which cumber the mind, choak the seed, and cover the pearl with earthly affections and lusts, which continually harden the heart, and strengthen the will against the innocent, and so stay the just spiritually for want of bringing forth in its time, and according to its motion; which when you have rejected, you cannot beget again of yourselves, nor in your own wills, though you may procure the likeness from another spirit in that nature which resists the truth, and corrupts the mind, and brings forth in its own will, as some have done, who having disobeyed the still motion of the meek spirit, and looking for high things, God hath given them up to a lofty spirit, and strong workings in a contrary nature, who now have a power wherewith to resist that which first begot them out of the world, and a moving spirit which draws towards the world again, which being got into the place of God (as God) makes them

believe that their return is of the same spirit that called them out, to which they yielded the same obedience, thenceforth without fear, become the same they were, if not seven fold worse, without all hope of recovery; and this disobedience becomes as witchcraft.

Wherefore in the fear of God watch with all diligence, hearken in the simplicity of your hearts, and take heed that you slip not any time of hearings, nor prove false in your conception or bringing forth, but that both calling and election may be made sure to you, not only by being in the knowledge of it, but also by bringing it forth, that it may be your own forever; for that which you bring forth is your inheritance, and none can take it from you, but you have power therein against all contrary spirits, which whilst it is but in the motion, will strongly tempt, and seek the life thereof to stifle; but being brought forth, it is before you, and only so it is put on as a breastplate, and becomes a defence, which being begot, and not brought forth, it withers and becomes as dry bones in the womb.

Therefore, as you must give your minds wholly to hearken, so must you give your strength wholly to obey: and when you feel the pure to move in you, with your whole strength serve it, and bring it forth, give up your bodies and sacrifice for his sake whom you have not seen, that his life may be made manifest in your mortal flesh, and through you to the world, that he may be seen in his brightness to you that love him, and before his enemies, then is the body for the Lord, and not for fornication: but if you rest in the knowledge of this mystery, and bring not forth to life, with that knowledge you commit fornication, and teach others to commit fornication also; this knowledge in the disobedient mind becomes the mother of harlots, and fornications of the earth, with which the kings of the earth are deceived, but none thereby ever joined to God.

For it is not the hearing of the truth that purifies the soul, but the obedience of truth which makes the vessel fit for the master's use, who in this using, and its obedience, makes it a vessel of honour, and glorifies his son therein, in your bodies to do the father's will in the

world, whereby the father is glorified in the son, in whom he shines forth, as the father begets him again in you, and you in him, who was with the father before the world was, of his own nature and good will, which as you receive again by faith and obedience, you will be changed into the same image and nature, and to delight only therein, being born of the same spirit; as he that is born of the flesh, delights in the things of the flesh.

THE LAMB'S WAR
AGAINST THE
MAN OF SIN.

The end of it, the manner of it, and what he wars against.

His weapons, his colours, and his kingdom.

And how all may know whether they be in it, or no: and whether the same Christ be in them, that is, was, and is to come, and their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to him.

THE Lord God Almighty, to whom belongs all the kingdoms in Heaven and earth, doth nothing therein but by his son, the lamb, by him he creates and governs; by him he saves and condemns, judges and justifies; makes peace, and makes war, and whatsoever he doth, he is at his right hand in all places, who in him hath long suffered the burthen of iniquity, and oppression of wickedness that hath abounded for many generations, till it be come to the full measure, as in the days of old: and now his appearance in the lamb (as ever it was when iniquity was full) is to make war with the God of this world, and to plead with his subjects concerning their revolt from him their creator, who ordered their beginning, and gave them a being, and their breaking the order that was in the beginning, and giving up their obedience to the worldly spirit, and the inventions thereof, till they become so far one with it, as that it hath not only defiled their souls and bodies, blinded their eyes, stopt their ears, and so made the creature utterly unprofitable to God, and unfit for a temple for him to be worshipped in, or to hear the voice, or understand the mind of the eternal spirit, by which they were created, but that they are also become open enemies to every check and reproof of that spirit which should lead them to God, and doth testify against their evil deeds, and are not afraid to speak against it as a thing not worth the minding, nor able to lead them in the way of

truth. Thus hath God lost the creature out of his call and service, and he is become one with the God of this world, to serve and obey him in ways that do despite to the spirit of grace; and now use the creation against the creator. Now against this evil seed, and its whole work brought forth in that nature, doth the lamb make war, to take vengeance of his enemies.

THE END OF HIS WAR IS,

To judge this deceiver openly before all the creation, shewing that his ways, fashions, and customs, are not what God ordered for man to live in, in the beginning, to bind him, and to redeem him out of his captivity, all who will but believe in the lamb, and are weary of this service and bondage to his enemy, and who will but come forth and give their names and hearts to join with him, and bear his image and testimony openly before all men, and willingly follow him in such ways wherein the father hath given him victory over this power, for himself, and all that follow him, to redeem them to God; and the rest who will not believe and follow him, and bear his image, them to condemn with the destroyer into everlasting destruction, and to restore all things, and make all things new, as they were in the beginning, that God alone may rule in his own work.

THE MANNER OF HIS WAR IS,

First, that he may be just who is to judge all men and spirits, he gives his light unto their hearts, even of man and woman, whereby he lets all see (who will mind it) what he is displeased with, what is with him; and what is against him; what he owns, and what he disowns, that so all may know what is for destruction, to come out of it, lest they be destroyed with it, that so he may save and receive all that are not wilfully disobedient, and hardened in the pleasures of this world, against him; all who are deceived, who are willing to be undeceived; all who are captivated, who are willing to be set free; all that are in darkness, and are willing to come to light. In a word all that love righteousness them, nor they fight against him, and know it not, but

that he may receive them, to be one with him against that more than the pleasures of sin, that he may not destroy which hath misled and deceived them; and as many as turn at his reproof, he doth receive, and give them power in spirit and life to be as he is, in their measure, but all in watching, and wars against that which hath had them, and now has the rest of the creation in bondage, that he may restore all things to their former liberty.

WHAT THEY ARE TO WAR AGAINST.

And that is, whatever is not of God, whatever the eye (which loves the world) lusts after; whatever the flesh takes delight in, and whatever stands in respect of persons (as saith the Scripture) the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life, these are not of God; and whatever the God of the world hath begotten in mens hearts to practise or to plead for, which God did not place there, all this the lamb and his followers war against, which is at enmity with it, both in themselves, and wherever they see it; for in the work of God alone is his kingdom, and all other works will he destroy. So their wars are not against creatures, they wrestle not with flesh and blood which God hath made, but with spiritual wickedness, exalted in the hearts of men and women, where God alone should be, and pleaded for, by which they become enemies to God, and their souls are destroyed. Indeed their war is against the whole work and device of the God of this world, his laws, his customs, his fashions, his inventions, and all which are to add to, or take from the work of God, which was in the beginning; this is all enmity against the lamb and his followers, who are entered into the covenant which was in the beginning; and therefore no wonder why they are hated by the God of this world, and his subjects, who come to spoil him of all at once, and to destroy the whole body of sin, the foundation and strength of his kingdom, and to take the government to himself, that God may wholly rule in the heart of man, and man wholly live in the work of God.

WHAT THEIR WEAPONS ARE.

And as they war not against mens persons, so their weapons are not carnal, nor hurtful to any of the creation; for the lamb comes not to destroy men's lives, nor the work of God, and therefore at his appearance in his subjects, he puts spiritual weapons into their hearts and hands; their armour is the light, their sword the spirit of the father and the son, their shield is faith and patience, their paths are prepared with the gospel of peace, and good-will towards all the creation of God; their breastplate is righteousness and holiness to God, their minds are girt with godliness, and they are covered with salvation, and they are taught with truth. And thus the lamb in them, and they in him, go out in judgment and righteousness, to make war with his enemies, conquering and to conquer, not as the prince of this world in his subjects, with whips and prisons, tortures and torments on the bodies of creatures, to kill and destroy men's lives, who are deceived, and so become his enemies; but he goes forth in the power of the spirit with the word of truth, to pass judgment upon the head of the serpent, which doth deceive and bewitch the world, and covers his own with his love, whilst he kindles coals of fire on the head of his enemies; for with the spirit of judgment and with the spirit of burning will he plead with his enemies; and having kindled the fire, and awakened the creature, and broken their peace and rest in sin, he waits in patience to prevail to recover the creature and stay the enmity, by suffering all the rage, and envy, and evil entreatings, that the evil spirit that rules in the creature can cast upon him, and he receives it all with meekness, and pity to the creature, returning love for hatred, wrestling with God against the enmity, with prayers and tears night and day, with fasting, mourning and lamentation, in patience, in faithfulness, in truth, in love unfeigned, in long suffering, and in all the fruits of the spirit, that if by any means he may overcome evil with good, and by this his light in the sight of the creature, that the eye may come to be opened, which the god of this world hath blinded, that so the creature might see

what it is he thus hates, and what fruits he himself brings forth, that the creature may be convinced he is no deceiver, but hath with him the life and power of innocency and holiness, in whom he rules. And this preaching hath a power in it, to open the eye of all that are not wilfully blind, because they love the deed of darkness, and such are left without excuse forever. And thus he in his members many times wrestles, and preaches to the spirits in prison, with much long suffering towards the world, a nation, or a particular person, before he gives them up, and numbers them for destruction; yea, sometimes, till their rage against him, and cruelty exercised upon his members be so great, that there be no remedy, as in the days of old, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16.

AND THESE FRUITS ARE HIS COLOURS HE HOLDS FORTH TO ALL THE WORLD, IN SUCH AS HE REIGNS IN.

As they come to obey him, he covers them with love, gentleness, faith, patience and purity, grace and virtue, temperance and self-denial, meekness and innocency all in white, that follow him, in whom he is, who walk themselves as he walked, in all things conforming to God, with boldness and zeal, owning the lamb to be their leader, with him testifying against the world; that the deeds thereof are evil, themselves the mean while covered with his righteousness, against all the storms and tempests that they must be sure to meet withal, who bear that testimony which the lamb hath ever borne, in whom he appeared to the convincing of the world; that he is the same that ever he was from the beginning, that all that will believe and love holiness, may see where it is to be found, and come forth to him, and be saved, that the whole world become not as Sodom in the day of wrath, which ever comes upon a people, or a nation, after Christ hath thus appeared, and been rejected thereof.

WHAT HIS KINGDOM IS.

The power, the glory and compass of it is not comprehended with mortal understanding, which was before all beginnings, and endures forever, who orders and lim-

its all spirits in Heaven and earth, who rules in the rulers of the earth, and in all heavenly places, though many spirits know him not, till they have felt his reproof for their rebellion against him; his sufferings are free for loves sake, which is naturally in him to the creation, being his offspring, for which cause he becomes meek and lowly, that he may bear the infirmities of the creation, which doth no way take from his power, who is equal with the father, but doth manifest his power to be unlimited, in that he beareth all things, his dominion he hath amongst the heathen, and his hands are in the counsels of the kings of the earth, and there is no place where he is not, who descends below all depths, and ascends far above all Heavens, that he may fill all things.

But his kingdom in this world, in which he chiefly delights to walk, and make himself known, is in the hearts of such as have believed in him, and owned his call out of the world, whose hearts he hath purified, and whose bodies he hath washed in obedience, and made them fit for the father to be worshipped in. And in such he rejoices and takes delight; and his kingdom in such is righteousness and peace, in love, in power and purity, he leads them by the gentle movings of his spirit, out of all their own ways and wills, in which they would defile themselves, and guides them into the will of the father, by which they become more clean and holy; deeply he lets them know his covenant, and how far they may go and be false, he gives them his laws and his statutes, contrary in all things to the god of this world, that they may be known to be his before all his enemies; if they keep his counsel they are false, but if they refuse, he lets them know the correction of the father, his presence is great joy to them of a willing mind, but with the froward he appears in frowardness; the kisses of his lips are life eternal, but who may abide his wrath? The secrets of the father are with him, and he maketh all his subjects wise; he makes them all of one heart, and with himself of the same mind; his government is wholly pure, and no unclean thing can abide his judgments. As any come into his kingdom they are known, and their change is to be seen of all men; he keeps them

low in mind, and a meek spirit doth he beget in them; and with his power he leads them forth against all the enmity of the evil one, and makes all conditions comfortable to them who abide in his kingdom.

Now these are the last times, and many false Christs there must appear, and be made manifest by the true Christ, with their false prophets, false ways and false worships, and false worshippers, which though they be at wars one with another, yet not the lamb's war. Now seeing he hath appeared, who is from everlasting and changeth not, here is an everlasting trial for you all, all sorts of professors, whether you profess him from the letter or the light; come try whether Christ is in you, measure your life, and weigh your profession with that which cannot deceive you, which hath stood, and will stand forever, for he is sealed of the father.

Now, in truth to God and your own souls, prove your work in time, lest you and it perish together. First, see if your Christ be the same that was from everlasting to everlasting, or is he changed according to the times, in life, in death, in peace and wars, in reigning, in suffering, in casting out and receiving in; and if you find the true Christ, then prove your faithfulness to him in all things; doth he whom you obey as your leader, lead you out to war against this world, and all the pride and glory, fashions and customs, love and pleasures, and whatever else is not of God therein? And to give up your lives unto death, rather than knowingly to yield your obedience thereto? Doth he justify any life now, but what he justified in the prophets and apostles, and saints of old?—Doth he give his subjects liberty now to bow to the god of this world, and his ways, in things that he hath denied in the saints of old, and for denying whereof many, both then and now, have suffered? Is he at peace in you whilst you are in the fleshly pleasures, or whilst you have fellowship with the unclean spirits that are in the world? Doth he not lead out of the world, and to strive against it in watchings, fastings, prayers, and strong cries to the father, that you may be kept, and others delivered from the bondage and pollutions of it? Is his kingdom the same in you? And doth he give

out the same spiritual laws against all the laws and customs of the man of sin in you, as he hath done in his subjects in all ages? Doth he beget in your hearts a new nature, contrary to the world's nature in all things, motions and delights like himself, whereby he works out the old nature that inclines to the world, and can beat peace therein. And now your peace is wholly in him, and that which crucifies the world to you, and you to it, is your joy and delight? Hath he called you out of this world, to bear his name before the powers thereof, and put his testimony into your hearts, and the same weapons into your hands as were used by the saints of old against the powers of darkness, whereby you have power given to overcome evil with good? And many other fruits you may find, which he ever brought forth in his chosen, whereby they were known to be in him, and he in them; for which the world hates them. By all which you may clearly know, if he be the same in you to day, as he was yesterday in his people, and forever; for he changeth not, nor conforms to the world, nor the will of any creature, but changes all his followers, till they become in all things like himself; for they must bear his name and image before all men and spirits.

Now if you profess the same as was, and is, and is to come, the same for evermore, the same Christ, the same calling in you that was in all the people of God, then prove your faithfulness in answering and obeying: who is it that sees not that wars are begun? And to whom hath not the sound gone forth? The children of light have published the gospel of light throughout the world, and the prince of darkness hath shown his enmity against it; the lamb hath appeared with his weapons as before mentioned, in much long suffering, and the God of this world hath appeared to withstand him with his weapons, and hath prevailed unto blood with much eagerness, and the lamb hath prevailed unto suffering with much meekness and patience, each of them in their subjects, in whom these contrary spirits act one against another; and now see what part you take, who hath hired you, and whose work are you in, or are you idle, looking on? Or are you gone out with the beast of the

field, and regard nothing but your bellies and pleasures? Doth it not greatly concern you to try your states, seeing all must come speedily to an account for their lives and service? Are you such as spend your time and strength in watching and praying to the father of spirits for yourselves and the people of God, that they may be kept in the time of temptation, and assaults of the evil one, who seeks his advantage on the weak brethren; and for your enemies, that they may be delivered from under his power, who are captivated by him at his will, to fulfil his lusts and envy, and satisfy his wrath upon the innocent.

And do you deny yourselves of your pleasures, profits, ease and liberty, that you may hold forth a chaste conversation in the power and life of gentleness, meekness, faithfulness and truth, exercising a conscience void of offence towards God, and all men, that thereby you may shine forth in righteousness, so as to convince your enemies whom you pray for; thus following him who laid down his life for his enemies. Is this your war, and these your weapons? Is this your calling, and are you faithful to him that hath called you hereto, so as you can by no means bow to the God of this world, nor his ways, though it were to save your lives or credit in the world, or estates, and yet can serve the meanest creature in God's way, though to the loss of all? I beseech you be faithful to your own souls herein: do you find nothing in you that calls or moves this way, or reproves the contrary? If there be, are you not such as quench the spirit, and put out your own eye, and deny the lamb's call against your own lives? And if there be not, then are you not dead members, cut off from Christ, and all your profession is but a lie, and without Christ you are in the world? O that you would prove your own selves; for there be many deceitful workers at this day of his appearance, who do the work of the Lord negligently and deceitfully, and many do their own work instead of his; and many are called, and for a while abide, but in the time of hardship prove deceitful, and return to serve in the world again, and take pleasure therein; others are called and convinced, but come half out of the world,

even as far as they can do it without loss or shame, but keep their covenant therewith still, in what makes most for their gain, or earthly advantage or credit: others have answered their call, and been faithful in the covenant of the lamb against the prince of this world, so far as they have seen; but not minding the watch against the enemy, and not keeping low in the fear, and zealous in the light, have suffered the simplicity to be deceived, and are led back to the old beggerly rudiments of the world again, and take that for their perfection and growth, which once they had vomited up; and these expect great things in their work; but they are blinder than the rest, and more to be pitied, because of the simplicity that is deceived.

Many other grounds there be that bring not fruit to perfection, who are not found faithful to him that hath called them therein; so that now the truth is, that many are called, but few chosen and faithful; many are ashamed at the lamb's appearance, it is so low, and weak, and poor, and contemptible, and many are afraid, seeing so great a power against him; many be at work in their imaginations, to compass a kingdom, to get power over sin, and peace of conscience, but few will deny all to be led by the lamb in a way they know not, to bear his testimony and mark against the world, and suffer for it with him. Now deceit hath taught you to say, and may be you think it also, God forbid but you should suffer with Christ till death; but come to the trial in deed and truth; doth not he suffer under all the pride and pleasures of the flesh, by all manner of excess, by all manner of customs and fashions, not of God, but of the world? Is not all against him that is not of him and the father? Is not the lust of the eye, and of the flesh, and pride of life, his oppressors? And do you that live in these things, and fashions, and plead for them, suffer with him by them, or war with him against them? Then would you be weary of them, and not practice nor plead for them against him: this you will find true in the end, you cannot suffer with him, and serve his enemies.

Can you live at ease, and in your pleasures and profits, and cover yourselves with worldly glory, whilst Christ Jesus is glorified in his temples with mockings, stockings, stonings, whipping, and all manner of evil intreatings; cast into holes, pits and dungeons, having none on earth to take his part, nor plead his righteous cause, nor once to take notice of his innocent sufferings; but who as will, may tread down his precious life in the open streets, without resisting; and this for no other thing, but for testifying against the deeds of the world, that they are evil: the pride and oppression, false ways and false worships, never set up by him but in the will of man, and so maintained against him, which he must judge with a contrary appearance, e'er he come to his kingdom; and do you suffer with him herein, who have a heart consenting to these things, if not a hand deeply in them; secret or open, either in this cruelty acting or contriving, or in cursed and scornful speeches condemning them that bear witness, as a foolish ignorant people, and that they bring their sufferings upon themselves, by their own wills, and so shoot your poisoned arrows one way or other against that spirit which leads, and hath ever led such as do not resist and disobey him, into the same testimony, and so in secret you become worse than open persecutors.

Or it may be some few become as far as Pilate, who washed his own hands, whilst others shed the innocent blood; and these are few indeed, who thus far will openly confess the just and innocent Lord before his accusers, in what vessel he is thus honoured.

But will the best of these stand in judgment as sufferers with him? Or will he know you at his appearance, by this mark? Are these his steps you follow? Or is this his image, or power, war or weapons? Will this suffering bring you to reign with him, or he in you to your peace? Or will this cross crucify you to the world, and the world to you? Do you walk as he walked, or hath he left you such example to follow? Search the scriptures, and read the life of them, and your own lives, with the light of Christ Jesus, and cease to blaspheme any longer, in saying you are christians, while in Christ you

are not, but in a contrary spirit, and contrary life. And your fellowship is not with him in suffering, but with them by whom he suffers.

Were ever christians at their ease and worldly delights, whilst Christ hath not where to rest his head; thrust out of your meeting places, towns, and markets, and every assembly, if he do but testify against the evil thereof? Are you asleep in the world, and doth it not awaken you, to see or hear how sudden a return that bloody spirit hath made, lately in part cast out? And with what power he is now entering, like to exceed seven-fold what he hath this many generations, making daily havoc of the lambs? Is it a time for you to riot in, to satisfy your lusts, to eat and drink, and rise up to play, and spend your time and strength (many of you) so as modest heathens would blush at, and then say you are christians, and suffer with Christ. Surely were you members of that body, or sensible of his sufferings herein, you would not add thereto a greater weight, nor join to his adversary the devil, whose works these are, but on the Lord's part every one up and be armed in the light, with the armour of the lamb, as before mentioned, to withstand these and other the temptations of his enemy, and in sufferings witness against them. Do you not daily read of such a testimony in the scriptures, born against the murderer by the lamb?

How long shall it be e'er the life of what you profess, be seen in the face of your conversation, teachers, and people? When will you teachers approve yourselves as the ministers of God, and sufferers with Christ, (as saith the scripture which you profess) in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequently, in deaths often, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in hunger, in fastings oft, in cold and nakedness, in poverty, in long suffering, and love unfeigned, in honour and dishonour, in evil reports and good reports, as deceivers (yet true) as unknown, sorrowing, chastened, poor, having nothing, yet coveting no man's money, making it your reward to keep the gospel without charge, and much more of this self-denying nature. which is the armour of righteousness the minis-

ters of Christ put on, and with such weapons they went out to fight with beasts, and belly gods, false prophets, greedy dogs, hirelings, and all sorts that went after the error of Balaam for wages, gifts or rewards. And by these marks of Christ they were ever to be known from Baal's priests, and such as the world called and set up in the will of man, and in the spirit of Christ did openly war against them with the sword of his mouth, and do to this day, even to the day of judgment. In whom the scriptures are fulfilled, which cannot be broken.

Now why will you not measure yourselves with this measure, seeing this only is sealed to all generations of God's ministers, (witness the scriptures.) Nay, why are you so exceedingly blind, and wicked above measure, that if you be found in the contrary nature, life and practice, and God send some to warn you thereof, and hold forth the lamb's testimony against you, you presently suffer the evil one to get up in you, and in rage and madness, not minding this to be obedience to God in them, and his love and faithfulness to your souls, seek to cast some of these things before mentioned upon them; and so your revenge turns to their double honour, and doubles a witness against yourselves, to your own condemnation, and that you have not the spirit of Christ in you. And some of you exceed in this, above your fore-fathers; for whom the lambs of God have a lamentation; yet must God be justified when he comes to judgment, for you will be found far off the suffering with Christ, though with your lips you honor him.

Surely he that hath a living conscience, may much admire how you get over these scriptures in your teaching of others, and not to wound yourselves, or pierce your hearts with fear, and your faces with blushing, who are found so absolute in contradiction thereto, in conversation, and unlike in your lives, in the sight of every open eye. Or how you can muzzle your consciences while you pass your prayers, that your own mouth do not condemn you? It's no wonder why you are such enemies to the light within, every one that doth evil hateth the light.

And you hearers of all sorts, how long will it be e'er you hearken to what the Lord saith to your soul? Who is no respecter of persons, but every one that bears not the image of his son in well-doing, he hates, though with Cain you sacrifice, or with Esau you pray with tears.—That with the light of Christ in your own hearts you may see how the world's lusts have spoiled your souls of that heavenly image, and hath captivated your minds into itself, and likeness, and how you lie dead in sin, covered with earth, and daubed over with the words of men. Oh! that you would awake, before wrath awaken you, and put on the armour of God, not relying any longer on men that beat the air, to fight your battles, against him who is got into your hearts; but that yourselves, as soldiers of Christ, may all come to use the spiritual weapons against the spiritual wickedness exalted in the temple of God, so that you can neither see nor serve God therein, being filled with wicked and worldly cumbrances.

That's the spiritual weapon which captivates every thought to the obedience of Christ, and this is the true warfare, and is mighty through God, to cast down the strong holds of the man of sin in you; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience; knowing that he that will not be led by the spirit of God is for condemnation. And only these weapons are effectual to cleanse the heart of all that exalts itself against the life and knowledge of God, and to make way for his appearance; which no man's words who is in the same evils hath power to do; for this power is only in Christ his light and life. And only blessed are they who feel and find this treasure working in the earthen vessel, such shall approve their own work to God, and have praise thereof, not of man. So should you come to see what others have said in scripture, concerning the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, and savingly feel the power of his cross, of his death and resurrection, and the everlasting purity of his life, and that eternal love the father bears thereto, an everlasting inheritance to all who learn him, and attain his appearance, whose beauty is blessed forever.

Called, chosen and faithful are the servants and subjects of Christ's kingdom, in whom at this day, he maintains war against the prince of this world, the beast and his seat, with the false prophet, and all that serve under his dominion, and obey his laws which he hath set up.

Now you that cry, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ; see that it be truth in you, and that you lie not within yourselves. The lamb's war you must know, before you can witness his kingdom, and how you have been called into his war, and whether you have been faithful and chosen there or no. He that preaches the kingdom of Christ in words, without victory, is the thief that goes before Christ. So take heed that your own words condemn you not, but mind your calling, and how you have answered, and whether you have been faithful in that whereunto you have been called, THE WAR; Christ hath a war with his enemies, to which he calls his subjects to serve him therein, against all the powers of darkness of this world, and all things of this old world, the ways and fashions of it will he overturn, and all things will he make new, which the god of this world hath polluted, and wherewith his children hath corrupted themselves, and do service to the lust, and devourer; this the lamb wars against, in whomsoever he appears, and calls them to join with him herein in heart and mind, and with all their whole might. And for that end he lights his candle in their hearts, that they may find out every secret evil that the man of sin hath there treasured up, even to every thought and intent of the heart, to cast out the enemy with all his stuff, and to subject the creature wholly to himself, that he may form a new man, a new heart, new thoughts, and a new obedience, in a new way, in all things therein to reign, and there is his kingdom.

Now many are called to this war, but few are chosen and faithful. They that are faithful in their calling, them he chuses, and in them he reigns, and with them he makes war against his enemies on every side, under what colour soever they appear, if they be not subjects to him, all in whom he reigns are at war with

them in Christ, and the sword of his spirit he hath put into their hands, his word into their mouths, whereby they are at wars with all the world, and the world with them, and he that's faithful will make no peace nor agreement, neither will he bow nor yield agreement, till there be a subjection to Christ. These are faithful to him that hath called them.

So you that are much in words, prove your own selves; if you be in his kingdom, or of his subjects, then are you at work with him in this his day, wherein he is coming in thousands of his saints to take vengeance into his hands, and inflict it upon his enemies.

Now you who are asleep, and at ease in the flesh, are not of his kingdom; for by suffering in the flesh doth he make war, and slays the man of sin.

You that are at peace in the world's ways and fashions, invented and maintained by the man of sin, you are not in his kingdom, for he hath given an alarm against all those things, which hath caused the dragon to whet his teeth, and all the devouring spirits are stirred up, their Lord's kingdom to defend, every one with such weapons as they have, against the lamb in his kingdom, in what vessel soever he reigns; and he is but one in all his, against all these.

Now you that are making peace where these things are upholden, you are false-hearted, and betray the lamb, as that of God in you shall witness, you are at peace-making with his enemies.

But say you, God is love, and we are commanded to love all, and seek peace with all, &c.

I say, is God's love in you otherwise than it hath ever been in Christ, and all his saints, whom the world ever hated, whom God loved, and in whom he testified against the world unto death, and unto bonds, and persecution, were not they in God's love? Did not they keep his commandments? Will you take their words in your mouths, and condemn their lives by your practices?

The lamb's war is not against the creation, for then should his weapons be carnal, as the weapons of the worldly spirits are, for we war not with flesh and blood, nor against the creation of God, that we love, but we

fight against the spiritual powers of wickedness, which wars against God in the creation, and captivates the creation into the lust which wars against the soul, and that the creature may be delivered into its liberty, prepared for the sons of God. And this is not against love, nor everlasting peace, but that without which there can be no true love, nor lasting peace.

Love to God and man constrains us to be faithful in this war. Nor is God's love to that seed of bondage, nor did he ever command you to seek the peace of it. For the love of the world is enmity with God, as saith the scripture.

And were you not fallen into self-love which is utterly blind (as to the love of God) you would see a great difference between the creature, and that which keeps the creature in bondage, and out of the love of God; can you love that, and not hate the creature, and God also? This all who fight in the lamb's battles know, who are in the true love. Doth not the spirit of pride, gluttony, drunkenness, pleasures, envy and strife, keep that in bondage which thou shouldst love by the command of God? Doth not the creature groan to be delivered from the vanity, customs and fashions of this generation? Is not the whole time of man taken up in service of the lusts and inventions which the man of sin hath found out; inventions in meats and drinks, inventions in apparel, inventions in worships, in sports and pleasures, &c. Is not the whole creation captivated under this spirit of whoredom, and so man's whole life spent in vain? So that men and women come into the world, and depart out of it again, as though they were made for no other end but for vanity and selfishness. Scarce one of ten thousand knows any call from God to any service for him, or hath an ear to hear his voice; but if any do hear, and obey, they all conclude him deceived, and are ready to devour him, because he testifies against the evils which destroy mens souls, and make void man's service to his creator, and devours the creation.

And can you love this spirit, bow and conform to it, or suffer it to reign in yourselves, or your brethren, and

you be silent, under a pretence of seeking love and peace, and obeying God's command; and boast in high words about Christ's kingdom, counting it a low and foolish thing in such as faithfully and zealously bear testimony for God, and against these evils? And will not God find you out, and your deceit and unfaithfulness in your generation; shall not God break your peace, and disannul your covenant, which you are making with the world, to settle yourselves in ease and pleasure, and bring you out with true judgment, where it shall be seen what nature your love is of, whose kingdom you are in, and whom you love and serve.

The day is dawned, and the sun is risen to many that shall not set, nor shall he cease his course, until he have rightly divided between the precious seed, and the children of whoredoms and deceit. And now the holy seed is called forth, to appear in its colours against the man of sin; and with the sword of his mouth doth he make war, and with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, doth he consume the filthy and unclean spirits. And all that are faithful have their armour on ready, day and night to follow the lamb, as he moves, counting nothing hard to undergo, so as they may but have hopes of reconciliation betwixt God, and the creature that is fallen to the prince of the world, and led captive at his will. And this is love indeed, to lay down all for such as are yet enemies.

Go on and prosper in the name of the Lord, and in righteousness make war; and all that are zealous for truth and purity shall say amen: but the slothful, the lukewarm, and all unclean persons, shut themselves out, as not for this work, nor worthy to be counted faithful nor chosen.

A WARNING TO SUCH WHOSE HEARTS ARE PREPARED TO RECEIVE
INSTRUCTION, TO LEAD OUT OF THE WAYS OF DEATH.

PERILOUS times are come, now is the earth and the air corrupted and filled with violence and deceit, ungodliness abounds every where, satan is loosed and gone forth to deceive, multitudes of spirits are sent abroad, and have power given to enter all that dwell in the earth, who inhabit in dark places, who love not the light. Wo to the world! wo to all who have treasured up wickedness in themselves; for now will satan seek to his own, and his vessels will be filled, filled with wrath, filled with pride, filled with lust, covetousness, and all manner of unrighteousness. The fulness of the Gentiles is at hand, and every bottle must be filled, that the potter may dash them one against another. Wo to the drunken nation, whose vomit is in the streets, streets filled with pride, filled with oppression and deceit, lying, swearing and cursed speaking, vomits out openly, and not ashamed; vanity and folly is become a glory, wickedness shines, it exceeds in boldness; its not found in a corner, but in the broad places of the streets, so that none can look out without danger of letting in the devil. Oh! what is now to be seen in the world, in which there is not a temptation: so that no safety is to him that looks out, for sin lies at the door, ready to enter: wo to every city that is without a watchman! These are the perilous times when every house is beset with danger: these are the evil days, the last times, wherein iniquity abounds. And now where the watchman is blind (enemies to the light) that house will be filled with evil spirits, legions of devils may enter, and inhabit in darkness, proud spirits, lying spirits, dissembling spirits, flattering spirits, deceitful spirits of all sorts, and these being got in, work in the vessel according to their several natures, the works of their father, holding forth his image to all that look out, tempting to get into others, to enlarge his kingdom; and so the wanton look comes to be deceived, lust looks out, and pride calls and holds out an object to the the eye, which being let in, it

conceives within, and grows till it be able to bring forth of its own, and become a tempter to others. So vanity calls out of the devil's treasury to all that pass by ; spiritual whoredom cries aloud in the open streets, to entice the simple, and defile the virgin, with eagerness seeking to pollute the chaste spirit, and corrupt the mind from God.

Now these are the perilous times, wherein simplicity is taken in the snares of subtilty. Oh! what baits are laid out where the strong man keeps the house within? With an impudent face hath the adulterous mind set herself to deceive, enticements to the eye, words of witchcraft to the ear, where satan hath got ahead, how doth he open his mouth in blasphemy against the holy spirit, and its fruits of humility, and purity, and godliness, plainness and truth, blaspheming the holy truth of scriptures, turning them against these fruits of holiness, and to plead for that which destroys these fruits, and brings forth contrary fruits.

What pleading for pride from scripture? For respect of persons? For false worships? For covetousness? For excess and riot? For all deceitful dealings and works of the flesh from scriptures? The deceitful worker having through subtilty, got the words of scripture, to destroy the life thereof, and set up a life contrary thereto, as though they now allowed what they formerly condemned.

And thus the whore holds forth a gilding cup, but filled with abomination and filthy lusts. And this is done with such craft, as it is impossible for any (who go out from the light within, to lend either eye or ear to that without) to escape the snare, and not to have that which should be for their welfare, turned into a trap, by that spirit which, where it enters, turns all the mercies of God into lasciviousness, as it is at this day in all where he is entered. How are riches become a trap to the rich, to captivate them into pride, idleness and vanity! How is Dives' table become a snare to captivate into all excess and wantonness, and hardens them against the lowly and meek. This is the greatest of curses, and it now abounds, and seeks to enter and spread.

How is trading become a trap, to captivate men into deceitful dealing, and vain customs and fashions, to serve the adulterous eye and vanity: so that not one trade, amongst many, wherein a just plain man, who is come to yea and nay, and cannot serve the vanity of the eye and the pride of life can live, but if he will keep his conscience pure, he must become a prey.

These are evil times indeed! Where can the innocent go out, and not a trap laid to bring him into bondage and slavery to some of these spirits, to captivate the conscience or deceive the simplicity? What traps in laws, which should defend the simple? Traps in courts! Traps in teachers! Yea what is it, wherein there is not the snare of the fowler to him that goes out? Wherefore now he alone is blessed, who looks not out for a guide, who lends not an ear to the wicked, nor walks in the counsels of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, but delights in the light of Christ, to exercise his mind day and night, in that law which God hath written in his heart. He only shall escape these perilous times, and not be polluted, his city shall be safety. who stands on his watch, his house shall not be filled with thieves, these evil spirits shall not lodge there; they are prepared for darkness, and have power in them that hate the light, and their habitation must be in desolate vessels, wherein God walks not.

Watching in the light with diligence, faithfulness and patience, keeps the enemy out, and kills that of his seed that is within, where it is not wholly dead; for while the root of pride and lust is within, it is fed by fetching in of its own without; but the faithful watch suffers him no passage out nor in. And so he that watches for iniquity is cut off, and the seed of the evil doer is kept in captivity, and the devil cannot come to relieve his own; so if a man's enemies be them of his own house, as it is with all till they be dead and buried, yet a faithful watch in the light will keep from being betrayed therewith, or kept in captivity; though the tempter, with all his wiles and subtilty, seek to draw out the mind, that he may come in to strengthen his own; yet in the light he cannot enter: He that dwells in the light dwells in God, and

hath immortality for his defence; and who feels the power of meekness, truth, peace, love, patience, and holds this in his mind and heart, and will not be tempted from it, he holds the head. This is he that is given of the father to be head to the church that is in God, who dwells in the light, he is head over all principalities and powers, and all spiritual wickedness. This is the saviour, and that name and nature to which every knee must bow, and every tongue confess. He that puts on truth and righteousness, puts on immortality and eternal life and freedom. This is our house from Heaven, and hath power to save upon earth, and to take us up to Heaven, to be with God forever; in whom is the kingdom, power and glory over all, blessed for evermore.

So holiness is come down from heaven, and the light of the son is arising, and begins to shine; and now all unclean spirits get to their strong holds. An unclean, lustful, covetous, proud heart, that hath got the words of truth, is become a habitation of multitudes of unclean spirits, and hath covers for them all: so thither they flock a pace, and in the light they are seen making head against the lamb, the temples of God to defile, holding forth whoredoms of all sorts, to entice the simple to come out from their strength; but he that keeps within is safe, and the clean heart is God's habitation, and such as walk in his light are them that are saved; and such are fit to serve God against all these whoredoms, who are inhabited with the chaste spirit and clean minds, they cannot bewitch: so the Lord alone is become the salvation of all that receive him, and the separation is making daily, and them that are saved of the nations walk in the light, and thick darkness covers the unclean, and such love the deeds that are evil, and see not destruction in their way: and the fool delights in his folly, babling and vanity, and thinks he is as rich as he that hath the treasure of God in a clean vessel; and the whore wipes her mouth, and saith she is right, though the heart runs from God all the day long. And so the scriptures are fulfilled upon that generation, that it may pass away out of the sight of the Lord, and his holy ones for ever, into the place out of which the

deceiver came, and the deceived with him. And this the father of lights shews to his own, as they come out from amongst them; glory to his day for ever, and holiness without end.

J. N.

TO THE RULERS.

BEHOLD, you rulers, and hearken proud men and women, who have let in the spirit of the world into your hearts, whereby you are lifted up in the earth, hear what truth saith.

You have gained riches, and you seek worldly glory, an evil covetousness to yourselves. And these idols being set up in your hearts to be worshipped; you rage, and wonder why the children of light will not worship your Gods you have set up, and fall down before the glory of the world in you; so you are angry: but why are you so blind, to think that such, who have denied to bow to the same spirit and pride in themselves, and have [through the cross] obtained power from above to cast out the same idols out of their own hearts, and can they bow to them in another? Nay, the day is come, and the children of light have found the living God to worship, and there is none besides him to us. And now in vain is the idol preached, we cannot worship with you; however you be tormented, it is of God to furnish the world's idols, and he alone will be worshipped, who is mighty to save; what have we to do any more with idolatry? Pride cannot save us, nor can the world's glory preserve in the hour of temptation, though we should bow thereto; we cannot trust in uncertain riches, nor may we take counsel at silver or gold, flocks or herds: We have proved your idols, and know what is in them, and we have found them destroyers and not saviours; whatever your glory promises you [who most seek it] we know in its right hand is a lie, flattery and falsehood, and all who love it come short of the glory of God; humility is our glory, and he is our saviour, who

saith, Learn of me, for I am lowly, and ye shall find rest for your souls. And this we have proved, and we find his words truth, and all loftiness a lie: So having found the truth, the truth hath made us free; free from pride, free from vain glory, free from that spirit that puts it on, and would have it worshipped, free from the manner of the Gentiles, who exercise lordship in that nature, which is out of the light and doctrine of Christ.

So the truth having made us free, in that liberty we stand fast, and may not be intangled again with your yoke of bondage, nor the manners of the Gentiles; and then you say its our pride and stubbornness; and many such accusations you cast on us. Alas what darkness is this? And how have you lost your judgment? What, is Mordecai become prouder than Haman with you? Is he proud who denies to worship pride, and he that would be worshipped free? Is not this to put light for darkness, and darkness for light, to condemn the innocent to hide the offender? Come down to that of God in your consciences, and let that judge, and let pride be seen and ashamed where it is: and then you plead scripture, and say, let every soul be subject to the higher power, and be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, &c. Now this we say also, and own the scriptures, but man's pride is not the higher power; in humility we find a power above pride, higher than oppression, higher than mens' wills, higher than the lusts of the eye; yea, higher than all that in man would exalt against it: so we deny the lower, that we may subject ourselves, to that which excelleth, which is ordained of God; and to every ordinance of man are we subject for the Lord's sake; but should we bow to the spirit of pride, we should betray the Lord, and give his honour to another, and that is not for the Lord's sake, and what is against him for his sake, we deny, and with him suffer under it, as witness for him against it. So we give Cæsar his due, and honour to whom it belongs, but all glory and worship to God alone, to whom it is due.

But you say, that worship we plead for is civil not religious; but where do you read in scripture of civil

worship? We find, honour all men in the Lord, and that which is in the Lord is religious; and that which is not in the Lord is idolatrous. Is there any thing honorable in man but the image of God, which is spiritual? And if any honor that of God in man, is it not on a religious account? And yet you say for conscience sake, and not religious: so your distinctions will not gain worship from them who know God and his image, and the beast and his image in their several appearances; and by this are they known for ever. He that is from above, seeks not honour from man, but that honor which is of God alone; God's presence in him makes him honorable in the hearts of all that love God; so God gives him grace and glory, and honour; but the other must have none from God, who abide not in that which is honorable, and so become as the beast, seeking honour by force, from such as he hath power over, and rages if he cannot have it. And this nature hath no right to it, though the false prophet join with him to plead for it, who must be cast into the lake together. And all that worship the beast and his image must drink of the wine of the wrath of God, poured out without mixture, as saith the scripture.

So you that are in place to rule and seek for honour, seek first that which is honorable, and none can hold you from honor; and know, it is the gift of God only to such as honour him, and not themselves: seek that glory and honor that hath immortality and eternal life, which is obtained of God by continuance in well doing. Seek humility that goes before honour, exalt justice, set up righteousness and truth in judgment, hold forth God's sword to all people under you, and not your own wills, without respect of persons; then you honor God, and he will honor you. Seek first the kingdom of God, that he may rule in your own hearts, over your pride, over your passion, over lust, over covetousness, over respect of persons, and over all unrighteousness; so shall you set up the higher power in you, for every soul to be subject to, which that of God in every conscience shall answer to: then are you ministers of God, and he shall add to you that honor which is of God, which is

spiritual, which is immortal, binding every conscience and soul in subjection to your authority, which all that resist receive damnation to themselves. And this is religious, and an ordinance of God, and receives not its honor from man, but from God alone, who hath ever honored holy men and women, that ruled for God, as you may read in the scriptures; who never needed to seek it from men while they retained God; but Saul when God was departed from him, through covetousness and disobedience, cried, honour me before the people, who had lost the kingdom, had lost his honor, had lost that which binds the conscience, and to which the soul is to be subject, who cried, honor me before the people, from whom God was departed, who had departed from God, who sought honor to himself without God, the kingdom being rent from him, his honour departed: so you that would have honor, seek God, and retain him, exalt his kingdom in your hearts, and he will add honor thereto; but if you be disobedient, and your own souls be not subject to the higher power, then another power rules, to which the righteous soul cannot subject for conscience sake; then gets up he that's out of God's kingdom, and cries, honour me before the people.

And this is he that sought David's life, and seeks the life of his seed, who is disobedient, who is covetous, who is greedy of honour, who is a murderer, who keeps not the word of God, nor abode in the truth, to keep down pride and vain glory; then the false prophet cries, worship this; so such as be out of the faith of Christ, disobedient to the law of God, and in respect of persons; such as be flatterers, liars, scorers, fighters, drunkards, swearers, and such as be out of the kingdom of God, whose souls are not subject to the higher power for conscience sake, such bow and worship with putting off hats, and bowing of the knee to the person, but the soul of such is not subject to the power that is of God for conscience sake; yet such is the darkness of many rulers, as to account this subjection to authority, while such whose souls do truly bow to the power of righteousness, justice, and equity, wherever it is, without flattering where it is not, are condemned for unmannerliness.

disorder, and suffer as disobedient to authority; but to that of God in every conscience do we appear, whether such souls exalt the power which is of God, and seek his honor, or their own; and so as you honor God he will honor you: but seek it as eagerly as you will without him, it will flee from you, though flattery you may obtain, which will corrupt your judgment, and let in upon you everlasting dishonor. Wherefore turn to the Lord with your whole hearts, and seek his glory alone, that he may put upon you his spirit of humility and righteous judgment, that you may be covered therewith as with a garment: so shall you freely have our souls subjection, which now in secret mourns for you, with prayers and tears before God, and openly suffers under you for a testimony against you. And now you that are not in place to rule, and seek to be worshipped of us, what is it you would have us bow to in you or upon you? Gladly would we see humility appear in you, and behold you covered with the spirit of God, that in our souls we might be subject thereto, and so in the Lord honor you: but should we bow to your gold and silver lace, your costly apparel or earthly riches? To that of God in you all we appeal, if we should not worship idols, and break the law of God, for which doing, how should we be excused before God at the day of account, let such as fear God more than man judge. J. N.

O you rulers and teachers of these nations, to which Christ Jesus hath shewed so much favor as to honor these nations with his first appearance, now after so long a night; and that from hence the sun-rise of righteousness should shine forth in clearness to the world, over the head of all idolatry, false worships, corrupt laws, violence and oppression, and all the numberless number of vain customs, pride and excess, in which the whole world lies in wickedness, and with which the holy pure one is burthened, and hath been grieved these many years, against which he is now arisen in many of his servants, openly to declare, not only here, but in most parts of the world. and should you be the men now to set yourselves against this work, by evil intreating

such as are called thereto, and are found therein, which your teachers do not go about themselves. What will you answer the Lord to these things? Is there no need of this work at home or abroad? Is your streets and markets clear, and your worship pure? Where can the pure eye of God look out, and not behold iniquity and provocation? Do you look for his coming, and evil entreat his servants, whom he sends to prepare his way before him? Would you have him to find you as Sodom at his coming? If you see these evils abound in the world, why do you set yourselves against such as call to repentance where these things most abound? Are your streets and temples prepared for the pure God to walk and be worshipped in with delight, when a mortal man who hath but modesty in his face cannot behold but be grieved with the excess of vanity and deceit shown openly therein? Is the way prepared in your streets and temples for the lamb, when a lion cannot pass for briars and thorns, and other fruitless trees tearing, and hauling, and bruising? Did you love him in truth you would also hate that which would grieve his holy spirit at his coming in yourselves, and in others, and you would hinder none that come in his name who seek to make an end of sin, seeing nothing else hinders his appearance, nor hath caused his departure from the children of men; and you that call yourselves ministers of Christ, had not the spirit of slumber possessed you this would be your work; did the holy spirit dwell in your houses, and look out at your windows, you could not be silent till you had driven iniquity into a corner, and made pride to blush, and lying, swearing, and all cursed speaking, afraid to utter its voice in the streets, that the pure eye might bless you, and the holy one delight to walk in the open streets of your greatest meetings; should not this be the work of the ministers of righteousness, and messengers of Christ Jesus, rather than to petition the rulers of the world against such as are found in this work, to the utmost of your power, hindering it both at home and abroad, neither going about it yourselves, nor suffering them that would; were you seen to be diligent in this work you should appear

to be such servants as truly wait for your Lord's coming in peace, and not in wrath, and that you had received the earnest of the spirit which travels for the delivering of the creation from the bondage of corruption, and the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and the joy and peace of the king of righteousness at his coming over the whole world.

These were written in Oliver Cromwell's time, to him, his rulers and teachers, and published in 1658, and the former of them printed, and now reprinted.

A
MESSAGE
FROM THE
SPIRIT OF TRUTH,
UNTO THE
HOLY SEED,

Who are chosen out of the world, and are lovers and followers
of the LIGHT.

By JAMES NAYLER.

TO THE READERS.

You lovers and followers of the light, to you is the message sent, in it abide, that the glory of the only begotten of the Father you may behold, and be changed from glory to glory: fill not your heads, but feel the life of what in this following paper is declared. For though the thief, the boaster, the proud and exalted ones have, or may cover themselves with like words, yet this birth never was, is, or shall be brought forth, but by the espoused virgin; pure, chaste, and spotless, true and abiding innocency; far distant from all feigned purity, which many being puffed up in their vain minds, have, or may intrude into things they know not, and so deceive the simple by a voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels. These hold not fast the head which gives the life to every member; he that is without beginning of days, or end of life; by whom, and for whom all these things were made; to him shall every knee bow, who filleth all in all, of whose fullness we have received grace for grace; who in these following lines salutes the whole elect of God every where, plentifully giving forth to the great mystery of godliness, hidden from ages and generations, now made manifest to the meek and upright in heart, who in the unfeigned love abide, which endures for ever.

R. T.

A MESSAGE

FROM THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, UNTO THE HOLY SEED.

DEAR friends, brethren and sisters, of the seed of Abraham, partakes with him in the holy call, and who in his faith wait for that glory and inheritance immortal, which every one of you shall receive at the appearance of the great God, and his Son Jesus Christ, to you all be peace, truth, and love increased, wherein you may be established to the end of your calling.

That which is set before me in the spirit of truth, and for which my soul travels and breaths after in the whole creation (but especially in you who are already called thereunto) I am moved to impart unto you, thereby to stir you up earnestly to press on towards the appearance of that to which you are called in one, which is no other than what hath been holden forth from the beginning, even the only begotten of the father, filled with grace and truth; for the obtaining whereof, you that are faithful have denied the delights of this present world, and do daily undergo the enmity thereof. Of whose appearance many of you have received a certain hope which cannot be shaken, and a measure of him some are come to in the same spirit, who have seen, felt, and handled of his appearance, and have received of his fullness, wherein alone you excel, and are able to hold forth that life in the power of obedience, meekness, and fear, which no form nor knowledge without is able to bear or bring forth, which is that alone wherein I rejoice in you; and not only so, but find cause in heart to magnify that goodness and glorious power of God, already manifested in you, and through you to the world, whose praise will daily increase, as his virtues appear in you; which that you, and all the number of called ones may increase in, and grow to the stature, and full appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is the full desire of my soul, and that which will give us an assured joy and perfect peace in one, when knowledge will vanish, and that which is in part shall be done away.

Wherefore you that have received the spirit of prophecy, and that light out of darkness, which lets you see what manner of one the Son of God must be at his appearing in spirit and power, holiness and great glory, I beseech you that none of you sit down at rest in this sight, nor be you puffed up therewith, as though you had already attained, lest thereby the enemy prevail to exalt you above what is meet, and so others, less in wisdom, who are more lowly, in spirit step in before you, and obtain that crown and glory to which you were called; and so while you feed on the knowledge you lose the life; but that every one wait in the light to feel the power and life of the Son of God manifest in your bodies, giving you victory over your own spirits, and raising you up out of death into the life of the prophecies, that you may all know the true worship in spirit, and what you bow unto, that henceforth you may be servants of righteousness, begotten and not feigned, which only hath food able to satisfy your thirsting souls, that you may all feel the only begotten of God in virtue and power, working mightily the work of the father, and destroying the work of the Devil in every particular, for hereunto were you first called, that you should inherit eternal life and power, the true riches of grace in righteousness, and to receive a kingdom that cannot be removed, but that is able to keep you against all assaults of the enemy, which riches is God's only begotten, in whom is received of the perfect fullness of God, which is only able to satisfy all fears, and supply all wants, in all who attain to his appearance.

And further, I beseech you that you satisfy not yourselves only with a feeling of this working in you, but that you diligently attend an entrance thereinto, that you may put him on whom the father begetteth and formeth in you, that your souls may be bathed and anointed therein. And not only so, but that you bring forth before all men, even him the only begotten Son of God in meekness, long-suffering, in patience, in righteousness, in godly holiness, and all his virtues; the living image of him by whom he is begotten; that it may appear to all men whose you are, and who possesses the vessel, and

what he is that appears therein; that it may be seen and confessed that God is in you of a truth, revealed in his only begotten; for this is he, to whom at his appearance every tongue shall confess, and every heart be struck with fear; though the form of his beauty, and visage of his glory hath (amongst false births and feigned profession) been more marred than any man's; who instead of bringing forth into the world the only begotten of God, to convince and condemn the world of all ungodliness, and save them from it, have brought forth the conceivings of their own brains, and the child born to them is no Saviour, but their birth hath left them in the world, and one with it, who are now turning the words of Christ against his works, and their power to withstand his appearance in others, who is the same which was, and is, and is to come to all generations.

So that instead of holding forth that spiritual power of perfect redemption from above, to save his people from their sins, and set them at liberty from the bondage of corruption, to serve God in the new man, the son of righteousness, of peace, and holiness, God's image, there appears the son of wickedness, in every form at liberty, and pleaded for the image and power of all unrighteousness and ungodliness, preached and set up; so that the very faith and hope of God's appearance in their generation is destroyed. So these not waiting in faith, single in the begettings of God from above, to see in patience that formed, born and brought forth, but mixing with their reasonings and wisdom from below, have not attained his appearance, but have turned the truth of God into a lie, his glory into shame; wherefore God hath given them up to believe their own conceivings: and you hath he called into that glorious hope and powerful faith, wherein you now stand; and them he hath left to be heirs of the corruptions of this world, which they have minded more than himself; where now many of them are the great opposers of his appearance, who were once called to bear a measure of his testimony in spiritual life and power.

And now, dear friends, the called of God you are, unto the day of his coming, whose light hath shined out of

darkness, giving you a knowledge in this great mystery and hope, and a power you have received from above, whereby you are come nearer the day than those before you, and many have denied the world and their inheritance, that you might stand single in hope thereof. Now the day is yours if you be watchful, and faithful thereto, that you mix not with the earthly seed, nor bring forth a false birth, but that your hearts be single, and open to receive him from above, the heavenly seed is in the will of God, and not of yourselves; the son of righteousness, the father's glory, who hath the living image and power of God, to make all sons and daughters of the most high, conformable to himself, and heirs with him of the same kingdom, glory and power; even as many of you as so receive him, as to put him on as he is, and so walk in him as the begotten of God, children of the most holy, whom he hath counted worthy of so high a calling, as to receive his name, power, and glory, and to bear testimony what he is before all men, and to hold forth the power that you have in his name and image, above all names and forms, in Heaven or in earth; and this with all diligence, meekness, and fear, least satan deceive you of that simplicity that is in him, and so you come short of his glory, and others be called. Now quit yourselves as the beloved of God; cast off every weight which would hinder your attaining him, that in the light is set before you; crucify every affection after the earthly, and put away all the cares and pleasures that would choak this seed, and whatever would mix in your minds, or plead for a place in your hearts, let it be to you as an accursed thing, that the blessing of Abraham may come upon you, and through you to manifest to all the world, and that the holy name of Christ may be glorified in you, which hath long been polluted through such who have professed it in a contrary nature.

For this is he to whose appearance in the world every tongue shall be made to confess, and the angels of God shall worship him, for he is the glory of God, and power of righteousness in heaven and in earth, God's love and good will amongst men, and in him is the father revealed, whom no eye hath seen. You that have received

him, and hold him forth, are the light of the world, let him shine to the glory of your father; it's you that hold forth the foundation of faith; he being lifted up will draw all men to him: hold him forth clearly, as you receive him from above, and there is that in every conscience that will answer to his appearance, for God hath not left him without witness: So that he that believes not is condemned already in himself, because he believes not in that only begotten of God, whom the father hath sent into the world. If he doth not that work in you, which none other can do, then how should any believe or confess that it is he. But at his appearance his works shall declare him, and leave all without excuse.

His righteousness, his meekness, his patient sufferings, his lowly-mindedness, his faith and obedience to the father, his love and tender compassion towards all men, being richly furnished with all manner of godliness, shall declare him whose image he bears, and whose son he is, and from whence he comes, for the earth hath not those fruits, power and glory: Thus shall he be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, and receive his testimony: and in this birth you shall not only save yourselves, but hold forth salvation to all that hear thereof.

Wherefore as you profess that holy calling above others, so in fear of God take heed what you bring forth, be sober and watch diligently in that which is from above, least the enemy prevail to mix somewhat of your own to hold forth in his name, that hath not the nature, power, nor purity of the Son of God, and that being above spoil you of his appearance, and mar the true image which you will find the envious one seeks to devour upon all occasions. that alone having power over the head of the serpent; wherefore see that you be covered with him alone, as he is from heaven.

But above all things, I beseech you put him on as he is the Son of God's love, and so hold him forth towards all men, but especially towards the brethren; so much the more as this being that which the enemy hath cast long upon the children of light [to wit] want of love,

taking his advantage while the way hath been preparing thereto, and the spirit of judgment and burning hath passed on the old building, a time of sorrow, and pulling down, dressing the house where love should dwell; so that though the root of the matter was in it, yet could not in that time spring forth towards others, nor indeed be fully shed abroad in the heart, while that is there which God hates; which love many have now received, and it is full time to bring forth, him so begotten in you, least any selfishness appear in his stead, and so prevent you of that which is most excellent: but that you all may put him on, as he is manifest from the father's bosom, and that you be clothed therewith, from heaven, so plentifully, that you may have to cast over a brother's nakedness, a garment of the same love, who came from above to lay down his life for his enemies, and of the same power, who can forgive sins, and offences, above seven times a day, beholding each others with that good eye which waits for the soul and not for the sin, which covers, and overcomes the evil with the good, that with him you may be perfect in love, judging, and receiving one another in the increase of God, and not in that which is for destruction, giving more abundant honour to him that lacketh, that in the body be no schism, nor defile one another, nor keep alive a brother's iniquity, nor blot out the name, and appearing of the holy seed in the least, but keep the Lord in your eye, and the evils shall die and vanish away from amongst you, and the appearance shall be the Lord's, and to him shall the gathering of the nations be; hungry souls shall see, and be satisfied with his likeness, and all that behold his beauty shall confess unto him, and in him shall the upright heart delight, for at his coming shall he establish the throne of righteousness, and measure every appearance, and correct every false judgment, and that which ensnares the simple will be cast out, for by the power of his appearance shall every thing be tried, and peace proclaimed in the name of righteousness alone, for that which is not like him, will not be able to stand before his appearance. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him; he that hath this hope purifies

himself even as he is pure, that he may be seen in him at his coming.

Now dear friends, is your sound gone forth to the ends of the earth, and God hath made you famous amongst your enemies, in that you have begun to confess his name, and nature, and that he is in you whom many are looking for here and there; and now the eyes of people and nations are upon you to see your end, and now your glory is in putting him on, and covering you with him, a lamb without blemish, before God and man, that in him you may obtain good report, unreprouvable, and holy, so shall you stop the way of the destroyer, and put an end to all false conceptions, and revive the hope of Israel.

Let his innocency be your armour, and put your trust in his truth, for your salvation. The time is full come for you to declare what he is to you, with boldness, with a confession beyond words; for this appearance of him in love is that which shall judge all likenesses, and try all spirits, actions, judgments and appearances, and by this shall you all be measured, what spirits you are of, and all spirits in the world, for he shall bring every hidden formed feigned thing to light, at his coming; and whatever hath not this love in it, is not his, nor begotten of God; but he that hath this love is begotten of God, and hath him, the Father and the Son, the end of the law and the prophets, the substance and life of all knowledge, faith and works, the root and ground of every good gift; for herein are we made perfect in love, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because we have put him on, and dwell in him, who is love; and as he is, so are we in this world. But he that loveth not, is not made perfect in faith, in knowledge, in judgment, having not learned Christ herein, therefore by this he must be judged himself. So blessed is he that judges nothing before the time, who condemns not himself, wherein he judges another; all judgment being committed to him that can lay down his life for his enemies. Therefore happy are you if you have him on first, for when he appears his judgment is true, and shall stand, when all that hath come before him shall pass away, for him alone hath the father sealed.

So dearly beloved ones, my soul breathes towards you, herein, that in all your several gifts and administrations, this Son of God be your eye and end, the beauty and glory of the father, that the hope thereof to attain, may stay you in all trials and temptations, knowing that in him alone is your lasting peace, and that which doth now befall you in all your afflictions is to shake all other appearances, that way may be made for him alone, whose image and life none can judge nor condemn. And the day is come, that happy is that man who hath nothing else to glory in; and this know, that the appearance of God in his own begotten, is your glory; and if any man boast himself, and not herein, when he is weighed therewith he will be found wanting, the sound thereof will not save him.

As the same spirit from whence this comes, moves in any one, so let them send it abroad amongst the called of God, to be read and known.

Come forth you children of light, come forth, depart out of the world, touch not the unclean thing, that the holy one may make his appearance amongst you; make haste to the day of your God. If he shine forth salvation is with you, but he cannot appear in that heart where the world is retained. If you be like the world it will own you, but that image which it receives not, is your everlasting glory and beauty. So mind what works in the vessel; for now must every child appear like his father, and must bring to light of what spirit he is begotten; and only blessed is he that comes in the name of the lord, with power and great glory, that which the world is ashamed of, is that with which the Son of God is glorified, and again must be glorified, he that bears the iniquities of men, and is filled with reproach, and yet appears without sin, is our Saviour. And a lamb without spot must take away the sin of the world; his manifestation destroys the work of the devil; in a body prepared he delights to perform the counsel of God, and to bring hidden things to light; that he may speak mysteries to the wise therein, and hold forth a way to the simple, leading out of the snares of subtilty.

Wherefore all that love his appearance, and seek the face of redemption, love that which prepares his way to his appearance in his temple; that which breaks down the will of man, and as a fire goes before him; which is that baptism with which all that will receive him must be baptized into death. So when sorrow, anguish, and tribulation comes upon you, rejoice, and fly not. This comes to destroy nothing but destruction, and to kill that which keeps you from eternal life, and to prepare a way for your peace, and a place for everlasting righteousness to dwell in you. For truly friends, in the threshing floor must the altar be set up, and where God answers by fire, there must his house be built: and as many as look to the end of this, may not despise correction, nor faint under the hand of reproof.

That is good which brings down into the depth, where the wonders of God are learned, for he that will labour in God's vineyard must know every seed, and its root; what feeds it, and what famisheth it, and the ground of every weed, and cause of every curse. This many may see, when it's come to a tree, brancheth, and brings forth fruit; but then it's strong and powerful, and not easily plucked up, seldom got down without fire, and much sorrow, therefore blessed is that eye that's lowly and diligent, which sees every several appearance, that he may slay the seed of wickedness e're it bud, and not suffer the enmity to take root; for he that suffers divers seeds shall have sorrow therein; and he that sows amongst thorns and briars must reap trouble; and where this kind is suffered to grow, there is torment to themselves, and trouble to others, for how should the thistle change its nature?

So all that desire peace, prepare a place that the seed thereof may grow alone, and the sun thereof may arise and shine clearly, that nothing may grieve his holy spirit, for Jacob must dwell alone, and not be numbered among the rest of the nations, neither hath the lamb fellowship with the beasts of the field.

Now as you have seen the image of the earthly, and felt his power and inclination to earthly things, captivating your minds downward, to things below; even so

must you bear the image of the heavenly, if he reign that comes from above. Till then think not you are perfect, nor have attained to the resurrection of the dead. For this I know of him, in whom your life is hid, that as he ariseth, he shall as strongly lead your minds into the heavenly, as ever you were captivated with the earthly. So he that can read the figure, rejoice in hope concerning him that is to come; yet let none glory in the sight of this knowledge, but press into the life thereof, that God may be seen and glorified in you. For as he that hath gone much out with his mind, and hath drank in abundance of the earthly, is become the most subtle, selfish, and hard, and filled with all unrighteousness, till he become incurable; even so he that returns in, and drinks abundantly of the heavenly, doth become simple, innocent and harmless, separate from all ungodliness, till he become incorruptible, and receive power to attain the Son of God, whose image declares the father, from whence he is; for he that hath seen the son, hath seen the father, and he that hath the son hath the father also. So dear friends, behold the end of your calling, and glory of your profession, your life in this world, and eternal inheritance; for the which to attain, we endure all things, for which sufferings, and patience, we have a cloud of witnesses.

So we follow not fables and fancies, as some suppose, but every one as he is proved herein is able to set to his seal, even to the day of the Lord, with them that are gone before, whose spirits herein are perfected.

Wherefore dearly beloved of God, for his name sake I beseech you, be zealous for his appearance, and with meekness and fear instruct the ignorant, who oppose themselves; comfort the weak; in all things leading with a life that cannot be blamed, knowing how manifold your labour of love is doubled, in everlasting glory, as he comes to be made manifest to the world. And the Lord God of power strengthen all your hands by the appearance of his love; that by the shedding of it abroad in your hearts, you may be able to overcome the world, and willing to give your necks to the yoke of Christ, and to bear the burthens of the weak, till the

brotherhood arise, and the body of Christ be perfected in one; that none of you suffer an evil eye or ear, which delights to behold the weakness of others; but that your whole delight be to wait for the appearance of God in all, and to behold his face in them, rather than their failings. And as this arises in every particular, it shall be a sure token to you for good, and that you are passed from the love of evil, unto the love of God the father and the son. And what you delight in shall be your inheritance. And as you grow herein, so shall he whom you love to see, delight to make his appearance amongst you, and to walk in you; and you shall not seek his face in vain, but with his likeness shall be satisfied, and shall praise the beauty of his appearance.

Thus in honor preferring one another, you shall know, that the power of love is a ministration of life, to that which is to be beloved.

Who will be on the Lord's part? now is the day of darkness, when iniquity is growing to the full, and the man child is to be born above it? And who will give up the vessel to bear his name against the enmity that is now arising? and who will be glorified with the lamb? blessed and happy is he that is found worthy to follow him out of the world, bearing his reproach. To as many as receive him, he gives power to become the Sons of God.

But he that will bear his name, must receive his nature, and himself also so walk, even as he walked: his name is power over sin, and the world; so the servants of sin, and the world cannot bear it; he that bears his name, must bear it in his life, and power, least he blaspheme. Of flesh and blood it is not born, nor by the will of man is it manifest, it's he that's born again who hath his witness in himself, that must bear his name before the world for a witness against them, who hath that life in him which testifies against the deeds thereof; but who bows thereto betrays him, and proves false in his testimony.

Moses in his house, made all things in likeness of the pattern, so it became a tabernacle of witness to all the nations (of the true God therein) and against all their

false Gods, and false worships; and herein was he faithful to him that called him, and to all that beheld the pattern he preached God's presence, dwelling in the tabernacle made with hands. How much more must he that bears the name of Christ, follow the pattern, and suit his example, holding forth a tabernacle of witness, and preaching the presence of the true God therein, and against all the world, their false births, false ways, and worships, herein proving faithful to him that hath called thereto; and to all that behold him, holding forth that holiness is his habitation here on earth, as it is in Heaven, bearing a lively testimony thereof, by the tabernacle of witness, conformable to the heavenly example in all things. And to this end Christ descended, walked, and suffered on earth, leaving an example to all that follow his steps; wherein, as in a lively oracle, God is found, in all that's builded after his image, and seek in his name and nature, for the immortality that dwelleth therein. Now God was not to be found in the tabernacle of Molech (though sought never so earnestly) but in the tabernacle of witness, built according to the pattern; neither is he now to be found in the image of the world; or is his name born in that nature, though professed never so zealously. Therefore let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity; the seed of evil doers bears not the testimony of Christ, but against him.

Did they blaspheme, who said they were Jews and were not? how much more do they who profess the name of Christ, and are out of the vine, in a contrary nature?

Wherefore all who aim to hold forth in life to his appearance, and to attain his coming in purity and glory, must be diligent in the heavenly light, ever minding the way and moving of the Holy Spirit, him that is from above, that his form you may see, who hath the heavenly image, and the holy power; that so beholding him with open face as in a glass, you may be changed into the same image, and formed thereafter, from glory to glory, by the powerful working of the same spirit; until the tabernacle be built conformable to the heavenly example, and holy pattern, in body and spirit, that as he is, so may you be in this world, that God may appear in his temple; that

as the image of the earthly appears in the world, so the image of the heavenly you may bear, a witness against them. And by drinking in the communion of that holy spirit, and power from above, you may become as able, zealous, and willing to hold forth the heavenly in holiness, meekness, purity, patience, love, long-suffering, faith, and obedience to God, and all the fruits of the spirit, as the sons of the world are to hold forth the earthly, in lusts and pleasures, strife, and envy, cruelty, and oppression, and all manner of the works of the flesh; that you may as truly and really give up your bodies, minds, and strength to suffer with Christ, that he may be manifest and magnified therein, in your mortal bodies, as others who are without God in the world, do give themselves to act according to the principles and power of the God of this world, his unrighteous ways, worships, and fashions, and all his cursed courses, and the whole body of sin, and mystery of iniquity born in them.

And where the tabernacle is thus edified, and the temple thus cleansed, there is a vessel of honor, fit for the master's use; that being filled with the holy ghost, God may dwell on the earth, and take up his rest therein, his tabernacle being with men, the appearance of the blessed day, so many souls hunger for, and Abraham's seed longs to see, which the God of this world strongly opposes, in all whose minds he hath blinded, and whose spirit he possesseth in disobedience to the heavenly light, for which the wrath of God remains upon that generation, till this day, and for ever.

Wherefore all you who wait for the kingdom of God, and love his appearance, whose coming again is without sin, abide within, and wait in that temple where the witness ariseth against the world, that in faith and patience you may be counted worthy to receive that witness, that it may arise and cover you, and that in bearing it you may come out of the world, being conformable to him, who suffered without the gates; bearing his reproach, and you bear his name. Touch not the unclean thing, and he will receive you for himself, in you to appear and be glorified. Rise up against the powers of darkness. You that have received the earnest of this spirit: hath

he not said, I will dwell in you, and walk in you? wherefore come out from among them, and be you separate. This is the joy that is set before you, to wit, his appearance, and that glory, for the attaining whereof, we endure the present sufferings and reproach; not to be compared therewith, for glory, immortality, eternal life.

Oh! friends, who shall be found worthy at his coming, and in whom may he appear, and not consume them? for our God is a consuming fire; even in his holy temple is he known, and with clean hands will he take up his rest, and in the pure heart shall he be seen; else who may dwell with everlasting burnings? and who may abide that baptism wherein every one shall be seasoned with fire at his coming.

WHAT THE
POSSESSION

OF THE

LIVING FAITH IS,

The fruits thereof, and wherein it hath been found to differ from the dead faith of the world, in the learning and following of Christ in the regeneration, with an opening of light to all sorts of people that wait for the kingdom of God, and a candle lighted, to give the sight of the good old way of God, from the ways that now ensnare the simple.

HEADS OF THE PARTICULARS CONTAINED IN THE ENSUING TREATISE.

- I. What the possession of the living faith is.
- II. Who they be that are under the law, and who they be that have made void the law against themselves, and who they be that are under grace.
- III. Of the way of life, from the knowledge that devours the life.
- IV. An opening of light to all sorts of rulers and people, that wait for the kingdom of God.
- V. A candle lighted, to give the sight of the good old way of God, at his coming, from the ways that now ensnare the simple.
- VI. The living God glorified in his temple, the true worshippers, that worship him in spirit and in truth.
- VII. To the Ranters.
- VIII. Deceit discovered by its fruits.

WHAT THE POSSESSION OF THE LIVING FAITH IS,
AND THE FRUITS THEREOF, &c.

Forasmuch as a right faith is the only ground of man's eternal happiness, and the only thing which gains the creature an entrance towards his creator, and without which it is impossible to please God; though much hath been said of it already, yet I having found by learning the true and living faith, which hath the living power, different from that faith which is dead and without that power; and seeing that so many at this day are at ease in a dead faith, and their souls in the grave, in tender love thereto I am stirred up, to declare something of the faith of Christ, which I have found only effectual to salvation and reconciliation with God. And somewhat the rather in regard the enemy hath spread so many false reports of me, touching my faith in Christ Jesus, which here I shall declare in plainness, for the satisfying of simple minds, who desire to know truth rather than to reproach it; and for those who seek occasion, I chose rather to bear their reproach who are in that nature, than contend therewith: for my work is not with flesh and blood, nor is it in my spirit to strive with any about words, that stir up strivings and contention, and edify not, but with God I strive daily, and to that of God in all I seek to be manifest, which resists not evil, but seek to overcome it with good, waiting for the kingdom of God in all, and the soul redemption out of death, and the seed out of bondage, and where that is not effected in measure, I look not to be owned, nor my witness received, though it be not of myself, but of Christ Jesus in me.

And first a faith, or belief I have found in the world, of which I shall say little in this place, having found indeed little in it to the salvation of life. It's a literal faith, grounded only upon the history of the scripture touching God and Christ, and what Christ did in that temple which the Jews destroyed at Jerusalem, &c. But do not know him in spirit, nor believe him as his name is IMMANUEL to to all generations, and so doth not necessarily work the

believer into a conformity to him in his then walking, by his coming again in the same spirit and power, working in them the same will, mind and affections, and obedience to the father in their measure which were in him the example, author, worker and finisher of the true and living faith.

And of this faith (being somewhat dressed by the several opinions of men) are all the unclean spirits, living in whatsoever abomination is to be mentioned in the world, all sects and opinions, or whatsoever may be found in all colours in these northern parts of the world, with this faith they are covered, and this is their strength, and here they take comfort to themselves, against all reproof within or from without, though living openly in the greatest whoredoms against the spirit of holiness, either carnal or spiritual, that can be mentioned, even at a distance from Christ in his whole life; yet they believe Christ came to save sinners, of which they are chief; and they that are whole need not the physician, &c.—As if the greater their wickedness is, the nearer to Christ they believe. And by this faith, he that came to save people from sin, and to lead out of sin, both by example and spirit, is made a cover for all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to strengthen the heart of wickedness against the life of holiness, some in one sin, some in another; but with this faith do all sorts strengthen themselves, and harden their hearts against the light of Christ, and that spirit which reproves the world of sin, and convinceth of it, and would lead out of it. And hence it is that the witness of God, which is holy in all, is trampled under foot in all, and little regarded in any, but by this faith believed on in none to be the way to the father, though the world have no light but it, nor is there a promise of life in any other. And this to me appears to be that faith of the devil, or dead faith the apostle speaks on, Jam. ii. though more hardened in it against God's fear, for the devils when they believe tremble at it. So this faith I leave, being judged already by its fruits, with the light of Christ in every honest heart that loves holiness.

And of that faith I shall speak something, in which I have found a measure of the life of Christ made manifest in my mortal body, in which life alone is the true and eternal union and atonement with the holy God, into whom no unclean thing can enter. And this is not a notion of what was done in another generation, past or to come, hundreds or thousands of years distance, but that which leads to the beginning of the work of a new creature at this day, and a new birth spiritually begotten, and born and brought to light, without which none can see the kingdom of God, nor enter therein.— And this faith doth not work by the comprehensions of brain-knowledge, that because I could here conceive or declare of Christ Jesus, from the beginning to this age, in words or thought, that therefore I have learned him, or know him as I ought to do, or am grown up in him to a perfect man; and so to deceive others by declaring and boasting of what God hath not wrought in me, as a man may easily do, and deceive his own soul, and bewitch others also, by leading them out of their measures of God's present work in them: but of the living faith, which now worketh powerfully in spirit by love thereto, the mystery whereof is holden forth in a pure conscience, working out the old leaven, purifying the heart, and making all things new, judging, and killing, and crucifying with Christ in spirit the works of the flesh, and casting out every thing in me that is not of God, and renewing in me the things of God in their order, by his mighty working in me, in which the soul is raised out of the grave, and the dead restored to life, actually and not in conceit. Of the grounds and workings of this living faith I shall speak something.

And though the foundation of this faith or beginning of it was, that I did really believe, in that which Christ did and suffered at Jerusalem, and that there in that body he bore the sins of the world, and satisfied the wrath of God for sins past, and overcame death, hell and the grave, and made way for the seed to arise in all, through the whole world, who would believe in his light, which then shined through him to all men, wherein he might be seen to be the way, the truth and the life ap-

parent, openly triumphing over all that had passed above the seed. And much more might be said of him there finished, all which I did believe according to scripture, which was as an opening of me to receive him from Heaven in the same spirit and power; without which I could not have received the gift of the holy spirit, God having so purposed from the beginning, that the covenant of eternal life and power should be received no other way but by faith in him, who in the fulness of time was there manifest in flesh, for the taking away sins past, and making a way for the resurrection of life over all, to save from sins for time to come.

The effect of which faith, when in the light I first received it, did turn my mind out of all my sins past, and took my mind out of them, and turned me towards God, and holiness of life I then believed to attain in that faith, and receive power therein, to grow up in him to the measure of the stature and fulness, which then I saw no less faith could save me, than the perfect faith of the son of God, which before I had not received, but then received with such gladness of heart, that it set my face and delights of all sin, towards the perfection in Christ, in which I then believed, which was the joy then set before me; yet was not the work done and finished in me already, though (I having received the faith and hope of the Son of God, and was turned from all my former sin, and my own righteousness; so that) if I had departed this body, I had died in no less faith than the holy faith of Christ Jesus. And so being turned to his spirit, out of the works of the flesh, I was turned from my sin, and so from condemnation; yet was there a great work to do in me, before I could witness freedom from the body of death, and the root and ground of evil removed, and the seed raised to reign, and the soul brought into the holy city, the resurrection of the dead, and fellowship in the Father and the Son, &c. and glorious liberty of the new creature, and all things to be of God in me, as the scriptures do witness: so this faith did not work me into a conceit of myself, glorifying in knowledge, and so to become a teacher of others, what I had conceived below the life, but it led me down, into

the obedience of the spirit of light, to wait therein for the resurrection of life. And I came to see in that light, that the motions of sin did still work from the old ground and root, and that must be removed by the power of Christ, working in spirit, and my obedience and watchfulness therein was required; and that without obedience to this faith I could not come to perfect victory over the enmity, nor to the glorious liberty of the sons of God: for though this faith had turned my heart towards Christ, and given me hope to attain him, yet I had not then learned him, nor was he yet formed in me. So was I led in the light of Christ, to see what I had of this treasure in the earthen vessel, which I found to be in me very little, and that seed the least of all seeds; so I became little in my own eye, and that which told me the truth, though I had been high in my own thoughts formerly.

And so to the word of the beginning, or the first principle of the doctrine of Christ I was led, that with that which teacheth Christ, I might learn Christ in every measure of him, as I grew therein: So was I brought to know him that was made under the law, and to the foundation of repentance from dead works, and to the doctrines of baptisms, and to eternal judgment. Then came I in truth and life to see what they were doing, whom the apostle exhorted to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, after they had fully believed what Christ had done for them at Jerusalem in that body, and many other scriptures did he open to me, as I learned him, which before to me was a mystery, while I learned them in meanings without the life of Christ, which then were opened by the revelation of Christ Jesus, as they came to be fulfilled in me, being led by the same spirit in that work of faith. Then came I to see, that I through the law must be redeemed from the law, and that my redemption from it must not be by making it void, but by fulfilling of it; and till then it had power over me, and sin took occasion by it to strengthen itself in me; but as I came to grow in the spirit and power of Christ, I was in him brought through it, it in him fulfilled, and I dead to it as it came to be

fulfilled; and the words of Christ I found true, I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; and it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than one jot of the law to pass away till it be fulfilled; and I needed not a meaning to that scripture, but a fulfilling thereof in Christ Jesus: and the school-master that brings to Christ I learned, and Christ formed, and the heir under tutors, before I knew the liberty of the son of God or perfect freedom; and then I saw the scripture could not be broken nor wrested; but it must be learned in the life of it to salvation, which the unlearned wrest to their own destruction, by meanings without life, and that it was of no private interpretation; but this one spirit must open it all in the fulfilling thereof, and this faith in Christ Jesus only was able to make wise unto salvation of eternal life.

And then came I clearly to see Christ Jesus set before me in all things that I was to go through, in that faith which I had first received, and that the attaining of him was the hope of glory, and no hope without him: and this hope was an anchor in all hardships and temptations, which were not a few I was led through; but all were counted little while I stood in this faith, for the hope that was in me to win Christ. And I clearly saw, that notwithstanding my first faith, in what he had done at Jerusalem; yet if I did not continue therein, to follow the same spirit in obedience thereto, believing therein, in all its leadings, hoping to attain to Christ Jesus the end of that faith, in daily growing towards his stature and fulness, but had turned aside, or sate down short of the leadings of that spirit in the way, I had made void my hope of glory, the work of my redemption, and that which Christ did at Jerusalem [as to me] and had denied my first faith, and could not have been saved from wrath to come. That being the end of that faith committed to me, that therein I might faithfully, without doubting, follow him in spirit through all trials and temptations, of which way he was a perfect example in his walking in the flesh at Jerusalem, that through the scriptures I might have hope, seeing he went the same way before me there, in which he now leads, and that therein I might see him to be the same to all generations,

as he was there, and in his saints that followed him. And as they exhorted one another to look unto him in their travel, who was the author and finisher of their faith, and to consider him as an example, who endured such contradictions of sinners against himself, lest they should be weary of suffering, and faint in their minds, and so their faith and hope was strengthened. So also I looking to the same in him, and also in them after him, my faith and patience might be doubled, and my obedience made without doubting, and my hope firm unto the end, which end was the winning Christ in me the hope of glory, the great mystery of faith, which is hid from all till the revelation of Christ Jesus. And so when the saints and apostles had Christ revealed in them, they were able ministers of him, and had the mystery opened, and preached it without doubt, that mystery of godliness which was great, yet hid from the world, but to them without all controversy, God manifest in flesh, not God flesh, but manifest in flesh; which mystery of faith they held in a pure conscience. And so I knew my faith to be the same faith once delivered to the saints, and the good fight of that faith I came to know; and that faith which overcomes the world, which hath the promise and inheritance of eternal life, which all that go back from deny the faith of Christ, and set up a faith without Christ, which is not the faith of Christ: and so in the learning of Christ, I came to see the faith of Christ from faith to faith, and also the faith of devils; the living working faith, and the dead faith without works: and I find, that it is not the faith of Christ, to believe that men could never be perfect, nor overcome the devil or sin; it was never the faith of Christ, to make void the law of his Father unfulfilled in him; it was never his faith to revenge evil, but to overcome it with good; it was never his faith to respect persons, or that we could commit sin, and not be servants of sin; it was never his faith to sue, contend, fight, or persecute any; to judge for rewards, or preach for hire, or any way to serve the mammon of this world, it was not his faith to observe his own will, his own times, or the world's customs, but to observe his Father in all

things, and only what he received from him that he did, and could do nothing of himself, he never owned them to be children of God, who said and did not.

And many such like things as these were never by him believed, but is the world's faith to uphold them in sin and lusts, who are enemies to the faith of Christ which presents perfect to God by working out such evils; all which I came to see, not by man, but in the revelation of Christ as in his faith I learned him, growing into his faith, into him and his life therein made manifest in my body; so I see what is his in truth, as the truth is in Jesus, and what is the world's, and but called his to oppose him; and I see that which loves the things of this world to be none of his love, nor that his joy that takes pleasure in carnal things, nor that his liberty which is in the works of the flesh, nor that his peace that is in sin, nor that his patience that seeks its own revenge, nor that his glory that's in pride, nor that his worship which stands in carnal things, nor that his honor that's sought of men, nor that his knowledge that's after the flesh, nor that his fear that is taught by the precepts of men, these are in the world, and not in him, but have only got the name to be his, but are enemies to his life, and were never begat of his father, nor learned in the son; all which and much like stuff I came to see the deceit of, by that truth and simplicity I found in Christ, contrary to the will of man.

And so in the life of Christ I have learned to know the growth of the faith of Christ, and the riches of it, and the end of it, which is Christ Jesus in all its workings; and I also knew the world's faith, its uncleanness, whose end is not to attain the holiness of Christ in life, but would live in the world's delights, and have Christ for a cover, and be saved by the righteousness of another, which they have no mind to walk in themselves; and so that faith works not by love, which loves not the life of Christ, but are enemies to his cross, minding earthly things, and this is the earthly faith; but the living faith works by love to holiness of life, and therefore purifies the heart, and the mystery of it stands in a pure conscience within themselves that have it, and not in telling and comprehending what was in another, for the

devils believe the holiness that was in Christ, and can preach it, but cannot inherit it, because they love not to live the life of it, and by this I know them both for ever, and all that prove them in the life of Christ shall witness with me; the end of the one is the life of Christ, in which himself walked, and the same obedience of the same spirit to the same father by the same power, according to the proportion of faith received from God, which faith is from above, and so lays hold on heavenly things for its strength, and so brings forth heavenly fruits: the other professeth and promises great things, but ends in the world and minds earthly things, and doth not purify the heart, nor believes ever to attain the life of Christ, his stature or fulness, but counts it an error in such as press after such attainments, and so the end of the conversation of one is Christ Jesus to hold forth in life and power, the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever; the end of the other is a liberty to sin here while they can take any pleasure in it, and sanctification and salvation when they are dead. And according to the end of each faith so it works, for it's impossible for him that cannot believe holiness, to work holiness; but according to each man's faith so must he inherit in this world, and that which is to come.

And in the workings and attainments of this living powerful faith I have found several measures according to my growth therein, from the word of the beginning of Christ, or the first principle of Christ, and the fulness, and stature of Christ, as betwixt a babe and a man grown in strength, and much working in spirit I found betwixt faith received of Christ Jesus, and Christ learned in me; ^a for though I received the faith of his fulness in what he was at Jerusalem, in his flesh there at once, yet had not I so learned him in spirit and life in my mortal flesh, nor put him on at once, but in the light of faith I saw I was so to run as to win him before I could put him on, wherein I came to see and know myself begotten again in him by faith towards God, who is the way to God, in which way I came to see the begotten of the father manifest in measure in me in the pure image of a holy child, separate from the fleshly sinful seed, or

^a Heb. 6, 1.

Christ formed in me as the scriptures witness; and when I did behold his pure image and his pure mind and nature so far contrary to my own, yet then was not he in his kingdom, nor all things put under his feet; nor could I say that Jesus was then Lord in me, but by the spirit's working by this faith I had received, and in hope thereof, was I made to endure the loss of all things, and to deny all things that ever this holy spirit did war against in me, which might any way oppress this holy plant, or hinder its growth, owning his judgment in the light, upon whatever was in my heart or affections but him alone, though never so much gain in my account in the world; which judgment being owned and consented to against myself, and all my self-lovers, therein was I parted from them in judgment, and so then were they subdued by the powerful workings of that spirit, and put under his feet, and I set free from them, to arise with him above them, being brought from under them; and this was not done all at once, but in order as he appeared in the light to manifest every particular evil: and as that faith I had received wrought by love to him, a consent in my spirit to his just judgment upon them, and I made willing to give them up to the fire, and to come out of them, and join to him in the execution, lest he should consume me with them, as it must have been had I stayed in them: and here I found the benefit of the light which goes before his face to prepare his way, and the salvation of faith which saved me through hope of him, that I was not destroyed in my sins; which faith and hope gave me an entrance within the vail, or a hiding place in him while the indignation was over, which was to pass upon the man of sin.

And so a voice was heard in the wilderness calling out of sin, into a way I knew not, but as the light of his covenant led me in the spirit, turning my heart towards him, that he might not smite the earth with a curse at his coming; in which way e're I came into the kingdom of Christ, my pure rest, I met with many hardships and great travails, and many temptations and trials within and without, but the greatest enemies were yet within me, which would upon every hardship be tempting with

unbelief to destroy this faith and hope, which was all that I had set before me to encourage me to endure such hardships, and to follow the light in a way I had not known, and to walk in the clouds to meet the Lord, and to leave my former knowledge and wisdom, and glory and riches, to go in a way I had not walked, and to abide such assaults on every hand; every foot the world which I was called out of ready to overtake me and compass me about, and to turn me back again into what I had seen and enjoyed, behind me, ever seeking to persuade me that I should never attain to him that was set before me in the faith and hope; then came I clearly to see, that though I had received the faith of Christ as a shield in this war, by which I was saved that the wrath of God took me not away in these temptings, and murmurings, and reasonings and doubtings which did arise in the fleshly part, yet was not I at present brought to enjoy the purchased possession, though I had heard and believed the gospel of salvation, and was sealed with the holy spirit of promise till I came to be built up with Christ for an habitation of God through the spirit.

And I found by daily experience that my salvation was not complete so long as my soul was subjected under any earthly lust or passion, nor the war over, but as by the mighty working of God in me by that spirit these came to be subdued under the feet of Christ, and the soul set above it with him to reign in the heavenly place; so was my salvation nearer than when I believed, for the soul is not safe while sin lives, or the flesh lusts, for that wars against the soul, and every sin wounds it, and this shall all know who are not past feeling, whatever their faith be touching Christ Jesus, or what was wrought in another, whilst sin defiles the soul it is not safe, nor the honest heart hath peace and rest, for the rest and peace is placed in the holy city where comes no unclean thing, into which the soul enters not till that all righteousness be fulfilled upon earth, and the soul singled from all corruption, and have put on immortality, and death swallowed up in victory, when the sting is taken away, which is sin, and the strength of sin, which is the law, which is not taken away but where it is ful-

filled, there only grace reigns through righteousness; and this I found to be truth, as the truth is found in Jesus, as I came to learn him and put him on by faith which I had believed; and I saw the folly of such as would make void the law by talking of faith and grace, where sin is yet standing, and the soul taken captive therewith, which I had often sought peace therein to myself, but could not inherit liberty to my soul any other way, but as it came to be purified in obedience through the spirit.

And this work was not wrought in me by the knowledge of Christ after the flesh, but as I came to learn him in spirit, for spiritual wickedness had taken my soul captive, and by spirit it must be sanctified and set free. And I came to see that if I had been in his company here on earth as long as his disciples were in the flesh, and seen as much as they did, and heard from his own mouth, I should have been short of this work as they were, in whom the child was unborn when he went away in the flesh, and they knew not what spirits they were of, until he came again to them in spirit and was revealed in them, then could they preach the resurrection of the dead and the soul's redemption, and desired to know him no more after the flesh, when once they had received him in spirit, but preached Christ within the hope of glory, who till then looked for an outward kingdom and glory, until they had received his promise. He that dwelleth with you shall be in you, I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you; the world seeth me no more, but ye see me, and because I live, ye shall live also; at that day ye shall know that I am in my father, and you in me, and I in you: and this was his promise, which they received, whom the world seeth no more, whose expectations are carnal, neither can any see the kingdom of Heaven but who are born of the spirit, and heirs of this life, and he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life, but the wrath of God abides upon him, whatever he may say he believes; and none hath the Son but as they receive this spirit, and are led by this spirit, and born thereof.

And this I found also, that the Son of God doth not appear in (works of righteousness,) but as he conforms

them to his own image, which he hath always borne in this world, as saith the scripture, when he shall appear we shall be like him, who shall change our vile bodies and make then like his glorious body, from glory to glory by the same spirit; and herein we have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is so are we in this present world; and this is not obtained with thoughts of believing without, but by a lively working of his power, which works out the earthly image and nature, and conforms man to the heavenly in that spiritual birth which is not of flesh and blood, nor could flesh and blood ever discern it in whom it was, but ever hated it in whom it hath appeared in all ages; which is of a shining nature where it is begotten of the father, and cannot be hid where it is formed, but by his fruits gives light to the world contrary to the world's ways, shewing of his coming to judgment against the deeds of darkness: and this heavenly begetting of the father is to be holden forth in that clear image of the father, according to every several measure as he grows therein without mixture, that all may see that he is not of this world, who also takes them out of this world as he grows in any, or they in him, forth of the world they must go bearing his reproach, that the scriptures may be fulfilled, they are not of this world, even as I am not of this world, and this is the world's light and condemnation, even his coming.

And so I find that faith which joins to the world where it is, and doth not overcome the world, is not the faith of Christ, nor lays hold on the power of Christ, though faith may believe the history of the scriptures concerning Christ, which faith alone sets not up the kingdom of God in the heart, nor casts out the world there; nor saves the soul from the pollution of the world through lust, and so is but a notion of salvation, and not the power of salvation, as saith the scriptures; whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith; and the faith which works not thus, is like a body without a spirit, which is dead; but the living faith that stands in Christ Jesus, that spirit purifies the heart and conscience, and makes toward God in Christ the example of all good things,

overcoming whatever would let the appearance of Christ in his temple, or hinder the bringing forth his virtues, which are believed to be in him, to the utmost of whatever he hath received of the father for such believers, who believe not in a lie, but in the truth and power of God as it is in Christ Jesus, and hath been declared in scripture, not for a discourse, but for an inheritance of life, of whose fullness we all receive according to our faith, till his coming, and we be complete in him, and he in us; and so not come short of the glory of God, the end of our faith and conversation, that to the world he may be manifest in life and power to be the same that ever he hath been, though he hath appeared in several forms, yet one in spirit to make up a complete body.

And therefore we find those who were of this faith witnessed Christ present (which the world's faith could never receive under any form or profession, but counted it blasphemy, and that spirit the spirit of the devil.) And so Isaiah witnessed this child born to them that so believed in his time, who was the mighty God, the everlasting father, &c., whose name they knew to be Immanuel, and this was before he appeared in that temple at Jerusalem, and Ezekiel was called the son of man before that time also; and Paul said he was revealed in him, and spoke in him, and wrought in him, and in his flesh; that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ was to be filled up for his body's sake which is the church: and to whom he forgave any thing in his time, he forgave it in the person of Christ; and many more might be noted who confessed the same Christ in them present, both before and after his time at Jerusalem, which testimony could never be received [by the wisdom of the world] in his servants before nor then, nor since to this day, for the God of this world being king in the heart, and having blinded the eye of the mind that should see his spiritual glory throughout the light of the gospel, he persuades the world that he is either past, or to come, but never present; and as many as are brought to confess him before men find it so at this day, who are hated of all men for his name's sake, that the scriptures may be fulfilled. and his testimony finished.

And this faith which confesseth him present, is that which the world cannot bear nor receive, who will preach him themselves at a distance, what he was and will be, but this faith cannot reach his coming at present in any measure to receive his appearance now, nor will this faith ever give an entrance into his kingdom upon earth, nor the holy rest, nor is this the faith of Christ [that puts him thus afar off,] which fills with all the fullness of God.

And by what I have learned, this is clear to me forever without any more controversy, that the faith that admits of sin is not Christ's faith, nor hath any share or possession in him; that faith which is not holy came not from God, and so cannot build up to God; that is not saving faith that doth not save from sin, but is deceiving faith which deceives the soul, and suffers lust to defile it and destroy it, and so brings it under condemnation, by believing lies, and so letting in sin upon the soul by consent, persuading that it cannot be otherwise; and so gives the devil victory, and the world victory, and the flesh victory, and sin victory over the soul, which should give the soul victory over all: and what greater deceit can there be to the soul than this is? and therefore forever that which I have seen and learned do I declare openly, that this is the deceiving faith, and indeed rather unbelief than the faith of Christ, which makes way for the God of this world to reign, and act in things contrary to the life of Christ in the creature, and the life of the soul; and that faith which gives way to the least sin is not the faith of Christ, whose work and coming is to destroy the works of the devil, and redeem the soul from sin, and the least measure of that faith that stands in his life overcomes the world and sin in that measure; and he that commits sin goes out of that faith, and acts against it.

And a lying faith I have found that to be which persuades the soul of freedom from condemnation, but gives it not freedom from sin which is the cause of condemnation, and all shall witness this with me now, or hereafter, that where sin hath power, there death hath power, and the grave and hell and condemnation have power also, for these are the wages of sin; then shall you see

you were deceived who believed the contrary; and may not such truly be said to be past feeling indeed, who can commit sin and feel no condemnation for it already?

And this is the effect of their false faith, to harden themselves against the faithful witness of God in their own conscience, and the seared conscience hath made shipwreck of the faith of Christ, and the doctrine of devils preaches the faith of devils to give way to the works of the devil, which all sin is from the least to the greatest, and he that pleads for it is a father to it, and he that commits it a servant, and may look for the wages thereof if he repent not, notwithstanding he believe the contrary.

And many may feel this truth at this day, who have a long time believed with this faith, deceiving their own souls day after day, believing they shall not be condemned, when they are condemned already in their own hearts, and feel the weight of sin daily pressing their souls, and burthening the pure conscience, and the fear of death and sin keeps their souls still in bondage, and lies upon them all their lives, and yet they will force themselves to believe contrary to the holy faith and a good conscience that they are saved and redeemed, and thus make shipwreck of saving faith and a good conscience, by believing a lie contrary to their own daily feeling, no other thing to encourage them therein but this persuasion, which suits well with such as take pleasure in unrighteousness; which persuasion comes not of God, but is condemned by that of God in themselves; and this is the state of many at this day, though some there be whose consciences are seared, and feel not this witness living in them, yet their damnation slumbereth not, though they have lost their calling and election also.

And this have I learned in Christ, that there is a great difference both in effect and nature betwixt that faith which is the gift of God, and that faith which men make to themselves; for that which is the gift of God is of his own nature, clean, pure and perfect as are all his gifts, and so it works naturally the work and will of God in all who receive it freely, and mix nothing with it to darken it or stop his working, and by this faith I am saved from

sin and condemnation, and begotten to the father thereof in Christ Jesus; which faith is not of myself, but it is the gift of God, to perfect holiness in the sight of God, and whatever is done in this faith is not sin; and whatsoever is against this faith, or not of this faith is sin, and brings condemnation, and this faith approves not of it. And if I act nothing doubtingly nor against this holy faith, in this faith I am justified in my own heart, and my own conscience kept clean, and I approved in God's sight, and I have boldness through the obedience of faith in the day of judgment, that it is not my own work, but the righteousness of faith which is in Christ Jesus, and this effect hath saving working faith, and this is its nature & grace.

But another faith I have found which is not so in nature or effect, being not freely received from above, but is feigned, and hath its ground here below, and its ends also: the earthly man in his wisdom from the letter, reason or comprehensions, sets up an opinion or image in his mind touching God or Christ, or religion, worship, doctrine or manners, or any other thing, and then looking upon the likeness of it in the reasoning part, gathers strength to believe it must needs be so, and so forms a faith in himself: and though this faith be not perfect when he hath formed it and made it with all his strength, but many things in scripture and the practice of the saints (but especially that of God in his own conscience will not suit with it) yet the strong man being above in the strength of his comprehension, forceth a faith against all these, and causes all to bow under it. So this faith brings not forth the birth of Christ, nor his pure image and life, neither in matter of worship nor manners, but what he may imitate Christ and the saints in worship, and keep the world and escape the cross, and save his life and credit and glory there, that he will conform to, and glory in, and for the rest, he believes it concerns not him now, in all things at this day so to walk as they did. And as this faith is not perfect in worship, so in practice also; for that evil he is not addicted to he condemns in all, but that which is in his own heart and eye, and brings him profit and pleasure, that he will cover, and believes it may stand with true belief at this day, though formerly

it could not. And this is the faith made after man, and not after God, and serves in respect of persons, times and things; but bows not all these forever to worship in spirit, nor brings them under the foot of Jesus, that spirit, but being earthly by nature, hath earthly effects; and God doth not own that with his power, nor goes forth with that which man makes, but with his own gift, which is good and perfect in every measure thereof. And this also I have learned in Christ Jesus, and declare to all that seek faith in him, that I never received any measure of this faith of Christ in vain, but whatever I acted or suffered therein, from the least measure to this day, in it I prevailed against whatever the light of the spirit led me out of therein, and a shield I have found it, and a growth in it towards Christ Jesus in every work of it, wherein I have stood single to the end, however tempted or tried before the end appeared; yet in the end of that faith I was ever a conqueror through the spirit, and whoever proves it to the end in singleness of heart, shall be witness with me herein, with a cloud of witnesses that have gone before, who by this holy faith have prevailed over the powers of sin, and entered into the holy rest, who have not sought their own kingdom, but the kingdom of Christ.

And only this pure faith, which works towards the appearance of Christ in all actions and sufferings, is that which orders all things in their place and time, and fits all relations for his appearance therein to glorify God; for God is not glorified in any thing upon earth, but in whom the son appears, who is the express image and glory of God, and in whom alone he reveals himself, and the glory of his judgments and mercy, the grace and truth of God is in his face in whomsoever he appears. And so every measure of the heavenly faith works towards the heavenly appearance, and the earthly faith to the earthly appearance: and so faith in God is that which works effectually by love, to the image and life of God in this world, which is seen only in his spiritual begettings, which being believed in, and set above, shines forth in every measure shewing the virtue and glory of the spirit of God. But the feigned earthly faith

admits of some earthly thing in the heart for its end, in love to which it works disobedience to the spirit, and so comes short of the glory of God; for it cannot hold forth the fruits of the spirit to glorify God, with an earthly lover in the heart; nor can one faith serve God and Mammon. So he that loves the things of this world is God's enemy, whose faith withstands the appearance of Christ in his actions or sufferings, and so withstands the glory of God, which therein should be manifest to all men: and this is that faith which ever of old hath put him afar off, yet gets the form and words to withstand the life and virtue: and of this sort they are, of whom the apostle speaks, having a form of godliness, but deny the power of godliness, who ever were the greatest enemies to the coming of Christ, being not of the faith of Christ, nor of the spirit of Christ; but being from below, withstand his coming from above, to be brought forth in his virtue, or worshipped in his spirit, this is antichrist.

And this spirit and this faith it is that wrests the scriptures to seduce from Christ, and destroy the way of his coming; and to that end, what Christ really commands to be brought forth of his life and virtue in real appearance, this spirit serves himself with a meaning, instead of serving Christ with real actual obedience; and so his birth is a meaning instead of the life of Christ, and this he sets to oppose that life, lest it should be born into the world. As for instance; when Christ saith in the scriptures, he that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer him the other; and he that sues thee, and takes thy coat, forbid him not thy cloak also; and he that takes away thy goods, ask them not again: resist not evil, but overcome evil with God; and love them that hate you. And many such like commands, which Christ means really and indeed, and led an example in himself; and whoever receives the same spirit, it moves to the same things, as it grows in any, and being obeyed, will bring forth the same fruits, to glorify the father thereof to all generations; which spirit waxeth not old, nor in its fruits barren, where it is really received in the faith thereof, and obeyed. But saith this other faith in the earthly spirit, Christ did not mean as he spoke, you must not

take it literally, those words must have a spiritual meaning: and this spiritual meaning of his is to devour the life of this obedience, both in the letter of Christ and spirit of Christ, and to set up a subtile meaning, without the life of Christ, and contrary to his example; and this he will have to take place in all, both against the plain words of Christ, his example in his walking, and the working of his spirit in others. And if he cannot destroy this faith and fruit before it be brought forth, then his work is to render him a high blasphemer, in whom this child is born, and brought forth to light, and counts it high presumption for any to witness the life of Christ in them, by bringing it forth into the world; yet himself will preach Christ in him, and the life of Christ in him, and the spirit of Christ in him, and his body the temple of God, &c. because he finds these words in scripture: but if any worship in that temple, so as to believe and obey unto life openly, that he cannot own without a meaning instead thereof. And so he sets the form to deny the power, and Christ's words he wrests to deny his coming. And how long this faith hath professed him to come (and his life and glory at his coming) in its own carnal comprehensions, many may witness; but is never like to receive him in the same life, and spirit, and power in which he ever appeared. And so to that generation is he ever to come, but never present, further than to make a cover for sins past and present, and an encouragement for sin to come. And thus the devourer turns the best of things into a lie, in all that believe him, that he may keep Christ and the soul from their present union, which he could not long do but by consent of the creature, there being that gift of God in every one which daily draws towards him, where it is not quenched by believing lies, whereby such as receive not the truth in the love of it come to be damned, as it was in the days of old. And a straight passage I have found into the way of truth and life, which misseth all his subtile pretences; and I have seen his words true, who saith, few there be that find it, the enemy being every way ready to meet them that seek with a shadow, meaning, or some deceit to believe instead of the substance, handling the words of God

deceitfully, using the gifts of God to withstand the life of the giver, and turning grace into lascivious liberty.

And thus have I learned in the light of the world, that in my turning towards him at his reproof, when I knew him not, and believing in his light whom I had not seen, I found that faith given, which did declare the righteousness of God in him, wherein he perfectly walked upon earth, both in doing and suffering, which being turned towards, I found the propitiation that God had sent forth, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remitting of my sins past, that God might be just, who would not have past by my sins past, had he not accepted his sufferings; nor have I had liberty from sin past to have followed him, nor could I have been accepted therein, but in the faith and hope of the same righteousness; so God was full in justifying, and his forbearance magnified to me therein. And in turning to this righteousness of his, declared in the light of faith and hope, my face was set towards God's righteousness in Christ Jesus, to be attained for life and salvation for time to come to walk in. And so being turned towards God, all my sins past were behind me, and God's righteousness before me; and so from henceforth was I to be found in God's righteousness, walking in a measure of it, and in the faith and hope of the fulness of Christ, and attainment of God for mine inheritance. And this great redemption I found in Christ Jesus at that day was in such things as these following: as first, his calling of me with his light; his holding forth to me his life and suffering which were so holy, that I could not but confess to them, his turning me towards the same in hope thereof by believing, his begetting a mind in me towards that same life, and the increase of his light that way to lead me, and the setting of me free from the wrath of God, for all my sins of ignorance past, which else had laid upon me as a weight or chain, binding me that I could not have walked in the way of his light, &c.

But I do not say, that if I turned to commit sin again, that that sin was cast behind my back also; I learned otherwise, I found that sin then before my face greater

than the rest, and stood in my way to God, and stopped me from following his light, or growing in his life, that I could no way escape it but by repenting of it, and receiving the just sentence of condemnation in myself, and bearing his indignation, till he that wounded me for it healed me again; which I never found, but as I turned from the evil with my whole heart, and accepted the punishment, till the advocate did arise to intercede, whose blood I had trampled on, and whose precious life I had pierced, and his holy spirit grieved, by turning away from his leadings.

Nor do I say, that all my sins, which formerly I had committed, of which I had been convinced by the light of the world, when I was in the world, before I believed it to be sufficient, that they were wholly taken away, as my sins of ignorance were; for this I found, that God in this was just and merciful: merciful, in that he did not ay them all at once before me, lest they should have prest me down, that I could not have followed the light, nor gotten any strength; but must needs have perished under them, had he not spared. And just I have found him also; for as they were not committed all at once, against the light of his spirit: so he hath at one time or other visited for them, and laid them before me; yet not all at once, nor no way so heavy as those committed after I believed, and gave up myself to follow the light, and yet to an account he hath brought me for them. And coming to feel the terrors of God, I have learned to fear and love, and have found the ground and rise, and deceits of that faith that believes Christ to have taken away the sins of believers, past, present and to come, with which many at this day make merry over the witness of God, and the just is slain in them, and that scripture I have learned without a meaning, if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation to devour the adversary; though none know how but he that comes to it in the fulfilling, and then shall be seen, he that's born of God sins not, and he that believes is born of God, but he that sins, turns his back both on the faith

and birth that's towards Christ, and becomes adverse thereunto in his work, whatever he says he believes. And this I have found an everlasting truth, whatever men believe or imagine, that no longer than a man keeps his face towards the light of God, no longer is his sins cast behind his back, whether they be sins past, present or to come; but if he turn from God's righteousness, his own iniquities will rise and meet him, both new and old, and in vain do such believe, they are then blotted out of God's sight whose eye shews him his way, in which he then walks, and condemns him for it in his own heart.

Nor was the ground and root of sin removed, so soon as my mind was turned by the light from sin towards God, but the motions thereof I found, and the lust seeking to go forth to its objects, to bring in to conceive sin again afresh; that ground was but removed, as I grew in Christ and he in me, and as I came to learn him, that was in the beginning before sin was, who was learned in faithful following and serving of his spirit, in watching, in fastings, in prayers, and in all spiritual wrestlings, as I came to be led into with the light; in which warfare I came to see the hardship of Christ Jesus, and the baptisms into his death, the slothful servant and the faithful, and their reward, and the parables and figures of the kingdom opened, as that spirit grew in me which interprets the scriptures in the life, and opens the sealed mysteries thereof in their season, as they come to be fulfilled. And so I came to the gift of the scriptures by inspiration, which only profits to the perfecting of the man of God, which the man of this world not having learned, wrests to his own destruction, getting the words of them in the earthly part, before they be fulfilled in his heart through the spirit, and such receive them not by inspiration, nor the gift of the holy ghost.

And in this journey I have seen the slothful servant overtaken with a fault, which he had once cast behind him, and never intended to join to again, of which the diligent servant is kept free; and I have seen the wa-

ges of each servant according to his diligence, in that which he hath of God entrusted in him, and not by his own strivings, in the thoughts of himself, his worth or wisdom. And in diligent hearkening and obeying of the spirit, have I found the right faithfulness towards God, though getting knowledge be highly esteemed with men, and I have found that, as I have the spirit manifest in me to profit withal; so the times of my profiting are only in his hand, and my waitings upon him when he moves not, is my reasonable service, and a profiting time to me as if he moved, though I see it not. And this I found a great cross to my hasty will, which indeed is the true worship in spirit, which, when I knew not this spirit to hearken and bow to, and obey and observe in all things as his will leads, I worshipped I knew not what, and my fear towards God then was taught by the precepts of men, and I was not taught of the Lord, not being born of that spirit; and so all the children of the Lord are taught of the Lord, and as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. These scriptures I then could read, and understand without meanings, not by that which my wisdom taught me, but which the holy ghost taught me; and the scriptures, thus learned and received, was no more a notion to be lost, but a possession; and I came to have an inheritance therein amongst them that are sanctified in all ages, and no subtle man could either steal them, or change them, or any way beguile me of the truth of them, by wresting them, nor take away my comfort I had in them, my comfort and fellowship therein being in the same spirit and life that gave them forth; and the word of God thus grew and endureth forever, and the spirit of truth, that leads into all truth, endures forever, and the seed of God is one therein to all generations, and that is one which perfects the spirits of all just men, and God himself is judge over all, and leader of all, by his own begettings in all that enter into this rest of the faithful, which remains to all his children, out of which false faiths and disobedience shut themselves.

And that which declares the righteousness of God for remission of sins past, and for an inheritance against sin for time to come, have I found to be faith without falsehood, which righteousness though in the faith and hope beyond declaring, yet inherited but as the virtues that are in Christ Jesus come to be received in the life of them. And that faith which hath not that righteousness for its ground and end, and the virtues, and several measures of the growth of Christ for its life and increase, that I have found upon trial to be a feigned fancy, after man's mind, and not after God's measures. And he that saith he hath faith in God, and is without the hope of this righteousness for his inheritance; or saith he hath Christ further than he hath his virtues, for his life and growth towards this inheritance, when he comes to be weighed with truth, will be found too light to stand in judgment, or abide the fire, or to dwell with everlasting burnings; the trial of that faith will leave him without faith: then shall it be read as it is written, "when the son of man comes shall he find faith on the earth."

WHO THEY BE THAT ARE UNDER THE LAW, AND WHO THEY BE
THAT HAVE MADE VOID THE LAW AGAINST THEMSELVES,
AND WHO THEY BE THAT ARE UNDER GRACE.

GRACE reigns through righteousness, and the law through transgression; and he that says he is from under the law, and the transgressor alive, he makes void the law against himself, but is under it in the account of God.

For the seed or image of God being fallen, the transgressor is above, to whom there is no grace nor life promised, who hath no true obedience but for self-ends; upon this is the law added till the promised seed arise, and a schoolmaster the law is till it bring to Christ, who of the woman is made under the law, who takes upon him the seed after the flesh, the soul to redeem from under the transgressor, that the natural plant of God may grow. So who can witness the teachings and chastisings of the law, to bring him so low till he come under the seed, so as the seed be set above the head of the transgressor, and have bruised it, and so taken away the strength of sin, there the strength of the law is taken away also; and as the soul is raised up through the law, the law being fulfilled by the seed through the spirit, so it arises above the law, into the kingdom of grace, which reigns through righteousness, and not by making void the law; for the grace is to the seed, and the law to the transgressor: and as these reign in the creature, so is he under the law or under grace, for the law hath power over the man of sin as long as he lives, then is the seed of promise in bondage; but he being dead by which the seed is held captive, the seed rises under grace, which as it rises through the law fulfills it, and being fulfilled it loses its strength, as sin dies, and so hath no more power, the law being the strength of sin till it be fulfilled by the seed through the spirit; so he that is dead to sin, is free from sin, and under grace: and he that casts off the law while he is alive that sins, makes void the law against himself.

So he that's under grace is dead to sin, and dead to the law which is the strength of sin, and sin hath no more dominion over the soul, the power of it being subdued, which was the law unfulfilled; but where the law is made void, the strength of sin yet remains, and the law will overtake them in the end.

And he that learns this in the death and resurrection, and eternal life, shall in this work learn what the transgression is, and how the law is added upon him, and how it is the strength of sin in him, but not in the seed, and what it is that makes the entrance through the law, and how grace comes to abound where sin hath abounded, and to reign through righteousness unto eternal life.

So where the transgressor is slain, there the law is at an end and fulfilled, and the plant of God brings forth, against which there is no law, but the law is against the man of sin, and the man of sin against the law as long as he lives, and power it will have over him, and one jot of it will not pass away till it be fulfilled: and he that would cast off the law and make it void, is far from grace, but in him that fulfilleth the law, doth grace and truth abound.

OF THE WAY OF LIFE, FROM THE KNOWLEDGE
THAT DEVOURS THE LIFE.

WOULDEST thou know the way of life from that knowledge which devours the life; then be no longer as the wild asses colt, but take up the yoke of the son, in whom thou sayest thou believest, that the life of faith thou mayst feel and know, for only in the obedience is the life made sure to thee of what thou believest, and thereby is faith and knowledge made perfect.

But until thou attainest power for obedience of faith, thou art dead, and know'st but words, in which thy faith stands without life, which accomplishes nothing, but will arise to condemn thee when thy time is out.

Therefore in all thy seeking, mind that which worketh in a lowly mind, calling thee into the obedience of what is there made manifest in the begettings of the father, and not in the conceivings of the brain, but in the son; for in the brain knowledge the boaster rules who glories in the wisdom of words, but not in the words of life; but in the obedience of the son is the father known and glorified in such as walk in the spirit and not in the wind, whose praise is of God, and their lives hid with him from all knowledge, but what is revealed in the obedience of the son: so from man you may learn the knowledge of words, but the knowledge of life is only in the begotten of God; so that he that hath the son hath life, not of the disobedient nature, for the begotten of God is conformable to him that begetteth him in all things through obedience.

So feeling thy measure of the begettings of God, in it be obedient, and seek not to be above it in any thing, lest the enemy thereby get power in thee to puff up thy mind in thy knowledge above thy life, which devours the life.

Therefore as thou feelest faith, love, meekness, gentleness, patience, or any godliness move in the spirit, therein become obedient with all diligence, and thereby shalt thou know the power thereof against all the contrary motions in thy flesh, so shalt thou learn the salvation of grace unto life eternal, which thou canst never attain by talking or any other way but in the obedience thereof, so shalt thou not receive the grace of God in vain, nor words without the working power of life, whereby the living knowledge of the mystery of godliness will daily increase.

For by obedience of the spirit is the soul purified from its darkness and pollution, and made fit for the further manifestation of the hidden mystery, and the receiving the fulness thereof, and walking therein; and so by the holy ghost thou shalt be able to confess Jesus Lord over all powers in heaven and in earth, the opener of all secrets, and only revealer of the father who begetteth, by whom thou becomest wise in thy knowledge unto salvation, not unto vain babling,

whose words shall rise and condemn them who glorify therein.

But thou, if in spirit thou hearkenest diligently and obeyest, shalt know that he who sometimes spoke by the prophets, doth now speak by his son, the everlasting power of godliness, the only begotten of the father, and in all things like unto him, in whom he is made manifest; and the prophets have prophesied of glory to come, but the son declares the father in this present life, according to the measure of him formed; and as he arises in fulness he opens the heavens, and gives the inheritance thereinto.

AN OPENING OF LIGHT TO ALL SORTS OF RULERS AND PEOPLE THAT
WAIT FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY NOT
OPPOSE HIM IN HIS APPEARANCE, NOR SET UP ANOTHER
TO REIGN UPON EARTH IN HIS STEAD.

Do you say you seek God, you rulers and people, will you seek his face upon earth? Or would you see his appearance to reign in righteousness? Or can you rejoice to see him manifest in flesh? Or do you love his image who is the father of lights from whom you look for the son from heaven? Then be not carnally-minded in your expectation, least you know him not in his appearance who is a spirit, and so oppose him as your fathers in the flesh ever did, except you be born of the spirit you cannot see the kingdom of God.

The father dwells in the light and changes not, and the son is the light of the world in his own image, by whom he changes all things that are out of him, and overturns shadows and customs, and makes the world new; and in spirit and power in his kingdom upon earth, though veiled from flesh and blood, but revealed in spirit to such as desire to know and worship him: And no man could ever say that Jesus was Lord but by the holy ghost.

So with the light of the spirit alone which sees through the veil is Jesus known to be Lord and king forever, with which you may all see what you set up to be Lord and ruler in yourselves, or over others. You that choose rulers, judges and justices, mayors and constables, &c. Do you see through the veil to choose Jesus in spirit to rule over you, or over others? Is that eye open which knows the holy ghost, and who are filled therewith, that you may choose him to rule in his kingdom? Do you seek for that spirit to choose withal by which alone Jesus is known to be Lord? Then it is plain you seek God's kingdom in the face of Jesus Christ who is that spirit, which turning to, causes the veil to be taken away from all hearts, and will change you also into his image by that spirit, as saith the scriptures.

So there were none to be chosen for judges, kings or rulers in Israel's Commonwealth, but who had of this spirit and unction put upon them, and then the Lord reigned over them in his anointed, whether king, priest or prophet, man or woman; but when they choosed rulers like other nations, then they rejected (not Samuel,) but the Lord, that he should not reign over them.

Now you that say you seek the Lord to rule over you, and say thy kingdom come, mind what you choose to rule in you or over you, and with what spirit, least your practice oppose your prayers, and make void your daily expectation; do you choose after the flesh as other nations do, or do you choose after the holy ghost? If you choose after the flesh, then you set the veil betwixt you and the Lord, and God's kingdom and his image you cannot see, and so you reject the Lord as other nations do; but if you look through the veil, unto that which is within the veil, then shall the veil be taken away from all your hearts, and you shall see him amongst you whom you wait for, and him alone set up and worship, and choose him alone to reign over you, who is near you, at hand to all that put not his day afar off.

So if you make rulers like all the nations, then after the flesh, they that are rich, they that are proud, they that are full of earthly glory &c. Here is the earth set above, then the veil is before your eye, and you see not the Lord, nor do you set up Jesus to be Lord by the holy ghost: but if that eye be open in you, that can see through the veil of earth, and all this deal of flesh and darkness to that which is within the veil, even the holy one in his temple, him to choose and set above in your minds, then your eye shall see the lord's anointed and the king in his glory, and he shall rule whose right it is in every heart, and your governors shall be of yourselves, and all violence shall cease, and shakings of governments, the government being upon his shoulders who is the prince of all your peace in the great and in the small, who shall reign in righteousness, and judge the people with equity for God and not for rewards, to whose authority every knee shall bow. and every tongue confess for conscience sake, his name being written in every heart will then be read, whose kingdom is everlasting, and in spirit and power he reigns, and in spirit is worshipped in heaven and in earth, who fills all things with the presence of his glory, and his kingdom is near to all that can believe, it's within you, saith Christ, and he rules where he is not known (though not to salvation) who is made of the seed of David after the flesh, by the word of God to all generations, a king forever according to promise, whose kingdom the eye which the God of this world hath blinded is putting afar off, who sees not the light of his glorious gospel though he be not afar off, but him in whom all things have life and being, either to salvation or condemnation, and this is the condemnation that light is come already into the world, which men who love their evil deeds say is to come, and so look for that without, who is a spirit within, and therein hath ever reigned more or less, but now his day is arising over all the world, whose sound is gone out to the ends of the earth, and his light ariseth in every heart, to life or condemnation, and some

it leads into rest, and others it pricks to the heart, and they kick against it, and will not have it to rule therein, and to this day he is rejected of the builders, who is the first-born unto God in spirit, blessed over all.

And now all sorts of people who in truth wait for the kingdom of God upon earth, with that which in you is of him, you may all see (if you keep that eye single) when he draws near who is to rule, and when he is put afar off in his government here below: when you behold in any manner of authority, such a spirit as is for God alone, looking to that of God in every man without respect of person or riches, and with a single eye seeks to find out where that measure of God is transgressed in any, or where it is oppressed by any, and with that measure of God in himself seeks to set judgment upon the head of the transgressor, and to set free the innocent principle of God in all, which will not lead any to evil; then is the judgment of God and for God, and that of God is set above in all, this is he that's born of God; here the kingdom of God is near, and as this increases, so God draws near, and his kingdom increases, and that of God in you all will answer thereto, and rejoice thereat, which waits for him, and that which is upright in every heart shall say that is the judgment of God, and in that vessel is God on his throne, according to the measure of that spirit set up in judgment, so is Jesus Lord by the holy ghost, known and bowed to.

But on the contrary, in what place of authority soever it be, in which the innocent comes for judgment against the oppressor; who is too strong for him, and so seeks to justice to plead his cause and to deliver the seed of God that is burthened; and when he comes his cause is not heard, but is thrust away (if not further ensnared) because he cannot oppress that of God in him more, either by bowing to something of vain customs or worships never set up by God, nor owned by his witness for conscience sake; or else because he cannot hire his judgment by feeding a covetous spirit which is for rewards and not for God, that he judges.

and so the innocent soul is not relieved at this throne, but sent away as an offender, from the place where he should be eased and justified with the judgment of a free spirit, for justice sake, doth not that of God in you all testify against this, that judgment is here turned backward in that vessel, and that Jesus is not Lord therein? So the innocent heart is saddened but not saved, and the kingdom of God put afar off, and the sceptre of righteousness not seen.

Wherefore rulers and people, who set up flesh instead of the holy spirit to rule over you, the wills of men, the pride and glory of this world, or any visible thing here below born after the flesh; see what you choose, and what you put afar off; and with that spirit you now choose you will never see the kingdom of God, nor be able to say in truth that Jesus is Lord; It's by the spirit of his holiness, meekness and true judgment, and works of righteousness that Jesus is known to reign, and therein stands the sight of the kingdom and lordship, in every heart; in every court, and in every place of judgment to all generations, which you deny in choosing the man of this world after the flesh to rule in you, or over you therein; and yet you say you look for him, and thy kingdom come daily, but deny him in the simplicity of his lowly spirit to rule for his own in all, as all your rulers ever did, as you have read in words, and now may read in deeds, the world by wisdom knows not God, so that spirit chooses its own to rule, but cannot receive him whom you say you look for.

And how should any one who sees the kingdom of God, and where the simplicity of Christ is above, own that kingdom, or worship that spirit, and not betray the simplicity of Christ, and give his honor to another. And if in the meekness of mind you did but weigh this, you could not think it so strange, why so many at this day (who have received the kingdom of God in his lowly just and righteous spirit) choose rather to suffer death under that spirit of this world, than to bow to worship it, or confess that due thereto, which belongs

only to Jesus the Lord, neither would you say it was obstinacy or contempt of authority rather to suffer by the will of man, than to rob the Lord of his glory, and deny Christ in his kingly office, and set up another in his place.

And herein true wisdom may see, that in so doing we resist not that power which is ordained of God, nor the person, but that spirit we testify against, by suffering under, which God never anointed for a ruler, holding forth the anointing as we have received for a witness against him, in the spirit of meekness, confessing our king in whom we receive power to suffer; so to us he is come, and by the gift of the holy ghost we can say he is Lord: therefore to us there is but one Lord, though there be many so called, whether in Heaven or in earth, yet have we but one in all, both in Heaven and earth, and him we know wherever he is by the gift of the holy ghost, and to him in spirit we confess and bow, and the fruits of his spirit are manifest with the light of the world, testifying against all the works of darkness in all the children of his kingdom.

And to us he is born who is from above the holy child, wonderful in counsel and strength, whose heavenly power and virtue takes our affections from all earthly objects and worship, whose name is Immanuel, and it is written in our hearts, and shed abroad in the world in our lives, and Christ Jesus is the end of our conversation, him alone to put on, above all to preach, by walking in him as we have received of that lively image of holiness and truth, the anointed of God, and so we confess him before men, who is the right heir, in what vessel soever he appears, and the praise we give to God where this treasure is found in the earthen vessel, and the hope of all our glory is Christ within, and the increase of his government is Christ within, of which there is no end, and with that spirit is all righteousness established, the kingdom of God upon earth, and eternal life.

And where this is not seen, chosen and followed, there men rule in their own wills. and where men's

persons and riches are respected in choosing such, there the same is respected in judgment by such, and the law of God is perverted, and the sword of justice which should defend the cause of the innocent is laid by, and the fist of wickedness lifted up against that which is tender of God in every conscience; and when this rules, the righteous seed mourns in secret, but wickedness reigns openly: and this is and ever was the state of the kingdom of God, and the kingdoms of the Gentiles; the one rules in the spirit of holiness, and the other exercise lordship in their own wills, chosen and set up not by the holy ghost, as you may read in the scriptures concerning Israel's commonwealth, who when they wanted the ruling of this spirit they sold themselves under their enemies, but when this was their judge they had a saviour chosen after the spirit, not after the flesh; whoever was the instrument, the spirit was their saviour.

Moses was a poor wandering shepherd, yet in this spirit a God to Pharaoh, and saviour of Israel: Samuel a poor man who received no reward for judgment, and when they went about to choose another after the manner of other nations, they rejected God, who then gave them a king in his wrath; David a poor man, not chosen by the outward appearance, as man looks, but by the heart, and the direction of the spirit, he was the shepherd of Israel, and his seed of the same election hath the everlasting kingdom of promise to all generations. Elisha a ploughman, yet by that spirit was he brought to see the chariots of Israel and horsemen thereof. Deborah a woman, yet a judge and deliverer to Israel.

And too long would it be to instance in all ages how he hath set up his throne and saved his people in this election, not of wisdom, riches, or worldly glory, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom of promise, which you say you look for, but cannot see nor receive while you choose after the flesh, as the world hath ever done, who still have bent all their wisdom and religion to keep the heir out of his king-

dom, whom they have been looking for after the flesh, but not believing in the light, to give them a sight through the veil to him that is born of the spirit, have resisted the holy one, and chosen the murderer, as did your fathers, so do you always resist the holy ghost; and as it was, so it is, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and chooses after the flesh, and worships after the flesh, for it can see no further, it cannot see the kingdom of God, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit, and chooses after the spirit, and worships in spirit, and these are contrary kingdoms, and he that's born after the flesh persecutes him that's born after the spirit, ever did and ever will do, for the scripture cannot be broken, which hath so said and is now fulfilled.

And now you that are called christians, you read and preach of this king Christ Jesus and his kingdom, what a one he ever hath been in his appearance upon earth, by whom he hath been received, and by whom rejected, and after what manner he hath ever suffered, and by what power he hath reigned in all ages, and this you will confess in words, but will you now receive him to reign in you? Or can you own his appearance where it is set up in others, and not be offended therewith, is that eye open that knows him, or can you delight in him who was never like the world in his walkings? Was not he ever poor as to this world, and therefore rejected of the rich and learned; lowly, and rejected of princes and them that were high? Was not his work ever to change shadows, and forms, and religious traditions set up in men's minds above the life of truth, and leadings of the spirit, and to set up spiritual worship and obedience in its place? And therefore by the builders ever rejected and condemned, and his new work was ever foolishness to the wise, wherefore he bore the reproach thereof with patience; was he not ever meek and innocent, and harmless in his conversation towards all men as a lamb indeed, separate from sinners in life, yet seeking to save them out of sin with the daily giving up of his life, &c. So

he was, and so he hath ever appeared on earth; now can you receive your king as he was, you that wait for him? Or do you think he is changed? Is he now become proud and lofty in flesh after the world, cruel, and covetous and hard-hearted, subtle and crafty to deceive the simple, strong and violent to trample on the helpless? Doth the glory of his sceptre now stand in meats and drinks and fine apparel or great earthly possessions? Doth he now come to take up his abode and delight in these things? Whoever hath come to take the minds of his people out of these things up into the heavenly treasure? Doth he now delight in earthly glory, strife and exaltation? Are the weapons of his warfare now become carnal, where-with he overcomes his enemies? Doth he now come with hauling and beating, whips and prisons and cruel tortures to take the kingdom of peace, who hath suffered such things formerly from the world himself, and will he now turn oppressor of that which is tender in conscience, and grind the face of the poor, or pervert the judgment of the needy? Should he now be seen in works of this nature, were this to appear the second time without sin unto salvation, as he is promised? Sure the veil is thick over that heart who sees not that this is not his kingdom, power, nor glory, nor his image, who is the same yesterday, to day, and forever.

Yet is this nature above in many, and chosen to rule over many, who say they wait for his kingdom, that eye being darkened with love of the world, which should give the true sight of his coming, the carnal mind thinks God to be like himself: but did you but honestly look into your own hearts, with that eye which puts a difference between things that differ in yourselves, to know each motion of each spirit, and each power, and the end and nature of its working, the earthly and the heavenly, you would soon be able to judge of these two, which so far differ in their fruits, and are so contrary in all things, and to own the right heir in his kingdom.

But while you suffer the God of this world to keep his throne in your hearts, by letting him captivate your minds and affections into earthly delights, it is not like he will suffer you to choose a-right, nor receive another to reign in you or over you, the eye of the mind being blinded therewith, the light of the gospel cannot shine into the heart by which you should choose, and which gives the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ, nor that treasure be seen or received in the earthen vessel, as king either in yourselves or others; but the wise in heart know what they wait for, and when they see him they rejoice with the joy of his kingdom, which consists not in carnal things, nor comes with outward observations, but whose coming is within, and whose kingdom consists in righteousness, peace and joy in the holy ghost; blessed be our king for ever, and blessed are they who put not his kingdom afar off.

And therefore you rulers and people of all sorts high and low, this word is to you, and this day is to you the day of the Lord, arise and receive your king into his kingdom, that he may receive you, and establish you therein; the Lord is at hand, he is near to all that call upon him in truth and righteousness.

To you princes, judges, justices, mayors and constables, and all sorts of rulers who are in the place to govern, the Lord is at hand, he is near you all, the kingdom of God is within you, the principle of God is within you, with which (if you mind it) he will break the yoke of the oppressor within you and without you by the sword of justice, that's his kingdom upon earth, put it not afar off, let it arise in your hearts, set it up above the will of man, let it shine in your hearts, let it speak in your courts, that which is of God in you all, which judges justly and with equity; lay by your will, your pride, your covetousness, and all that's above that spirit of meekness in your minds, and make room in your hearts for the holy ghost, that thereby Jesus may be Lord in you, and over others, that you may know him to whom judgment belongs, to be in you; you

need not say who shall ascend into Heaven, to bring down Christ from above, or who shall descend into the deep to bring up Christ again from the dead, for he is nigh you, and you may feel his witness in spirit, and his word is in your hearts, the word of faith, the word of righteousness, that therewith you may all know him, who standeth in the congregation of the mighty, to judge among the Gods, who judges not unjustly, nor accepteth the person of the wicked, but that with him you may deliver the poor and fatherless, and judge the cause of the stranger, wherein they are oppressed; that's his kingdom, and that's the word of faith and the word of righteousness that leads to it.

And if this be set up in your own hearts, to love it more than gifts and rewards, persons or earthly glory, then is the Lord near you, and his kingdom is above the earth in you, and your work will be to set it above the earth in others, and so the kingdom of your father, who begets this in your hearts, his kingdom comes, as his will is done upon earth as it is in Heaven, where all obey him, there is the kingdom his, the power is his by which you judge, and the glory is his of your righteous judgment, now and forever if you therein abide; and thus shall you be of the obedient children to that of your father in you begotten, who say and do, who pray and practise, and not like the Scribes and Pharisees, and lawyers, who said and did not, who made long prayers, but devoured the poor and needy, and judged not of the cause of the stranger, but laid heavy burthens upon others, and bowed not thereto themselves, who could not believe in the light, nor receive Christ within them, though he told them the kingdom of God was within them, and his word had no place in them, who were filled with pride and wilfulness, so they had lost the key of knowledge, the key of David, to open to them the way into the anointing, whereby to know David's Lord to reign in spirit, which hath the promise of David's throne forever; so when they lost this, the kingdom departed from Israel, and the priesthood also; and he set up his sign to the gentiles,

preaching the kingdom of God to them that were afar off, and they that were not a people came to the kingdom of his anointing, and that great mystery that had been hid from ages was opened thereby to the Gentiles, which was Christ in them the hope of glory, and kingdom of the father.

And now you that are called christians, and are making great declarations, what a glorious kingdom the kingdom of Christ will be at his coming, and what holiness and righteous government, and many high things and great glory you look for, &c. But above all the rest how are you estranged, who are gone out again from the anointing to look for this without you, while you reject it within you? Was Christ within them that great mystery that had been hid from ages, which by the hearing of faith was opened to the Gentiles, and was the hope of glory to them (even Christ within them, whom the apostles preached, warning every man and teaching every man that they might present every one perfect in Christ Jesus, the hope of glory within them, which faith the jews not receiving, lost their king and kingdom?) And is your hopes without you, as the Jews was? Is that the hope the apostle preached to the Gentiles, or that which enters within the veil? Is there not a veil drawn over your hearts again, whilst you read this in the scriptures?—And have not you lost the key of knowledge, who are gone out from the anointing in your hopes? Have you not lost the key of David, which should let you see David's Lord, in which the kingdom of God is established forever? Did God swear this to David after the flesh, or to Abraham after the flesh, or to any after the flesh? Then how is his kingdom everlasting? Or why did he say the flesh profits nothing? And why did the apostle say, they desired henceforth to know no man after the flesh, no not Christ himself? Flesh and blood passeth away, but this kingdom is everlasting; so he whom the apostles preached in spirit by the receiving of the holy ghost, wherein they were to grow up to the measure of his stature and fulness, him you

reject in spirit, to be the hope of your glory and kingdom, and wait for a government after the flesh, and so shut up the great mystery of godliness which was opened, and the kingdom against yourselves, which mystery is not after the flesh, but God manifest in flesh, Christ within the hope of glory; and this mystery was ever shut with carnal expectations, but opened in the spirit, as it was, so it is, who denies the spirit to be Lord, shuts up the kingdom.

Wherefore arise out of the flesh, you rulers and people, and receive your king, long hath he been rejected and thrust out of the throne of judgment, for which you have no peace nor establishment; why will you not turn to him who calls you in spirit, what a shame is this that you are called Christians, and know not your anointing, viz. Christ in you? What Christians and without Christ, Christ not come? What do you rule withal, and discern with, and judge with? Are not all those reprobate who know not Christ in them? but if you know a just, a holy, a righteous principle of spirit in you that is of Christ, set it up, and you set up Christ, bow to the holy ghost, and you worship in spirit, and thereby you shall say that Jesus is Lord, set up his light in your hearts, and his day will arise to you all, for there must the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts, which will give the knowledge of God near you, and true judgment near you, and that which rules over spiritual wickedness near you, which all must bow to who receive the kingdom of God; honour God in your hearts, set him up in your hearts, let him be judge in your hearts, and first receive his light and judgment there, before you pass judgment upon others, lest you in judging others before men, condemn yourselves before God. David had little thought he had done that, when he said, "he that had taken his neighbours lamb should surely die; and you may soon do the like, if you go out from the spirit, and judge before you receive judgment in your own hearts, and see all be clean there first, then is your sceptre established in righteousness, and your judgment in

truth, which is the sceptre of the throne of David in spirit, which condemned David in flesh, and will condemn you in the flesh if you sin against it; and that is his kingdom, and he is king forever, who in spirit condemns sin in the flesh, and for this end is he manifest, that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in all who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, which comes in his name who went away after the flesh, that the kingdom might come.

And if you receive your authority and judgment in this right principle of God, it will judge for God in all, yourselves and others. and it will fit you to be mediators betwixt the offender and sufferer in all, and you will see what it is which transgresseth, and what is transgressed, and the nature of every offence to pass an equal judgment accordingly, and this is of God, and he loves it; and where that of God is pressed not to clear the oppressor, but to judge the oppressor, and set that of God which is innocent free; and here with that of God in yourselves you judge for that of God in all, and set that of God above the oppressor in all, which oppressor is not of God in you, nor in others, but is to be judged, and for the law and for the sword; but against that of God the law is not.

And here is God's kingdom already near, and not afar off, where God is all in all, and the righteous reigns, and the power that is ordained of God, the soul is subject to for conscience sake towards God in heaven and earth; and that of God in every conscience shall answer to your judgment and authority, and God shall set you up therewith as a terror in every heart above the evil doer, the murderer and traitor, and the arrows of the almighty shall stick in the hearts of all that seek to undermine this government, for the kingdom of God it is, in which he rules, who cannot forget himself, nor hath this kingdom been taken from any who received it thus, till they go out of it themselves, by suffering or setting up another to rule, above that measure of this just and innocent principle of God.

And if you receive this kingdom from heaven in the love of it, then shall you receive your judgment from heaven also, and your law to judge by, and God shall make you rich towards him in righteous judgment, and towards his people, and a discerning spirit will he give you in this anointing, to know hard matters that are hid from flesh and blood, which you shall receive in secret, and bring forth openly, and shall hear and fear, and praise the Lord for you; and you shall no more go to the heathen to learn judgment, whom the Lord hath removed far from him, nor shall you uphold those laws by which the servants of God have suffered formerly in the times of Popery; nor shall the statutes of Omri be kept and observed, nor follow the ways of the house of Jeroboam, for you have seen what God hath done concerning them, that you may fear to follow them; but you shall have your laws from the law-giver Christ Jesus, and your judgment from the father of lights, whose ministers you then are, to whose sword that of God in every conscience shall answer, which is written in every heart, and which every heart shall fear to offend, when they hear that the Lord hath raised him up judges as at the first, and counsellors as at the beginning, and the heathen shall hear and fear, and come to you to learn judgment, and righteousness shall arise from amongst you to the ends of the earth, and the break of God's day shall be with you first, as to you it is first tendered, if you be not found unworthy to receive him, and he shall make you as a head in counsel, and the first born of all nations unto God shall you be, if you receive him, wherein the blessing of God is bound up by an oath, and his strength upon earth to all generations.

And this is the love of God to you all once more, the rulers of these nations, from the highest to the lowest, that love might open your hearts which the earth hath shut and sealed, that you might come to a feeling of your everlasting establishment, and that your fears may cease in an endless union betwixt Christ your king, and your own souls, to the dread of all your ene-

mies, and eternal praises lift up to him indeed, who hath scattered your enemies many a time for you, and all their dark plots brought to light that you may love the light wherein is your salvation, and not plot in darkness against his innocent ones, as your enemies do, but with hearts open and naked receive the truth, which condemns all the deeds of darkness in you and in them, lest he bring your plots and secret counsels against the innocent upon your heads, as he hath often done to your enemies, for he will avenge the poor, though long he suffer with them and in them; and this is now seen concerning you, as was formerly seen concerning them, of which they were warned in words, and witnessed against in sufferings long before it came, who are now broken as a potters vessel, and cannot be made whole, but whatever they do, breaks them more: and now are you warned and invited in love, who sees before you this day what God hath done concerning them, and suffered concerning you.

And I am bold in the love of God to send this to you all wherein there is a seed of God, and I know there is that of God in you which will answer to the truth of this; and the scriptures witness with me also: so I am not alone, but by two infallible witnesses every word is established, either to life or condemnation; and my prayers to God is and shall be as long as this of God in me hath breathings, that you may receive the kingdom of God which is near you, through that spiritual light and key that opens the door of your entrance thereinto, that you may come to be established in the covenant of God and not of man, and that you may not resist the holy ghost, as hitherto you have many of you done, nor kick against that which pricks you at your hearts when you are told hereof, lest you be broken in the end, so as you can never be healed, which is near at hand, to be broken or established, as you receive God or refuse him, who hath long waited upon you that now are, and with much patience is he finishing as large a testimony of his long-suffering and forbearance among you, as ever

was since the world began, though it be little seen where the light is rejected, which the longing of my soul is, may be for the leading to repentance, that you may be established after all these shakings, in that which cannot be shaken, otherwise the most miserable woe that ever was will come upon you, your profession of Christ being the greatest that ever was since the beginning; and his oppression answerable, under which he suffers in all places of the nations, for a testimony that the kingdom is near you, whether you will receive him or refuse him, whose life in measure is now manifest in mortal flesh, and the light thereof ariseth in every conscience to lead or condemn.

A CANDLE LIGHTED, TO GIVE THE SIGHT OF THE GOOD OLD
WAY OF GOD AT HIS COMING, FROM THE WAYS THAT
NOW ENSNARE THE SIMPLE.

A voice in the wilderness cries aloud to all you who are talking of the Lord's coming, prepare his way, make his paths straight; make way for the just to come to judgment, make him way in your streets, he comes not in a corner, nor is he kept in the secret chambers, but openly in the streets of your great cities, where iniquity is committed openly, whose cry hath gone up before the Lord, and he comes to see whether it be so indeed as the cry hath been; and behold here is no room for the feet of his servants to pass, in whom he comes; the ancient paths of peace are broken up, the sea hath broken its banks, it rages and swells exceedingly, and the good old ways are grown like a wilderness, they are filled with heaps of rubbish, so that the stranger cannot pass who hath no habitation in the earth, our streets are become as Sodom which God overthrew, who can see and not lament? How are the paths of the just devoured? How are briars and thorns grown over the way of the

righteous, which takes hold of the upright what way soever he turn, if he come against sin? So the innocent cannot pass if he come in the name of the Lord: all have freedom but the heir, and such as he sends before his face to prepare his way; swearers, liars, drunkards, and all deceitful workers are become freemen, have free passage, and every one brings forth without fear; but he that departs from iniquity, and testifies against it, is beset about with them all, as a sheep in the briers, what way soever he turns, his bonds are increased. How is true judgment driven into a corner, and wickedness come into the streets, which rises up without fear against him that reproves it; for violence hath got into the seat of equity, and hath framed mischief by a law, and hath turned judgment backwards.

Should not truth have its way amongst you professors, and righteous judgment pass upon its enemies where they are found, and plead its own cause against iniquity? But he that letteth stands in the way with his weapons, to devour him that is more righteous than himself, and no man is able to restore to the upright his path; or can he redeem his own way but through blood? Shall he condemn iniquity, and not be a prey? Or, shall he reprove sin in the gate, and not be taken in their drag? And when the innocent is caught in this net, to whom shall he cry for relief, and not increase his bonds? Or, who will plead his innocent cause and not betray him? If he would appeal to justice, he cannot come at it, nor doth judgment sit in the gate; is there help in the house of the king, or will the house of the priest plead his right? Or to whom may he commit himself with safety, whose life and faith is held in a pure conscience? Or in what court can he appear without offence? Are not snares laid in lower places, and on the mountains a net spread? And do not these daily catch men? Search, if there be a man left that is valiant for truth upon earth, who for fear or favour will not wink at oppression, or that dare faithfully stand by him that comes

in the name of the Lord to reprove sin openly; who is he that hath not laid riches or honour, or some piece of earth in his own way, to stop his feet from the path of uprightness? And so is every man's arm become too short to relieve the oppressed, or to open the way wherein the innocent may serve his maker without fear? Or, the just to proclaim the holiness of God without danger, in the way that God shall choose, and not man? Or for judgment to come forth into the open places, where wickedness is most acted? Or for the lively witness of the Lamb to arise against his enemy, in the good old way that he hath chosen to all generations?

Ah! how are the ancient paths forsaken of men? How have you left the good old way of God, and chosen ways of your own against your own souls? How long will it be ere you try your ways with the truth, that you may return to him who is come to require the paths of judgment, and righteousness and truth, that the meek may possess his inheritance of old, and that God may walk in his own seed, as he hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; who comes as the lightning.

Behold, you who are crying against new ways, you say, it was never well since there were so many new ways; you are the men, and your ways are the thing you complain of, and why there are so many of your ways is, because Babel is confounded, and many heads and horns are lifted up, to fulfil that number, as it is written of them, to withstand the way of the Lamb, and to fight against God's appearance in his heritage; who all are set against the way of God as at this day, which is but one to all generations. Was not this his way of old, which is now rejected, and which is become so odious in your eyes? Was not this of old the pure path, which you now say breaks your peace? Search the scriptures, which testify of God and his way in his servants of old, and how he then passed in his redeemed ones, chosen vessels for himself, to make his power known against opposers; as you may

read in the scriptures; trace the steps of his servants in whom he walked, and see how far you have erred at this day.

Was not this his way in Jeremiah, who led him into the gates of Jerusalem, and through the streets thereof, through him declaring against sin there abounding, and to pronounce judgment to follow: did not he lead him into their temple, and therein told them who went thither to worship, that they trusted in a lie, who cried the temple of the Lord, but had made it a den of thieves by their wicked ways? Did not he lead him down to the house of the king, and there told him, that if he would not amend his ways, his house should become a desolation? And which of the false prophets did he not reprove openly by him? Was not this his way then? And what became of them that would have stopped him? Did not he speak words in Amos against the wickedness of their king, priests and worships, that the land was not able to bear? Did not he lead Jonah through the streets of Nineveh? And in which of the prophets did not he thus walk in, and some received him in his way, and turned from their own ways, and found mercy; and the rest that rejected him, were destroyed in their own ways, in which they blessed themselves, as at this day.

Now read these, and read what you now oppose in your streets and steeple-houses, and markets, and let that of God in you be judge, if you be not of such as now say, depart from us, we will have none of thy ways. Also, search your gospel, if you can receive his way therein, which changes not; did not he come in Christ, and in his apostles, as a wanderer to and fro, without a certain dwelling place, to preach repentance and amendment of life, and the light of the world, from city to village, from place to place; which way you now call vagabonds? And did not he enter their temples and synagogues, schools and markets, and all their places of worship and concourse, where sin or false worship were acted, and there disputed, and testified against their whole way, and called them to

the way of God. And this was his manner of walking in them, even in times of their worships, and in the greatest assembly of meetings and markets, which to you is become as gall and wormwood, and you call it disturbance and peace-breaking.

Was not this his way in such as knew their bodies to be his temples, and in whom he walked, and spoke the words of life, and judgment, and truth; his way, by which he overturned the world, leaving all without excuse against the day of wrath, which was to follow where he was rejected; his way by which he called many thousands out of false worships, in which they were settled (as you are) and their souls deceived: but this was his way to salvation, which was not their way (as he hath said, my ways are not your ways) yet was there no other way for them to be saved; which is the same at this day to all that receive his coming, and to all that resist the holy spirit in his temples; as did your fathers so do you, saith Stephen, to such as worshipped God in outward observations, but denied his way and worship in temples made without hands: these resisted the spirit that spoke in his saints, these resisted the holy ghost, resisted the way of God, as you do: read and consider, Stephen was full of God, the spirit spoke in him; they resisted him, they called him a blasphemer, they stoned him by a law: here was God's way and their way; now try your ways, whose work is to resist the spirit and light within, which hath filled the hearts and mouths of his servants to cry against sin. Mind what you resist.

Had not God come in this his own way, to seek and to save by his appearance in such vessels, as he had prepared of old for that end, whom in time he filled with himself, as they stood in need, in all conditions to pass with him through all hardships and crooked ways of the wicked world, from place to place seeking a seed to himself, what had become of the saints of old, which were covered with darkness, till he came thus to appear to them, holding forth his light, and his life and glory in vessels prepared, to show

forth his virtues, and the riches of his grace, not only in declaring in words, but also in power, to suffer for his name long and hard trials, with much patience and meekness, in all which they became signs to the world, and lively witnesses of God to his own in every conscience, whereby the seed of God in many gathered strength, to arise out of darkness and come to judgment, and by their sufferings waxed confident in the faith, that it was the eternal God that they had seen preached, and that was in them who thus suffered, and did not receive their words as the words of men, but of God, who was with them, and in them in all. And this his way was not only to receive such as came to him, but with danger of life went into their assemblies and public places, to bring them out of the claws of the devil, who beat some in their synagogues, hauled some before rulers, cast some into prison, who suffered great afflictions to bring souls from under this dark power, and in all this God was afflicted with them, and by his own spirit brought them out. And this was his way of ransoming and redeeming, and of bringing to Sion, as you may read of old; and thus by his spirit, and by his working in them, did he work wonders and signs, and was a witness against the whole body of sin, overturning false ways and worships by a way they knew not, nor did the world know it was he, until he had brought to pass his work upon them, having thus gathered out his seed from amongst them, who then sought to stop his way, as you do at this day, but what was their end?

And in this way were the churches of Christ gathered, even by blood and sufferings, and tumults, and beatings, and mockings, and whippings, and all manner of cruel usage, fighting with beasts after the manner of men, and by the patient sufferings of Christ, in them were many recovered out of the snares of the devil; which, had he not sought them in this way, they had lived and died in blindness. And this was the way in which God gathered the churches (which you who oppose this way would imitate) and in this way

was the mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity revealed, and the kingdom of Christ known upon earth, and in this way came the scriptures of the apostles and prophets, of which you talk, and would turn to oppose this way; like them who read his coming in the prophets, and would have stopped his coming in Christ and the apostles: so do you ever resist the way of the Holy One, and yet in words you pray for his coming; but having erred in your hearts from that light which should give the knowledge of him, you know not his ways, but have in your imaginations set a new way for his appearance, every one in his own form; but all think you are doing him service, to stop his old way by force.

Ah, foolish people (and full of wit) will you call on him to come to judgment, and stop his way with cruelty? Is not the day of the Lord darkness to you who deny the light? God's ways are not yours, nor his thoughts yours, who are vain therein; will you hedge up his way against him? Will you set briars and thorns before him? And shall not the light of Israel kindle a fire amongst you? Shall not he go through and tread you down, and tear you as a lion, from whom none shall deliver?

Was it not thus with Israel, when they builded temples and increased their altars, and multiplied their sacrifices? And what was the end, was it not all to sin? for thereby they strengthened themselves against the way of the Lord in his prophets, and blessed themselves in their worships, and said no evil should come upon them, for they made many prayers, but their hands were full of blood, for the best of them were become as a briar in the way of the innocent, and the most upright as a thorn hedge in the way of his servants, in whom he appeared against their backsliding, evils, and false worships, but they were not so to their own teachers; for them they fed fat, and gave gifts, rewards and hire to them. So having got prophets of their own in their way, then they joined together, and one cried peace to another, and when God came to

break that peace in his way, and to tell them it was not his peace; then they all joined to hedge him out, and made a wall against him of their own righteousness, which they daubed up with their increase of sacrifices and false worships: so they said they were innocent people, said so, and priest, and prophets, and rulers said so; for they had trimmed their own ways, so they said they should have peace, and he that told them truth then became their troubler. So having covered themselves with this garment, they could shed innocent blood boldly, which was found in the skirts thereof not by secret search; and what became of all this? Did their own ways save them in the end?—Did not innocent blood outcry the multitude of their altars, till there was no remedy? So he became their enemy whom they called their redeemer.

So now read your ways at this day, and measure them in truth, and see what it is you are hedging out, who it is, and what his message is against, and what is his manner of coming, and your manner of opposing; that so, if it were possible, you might come to see a glimpse of the old way, and of your own work: Is it not he that comes to cry out against that which is wicked in your streets, and false in your worships, who is become your enemy, and breaks your peace, whom your hedge cannot stop, nor your wall keep out? How many briars and thorns are set against him at this day, to take hold of him, if he do but open his mouth in your streets? What laws new and old there are, to make him an offender for a word in your temples, how is he beat in your synagogues, hauled before rulers, and cast into prisons? How are the scriptures fulfilled upon you, and his witness doubled against you manifold over, above all your forefathers, of whom you read; and yet you say you are innocent, you are no persecutors; but for liberty of conscience; they were persecutors that so used him in the prophets and in the apostles, and in queen Mary's days, that so used the Martyrs, &c. But ye cannot see your work of the same nature, and as if queen Mary's laws were not

sufficient for you to accomplish your ends, with many additions thereto, are you in much fury driving on to destruction, yet having trimmed your own way, you say, we are Christians, and have a gospel-ministry of godly men, &c. But what Christians? Did ever Christians count it a breach of their peace, to reprove sin in the gate, or where-ever it is committed? Did Christians ever cast into prison, or count it disorder to dispute in their synagogues in the time of their worship? Did they ever make a law to whip strangers, who ask them nought; or to force people to swear against their conscience? And many such things are now done, which in the time of the apostles, the Heathen came far short of, which now are filling up against him, whose coming is ever as a stranger in the earth, and what hedgings here is at this day, to keep him out from his own, is plainly to be seen, and that he should not have liberty to seek up his lost ones in high ways, and hedges, markets and steeple-houses; how have you heightened your walls higher than your forefathers? And what daubing is at this day against the way of God, from which your own ways cannot save you: for the way of God is perfect, and will endure to all generations, wherein the upright walk, and sinners fall in opposition thereto.

But how should you know his way, who deny his light within, seeing they that rebel against the light, never knew the paths thereof; you are they who have erred in your hearts, and therefore have not known his ways, and how should you have peace, or enter into his rest; for you that deny his light, and resist his spirit in your hearts, must needs be offended at his coming in your streets: So you have set yourselves against him, and he hath set himself against you, as at this day; and therefore it is not with you now, as it was when you were in the work of making him way to walk in tender consciences; and you will find him arise more to cross your ways, as you seek to stop his way. You have begun to walk contrary to him, and he is beginning to walk contrary to you; and unto you

is he become an enemy. So take heed what you do, for till you return he will watch over you for evil, and not for good: and the more you trim your own ways, to withstand his way, the more will he discover the blood of the innocent in your skirts before the sun, till all may see you are no Christians, nor what you profess, but open enemies to God and his people, and your hands full of blood.

Wherefore be not rash, you heady people, you that are but looking for his coming in outward observations, are witnesses against yourselves, that his way you have not yet learned; though you have read of it, yet you know it not, and will you appoint him a way, and call it his way, and will he own it, who comes in a way you have not known, nor can believe if you be told it. It would be your wisdom to stand still every one, and cease from your own ways, and wait in the light, which only gives the knowledge of him, and his way; which light shines in the heart, as saith the scriptures, and the kingdom of God is within you, and he whom you oppose is a spirit, and comes in a spiritual way, to cut down spiritual wickedness. So to the spirit of light turn, that you may see to prepare to meet him in his own way, and not set your way to oppose him, that he should break you to pieces.

THE LIVING GOD GLORIFIED IN HIS TEMPLES, THE TRUE WORSHIPPERS, THAT WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.

Now glory to God in Heaven! Thousands of his saints do confess him upon earth, who bear his name and testimony against the world, who have still put his coming afar off, who have not that which they profess in them, but tell of great things which they have not, who are without God in spirit, and his worship in spirit, such as Christ said, worshipped they knew not what.

who worship that they have not, and profess him they possess not; without God in the world, in whose heart there is not God, who are not the temples of the living God, but to this day worship in temples made with hands, as those who resisted the holy ghost ever did; and how should such be holy vessels, holy men and women: What should sanctify where God is not? And what should lead where the spirit is not, but the blind guide that leads into the ditch? And what is like to govern, where God is not in his throne in the heart? How can such but be filled with unrighteousness, who retain not God in their knowledge: so it is not strange to the children of light, who with the light of God are guided, to see such things acted against God in his temples now, by such as are without God, as ever was. So the scriptures are fulfilled, as you may read.

And, ye holy in heart, rejoice, and lift up your heads towards the day of redemption, and own your generation here on earth, that you may be gathered to the fathers with that which comes from above, and that spirit which perfects the just, and casts out the unjust, where are the dogs and adulterers, and such as know not God, and where the hearts are gathered to the fathers in God, there the earth is blessed, whose God is the Lord, who have received the spirit from on high, and are filled with the holy ghost, as Stephen was, who saw Heaven open, who was full of the holy ghost, whom the great professors stoned, who were full of wrath, and yet said they looked for Christ's coming from scripture; yet like madmen run upon him and destroyed him; so he destroyed their temple which they thought to uphold, who resisted God and the holy ghost, because he had no place in them, who could not receive the light of the world, nor his word could find place in them; but in such as they cast out it found place, whose bodies were the temples of the living God, as he hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and Enoch walked within, with God in spirit, and was not; and Isaiah, God had wrought all his

works in him; and Jeremiah was full of the fury of the Lord, and Ezekiel was the son of man; and Daniel had the spirit of the most high God, the spirit of light and understanding; and Paul had the son of God revealed in him, the same that he preached, and said, they that knew not Christ in them were reprobates, and he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit; and to David the Lord said, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee; and David declared it, and the saints were begotten of God, and made partakers of the divine nature, and confessed the father and the son in them, and that the son of God was come, and had given them an understanding, which they that looked for him to come without understood not, who beat him in their synagogues, and shamefully intreated him, because they knew not the father nor the son, but said he was to come. And they that had the son, had life, and the rest were children of wrath, filled with wrath; and so the father and the son supped with such as had them, and the Lord was at their table, and they fed with him in his sufferings; and the rest made a large profession of him, but fed at the table of devils; and these grew great in violence, and strong to devour and shed blood, but the other excelled in meekness, and patient in suffering; and here were they separated into life, and death never like to meet more.

And here now may all read the worship in spirit, in such as know God in spirit, and the worship in the letter, in them that have not God, and know not what they worship: and these know not what they do, who know not what they worship; and the son of God saith, father, forgive them, they know not what they do, who saith, they worship they know not what, who worship not in spirit, who worship in their thoughts of God, but not the spirit of God in possession and knowledge, who think they do God service to kill and destroy the temple of God, because they know not him in themselves that is worshipped therein, as Christ hath foretold, and must be fulfilled at the coming of the holy ghost; And when God descends from Heaven to walk

on earth in his temple, and to require his worship to himself, out of all sects and traditions. This is his entertainment from all that look for him in observations, whose coming is within, and his kingdom is within you.

And now to you he is come, of whom you have been long talking, and in that way he appears among you of which you are preaching. The Jews had but the prophecies and shadows to know him by reading without them, but you read and preached in words of the lively pattern in spirit, and have heard of the same life and testimony, which now he bears against you in his servants; and when he comes you cannot receive him who suffers the same things among you. O England! How wilt thou stand in judgment? What wilt thou plead for thyself, when he arises to judgment, whose testimony against thee is drawing to an end? What will be thy excuse; and who wilt thou say thou tookest him to be, who now endures such contradiction against himself, such hauling, beatings, scourgings, and mockings, and banishings, imprisonings and death, without resisting; hast not thou heard of him before he came, that thou mightest have known in this thy day the things of thy peace? Hast thou not read of him that is sent to seek his lost in temples and synagogues, in markets and where the greatest of the people be; In which manner he now appears, and being refused of the rich, gathers the poor in the high-ways and hedges, and yet hath no where to lay his own head: hast thou not heard of the everlasting way of his walkings in prophets and apostles, and his pilgrimage in their bodies upon earth, who was ever a stranger in the world at his coming from Heaven? What spirit wilt thou say this is which hath conformed so many at this day, who were amongst you like wolves, to devour others, now to suffer the spoiling of their goods, and torturings of their bodies, and taking away their lives without seeking the least revenge. Wilt thou at that day say, thou had'st thought it had been the spirit of the devil, as many of you now do, though in your consciences otherwise convinced.

Alas for thee, how art thou wept over at this day! And what a lamentable sorrow have many of the Lord's servants for thee, whom thou hast cast in holes and prisons for their obedience to God, and testimony of their conscience towards God in them, whose patient sufferings under unparalleled cruelties, are no more valued with thee than if they were dogs? And this hath gone throughout thee, from the least to the greatest, till there be very few left which are not wholly hardened, so that to hear of these evil dealings, exercised upon the innocent do no more enter your hearts than the rain enters a rock: wherefore our souls are troubled for you, and our hopes concerning your healing grow daily less, and our sufferings in the Lord Jesus daily greater, hasting to the full, and what will you do in the end thereof? Or, whom shall we take to witness for you? Or, may you be compared with any that ever hardened themselves in these ways, and escaped destruction, that our hopes might revive and our prayers not cease? Did ever any thus deny the life of what you preach in words yourselves, and which some of you have in measure felt and suffered for, and have been answered in by the Lord, and your eyes have seen the vengeance of the Almighty, and how dreadful it hath been both upon kings, priests and rulers for resisting? Ah! How much better had it been for you never to have known these things, which you have seen, read and preached, than now that they should be fulfilled upon you to the uttermost? How well had it been for you, had you been as those you call heathens, rather than to profess Christ, and thus act against him at his coming, even in the same way yourselves preach him?

Alas! alas! What hath the innocent done, why he is thus used among you? Doth he cry against sin, against pride, against false worships, against corrupt rulers, corrupt teachers, corrupt lawyers, &c. And with much meekness bears his witness against these evils in you, for a testimony of light in your words, whom he hath lifted up in wrath, and zeal, and judg-

ment against the same things in the persons of others? And will not this arise against you of which you are witnesses all in one generation? But say'st thou he breaks the peace, and breaks our law, and is unmannerly, &c. But was he not ever so accounted, and is he not now in the same way he ever walked? What would that peace do for you [could you keep it whole] which is broken by reprovng sin and deceit? Is there any peace to the wicked from God? And will he keep that law which will not give him liberty to reign in his temples, and to lead his people by his spirit? Or will you plead that law against him in judgment when he comes to deal with you, who should know his law written in your hearts to limit you, and not your laws to limit him, nor your manners must not bind the conscience where he is known to be king? And this you know is truth, and have pleaded it against others, and now cannot own it; will the laws of Christ and manners of Christ, of which you read in scripture, agree with your government and peace, who calls for his kingdom to come amongst you, and profess to rule according to scriptures? How will this stand at that day when you must not be your own judges, nor by your own laws? And why is he counted your enemy, seeing his appearance now is in love, to give you light out of this, for your eternal salvation, against which he will certainly come in judgment to condemnation? Have you not heard of the love of the father to the world, who sent his son to lay down his life therein for a light to the world, that whosoever believeth therein might not be condemned? Can you read and confess this life laid down in the prophets, in Christ, in the apostles, in the martyrs, and in all in whom this righteous blood hath been shed from Abel to your time; and can you not say they were blind priests, and people who could not see this innocent sufferer in his several appearances? And what will you say of yourselves, seeing the same testimony is before your eyes, but not received? Was ever his sufferings so increased in so little a time, and for such little foolish

things, as yourselves call them, which though they seem little, yet much innocent blood hath been shed, and this life is laid down daily in many? And why should you count that so little, which your brethren count dearer than their precious life? Is there any thing makes it so but the tenderness of the one, and hardness of the other? But say you, they are guilty of their own blood to suffer for such foolish things, but who is their executioners? Do not you suffer fools daily, they shall witness against you, that there is something in it more than folly: Have you not read, "that God chooseth the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and base despised things to bring to nought things that are, and weak things to confound the mighty?" And can you read and preach this and not see it fulfilled, nor understand without a meaning: Then take heed how you call that foolish which God hath chosen for a witness against the murderer in the wise men of the world: Will you call that foolishness, whereby the mysteries of God come to be manifest, and that which he hath chosen to declare himself in openly in his temples and his worship, his service, and his suffering long in meekness, and the devil in his temples, with his servants, his pride, his rashness and cruelty, and to lay each open to the simplest heart by their fruits, which have been long covered with words, but now every one that knows a wolf from a lamb, may see and cannot be deceived.

Will you call this little which discovers so great a depth of deceit so closely hid, and open the painted sepulchres, and searches the heart of the deceitful, laying it open to yourselves and others, which else you could not have known nor believed if you were told it? Could many of you have believed the prince of pride had ruled in you, till you see him act you in cruelty on your brethren, because they cannot worship you? Or could you have believed that the murderer had been there, till you proceeded to cast into prisons your brethren, and keep them there till death for these

little things? And these things some suffer under you for a witness, and the rest are spared [though that spirit would have none to live] that the scriptures may be fulfilled, satan shall cast some of you into prison, &c. And are not these things manifestly laid open to yourselves, and all that are not willingly blind, and also the contrary spirit of Christ Jesus where these things are patiently endured? And will you call this foolishness, which thus leaves all the world without excuse, and prepares all for righteous judgment? Many had little thought these little things should have opened such great secrets, or this folly have confounded such wisdom, when a subtle spirit hath been some years getting knowledge, and words, and religion to make himself fair without, that others may believe him to be a suffering saint, and one of these little things arises in his way, which discovers him to be a devouring wolf in a moment; may not the wise then truly say, the weakness of God is greater than the wisdom of men; and God hath chosen foolish things to confound the wise.

And now the scripture is fulfilled to your face whether you [seeing] can perceive or no, and the rock of offence is laid, and the stone of stumbling though he be refused; and he is come whom we have looked for, in thousands of his saints, and the head over his church, and his body or church he is preparing daily, that the father's will may be done in earth, and that he may take vengeance of them that know him not, nor will receive his testimony, who will not believe his light that now shineth, but take pleasure in unrighteousness, though he be come after their own preaching, and many are his witnesses at this day; glory to his brightness, and let the son arise and reign forever, in whom alone the scriptures are now fulfilling, and the builders reject him, and the wicked make a prey upon him where he turns from iniquity, and the spoiling of goods is suffered joyfully, and the havoc is made of the church, and he is taken from prison, and from judgment, and the reproach of many he bears, and

the back is given to the smiter, and he that sues at the law for the coat, may take the cloak also; and he that would have the hat, take the head and body also without resisting; and prayers and tears is shed for them that hate and despitefully use him, and goods are taken away and not asked again, and this is our beloved, and this is his voice, and his sheep know it, and follow him, and thus it is written of him, and thus it is now read, and glory to him that liveth and reigneth forever, who was, and is, and is come.

TO THE RANTERS.

Woe unto you ranters of all sorts! the day of your torment approacheth, your cup is almost full, your time draws near an end, you are fed, you are grown full for the slaughter, your swelling is reached up to heaven, and the burthen of the innocent and just one in you cries on high; above all people you have dealt evil with the Lord, and treacherously betrayed the tender proffer of his spirit, you have murdered the babe in the womb, and he hath not resisted, but intreated; how many gentle reproofs hath he visited you with? And with what love and faithfulness hath he followed you from one of your evils to another, calling to you in secret, in season and out of season, before the act of your wickedness, in the act of it, and after you have done it; if by any means he might have overtaken you and prevented your ruin, and won you again, that he might have done you good, and saved you from the paths of the destroyer, all which is written where it cannot be rooted out against the day of vengeance, although you have done what you can to stop the mouth of God's witness in you, and to stifle the just

least he should reprove you, or give you light in your dark by-paths, wherein you have walked towards the Lord, as wild colts and fed horses, refusing his teachings or corrections, strengthening one another against the faithful witness of truth when you have been wounded therewith, and have belied the Lord, and said it is not he, and if it be he let him make me better, and I cannot make myself, and if the devil be in me let him cast him out, and that sin and righteousness is all one to God, and many of you openly denying God, and much more such blasphemies out of you have proceeded, all which the innocent Lamb hath borne since the day he first invited you, and the just Lord, who is in the midst of you hath seen it, and of you he will take revenge for the innocent ones sake, whom he will ease of his enemy.

Oh! the terrible day that I have seen approaching towards you, and the misery that is coming nigh, when you shall be dealt withal, as you have done against the meek and holy seed, which hath stirred in you unto life, which you have betrayed and murdered for your lusts, treacherously have you dealt, and treacherously will you be dealt withal; then shall you know that there is a God of power and judgment, when you shall be as a mad bull in a net, and the fire of God underneath you: then shall you choose death, and it shall flee from you, who have refused the way of life and puffed at it; and you who have scorned the light shall know chains of darkness: Ah! how have you mocked at reproof, the Lord hath heard your light answers, and hath borne your mockings, and you have made him to serve under your lusts, he is oppressed and grieved, and broken with your whorish hearts, and you have made heavy the burthen of the meek and lowly, against whom you have sported, and have not considered that all this is against your own souls, and to make strong bonds for your own necks, which you must know and feel when the just arises to plead against you for all that is written against you; verily, dread is upon me when I behold your end, and the way

you have to go, and how few there are to be saved; alas for you, how have you heaped deceit, and filled your vessels with that which the pure God abhors? You have eaten and drank your own damnation while you have served your lusts? You have chosen deceit rather than truth, and therewith shall you be deceived when you look for rest: you have got words, and sought out cunning ways to stop the way of judgment in you, therefore is your cup become full for condemnation from the Lord God of power, you are filled with the names of blasphemy against the most high, yea, it is written; he hath marked you out, he hath set himself against you, and while you are building a wall of falsehood, is he preparing destruction, and is watching over you for evil and not for good, and your wall you have made of cunning deceits will stand betwixt you and salvation, and keep you from finding the place of repentance.

And you high-minded professors also, who have gotten the wisdom of words, and have preached high things of God and Christ, which in you is not wrought nor fulfilled, but is a lie: this will be required at your hands with truth, and your own words shall arise against you in judgment, and when you should come to him that should answer in your behalf, your wisdom and knowledge, which you have got in that nature which hath oppressed him, will stand in your way, as thick darkness, which you cannot remove nor pass; then shall you curse your God, who hath set you on preaching words above life, and lies, by which the spirit of truth in you and others have suffered and been denied, and God's witness lies waste, and hath been resisted in its gentle calls, motions and reproofs; all which by a just hand and unresistable, will he bring on you in that day when chains of darkness hath compassed you in the horrible pit.

DECEIT DISCOVERED BY ITS FRUITS.

You that call the children of light blasphemers, and seducers, and many evil names you give out to people against them, because they preach Christ the light of the world, and Christ for righteousness and perfection, &c. Hear what blasphemy, and seducing and deceiving is, and who are the deceivers.

They were blasphemers who said they were Jews and were not, and this was blasphemy in God's account, to profess in words, what they were not in works, Rev. 2, 9. And they were blasphemers who said, he that wrought the works of righteousness was of the devil, Mark, 3. 22, 28, 29, 30. And James said, they blasphemed that holy name by which the saints were called, who drew them before judgment seats, and oppressed them, Jam. 2. 6, 7: And Saul blasphemed in persecuting for conscience towards Christ. Now this God calls blasphemy, falsely to take upon them the name of a Jew, seeing the Jews were to be a holy people to the Lord, and to bear his holy name before all the world in righteousness and truth, and the fruits of his spirit; which name they who had not the life did blaspheme, by taking the name of a Jew. And Christ calls it blasphemy, to condemn the fruits of that spirit to be of the devil. And the apostles call it blasphemy, to haul before the judgment seats, and persecute the poor that God had chosen out of the world. These were the old blasphemers in God's account; and their children be in the same steps till this day, and therein the truth finds them, and uncovers them.

So come to your rule, and be tried as you are in deed, and not in words, in God's account, and not in your own: This is the blasphemy, to say, you are Christians, and are not; to say, you are in Christ, and are not; to say, you are of God, and do the works of the devil, that old murderer and persecutor; to say, such as do the works of God are blasphemers, and to

oppress your brethren for conscience sake. And this blasphemy exceeds your fathers, by how much the name of Christ excels the name of a Jew. Will you bring forth the abominable fruits that God hates, and cover them with the name of Christ, and father them upon the spirit of Christ, and say you are in Christ, and redeemed, and baptised into him, and have communion in him, and get up likenesses and imitations from the letter to cover you with, in a nature contrary to Christ; and is not this the height of deceit and blasphemy?

What is the name of Christ, and the redemption of Christ, the death of Christ, the baptism of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the communion of Christ, and the words of Christ become a cloak for the works of wickedness: And doth not this blaspheme his name, his words, his spirit, his ordinances, and his people, and all his holy things, and cause them to be blasphemed amongst the heathen, and throughout the world. But to preach Christ the light of the world, and to confess him in us, so far as we feel the power his spirit taking us out of the power of sin, and conforming us to himself, and to bring forth the fruits of his spirit in truth and righteousness; this doth not blaspheme, but in such he is honoured, who show forth his virtues and walk in his spirit, such exalt his name; this was Paul's work when he had left off to blaspheme.

Now come to your rule and be tried, it tells you who are Christ's, and who are antichrists, deceivers, and blasphemers, and they are known by their works and not by their words; it saith, "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts: and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin: and as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ: and as you have received Christ Jesus, so walk in him: and he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself so to walk, even as he walked: and ye are all one in Christ Jesus: and if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, and all things are of God: and he that saith he knows Christ, and keeps

not his commandments, is a liar:" and this is the blasphemer, who covers himself with the words of truth, but is an enemy to the life.

Now here is the testimony of truth, lay it to the testimony of your lives, and measure yourselves therewith, and we will measure ourselves therewith also; and let truth judge the deceiver, and liar, and blasphemer by his fruits, and where he hath his seat. What will truth say where covetousness is found? Have such crucified the affections? Have proud men crucified their lusts? Have wanton ones crucified the flesh? Have swearers, liars, and cursed speakers put off the body of sin? Or is it dead where these works are alive, where there is envy, strife, suits and contentions: Is this to put on Christ, or to be all one in him? Where flattering, scorning, backbiting and slandering is, and the vessels filled with such wickedness, are all things of God? And are such baptized into his death, or planted into his resurrection: And are not they blasphemers who persecute others for conscience towards God: But to preach Christ to be the light of the world, and the hope of glory in the saints, our life, our righteousness and perfection, and to suffer for it, is not blasphemy.

Now here is your measure, and with truth are you measured, weighed, and tried; your baptisms, your communion, your redemption, your death and resurrection, and your life eternal; and in the light you and we are seen, and with the life thereof you are found, who bring forth these fruits, to be under the power of sin, unredeemed, and out of Christ the life, deceiving your own souls, and others, of the righteous inheritance amongst them that are sanctified, and blaspheming the holy name of Christ, and grieving his holy spirit, by professing that in his name which you have not, and by your evil deeds act under his name, whereby it is polluted, which was not given for a cover to such works.

In this holy name of Christ hath God placed his covenant and life, and in these holy things did holy men and women meet with God, worship him, and

dwelt with him in spirit, as his house, in which he was seen and walked; and are these now become a cover for a den of thieves, a habitation and hiding for all the abominations now acted in the world? Is not this the height of blasphemy and deceit, thus to profane his holy name, and turn it into a lie, as though all these abominable things were therein, or that he owned such as live in them.

Now lay your words and your works in the true balance, and weigh them with the words of life and power of his name, and measure of truth and honesty, and lie not against the truth; but you that are under the power of these wickednesses, and in bondage thereto, who see and are not ashamed to say, you cannot but commit these abominations while you live, do not lie against the work of Christ, in saying he hath redeemed you, when you are yet in this bondage, neither count his blood an unholy thing, in saying you are washed, nor his work imperfect, nor mix it with the work of the devil; but give to each his own, that thereby they may be known, and in what name every thing is wrought; for now is truth come to try you, and he is appearing who will have his own, and nothing but his own, under what pretence soever. Now is the heir of righteousness come to seek the fruit of his own; stand still you that use those high words against others, and see how the Lord is dealt with amongst you at this day; did not he plant a holy vine to bring forth to himself of his own nature and image? And have you let this be overrun with weeds, while you have been asleep in your sloth and idleness, cares and pleasures of the world, till all be filled with briars and thorns, and corrupt plants that now are spread and bring forth? And now the Lord is come who is the light of the world, to seek fruits of his own, and will you hold him forth these cursed fruits, and cover them with his name, as though they were his, and seek to force them upon him, whether he will or no, and fall violently upon him if he deny them?

Now if this be not so, what means this. That when any one in his name is sent to reprove sin in the streets or markets where it abounds, and in the name of Christ to declare against false worships, never set up by him [which hath been his manner in all his appearances] and to call for what is his own, and to deny the works of the devil, that presently all is in an uproar, and a tumult raised; pulling and beating, and hauling to prison, beaten in markets, beaten in your synagogues, shamefully intreated in your streets, and all for no other offence, but because he calls for his own, and denies what is not of him. Doth not this blaspheme that holy name by which they are called, and which yourselves profess. Teacher cries away with him, and tumult cries away with him, its not fit he should live. And what usage he receives from you in his members is openly seen, and God is daily bringing your works to light.

Now let the wise in heart, who can discern the signs of the times, read, if the parable be not fulfilled upon you husbandmen; and will you gild this cup over with fine words, forms and professions, and call them deceivers and blasphemers, who in love to your souls, and obedience to Christ tell you of it, and testify against it, in all long-suffering and patience. Who will be found the deceivers, and the deceived, when your gilded covers come to be pulled off, and you must drink of the cup yourselves as you have filled: and this is certainly near at hand to come upon you, and you are hasting towards it apace, your cup is almost full, and with the light are you seen; hath not the Lamb set up his testimony against you almost in every place of the nation? How many towns have you in which the innocent have not suffered violence for crying against sin, in the name of Christ, calling for the fruits of righteousness? How many prisons have you that do not speak your cruelty? How many counties have you in which innocent blood hath not been shed, which daily speaks? How many of your synagogues have the children of light born witness in.

against your evil ways, wherein they have been beaten, hauled, pulled and punished? And all this you drink up as a thing of nought, and are yet thirstier than at first? Are these the works of Christ, or of the old murderer?

Wherefore cease to blaspheme, for you are measured by that which will not lie, and with your own rule are you found in the works of the old deceiver, and the old persecutors; and in their opposition and blasphemy against the holy spirit, where it testifies against your evil deeds. So seeing you are found in the works of the old persecutors, and in their nature, take to you their name, for that is truth, and will be your inheritance amongst them; and cease to blaspheme the name of Christ, by taking it upon you to cover these abominations, and hide your sin from your own eyes, and so deceive your own souls, and others that are blind; but who comes in the name of Christ, comes in the light to prove you openly, and sees you, and gives light in the life of Christ for all to discern between the lamb and the wolf, by their nature, and not by their clothing.

Christ is the holy anointing, wherewith all that are in him see out of these things to be lead, and every appearance of his, from Cain the first murderer till this day, declares these to be the works of the devil, and by works of a contrary nature do witness against them: in which life he is the light of the world, who though he be in the midst of God's throne [seen so to his own] yet as a lamb slain amongst these unclean beasts, shining forth in the life of meeknesss, holiness, patience and long-suffering, enduring all things from his enemies. Which light and life, though to the wisdom of the wise world it appears poor, base and contemptible, and therefore by the builders rejected; yet it is full of grace and truth, and hath power with God over the devil, and all these his works, and by faith in his name, and by the virtue of his nature, all that are in him bear their testimony against the world's works and nature; for in that name is God's covenant of life

and peace, and the ark of his strength and safety in the great destruction that is to come upon the world for these things: and he is ever at the arm of God's strength, and sits at his right hand in heavenly places, and with him to gather and save his elect from the ends of the earth, and by his sufferings to redeem them from under these ungodly powers, and to break the bonds of iniquity. And therefore they who are gathered into this name, hold it as a holy power, and dare not blaspheme it, but say, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity; which name to such is salvation, and strength and righteousness, meekness and peace.

Ah, blind people, that have eyes and see not! what is become of your profession of names, your forms and ordinances? And how is God departed out of all [as to you] and your house is become desolate, and where light, truth and peace should dwell, its become a habitation of devourers, a place of owls and dragons, and night birds and beasts of prey? Such spirits rule in all your holy things, in which you trust; you cry the name of Christ, but see not, nor is your eye anointed; you cry the name of Jesus, but are not saved from your sins; you cry Christ is your king, but have not peace; you cry great is the Lord with your lips, but the devil prevails in your hearts, and carries you captive at his will, contrary to the will of the Lord; so you have got the words of saints, but the life you have lost; sheep in words, but wolves in nature, and so are in the gall of bitterness against such as retain the power of what you profess. Now are not these vain words you trust in, which do not save? This is the deceiver you tell on, who makes people believe in a lie, and now he is found in your own bosom; blessed be the day which hath brought his works to light, glory to God for evermore. Wherefore let not your own thoughts deceive you, and lead you to cast upon others that which in yourselves is found, but leave your vain and evil thoughts of others, and judge your own selves with the light of life, and measure your works with truth,

and not with thoughts; did not they that persecuted the prophets, think they did God service? And they that persecuted Christ thought the same; and they that persecuted the apostles and saints of old, knew not that they persecuted Christ Jesus, but thought they did well to punish hereticks and blasphemers; and they that slew the martyrs were of the same spirit, and so of the same mind. And now come to yourselves and your thoughts in this your work, which is the same at this day, and many of you have the same thoughts, though some of you act clearly against what you see, and so exceed all your fore-fathers; and now see who are deceivers and blasphemers, and where the Lamb is led to the slaughter.

Ah! you teachers of these nations, should you thus have used your liberty you had given of God from under the dark power that ruled [in part] in the bishops, under which some of you suffered? Was it not then in your hearts, that if you had but liberty, you would go on to the rooting out of the relics of popery, and idol worships, and persecution? Should you not have gone on with singleness of heart, as you had liberty, to the end? Then had you been faithful to God and the nations; then had you been as openers of the holy paths for men to walk in, and breakers of oppression, and men should have called you the blessed of God; then had you not inherited this cursed thing set up by your fathers the old persecutors and oppressors [whose children you are now found to appear] then had you not been at this day found fighting for their fat benefits which spued them out; suing your people for tithes, pigs, geese, smoke-penny, and such like trash, hauling poor poor people to prison, and spoiling their houses and lands for your bellies; you had been at this day in a more honorable work than raking in these dung-hills: the Lord should not have needed to have called your own hearers from under your elbows, and sent them against you into your meetings to declare your shame openly, and to cast this dung in your faces, laying open your deceitful

works and worships, which fall so heavy upon you, that you have not strength left to stand before the guilt thereof, nor have any defence, but either to fly, or cry out to the earthly powers to help you against him who is now become your adversary. It was not thus with you while you were sufferers for standing faithful to what you then knew of God's new work. I appeal to that of God in your own consciences, if then a silly boy or girl, or man or woman had asked you a question concerning your doctrine or manners, if you would have used either your feet to fly, or your hand to smite, or cried, away with him; officer take him to prison, magistrate, make a law against him. Queen Mary's acts were then abomination to you; you had then another weapon, even a measure of the spirit to inform the weak with meekness, and to convince gain-sayers: but then you were sufferers yourselves for your conscience, and so the case is changed with you, and the spirit also, as far as the sufferer is from the persecutor; only here the deceiver keeps you blind, in that you keep the old form you then had, but possessed with another spirit; so your sticking in the form hath deceived you of the suffering spirit, and the power of meekness, which had you been led by the spirit of the Lamb, you had been at this day in the fellowship of his sufferings, not tormenters of those that are. Have not I heard some of you in public declare, that if a church had persecution in it for conscience sake upon any account whatsoever, it needed no further trial to prove it to be of the devil, and not of the church of Christ. But since the same person [though no mean one of account amongst the finest sort of teachers] hath commanded them to prison, who came but into the synagogue, and spoke not one word. Alas for your souls! how are you fallen under the cursed thing, that you should be they who are left to fill up the measure of what the bishops came short of. Ah! how are you to be pitied? Will not your cutting them off rise against you, and will not God avenge their blood upon you who have condemned

their persons, but justify the things for which they were cut off, by adding manifold thereto in the same nature.

God is judge this day, and his light in your hearts, how you have dealt with him and his inheritance, by which you should have been led out of these things, into the kingdom of God, but are now found in the work of gain-saying, such as are coming out of darkness into light, neither entering yourselves, nor suffering them that would; so let truth forever stand upon the head of the deceiver and blasphemer, and let such as are seduced by them, be therewithal delivered. And blessed be the Lamb forever, whose life in this day become a light to divide the sheep from the wolves, that he may come to judgment.

A DOOR OPENED TO THE IMPRISONED SEED;

OR, CAPTIVE SOULS IN THE WORLD:

And the way of freedom, by the spirit of truth, sent out in the world in love to the sheep that have long been lost.

Which may serve any who simply seek the life of what they profess, and may shew the feigned and false in heart, the cause why they are shut out of truth's power.

Wherein the elect way is opened to the blind, with encouragement to enter and walk therein.

Also the fruits of the free born cleared from legal performances, and the children of bondage shewed the nature of their own works.

Christ Jesus known to be king in his temples, thro' the power of the holy ghost, and sword of the spirit lifted up against the man of sin in true judgment.

**A DOOR OPENED TO THE IMPRISONED SEED IN THE WORLD,
AND THE WAY OF FREEDOM BY THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH,
SENT INTO THE WORLD IN LOVE TO THE
SHEEP THAT HAVE LONG BEEN LOST.**

ALL men in the fallen state, through sin and transgression, have that spirit in them, which lusts against God, and that seed in them, and growing up with them, which daily seeks to ensnare their souls further into wickedness and vanity, and to increase their separation from God, by drawing in iniquity, and filling the temple, where God should dwell and be known, with the accursed things which God hates and cannot behold, for this evil seed being subtle and froward, prevails over them, and leads out the mind into many several temptations, presenting them with delight unto the carnal part, and outward senses, whereby the seed of God becomes veiled, and hid from the creature; so that man knows not that word of life by which he was created, nor can he come to be guided by it in himself, till the head of this evil seed be bruised, through believing in that light which comes from the life, by which

the world was made. And this is that rock which follows man with its unchangeable testimony, bearing witness only to that which is of himself, and against all the ways of that evil seed, calling and reprovng the world because thereof: which call as many as receive and hearken to by faith, come to receive the word of life, wherein power is received to become the sons of God; which power of life, as it arises in the promised seed, the head of the evil seed is bruised, and he comes to be brought under, who had taken the soul captive at his will to every vain and evil work: and so as the creature comes to be redeemed from under the power of darkness, so he comes to be guided in the light of that life, by which he was created; and that light which before reproved him for his deeds of darkness (following him from one to another, condemning him in all, being turned to by faith and obedience) now becomes his leader out of the world, to the son of God, in whom God's righteousness is revealed from above to justification; which righteousness being received and abiding in, sin is remembered no more. And thus man being changed into that divine nature which changeth the inward man, comes to love that light which before he could not, for no man can love that which is of God, until he hath received God's love.

Now the light of the world, is God's love to the world; for God so loved the world when it was in the power of darkness, that he gave his son into the world, a covenant of light, that whosoever followeth him should not abide in darkness, but should have the light of life. Now God's love stands in Christ, the light of the world; that's his covenant with the world, which whosoever rejects and receives not, is out of God's love, and in the enmity out of God's covenant; neither can he in that state believe that God's love is in it. And this is the cause why men speak evil of the light, who love their evil deeds, and cannot receive it as God's love, and the way to life, to such it is condemnation; not that it was intended thereto; but men

loving darkness rather than light, it becomes condemnation: but to him that believes, and is obedient, to him it is precious; for who follow it out of the evil world, receive the nature of sons, and the love of the father, which the world cannot receive, and the power of godliness, and treasure of eternal life; and this is not given to any till they come out of the world, as he is not of the world, for therein stands God's covenant with Abraham's seed forever.

So God's love to the world (while men are in that corrupt nature) and the witness of the spirit of truth, is to reprove the world of sin, and testify condemnation against the deeds thereof; but to such as have received it, it's a leader, comforter, and saviour; and this is the cause why the one loves it, tho' the other hates it, each nature speaking that state in which it stands towards God, and as it hath obtained from him in Christ Jesus, love or condemnation; and he that will not receive God's love that calls him out, must abide under the power of that seed which God hates; and this is he that seeks to murder him that is in God's love, the evil one having power to blind that mind which denies the light so far, till he cannot see that the murderer is of the devil, but thinks he is doing God service; and this in the end hath ever befallen such professors as reject the light of the world, for he that walks in darkness knows not whither he goes; but God is light, and in him is no darkness at all, nor hath darkness any fellowship with him: Here is known the children of God, and the children of darkness; he that loves the light, brings his deeds to the light, and hath fellowship with God in his deeds, and works the work of God; and he that denies the light, works in darkness, and cannot believe the power that is in the light, being under the power of darkness.

And therefore he that is born after the flesh, knows not him that is born after the spirit of light, nor can judge of his ways, which are strange, and wonders in his carnal sight, neither knows he by what power and love that is, by which he overcomes the world, and

takes pleasure in denying the pleasures thereof, and vanquisheth all its vanities out of the heart and mind, and can no more rejoice in the world, nor make merry with its mirth, but rejoiceth in the truth, and is made glad with that which saves him from such folly; the wicked know not the life of the righteous, nor the spring whence his virtues arise, nor the power of his change, nor the end of all his patient sufferings and trials, but stand wondering at it as folly and madness, that eye being blinded by the god of this world, which should give the sight thereof, and the soul being in bondage under the prince of darkness, wherein it cannot inherit immortal treasure. And this must be, till there be a denying, and coming out of the world, to receive that inheritance of divine light and understanding, which none can receive nor be one withal, but as they come out of the world, from under that seed of enmity which seeks to pervert all the right ways of God, and wrest all his gifts to man's destruction as far as it can prevail.

Now this destroyer, or seed of enmity against the life of man and his salvation, is kept from that sudden effecting his purpose upon the creature in whom he is head, by no other thing but the patience and long-sufferings of God, who willing that none of his creatures should perish, but that if by any means all might hear-ken to the truth, and so recover themselves out of the snares of this subtle deceiver and be saved: wherefore he doth many times long bear and forbear with much patience, striving by the spirit of truth with man, checking and reproofing, and warning him even many times, at that very instant when the act of sin is committing: and if the evil one have got such power in the creature, that he will not suffer him to mind reproof before, nor in the act of sin, then afterwards when the heat of temptation is cooled, then he shews the evil and danger of such wickedness, that so he might preserve fear in him, against the next temptation.

And thus (in many) he keeps back destruction a long time; so that some are long e'er the wicked one

get them to fill up their measure: and some in that time of God's patient forbearing and long-suffering, come to repentance, and turn to that which reproves, and are saved; and others go on to destruction, which swiftly they draw upon themselves, after once the spirit hath ceased striving and reproving; for then the fear is lost, and the evil one hath his liberty at his own will, the creature being given up of the Lord, and the spirit of truth departed from them, being left to deceit, who have dealt deceitfully with the spirit of truth, having only a form of godliness, without the power; for the power of God is in that spirit, and in that life which is known by withstanding the evil one, which is hid in such in whom death reigns; only such who are born of the spirit, have the life and power, and know its strength and virtue unto eternal salvation; the rest are left to their own thoughts and notions.

And here is the cause of that strong contention which hath ever been betwixt the children of light who are born of that spirit of truth, and have their light and strength in the inward man; and the world's professors, whose expectation stands in something without them, which others have spoken of, who had it in them. And so not knowing the power and mystery of the living faith, which is holden in a pure conscience, which only hath power to bring out of the world's darkness, they are kept captive therein, contending against the spiritual light; and so while they are in the world go about to comprehend and measure that spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive, neither knoweth, thinking that spirit of light and life to have no other operation in such who are led out of the world, and born thereof, and in whom Christ lives, than they find it to have in themselves, who stumble at it, and are disobedient and unbelieving in heart; whereas indeed to us that believe, it is elect and precious who come to it for all supplies; but to the wisdom and profession of the world, it is a rock of offence, and stumbling stone, yet it is the head of the corner; and in them who revile it and reject it, it is become all they

have in them that is good, true and faithful towards God, or their souls, as their hearts in secret do witness to them, and leaves them without excuse many times.

For even they that reject this light and spirit, have nothing else that can show them so much as one of their thoughts, or divide to their understanding the evil from the good, either in thought, word, or action, or that can really show them what is of God really, and what is of him, who doth but show himself to be God to deceive withal, and is not; nor without it can they perceive the several motions of every several spirit that is in them, to receive the good, and deny the bad; nor can they know the several roots of life and death, which plant to pluck up, and which to feed on; and how can such labour in God's vineyard? And indeed, without obeying this light the body is a house of darkness, and a habitation of every deceitful spirit, and the heart desperately wicked, and no man knows it, but he in whom the light of truth shineth; and he that declares to man his thoughts, his name is the Lord of hosts. Thus is he the head of the corner, which the stumbler cannot comprehend in his wit, and so rejects him, without whom there is no building, nor working the work of God.

And therefore, you sons of the darkness of this world, mind in yourselves what it is you set yourselves against; is it not that light which would limit and chain the evil one in you, that which condemns you for every evil work, secret and open, which will not let you be proud and wanton, and lustful? That which in your own hearts testify against you for deceit and falsehood towards God, and towards men, deceit in religion, hypocrisy and falshood, making a form of what you are not? Deceit in your dealings with men, in your tradings and speakings, and several actings, both as rulers, priests and people, without respect of persons, nor any other thing, but hath respect only to that of God in you, which is of his nature, given to you to guide man in the light of God, out of all the ways of the deceiving spirit.

And now he that comes to you with this doctrine, comes near you, being manifest in spirit to that of God in your own hearts, you are pricked therewith, and then the evil one is stirred up in you, to fight against that which is truth in yourselves, and answers to the truth which is spoken to you, by another without you, from the same spirit of truth, which by you is rejected; And thus you joining with him that rises up in wrath against the truth in yourselves, and denying that which should chain and bind the evil one, you deny the Lord of life, and give strength to the evil one to crucify the just in you, and quench the spirit of truth, and weary the Lord with striving, till you be given up wholly to the power of darkness, who will then keep you seeking salvation without, whilst he is heaping up evil within.

For that which seeks to devour your souls is within you, whilst he is leading you out to seek salvation; and that which condemns you, is in you; sin is within before it be acted, so must salvation be within before you be cleansed; though the old deceiver hath taught people to think they are saved by believing God only at a distance, who neither know nor worship him in the spirit and truth, nor are their bodies his temples, nor can the holy one dwell or walk in them, because of uncleanness, but their vessels being filled with the powers of darkness, and the heavenly place with spiritual wickedness, hath caused God to depart from the children of men for this uncleanness; and yet the liar speaks peace, and preaches salvation, and the creature believes so, being filled with darkness: but the children of light receive not this doctrine, who see and feel cannot be content with words, but with power. A talk of God satisfies not the soul of a good man, till he feel his presence and power; God only without, and the devil within, is not the saint's faith nor salvation; but God in them, and the devil cast out, is their glory and strength, and they are bold through the might of his spirit in them, to war daily against the prince of this world, because they know him who is greater in them.

than he that is in the world. And this is the faith that overcomes the world; and he that's born of the spirit, hath the father and the son, and he that hath the devil is his enemy, and knows him not whence he is, but judgeth him after the flesh and outward appearance; but the child of light wars not after the flesh, but after God, that he alone may have the glory, who is all in them that they have to glory in, who gives their souls the holy victory.

And now, were not you wholly blind in your minds, and past feeling, you could never sit down so besotted, as to believe you are saved, while you are daily captivated in sin, and led many times to do that which you know you should not, and this by the power of lust in you, enticing and leading you into every temptation, and causing you to fall into many hurtful evils, which gather strength and rooting daily in you, heaping wrath and vengeance, by adding sin unto sin, which must all be accounted for in the end thereof, when you have filled your vessels to a full measure: and can you say you are redeemed from the devil, while he hath this power in you, that you are not able to resist him, but are led captive at his will, contrary to all fear of God, or power of righteousness? Are your bodies redeemed to God, and are you members of Christ, whilst you yield your members unto unrighteousness? Or, are you saved who are servants of sin? In what stands the life and power of your redemption, of your faith, and of your salvation, seeing nothing can stand with God but that which brings forth to him? Is not he in the bonds of iniquity, who is bound to bring forth iniquity? Is not he a servant of sin, in whom it reigns? Is not he the child of bondage, who is bound to bring forth what the evil one begets in him, and to serve him in what he moves him unto? Mind this, you who are born after the fleshly spirit, who act according to his will, who worketh in your flesh to bring forth unto death. Doth your profession save you, who are not turned from dead works? The foundation of repentance is not yet laid in you, and therefore death

reigns over you, contrary to the life that should bring forth to God; and this is the servant of sin's state, and spirit of bondage, and not the heirs state, who inherits God's righteousness, and brings forth thereof unto that spirit which pleaseth God, as you bring forth to the flesh, and please the world: and these two seeds are within, and are at enmity and disagreement, and there can be no concord betwixt them, no more than between light and darkness; and their several fruits are made manifest with the light, which condemns the one, and confesseth the other to be of God, and wrought in God.

And as many as are quickened with the spirit of life, have the feeling of this before they bring forth the fruits thereof into the world, and are come to the discerning of things that differ in nature and effect, by the tasting and handling of the word of life, and knowledge of that election which was before the world was, by which they are made able to judge the ground and end of every motion in them, or to them; which abiding in, they need not man to teach them, neither can they be deceived; which makes them with boldness bring forth openly such words and works as are begotten in them by the word of life, which shews the whole world to lie in wickedness, and makes it manifest in the light of life, by whom the prince of this world is judged and condemned, and the secrets of hearts made manifest, according to the nature of every several spirit which comes up to the day of the Lord's appearance.

And to this spirit of truth must an account be given by all flesh living; for this is he that lives to all generations, and is unchangeable in his witness against the evil seed, into whatever form he transforms himself, in words and profession; yet is there no agreement betwixt their several natures, be they in one person, or be they in a family, or be they in a nation, there is not agreement; nor can any one person, family or nation serve them both; but whoever serves the one, hates the other, and condemns him: so he that serves deceit, condemns the just, and so condemns that

which should save him, and must judge him in the end. And here is the cause of that fleshly liberty which some have got for the present, where the witness is slain; and also of the horror of conscience, where the just appears toward judgment; the unstabled estate of such who are not faithful: but the eveslasting peace and power in such where the just hath dominion, and the present sorrows of such who are diligent in waiting and wrestling to the end of the world, from the beginning of the work of Christ Jesus, through faith and patience; and all these are comprehended with him who hath learned Christ, by being faithful to that spirit of truth, sent in his name, to testify what is of him in every vessel, and what is of the spirit that lusteth against him, and keeps the creation in bondage.

And this is that one way to life and salvation, holden forth freely by the spirit of truth, sent forth by the father in the name of Christ Jesus, who hath its several operations in several vessels, according as he finds them towards God, in some he is a condemner, in some a leader and teacher towards God; in some a perfect justifier in the sight of God presenting them, who also gives several gifts, and power to such as receive this testimony of Jesus Christ; yet is he but one in all, unchangeably just, equal and holy, who by the power of his word changeth all things that are changeable, and bringeth all things to the beginning, before people, nations and tongues were divided, where man lives by the spirit of a pure life.

NOW ALL THAT DESIRE TO BE SET FREE FROM THIS BONDAGE
BEFORE-MENTIONED, AND FROM THAT LAW OF SIN AND
DEATH THAT HATH ITS STRENGTH IN THE FLESHLY
PART, DILIGENTLY MIND TO FEEL IN
YOURSELVES, AS FOLLOWETH.

THE spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, by whom the world was made in the beginning, hath a law that is spiritual, proceeding from himself; which law gives

light in spirit to good and bad, testifying against the power of sin and death; which light, as many as receive by faith and obedience, are brought thereby under the law of life, which whoever is faithful in, are led in such ways, whereby that part in man in which the law of sin hath its power, is crucified and slain, and the seed of the covenant thereby comes into dominion; for by the man of sin the soul is kept in bondage, while the strong man keeps the house, whose strength is in such things as the carnal mind takes pleasure in; which things the law of the spirit calls them from, who mind it in the light thereof, and leads to exercise the mind in spiritual things, and to feed on the word of life, whereby the inward man is strengthened, and made to grow up in the stature of a spiritual man, filled thereby with spiritual power, life and virtue, to bring forth fruit unto God, and to live to him, as the other lived to the flesh and brought forth unto death.

Thus the spirit of life draws with the light, and saith, come, to all that mind its voice; and as many as obey, he changeth and feedeth with the new life, whereby they become new creatures, born of the spirit: and the fleshly spirit it draws, and saith, come, holding forth visible idols to take the carnal affections, and to captivate the mind from the spirit of life into carnal objects, who promise much to the eye of earthly wisdom, and have a likeness of a substance in them, but the end is death, and their whole life is in captivity to vanity, and separation from God: and here are the children of freedom, which are in Christ Jesus, made manifest to the world, by their coming out of it; and the children of bondage manifest, who cannot deny to serve it; and betwixt these two is no agreement: for he that is a servant of sin, is free from righteousness, and the servant of righteousness is free from sin; and as he that is in the flesh cannot please God, neither can he that is in the spirit please the world: these are children of several kingdoms, and several natures: and he that's born after the flesh

hath that spirit which lusteth enviously, and seeks to devour the creation; and he that's born again after the spirit of life, is brought into the restoration, as in the beginning, and bringeth forth to God the fruits of eternal life and salvation in the creation.

And as by the creatures yielding and consenting to the subtle one, the life is lost, and the evil seed gets strength in man to rule and bring forth after the power of darkness; so by the creatures believing in the light, and by yielding to the motions of the life of holiness, and the law thereof, comes the evil seed to lose its strength and feeding, which is upon carnal things; and that life which is by faith comes again to be renewed in the vessel, and arises through the spirit, and reigns above death; and the righteousness and virtue of that life is not of the nature of flesh and blood, but of God; and is made manifest in the earthen vessel, by the life and power of the spirit, against the will of the flesh, and the lusts thereof: and thus comes man again into the restoration and redemption of the body, into the free service of that spirit and life, of whom he is the offspring, and for which, and by which he came into the world; and here is true reconciliation and peace with God, and no condemnation, but unity in the spirit and life as the father and son are one, the lust being slain, the enticer denied, and the accuser cast out, and all things become new, and all things of God; here is no more the house of bondage to sin, but the glorious liberty of the sons of God; that nature being quickened that is spiritual, it doth not feed on carnal pleasures, but upon God; so the inward man becomes a natural branch of the holy root, and a plant of the living God, bringing out freely what the root sends forth, in which God is glorified, and the vessel made honorable, and the soul filled with peace and fatness, and hath no more sorrow and death to oppress it; and the light and life which is in Christ Jesus manifest in the spirit of truth, is the first and last in this work; and here is seen how unnatural man, driven from God, is become to that pure life

which gives him breath and being, and would preserve him from destruction, who is so wholly fallen from it, and become contrary to it, in nature and judgment, that of all things in the world it's the greatest cross to be guided by that light which arises in him from that holy life, and daily calls him in spirit thereinto, being degenerated into a contrary nature, more subtle and selfish, is willing to join with the enemy thereof in any way against the pure light that's in himself, to revile, reproach, murder, and turn it into darkness, by covering it with deceit; though man in this state hath nothing in him but it, that is of the nature of God, holy and just, or that will call him from the paths of the destroyer, into the way of life, or bring forth through him any fruits of obedience, or spiritual worship that God will own; nor hath he any other thing in this world that is always present with him; to give him to see when he is enticed with his lust, and tempted to sin, nor the way how to escape the temptation; yet is man so exalted in the contrary nature, that he hath forgotten his creator, and lifts up the heel against the reproof of his spirit, trampling upon the lowly motions of the holy one, and the law which out of his mouth proceeds, counting the light and virtue of his life to be a low and contemptible thing, not able to save. Thus doth lost man daily despise the spirit of grace and truth in the inward parts, and resists the holy ghost against their own souls, and denies his pure and single eye, and holy movings by which the holy men of God spoke, saw and discerned in all ages, as the scriptures do testify; all which is lost as to that man who is exalted above the pure light and lowly spirit, in which God meets man to teach him the knowledge of the truth.

And therefore you teachers and people of all sorts and sects, who so violently have set yourselves against the light of the spirit within you, and within others; when it calls to you for a return to it; How long will you kick against that which pricks you at the heart for your contrary walkings, and dissembling profes-

sions? Why will you not be still and commune with it in your own hearts, that you might come to a true feeling, and discern what nature it is of, and from whence it is, and what way it works, and against what? And also what nature that is in you, which it chiefly condemns and works against, and from whence that is? That so with the light of truth you might come to judge things that differ in the ground, and in the end, that you might so come to walk in the light, in judgment, and in truth of heart towards God and man. And let the single truth of God without mixture answer these things following feelingly in you.

What is the cause that while you are professing to seek God and serve him, you should be so unwilling to serve him in that which is of his own nature, and to worship him in spirit and truth, in your own vessels, whose bodies should be the temples of God, who is not worshipped in temples made with hands, nor in a nature contrary to himself? Or will the talking of what he is or was in others, in whom he was known to walk and speak, deliver your souls from the power of the prince of darkness and deceit, that is in yourselves. unless you can by faith receive him in you also, as they received him, and feel his power overcoming and casting out him that hath you captive at his will, against your faith and conscience? Or, will God be found in you, or accept your worship, whilst his temple is possessed with his enemy, and a contrary nature act you therein? Can you meet with God in any thing but that which is holy, who hears not the prayer of him that regards iniquity.

Wherefore your first work should be to know him in you whom God accepts, for he alone must present you to the father, who appears without sin; understand what I say, he that appears without sin, else you are reprobate in God's sight; there is no hope without knowing Christ in you the everlasting priest, to offer up upon the altar of atonement. Holiness must make one in spirit; and though by the height of your minds, he that is without sin below and little in you, yet without

me you can do nothing: then what are you doing who are not in the holy spirit? Can you worship by tradition, or be saved by the letter? Will you make Christ a liar, who saith, without me you can do nothing? I am the light of the world; every branch (saith Christ) that abideth not in me, is cast out, and withereth, and is for the fire. Mind this, you that reject holiness in spirit, and the light, from the holy spirit in you: are you not cut off, who are not in that which is holy; are you not withered and for the fire? Are you not cast out, who have no abiding-place in that which is holy? Have you power and knowledge in you to do evil, but not to do well? Are you not cut off from the true vine, and planted into a wild vine of a contrary nature? Your corrupt tree is known by its fruits, which brings forth, but not to God, nor from God, who are cut off and withered, without Christ and without God in the world, who would teach you and make you free; here is your loss and nakedness manifest, and the short bed, and the short garment, who have not the holy spirit to cover you, nor bear you harmless.

Now, will you say, you hope you are born again of the spirit, and are baptised into the spirit, and walk in the spirit, and worship in the spirit, and then are gone out for salvation and light, and speak evil of that light within, as not able to bear you up against him that is of the world? Now your hope is not an anchor, nor your faith in that which overcomes the world, as the saints do, whosoever is born of God, overcomes the world: and, he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, that the evil-one toucheth him not.

Now mind, where is he that keepeth himself? And where is the evil-one? Let truth answer in you, if there be any knowledge of God in the house. Is not that he who gives you light, that would keep you from the evil-one? And should you not be one in him that would keep you from evil? Who is your keeper? Ye watchmen that are blind, do not you watch in vain, who know not the Lord to keep your city, else how should the evil-one have his liberty in and out without a pow-

ful resisting? Consider in yourselves, where is he that gives you to see when the evil-one toucheth you, and when he tempteth but toucheth not? What nature is he of that doth this for you? And where is he? Is he not light and understanding, and is he not in you; and is he not of a contrary nature to the evil-one that tempteth? And doth he not shew you the temptation, before you consent thereto (if you mind him:) Then what is the cause that the evil is committed, seeing the light appears against him? Is it not because you join to the evil one, and like his motion better than his that testifies it to be evil. And so you deny the holy-one and the just, and become one with the evil-one; and then you say, the light is not able, when you have denied it, and have not been faithful to join to it in counsel and strength, but have given your strength to the contrary; but they that are born of it, do not so; but when they are shewed the evil-one and his temptation, be it whatever it be to, or under what pretence soever, if the light testifies against it, then is their diligence, watchfulness and sobriety, used against it in the fear of God, lest they should draw from the light and enticed; and with all their power they join in obedience to the way of the light, so that there is a war and wrestling e'er the things be over; and being resisted steadfast in the faith, he flees, and the glory returns to God who dwells in the light. And if at any time the evil-one prevail, the creature comes to see the cause to be in himself, and not in God, and for it is humbled and warned; and this he comes to see when the temptation is over, and the enemy fled, and he is come again into coolness with God in the light, which while the darkness was up, and the enemy in the house, he saw not.

And thus is experience gained through tribulations and trials, which they who endure not, come not to learn of God, but fall under temptation to evil, through unfaithfulness to the light, and so are captives at his will who tempts to evil, and the enemy of all righteousness reigns over all the members, leading out the eyes, ears, hands and heart to iniquity and vanity, and

the tongue to plead for it, against every reproof; having denied the reproof of the spirit of truth within yourselves, it cannot be received from others, for in that house the contrary spirit wholly reigns, which turns away the ear from hearing of knowledge, and the heart from good understanding in spirit.

And this is the cause why you are kept without the feeling of God and his power, and knowledge of his word, and the mysteries of his powerful counsel are hidden from you, which he reveals to the faithful, who have overcome through faith and patience, in whom satan is subdued and trodden under foot; for in whom this devourer is above, whatever God gives or reveals to the creature, the deceiver is ready to pervert it quite to a contrary end, that God never intended in the giving thereof, and to lift up a wrong nature, and exalt a contrary spirit, which God hates, and this is evident by the light of truth throughout the world. What are the gifts of God which the spirit of the world abuses not? If God gives wealth, where that spirit is above, how is the creature puffed up therewith above the rest of his brethren, as though he were no more of the same mould and blood, but as God would he be worshipped; if he gives beauty, it's turned into lust, pride and wantonness, begetting and deceiving adulterous eyes; wisdom is turned into folly and wickedness, scorning the simple, and over-reaching the plain hearted, and such as have most of it, are but most able to compass their corrupt ends; when God gives grace, it's turned into lasciviousness, and God's long forbearance into hardness of heart; religion and profession into a cloak for sin and hypocrisy; fasting and praying, to accomplish men's self ends against such as they would swallow up, &c.

And not one thing that God can give, which this evil one will not subvert and turn against the giver, so that though God be free in himself, and good and plentiful in mercy, yet he doth not so shew himself to such in whom the strong man keeps the house, who makes the creature thereby but more wanton to kick against

his Creator, and puffs him up to forget his maker and feeder; and so a fruitful land maketh he barren, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, which from the beginning was not so.

Neither is it so with the children of light and counsel; who have the giver in their hearts above the gift, where the pure counsel sits to order the gifts, where every good and perfect gift is brought forth in its own nature, form and manner, undefiled, or disfigured with the spirit of the world; but the springs run forth from the clean fountain, and the plant and fruit is holy like the root, where the spirit is clean, and the flesh undefiled, and every thing as it comes from God, as in the beginning, and the old man put off, and all things of God; there every gift of God is known by its fruits, and nature, and ends, in such vessels; the gifts of God return to God by glorifying him here on earth, where riches bring forth good and merciful works, and not pride and vain glory; wisdom stands up against oppression, and not to deceive; and through grace doth righteousness reign unto life eternal; their religion is pure, and unmixed with the world, but separated from it, whereby the sons and daughters of God are known in the streets, by his virtue and comeliness put upon them by him, with which they are covered over, as a garment, even with all the fruits of the holy spirit of faith and truth, which is in Christ Jesus, who is Lord over all in such vessels; and these are the vessels of honour fit for the Lord to shine through against his adversary (the world's spirit) in fruits that cannot be condemned, being not defiled in the vessel, but manifest as they come from above, answering to that of God in every heart, in which the evil one hath neither part nor power; these are sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of an unclean generation shining as lights; and this alone honours God, which is of God; and this answers the end of man's creation, and God's bounty, who is rich in such, till they come to be filled with all the fulness of God, which he withholds not from such; but from the unclean and slothful, such who defile the

flesh with lusts, from such he withholds his riches and fulness; therefore the world knows not the sons of God, nor whence they are, nor whither they return, who follow Christ out of the world, never returning thither again, but to testify against it, whose vessels are no more filled with lust, and the spirit of this world to bring forth thereto, but are filled with the holy ghost, who hath made them new creatures for himself to walk in, and shine forth in fruits of the spirit.

And now you wild colts, and barren earthly minded professors, who have filled your vessels with wantonness and deceit, and all sorts of fleshly minds: in vain do you hunt about with your old bottles, and think to retain the heavenly treasure, you gad about, but to no purpose in the sight and esteem of God, for you are in the wrong work, while you are in the worlds nature; and in the old creation; your words and ordinances are empty of the life of God, and his fruits you cannot bring forth nor receive, till you be renewed; nothing you can do will avail you but a new creature; your old vessels are full of the old wine from the wild grape; and that's above in you which defiles the pure conscience, so God with-holds his gifts from you, which abound in his new creation, and you know nought of it but what condemns you; so you fight against it, and say, there is nothing now perfect, and so would condemn the new with the old, and judge them alike; and thus you err, not knowing the gift of God, nor the works of his hands, which are all perfect, as he is perfect, who walks not in the defiled temple, nor lies in the bosom of harlots, who are out of his power and perfect way of a holy life; therefore

Your work would profit you most, to take the candle of truth, and sweep the house at home, and cast out the old leaven, and whatever is of the world, and wait in that which works in spirit against the old, till therewith all be made new; and the new vessel which will not receive the old, nor mix with it: that is it which will hold with the new, which God will fill

with himself; there the seed may spring and not be hindered, and the lilly grow without being choaked; there the lamb may be safe from the fox, and the pure from pollution; which can never be, while your covetous, proud, lustful, earthly minds are alive in you, or ought that therewith you have treasured in, or grows up in that ground, the plant of God is more pure and tender than to grow amidst such pollution. So to judgment you must first come, and own your condemnation upon all the old, before you can receive of the new, or it grow in you. What agreement hath the spirit of meekness with the spirit of pride? contentedness with covetousness? holiness with lust? Christ with Belial? light with darkness? Read and understand, here is the cause why you have sought and laboured many years, and many of you further off than at first, but none have found freedom indeed, nor that rest where the thief and unclean come not to devour. Consider these things while they are near you, lest your hearts harden in you through unbelief, and the deceit of lusts: and if you will come, then refuse not him that calls and gives you light in the dark, but faithfully manage the watch and the war on his behalf with all your power, till all be brought under his feet, which he testifies against in you, and do not answer the truth (when he calls) with deceit and excuses, lest he turn away from you, and call others more worthy. If you say the world holds you back, then it's time you should not delay to break those bonds that are grown so strong already, they will be stronger every day, and what will the end be? Consider and understand like men, and say not, you have not strength, but turn with that strength with which you have long served the world, and you will find God [that gave it you] the better master; and the redeemer is served with less vigor than the spirit of bondage; and do but faithfully give the strength you have of God unto the service of God in the light, and he requires no more than he gives; it's deceit that makes these excuses, and not a willing mind; and were you in the

fear of God, these words you would not utter against yourselves a witness; for these are not the words of Children of Love, nor obedient Servants, but of such as are without.

Therefore in truth of heart consider, what state you are in, and who is your father, and hath power in you, who thus speak; can you do evil with both hands, live to your lusts, serve the world, compass the earth for your profits and pleasures, with power, wisdom, and delight; and have you not power to do well? Now should you see your strong captivity, and how you are degenerate from God, and the end of your creation, with your whole strength, and become altogether reprobate to God's service; and for this should your hearts be smitten with sorrow, did you love God or his true worship, and that evil tongue you would bridle, and your eyes you would limit from vanity, your ears from pleasure, and your hearts from deceit, that so you might only hearken to the light, if by any means you might come to hear the voice of him that's sent into the world; to call you from under the power of satan unto the living God, by preaching light to you who sit in darkness, and are dead while you live; neither can you be quickened till you hear the voice of the son of God, which the deceiver keeps you from in your worldly pleasures, long prayers, and a lying profession, taking the saint's words to cover you from true judgment, but have not their spirit nor power to live their lives; nor are you plants of that root and nature which brings forth to God, as he is, in whom there is no change: and this is not the sacrifice that God accepts, which is brought in the unclean vessel without his power and renewed strength.

Wherefore that nature which is become so wholly unprofitable, should be denied its will, and its way stopt; and to that seed you should die which rules in that strength you have, and runs to and fro to seek for itself, but seeks not God first; and to that which is pure must you turn, and therein wait for the anointing, and the rising of the holy seed; for it's the most holy that's

anointed to rule in you, e're you can know Christ in you; and without Christ you can do nothing; and that seed which is neither willing nor able, is not he, but is the seed of the evil-doer, as is manifest by his fruits, which must be denied, his thoughts, his words, his profession, his prayers, his lusts, his sin, and his righteousness, for it's all of one nature, and stands up in you to withstand the coming of the seed of the covenant, Christ Jesus the life of God, and light of men, which hath God's power which was in the beginning, God's righteousness, and is to all generations; whom the heavens must receive until the end of all these things, and the restitution of the creation to God, till which you cannot know his appearance in you without sin, who died for sin.

Whose light (as is before declared) shews you his law, and the spirit of prophesy testifies of him to come, whose way before his face must be prepared [if you have ears to hear and understand;] and all your crooked, untoward wanton ways must be made straight, and your hidden subtle ways made plain; and the refiner's fire must pass through your house, and take hold on all that will burn, till it be consumed; for till the filth be purged out, and an end made of sin, God dwells not in his temple, nor is everlasting righteousness brought in for an inheritance to eternal life.

And here will you come to learn the first principle of pure religion and the doctrine of the beginning of Christ, and the foundation of repentance from dead works laid in you, then will you see what kind of treasure your wanton careless minds have treasured up in your vessels, and your deceitful and unprofitable words and works, you will then see, by that which will not lie; then will you find that all will fail but truth; and what you have gathered by craft and deceit, will stand in no stead, but will deceive you: truth in the inward parts must be your stay, if any you find, for to that rock you will be forced to fly in the end for refuge, when all else is weighed and found too light

to abide the trial, though now it be lightly esteemed, and you say it's not able to save; it's that light within that must give you the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus, nothing without will make your peace, but that which works in you, that must cleanse the house of your adversary, and ordain peace for you.

And this is that which made the holy men of God, who have gone before you in this regeneration, to preserve a clean house and a pure conscience, above all that the world can afford or promise, knowing that in the day of trial all will prove a lie, but what is truth in the inward parts; and that none are true worshippers, but who worship the father in the spirit and in truth: and the whole mystery of faith and of godliness is learned within, and holden in that which is pure; and the pure in heart only see God, and have heard and learned of him; and such are sons indeed, who are born of the spirit, and led by the spirit, and filled with the spirit; and these have power, light and understanding to do well, who have that of God in them, which is holy, and that spirit which the devil is not able to resist; and every child of God hath this in their measure, by which they resist the world and overcome it, even that which is born of God; that only overcomes, which is faithful and will not forget himself: blessed only are they who have of this in them in the evil times, which God cannot forget, nor suffer to be tempted above measure, such only have that election, for whose sake the spirit or soul is saved: and in this only doth the creature find favour in the sight of God in the day of vengeance, when God ariseth to plead with all the earth for their wickedness; a seed shall be saved, but that is not it which saith and doth not.

And therefore think of this, all you who mock at a pure conscience, and reject that of God within, and speak lightly and reproachfully of it; did you know whom you reproach, and against what it is you sport yourselves, you would rather gnaw your tongues than

utter a word against it; you would change your minds, and seek it with those that seel all, that they may find it; though it be little in you, (as to you) so that you dare not trust to it, yet all that have proved it, prize it as the great power of God to salvation; and whether you can receive it or no, you have no election but what is in it: in this did Noah find grace in the sight of God, when the earth was corrupted; and Noah walked with God, and was just and perfect in his generation, and in that which was just and perfect he was saved; and in the righteous seed which was grieved with the uncleanness of Sodom, was Lot saved. Now if you can read your election you may, it's only that which was before sin was, that is grieved at sin, and testifies in man against uncleanness; and this seed stands elect before the world was, if you can receive it, and make it sure, you may, but you which say, you have not power to do well, and deny his call, cannot do it.

He that calls out of sin, and the soul that is vexed because of sin, is little and lowly in you; but the God of this world is lofty, strong and powerful in you, and hath lifted up your hearts on high, to seek great things far above that pure principle of true light and understanding, which God hath chosen and elected to himself, and wherein he will commune with man, and teach him his fear and knowledge, and give him renewed strength, and of his spiritual power, and salvation from sin.

And now your lofty looks are too high for this door, and the day of this small and simple one you despise; these waters are too still for you to drink on, and to stay and wait for great things where so little is seen, you have not faith; so you outrun your rest, and the poor in spirit take the kingdom before you, to whom the election and blessing belongs.

Now consider, you that are lofty, rich and high minded, mind the calling of God and his election; hath he elected the rich in notion, and high in profession, the proud and the wanton? Hath not he chosen the

weak and poor, foolish and contemptible to confound all this? But he doth not confound the election, the poor, lowly and meek; the pure and holy in heart and soul he doth not confound nor shut out, but he that is pure, meek, and holy, calls; and the soul that is meek, lowly, and loves holiness, it answers in all conversation, obtaining grace to be holy, as he that calls is holy. Here is the calling made sure, and the election by answering thereto, who keeps in the call, and in the election, which was in God before transgression was; but you that deny him that calls you out of darkness into light, by the power of his holiness, lowliness, meekness and truth, manifest in spirit in you, according to the gift of God in his tender mercy, by which this springs from above, as was in the beginning; I say, you that reject this, to lay hold on something that is set up without you since the beginning, you deny your calling and election, and betake yourselves to a changeable thing, which the election is not, nor he that calleth thereunto: for the election hath been preserved in God, when all the world else, professions and people have been deceived, defiled, destroyed and changed. And that is it which is always pure, as God is pure, and changeth not; and he that goes out from this, doth not make it sure to himself, by well-doing; for the election is in the light and power of holiness, and truth, which they that say and do not, are out of.

Therefore return from off the mountains, you that have lifted up yourselves on high without God, who have a form without the power of God, and feel after that which is pure, lowly and just in you, for God is a spirit, and in the spirit and truth is he known and served, and there is his counsel received, in that which is truth in your inward parts: feel that which never sinned near you, then you draw near to God in spirit, and keep there, and wait and hearken, what the spirit saith, which never sinned, with that principle in you which would not sin, with that wait upon the holy spirit, and mind his motion continually, and be obedient thereto, that you may once come to serve the liv-

ing and not the dead, that you may be able to say, "your Redeemer liveth," and that you know him, and have heard his voice that is holy, as God is holy, that is lowly and meek; and that you have learned, and do always learn of him, and are joined to him, that you may become conformable to him, that liveth and sinneth not: and this appearance will be your daily salvation and peace, and daily growth and increase in God, and make this sure to you in that principle which would not sin for gaining the whole world: so shall you not loose your election nor your calling. but an entrance thereby will be daily ministered into the kingdom everlasting, which is in Christ Jesus the light, and truth, and power of God.

But if you go out to any other thing for help or counsel, then that spirit which is pure, which is Just, which is meek and lowly as God is, which is righteous by nature, and springs in you to bring forth fruit of itself, to God alone, in that principle which is pure and clean, then you go from the fountain of living waters to dig for yourselves, and into your own works, and what you bring forth is your own righteousness, and not that which is revealed from above, to all generations of God elected; and you will go through your work hard breasted, and when you have brought it forth, it will not satisfy that in you which hungers toward God, only it will puff up that nature which is selfish, and exalt that which is too high already to receive life from God; and this righteousness God accepts not, nor is it everlasting to all generations, which is brought in by works and not by virtue of the divine nature springing freely in you from an eternal spirit, which those who are entered into rest, and keep the Sabbath holy, are freely fed with, and covered over, who are ceased from their own works, their works being wrought in God, and in him are brought to light, where the holy child is born, and the son of God manifest, through that spirit which the world neither seeth nor knoweth, which gives to see and inherit God and godliness in a clean nature and vessel.

Which birth if you desire to be born of, then cease from flesh and blood, and whatever that can do for you within and without, that is defiled; and in that which calls and convinceth you of sin, wait and be faithful, till you find a life and desire quickened in you; which can favour or delight in nothing, but that which is as God is, pure, just and holy, and loaths whatever is contrary, and cannot join to it in thought word nor action; for this is the life which quickens you, if ever you feel it move and breathe in you, and its spiritual birth, which as it grows in the vessel, is to be heir of the heavenly treasure, which though at first it be weak as a child without understanding or full strength; and you not knowing what way it is ever like to come to have all the power and dominion in you, by reason of the abundance of corruption that is above in you and the strong bonds of iniquity that rules in your flesh, which all war against the resurrection of this innocent birth, and by which the strong man keeps the house, with much subtilty and spiritual wickedness, against the pure and simple life; yet if you do but abide in that which first gave you light to the quickening of it, and be obedient thereto, it will bring you a way you know not; and though you may come through great travails and temptations, and many fiery trials and tribulations, where you may be sifted and winnowed, yet shall not one grain of that pure seed perish and fail in the way, for that spirit of light and truth will lead you in his light and in his truth, which hath been tried in that way for many generations; for Christ Jesus, the light and salvation of ages, hath overcome the devil and the world, and all the power of darkness, for all that are sanctified; and now is come to do it in you, and that you may inherit the purchased possession, and sit with him in heavenly places also: so that your work is faith and obedience, and patience towards him who is that spirit and light in you; and to him must you give up life and all, who will confound your corrupted wisdom, and blind his adversary, that he may give light to them that are yet under the shadow

of death, and build up in you the way of peace; and you shall no more live by your works and gifts natural; but because he liveth in you, shall you live also; and your life will be that which is begotten of God which never dieth; and this will he do for as many as give up themselves wholly to him, whose light leads out of sin; this is the king of saints and holy life, if you will receive him, he hath the power of God.

But you that pray and profess, and seek abroad, and cry for help, but know not him who hath help in his hands for you, in him alone to wait, that in all things you might observe him: you worship you know not what, nor where; and while in words you talk of God that liveth, in works you deny him, and give your strength to the dead, and not to the living. Should not every man know his God liveth in him, and go to his own God for life, according to the manifestation of the spirit of truth given to profit withal in every creature to God-ward? And this God that liveth, who is just, holy and true, should you hear, and know, and learn of, not of dead forms, but the power of the spirit of life, whose word giveth life, to as many as have that ear open, to hear the living spirit, and can savour the living from the dead.

Now whatever you look to for life and salvation, which is not in this spirit and power, it's that which kills and devours your strength to no purpose; for nothing gives life but the spirit, it's the pure spirit that feeds the hungry soul with bread of life; and to that you should give up all you have and are; in hearkening and obeying spend your time, and all your strength to increase in the life that's bread indeed. But when you give your strength to customs and forms, and carnal rudiments, vain pleasures and delights, and set your minds on these visible things, then you spend your strength for that which is not bread, and labour for that which profits not to life eternal, nor can carnal things give an entrance into the most holy; but in that which is pure should you wait, that he may open to you the door of life; I am the door, the truth and

the life, saith Christ Jesus, who is not carnal, who is pure clean and lowly, and meek in spirit, who is in you except ye be reborn; and if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Mind and consider well the spirit of Christ in you, that's he that's lowly in you, that's meek in you, that's just and holy in you: mind this spirit in you, and then whither will you run, and forsake the Lord of life? Will you leave Christ the fountain which should spring in you, and hunt for yourselves? Should you not abide within, and drink of that which springs freely, and feed on that which is pure, meek and lowly in spirit, that so you might grow spiritual men into the same spirit, to be as he is, the sheep of his pasture? for as is your pasture, so are you filled. High carnal minds seek high things, and so they grow lofty and proud, and such God resists, and keeps them afar off; but the poor in spirit seek truth and meekness, and are fed thereof at the table of the Lord; meek, and lowly and just, and faithful are all his household, who feed and sup with him. Now mind and consider your ways, who are gone out unto the mountains to worship and feed yourselves, you may read of Israel's sin in going out from the temple, in which the Lord had said he would dwell, and be enquired of, and they built altars without him, and there called upon him, but found him not, for which he rejected their worships, and their temple also. And where hath Christ said he will now be worshipped? Is it not within? For saith Christ, the true worshippers worship the Father in spirit and in truth; mind it, professors, not at Jerusalem will he be inquired of, but in spirit and truth; and the body is the temple, as he hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will put my law in their inward parts; and all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. Not in temples made with hands doth the Godhead dwell, whose off-spring we are; not in your high places and steeple-house churches, but in that which springs of him. Can you read this, and understand it aright?

In that which springs of him is the Godhead and power known, but the high-minded are too far off it to feel it, it's the poor and lowly in-spirit that are near it, and he that is become as a little child can only understand it, who is not too great in his thoughts to hearken to that which is little and pure in him; by birth and nature that springs of God, and not the height of that mind which hath notions, but not the nature, life and sonship, begotten and born of God. A sanctified life and vessel is God's off-spring; but he that saith and doth not, is not born of truth, but of fornication and falsehood: so read your birth, and nature, and kindred, with the truth: it's not the uncircumcised in heart, nor the bastard, that's God's off-spring and child of his love, but the pure and clean in heart, mind and spirit, hath his image. And if you look to be godly, you must know this in you, else you are without God in the world, having neither seen him, nor known him whom you seem to worship, but are alienated from him in your minds, and in your members, and in your whole strength: so that you have neither power nor understanding to do well, being taken captive of a contrary spirit in all your abilities of spirit, soul and body, your wisdom perverted, and understandings darkened, and parted from the root, whose offspring man is.

And now this should be your return, to sink down to that which is holy and pure in the light, and to that give up your whole man, and all you are and have; and no more consult with your wisdom, nor follow your own understanding, but let that in you that's pure and simple, lead you, and thereto bow and bend, and confess; and this will be your restoration to God, to give all you have to the holy, who when he hath befooled your cursed wisdom, and brought down your high conceits, and bound the strong man, and tied the colt to the vine; then will he arise in power, who is meek and holy, and rule in your strength, parts and wisdom, having purged the enmity out, and renewed your abilities, and you will have all restored

again manifold, all new, and clear, and able, by the power of the holy one, who will reign and govern therein; and you shall know the Lord, whose off-spring you are, to be both root and head, and all in you. And you shall say no more, I am weak and can do nothing, but all things through him that gives you strength: for the devourer shall no more pervert it, but great shall be the holy one in the midst of you, if this you can believe and receive: and you shall no more, as you have done, sow for the devourer, nor bring forth unto blasting, but your fruits shall arise to God, who will receive them with good will; and your prayers shall not return empty, when he hath bent you for himself, and taken away the accursed thing from amongst you. And then will you know the Lord's redeemed, and that seed which is elected and blessed, which brings not forth as other men, and you will see that all who despise the day of small things, neglect their own mercy [to follow the teacher of lies] who turn not at his reproof, who is holy, and therefore worship without power.

Then will you know the life and power of redemption and sanctification, and justification, and renewing of the holy ghost in you, when your strength is redeemed to God, your wisdom redeemed, your hearts, tongues, eyes and ears, and all you have redeemed unto God, into that which is holy, to be guided and exercised in all your conversation, possessing your vessels in sanctification. Here is that renewing of the holy ghost known, which sanctifies and justifies through the redemption of the body and mind, and reconciliation which is in Christ Jesus, who is not known to be Lord but by the holy ghost; that spirit of truth which leads into all truth: which truth is a witness in you, against you, who say you are redeemed to God by Christ Jesus, when another Lord rules in you, and leads you captive into sin, by which Christ Jesus is denied and suffers in you, and by which you are separated from God, and in a nature contrary to him: wherefore to that must you come which changeth you.

nature, and not your words, and forms, and teachers only, but which begets another seed, and kills that which is begotten of whoredom and lust, which is after the prince of this world; that God may be served in his own spirit, in his own truth, of his own nature, of his own begetting, holy as he is holy in every measure and growth thereof; that so the least of his children may be known to be of him, and separate from the world, in soul and in body, coming out of the world, bearing his image and reproach.

And as many as honestly desire to be heirs of this holy power and kingdom, patiently wait till you feel that move in you which is of that pure nature, and having felt it alive in you, rejoice in it with hope and faith, and keep therein, and be not discouraged, because of the littleness of it in your present sight, neither do you judge and measure it thereby; for you know not what power it hath with God, and how precious it is in his sight; and what it will obtain for you at his hands in the time of need, you have not yet proved, nor can you, while you have things greater in your thoughts than it to run to: the power of holiness and truth in the inward parts is not known but in the depth, when the fire of wrath comes upon all vain hopes, and hypocritical confidence, when all that is without a man is removed far away; when all relations, friends and acquaintance are become farther off than strangers, and whatever thing the creature seeks to for comfort, turns against him, and adds to his grief; then is known the power of holiness and truth in heart with God, and a clean conscience will speak peace; and none can take it away from you, if you abide but in it: he that hath proved it commends it to you, who have been stript of all, that ye might learn and know the treasure of life, and holiness with God. Wherefore judge not that which is holier and lower than yourselves, but let that which is just and holy, judge that which is above it in you, which is not of that nature.

The cause why it is so little esteemed in you, is, because you are so great in the contrary nature; and the proud despises the poor, and the rich undervalues him that is better than himself. And this you will find in you, if you measure with that which God esteems and weighs all flesh by [to wit] by that which is his own, and as he is in every creature; so do not you judge the most holy, but believe and obey; for the time for you to judge is not yet come, till the most holy and just king appear to be king in you, and you in him. So keep in that which is holy and just, and grow in him, that he may rule in you, and arise through the death of his enemies, to be greater than the greatest, greater than the world, and the prince of it, which is the devil, wherein is all unbelief, false fears and doubting, and exaltation against the holy one; and as these towers fall which are lifted up against the Lord; so his way will become a plain, and truth will take his place in you as king and Lord, which God loves, which the unbelief is out of and against; and as the pure arises, you will find a change in your mind, in your nature, in your judgment, and in your government, and you will come to know that your kingdom and power with the highest stands in the anointing of the most holy, and the kingdom of God is within you, and the poor take it.

So you must not fix your faith upon that which seems great and strong in you, because it is so, nor because it is likely, nor because it promiseth great things; but believe in that which is most holy, true and just in you, that to the anointing of the most holy you may come in your particular, and he will bring you into the assembly of the sanctified, where the holy one reigneth over all; for it's he that is sent into the world that lies in wickedness, to gather them one by one into sanctification, therein to present unto God as many as receive him, who is without spot or blemish.

And all the world take notice of this wherever it comes; this is he whom the father of lights hath now sent into you that are in the world, the holy one of God.

sent to call you and give you light, who saith, I am the light of the world: Hear him, and believe, that you may become children of light and truth. This is the glad tidings and gospel of Jesus Christ, who is preached to you in the world. Professions and forms, would limit the holy one to themselves, and exclude others; but God's gift is free in Christ Jesus, and his tender is to all men, who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; none he excludes, but who will not receive his gift, his son, the most holy which calls you, who through the preaching of the gospel is come near you; yea, he is in you with his light, giving you to see the way out of darkness, which no other thing could do for you; and without money or price you have him: If you receive him, and keep his sayings, and obey his movings, he will dwell in you and take up his abode, and you shall know that the father hath sent him to call you out of the world into the light of life. If you deny him, he will deny you; if you receive him, the father will love you, and power from above will be given to become the sons of God. Wherefore mind that spirit which calls you out of sin, out of the world, and gives you light to see what is sin and deceit in your own hearts; hearken to that which is holy, and would not have you do evil, that's of the holy one, and the most high in you, believe in him, and follow him; believe not them who would make you believe you have him not in you, who are past feeling in themselves, and have already rejected him; but you who feel him, abide in him, who is holy in you, against all unholiness a witness: cut not yourselves off thro' disobedience and unbelief, and he will in no wise cast you out, but will increase your light through obedience, and purify your souls, and cleanse your bodies, and work in you mightily in truth to salvation; and you shall see that his working is pure and good, and that which none else can do for you. And this is the Lord your righteousness, though yet you know him not as he is.

And if you will receive the most holy, this is your time, and the day of your visitation by him, whose light is now rejected of the builders of this world, and the wisdom of the wise will not know him, nor suffer him to rule above their carnal rudiments; nor to be all in their hearts, to guide with his light to salvation. So to the out-casts he is preached, who are afar off, and have not sought him, you is he seeking with his light, if you reject him not, he will make you to see light who have sate in the region of death, and gross darkness hath covered you. Wherefore hearken to him that saith come, and feel that spirit that draws, that you may answer his love freely, as it is freely tendered; and know him by his holiness, that it is he, and let his unchangeable witness in you, in the night and in the day, persuade your hearts that he is the Lord who changeth not; and he that declares unto man his thoughts, his name is the Lord of hosts. And you that withstand his appearance in spirit, and tell people that this is not to preach Christ, and yet profess Christ in you, tell me what Christ is in people, if not light and holy life, and a faithful witness against the contrary in all in whom he liveth? And by what other thing may he be known in spirit, life and power, if this be denied? Else let the mouth of antichrist be stopped, that the simple may pass on the right and living way, free from such who will neither enter the kingdom themselves, nor would suffer others, who have always resisted the holy ghost.

THE FRUIT OF THE FREE-BORN CLEARED FROM LEGAL
PERFORMANCES, AND THE CHILDREN OF BONDAGE
SHEWED THE NATURE OF THEIR WORKS.

Children of this world, who have the form but not the power of godliness, and have got notions of life, but not the nature and spirit thereof, in your dark thoughts from an unfruitful spirit you judge the children of light; and when you see us acting in the life of Christ Jesus, then you say we are under legal performances, and that we think to be saved by our works, and that we do it to merit, and the like; but you are greatly mistaken in yourselves, and are not in that spirit which doth see us, or can judge the nature of our works, nor our end therein; wherefore be silent, and hear what is said to you, if you have an ear to hear withal: for though yourselves be dead, withered branches, cut off from the tree which is good by nature, and there abide, yet it is not so with such as are born again and ingrafted into the good olive; for he that is really born of God, knows two several seeds and natures, which spring and bring forth from several roots, and after their several kinds.

Now the one of these is in bondage with its branches, and brings forth unto self, from some outward observation, or literal command, or something that is carnal or visible sets on work: and being thus set on work, to do things contrary to your life and nature, you go hardly through it; and if you attain the outward performance, the boaster gets up to glory in what you can do, who doth all for self-ends, and so look for reward above such as you think cannot do as you have done. Now you who have gone no further, but wearied yourselves herein, and found nought but bondage, are turned back into liberty again; and you judge as you have found in yourselves; so you say all good works are from the spirit of bondage, boasting about merit, and the like.

But you should not judge the children of light after the flesh, your measure will not reach that birth; for he that's born of God, is a branch of another root and seed than you know, which hath another nature inclining to God from whence it is, as the other inclines to the world, whence it is. And as the natural man doth evil naturally with delight, his root and life being so; so the spiritual man (in his measure) doth good naturally, after his root and life, which is his pleasure and joy to bring forth from the good root, that which is good by nature; as it is the delight of the other, to bring forth that which is evil by nature: for as is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly; and it's no bondage for the heavenly to bear heavenly fruits, but to the earthly man it is, being against his nature: wherefore saith Christ, either make the tree good and his fruits good, or the tree evil, and his fruits evil. So good trees, evil trees and fruitless trees, are known to be of several natures, and for several ends.

So this is but your own darkness that thus thinks, and with evil thoughts you judge amiss. Will you say of such as are really planted into the living vine, that their fruits, which freely spring from thence, are legal and bondage, and that we think to be saved by our works, and by our own righteousness, &c.? Nay these are the fruits of such who are saved already; and the righteousness of God is given to us who are ceased from our own works, whose works are no more legal but spiritual, free and not bondage; and he that's in Christ is fruitful in good works, and free therein by birth; and he that abides in Christ, sins not, nor is his seed of the evil-doer. Could you understand this, you would not condemn the fruits of the living, with such as are dead while they live, whose fruit is withered, being broken off from that which is good by nature, and planted into that which is wild by nature; but the spiritual man you cannot judge, his fruits nor freedom, his off-spring nor his end, whose fruits judge all fruitless trees, yet is he judged of no man; and it's as hard for you to do good, who are accustomed to do evil, as

the leopard to change his spots; but it is otherwise with such as are changed already, born of the light, and heirs by birth, and right nature, to everlasting righteousness and truth: it's hard for such to do evil, being against nature, seed and sonship which is in God. And though this you cannot believe, yet he that's born of faith can, and the least child of God can read it in his measure, who knows the old Adam and the new; and as in the first all are in sin and bondage, so in the second are all made righteous and free to God's work; and in the second is known the new creation, wherein dwells righteousness, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them: And will you call this self-righteousness, where all things are of God, and all things new? Is this legal and bondage? And if any man be in Christ, all things are of God, and it's God that worketh in us of his good pleasure to will and to do; and this is not the spirit of bondage, but good will and pleasure which God worketh freely in us. So you reproach what God worketh by the hearing of faith, and not by the letter, which righteousness wrought in Abraham, which was in God before Abraham was, which is wrought from everlasting, and elect of God in Christ Jesus before the world was, and is a free gift to all that by Abraham's faith come out of the world, to him who is not of the world; which you that abide in the world inherit not, who are in self; and seeking yourselves in what you do to God or men, how can you believe, saith Christ? And you that look for rewards, are not in that spirit which worketh freely. So you look for rewards and honour; teachers and people are all for rewards, honor and respect of persons; and in that nature is all the bondage, pretended merits and rewards, in this nature out of the faith of Christ Jesus, who went from place to place doing good freely, and preaching freely; and so will all do who are born to true freedom, as he is free, whose life you speak of, but know it not by birth and virtue, which is naturally good, as the first (or fallen) man, is naturally evil.

And the bondage is in that which is against the pure nature, and not that which is free-born, and the law is upon the transgressor, and him that is degenerated into that nature which is carnal and sensual; and if this man do any thing as to God, it is from something that is laid upon him, not in spirit, but from without; and this is legal and in bondage, which is not in the free spirit, which doth by nature the things contained in the law.

And little it is that such would either do or know were there not a law or a letter, a heaven or a hell to put them upon works. And here is the bondage and fear that hath torment; but with the spiritual seed it is not so, who are begotten and born of God in Christ Jesus, in whom they receive freely as the branch of the root, and what he sends forth through them are fruits of the spirit, against which there is no law; and this is not legal, but spiritual and free, who are a law unto themselves; and there is no law against the seed, but it is added upon the transgressor because of sin, till the seed be come; And where the seed is born and rules, that creature is not under the law, letter nor tradition, nor bondage, but led by the spirit, and born of that nature which was before transgression was, by which the fruits of righteousness are brought to light, by the working of the holy ghost, who worketh the will and deed of his good pleasure; and with the same good will and pleasure it is brought forth without bondage or constraint.

And in whom the bonds of iniquity are broken, the evil world ended, and all things become new, and all things of God, there dwells not self-righteousness, nor spirit of bondage; but that is the new creature, which is in Christ Jesus created unto good works, and not in self; and the heavens new, and the earth new, wherein dwells righteousness, as it is in Christ Jesus, revealed from God in spirit and power, without the law manifest, to which the law and the prophets bear witness, having foretold what glory and freedom should be revealed in the latter days at the seeds

appearing; and the holy scripture testifies of this life and power, but is not this life, but the spirit gives this life and freedom, that it may be of grace freely, and the glory of the Lord, who is that spirit. And here is the boaster and self-excluded, and all fruitless trees condemned, and seen to come short of the glory of God, of whose works he is not either root or off-spring.

And before you can judge of this freedom, or the nature of the works that spring thereof, or inherit the power that brings forth this righteousness, you must own the judgment of him that condemns the man of sin in you, and receive him for your law-giver, which will break you off from the world, and would have you to deny the forms and images, and bring you from under its power; that's he that breaks the house of bondage, and sets the righteous at liberty, to bear the fruits which are of God.

And thus hath Christ sent his servants to seek the lost, and to gather them from among briars and thorns, and bring them to Zion one by one. And as they were gained out of sin, so the devil's kingdom fell, and grew weaker by every servant he lost, and Christ's kingdom increased, until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of righteousness, wherein the righteous king reigns; and out of cruel mockings, scorning and bloody persecutions, they gathered the lost, and gained them to God; yea, sometimes pulled them out of the fire, such have been their faith and zeal for Christ, and his holy kingdom, and their steadfastness to that work to which they were called and hired; and the fury of the adversary, and his opposite power against him in his servants, hath often reached unto blood, rendering evil for love to their souls.

Wherefore take heed to yourselves, you that name the Lord, and call him master; depart from iniquity, and obey the good. This is his work; if you be his servants, he hath called you to holiness, as he is holy; and that you turn from the world, and repent of his

works who is the prince of it, and deny him and them openly and in secret. If you will serve the holy one, you must bear his mark, and open your heart to him, and your mouth for him, as confidently as the servants of sin do for it, that your light might shine against the darkness of this world, in the face of the perverse and crooked generation; that it may appear to all men, that the ways of the Lord and the world are not one, nor their servants one, nor their words one, nor their garments one, nor their table one; in all things bearing his image and glory above his adversary, that it may appear whose family you belong to, and what is his glory who hath hired you, and what is the work of your Lord in the world.

And herein may all people, as in a glass, see yourselves, and what you are to God in this his day, and what against him. These are the two masters, which Christ tells of, which none can serve, but the one he hates who serves the other: so now, who hath hired you? whom do you serve and whom do you hate? is it the world you serve? Then you hate Christ: is it Christ? Then you deny the world. And these are plain things, and you may read as you go, if you will, whose business you go about, and whose hand you strengthen. If you commit sin, and plead for it, then you war against him that is manifest to destroy sin; and if you say, sin must live in you while you live, then while you live the devil must have a place and power in you, and a kingdom as long as you live; and if you believe to overcome sin, then you wait for the kingdom of God, which consists in righteousness, and believe to see it, and seek it daily with your whole heart; for it is not words which take the kingdom, but power of faith against the evil one.

Neither is it forms and professions, or any outward thing that can vanquish the devil; for he is a spirit, and by a spiritual power must he be resisted; and the weapons must be spiritual and mighty through God, which casts down his seat in man; though many are led out from form to form, and deny that power of

God in them, and obey the power of sin in them, not knowing that power which lays the axe to the root of the evil tree, out of which all the evil springs; and these are manifest to be such as are not hired: whatever your forms may be, which you choose and change, you are but in the market-place at the best, not yet come into the vineyard of God, till you be set on work against sin, to pluck up and cut down every evil thing that offends in the kingdom of God, with his spiritual light and power; which kingdom is within you; and that which offends is within you, and that which is offended is within, and that which is lost is within, and there to be sought; and the pearl, and the seed, and the word, and the law of the spirit of life, and the covenant is within; and this is not seen nor believed, nor can it shine forth till the house of God be swept, and the fruit of darkness denied, and the light of Christ turned to, and the just obeyed, which gives to see the unjust, and power against him, when the ground of darkness is removed by the working of faith.

And as many as be called to this work, and entered into it in truth and faith, must not be idle, but obey the spirit of life; till the house be cleansed, and the unclean wrought out, and the pure exalted, and then is the rest holy; and then you will find your rest within you, and your God near you, and your souls to dwell at ease with God in your own habitation, whose temples you are, if this you obtain by faith in him that calleth and quickeneth you to holiness; and the fruit is the Lord's and so is the seed, and the safety forever, to all, and in all that abide therein.

And this is not self-works, nor self-will, but pure faith and obedience to the seed, or living word of God, (which in you wars against the world, and every selfish fleshly lust and delight,) which is the seed of the holy covenant, which seed is Christ, the holy and just one, if you can receive it. This is he that makes clean and keeps you so, as many as obey and walk in him, and from his spirit receive your law, which spirit

giveth you his life to inherit here on earth; if you walk in the spirit, you shall not live to the flesh. And in this life and knowledge truly learned, is answering that common objection which the spirit of the world makes against the holy life and kingdom, saying, if it were possible that we could live without sin, then we need no saviour, yea the same that cleanses the house must keep it so; and he that's the death of sin, is the life of righteousness, and the same light and fear of God which leads to the putting off the old man with his affections and evil works, leads to put on the new man, and so to walk in Christ, which is renewed after the image of him that created him, where Christ is all in life and guiding; and the good man keeps the house, not the strong man; and how can that man say he needs no saviour, who can do nought without him, whose righteous life is both food and raiment, and his light their armour daily, against the evil in this world in every thought, word and work? And in whom this is not so, Christ is not all; and in whom it is so, they are complete in him, and do not say they have no need of him, but confess him in them their head and glory; and this is the kingdom of God upon earth, and the king in his kingdom, which you that resist in your faith and practice, deny the Lord, and his power, and his faith, and his prayer, which is, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven, where no sin is.

And this further, to all you that in words profess Jesus Christ to be your Lord and master; let it be in truth and righteousness, that you may have his witness thereto, who is pure and clean, and cannot join to evil, but is an open witness against every appearance of it; and so are all his servants, whom he hath hired and sent into the world; in what place or employment soever you are in, if you be his servants, you are chiefly about his work, and not your own. Now his work is manifest in every appearance of his in this world; it is against sin, and to destroy the works of the devil out of this world, mind this, to destroy the works of the dev-

II out of this world, that so the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of Christ Jesus, and the most holy one may rule and bring forth fruits therein. Now his servants are known by this, that they stand for the kingdom of Christ in this world, and his works, and against all the works of the devil in this world, that Christ may destroy and bring down, and make an end of sin in this world; and the servants of the devil are known in the contrary, by being in his work, which is to keep sin in this world while people live, and this is the strength of his kingdom; take away sin, and take away his kingdom here, and his power here, and his place here; for where he is resisted he flies, but where he is received he sets up his throne, and takes pleasure in his servants, and they in his works; which is to increase deceit and vanity in them, and to fill their hearts with every lust; and so strongly carry out their hearts thereunto, that they have no delight in that which is contrary, nor can believe that ever any can receive power in the spirit of Christ against him, or such redemption as to overcome him, and be freed from him in all his works in this world: and here is an agreement with death in your faith, and a covenant confessed with unrighteousness.

And you that are in this mind and belief, you are not hired of Christ Jesus the righteous, nor have you received his faith, which is pure, as he is pure; and believes unto righteousness, and unto victory, and not unto sin: and that's his faith, which overcomes the world, and the prince of it, and resists the devil, steadfast in the faith, in hope of victory in the end; and this faith Christ's servants confess openly, which faith the world cannot receive, but confess the contrary openly; and so you are kept captive at his will, and you believe you must be his servants while you live here in this world: and this faith you confess openly against the victory of Christ; and herein you are faithful to your own master whose works you do, and plead for, and confess his faith, which none of the servants of Christ ever confessed such a faith, that they must needs serve

sin as long as they live; for the youngest and the weakest servant of Jesus Christ, that know themselves hired of him, they know his work is to destroy sin out of the world, and to subdue the devil, and to this work they are set in themselves, by faith and power, which is in Christ Jesus the Lord, and they labour in hope, having their hearts turned in them, and their faces set towards holiness, and from the world, and are set on their way out of the world, which is Christ the life that's holy, and lights that's pure; and to this the mind is kept in all their travails and tribulations, and temptations, which work in them by faith in Christ, more hope, and more strength daily; and every trial that happens to them in the way, gives experience and renewed strength against their adversary the devil, while they keep close to Christ in faith and love; and though they feel the devil in the sensual part to be strong and powerful, and past their strength at present, yet they yield him not the kingdom for that, but into the faith and hope and patience of Christ Jesus they sink down, waiting for the resurrection of that life which never sinned, but was oppressed and grieved when sin took his kingdom, and there wait for the appearance of Christ without sin to save them from that power of death which wars in their own members, to bring forth sin in this world; and this is to be true in their service, and faithful, who wait for the kingdom of God within them, and righteousness thereof, and the coming of their Lord, with their minds girt up with holiness, and hearts stedfast, not to consent to the least work of the devil, if it would gain the whole world in the appearance of the sensual reason and wisdom.

And if these be overtaken with a fault, it is not willingly, but as servants of Christ they stand against it to the utmost they then see; and sin being a work of the wrong master, they abhor it, and themselves for it, and deny it, and will not plead for it, or seek to hide it in them, but confess it, and cannot have peace till it be cleansed out; and these are the little children who have an advocate with the father, to whom sin is

as death, and dare not speak a word for it, but against it in themselves and in others, and these appear against sin openly, and confess to him that is holy, with all their hearts and words.

But what a difference is there betwixt one of these who when they either see it, or are told of their offence against the Lord, are broken before the least reproof, into tears or sorrow, condemning themselves for it, and it in themselves openly; and you who when you are reproofed for sin, which is both open and known, you set yourselves with all your strength and wisdom to plead for it, and like the devil, bring the letter to strengthen yourselves against just reproof, and with hearts full of envy, and mouths full of reproach, you stand up, seeking to ensnare them that reprove you, in love to Christ's kingdom, and your souls, and to recover you out of the works of satan, that his kingdom might fall in you, and so he have fewer subjects left in his power, and you be added unto the kingdom of Christ, by being brought under his commands, through denying your old master, and confessing and condemning his evil works; for a denying of the devil and his works there must be, e'er Christ will receive you.

And thus it is that Christ hath taken his kingdom out of the hand of his adversary in the world, by sending his servants into the high-ways and hedges to gather his creatures out of the devil's works, by true reproof, and testifying against them wherever he led them, for which they were torn and scratched, and evil entreated by that evil spirit in whom it had power, as you now do, who rise up against reproof.

CHRIST JESUS KNOWN TO BE KING IN HIS TEMPLES, THROUGH
THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST, AND SWORD OF THE
SPIRIT, LIFTED UP AGAINST THE MAN
OF SIN IN TRUE JUDGMENT.

You who look for the kingdom of Christ Jesus: it stands not in observations, words and forms, but in the power of the holy ghost, in judgment, in truth and righteousness; if you would know his appearance to salvation, wait for it without sin, in that spirit and power which is holy, to judge and condemn sin; this is his kingdom with men, if you can receive it, that he be known in his spiritual power in the bodies of holy men and women, to dwell and walk in a holy life, a witness against all sin by the breath of his mouth and sword of his spirit; and therein that he hath power and consent to judge all contrary spirits within and without, and all contrary actions; and whatever opposes him in this his kingdom is antichrist, which denies Christ in his temples and house, whose house and temple is the new creation of holy men and women, and in whom he speaks, dwells and walks, as saith the scriptures; in whom he judges the prince of this world, and all his out-goings in the children of darkness, and in his own temples shows forth his nature and virtue a witness against him and all his words; and he that would let this, is antichrist, who sits in the temple of Christ to resist the holy one, and cannot receive the judgments of Christ against sin in his temples, nor his witness against sin to salvation, but cries, do not judge when truth speaks, and the spirit of Christ testifies against sin in true judgment; and this is he that lets and withstands the coming of Christ without sin, who withstands him in his temple, and denies his righteous judgment against sin, and blasphemes, and says it is not he; nor is he now on earth, nor speaks in any body now against sin, but saith, thou must not judge, lest thou be judged; and so

through deceit would turn Christ's words against his work, who saith, I will redeem Zion with judgment; and Christ did not speak those words to save sin from judgment, when he saith, judge not, that ye be not judged, nor to stop the mouth of truth and righteousness; for then had he contradicted himself, who in another place commands them to judge righteous judgment? And he is manifest to destroy sin, and not to save sin, in whomsoever he is manifest; and for this end he liveth in his people, which antichrist would make as though he lived not, nor heard or spoke, but as a dumb idol would he make the living God, for people to talk on, or set up a form of him, to make void his present life and spiritual power in his people, that he should not show forth his virtue, and give forth his laws and judgments by the mouth of his servants, against the works of his adversary, wherever they appear in his eye.

Therefore you professors of Christ in words and forms, seek his kingdom in you, and take heed that your forms withstand not his powerful appearance in spirit; his kingly authority stands in his heavenly holy nature and virtue in spirit, and not in perishing rudiments and shadows without. Read in scriptures how often Antichrist hath deceived people, by turning these outward forms, to let the spiritual power, and so have kept people in words without life, opposing Christ in his kingdom: so in the first place mind to know his spiritual nature and virtue, and what hath power against sin, in word and in deed; therein is his kingdom. and there is his glory, and therein he reigns.

So take heed how you let that spirit, which goeth out against sin in judgment and in victory, in the least of his people; and this know, that his kingdom is spiritual and within, and holy, and these are his testimonies, laws and judgments, which he sends out by the mouths of his servants as he sees fit; and it's against the works of the evil one he testifies in judgment and virtue, for that is his nature, and to that end he appears on earth to destroy the devil and his works,

through the sword of his spirit; and none will let this but Antichrist and his servants, whose works are evil and so would stop the mouth of truth, and voice of Christ Jesus.

So you may come to know his voice from his temple, when you hear judgment from the spirit of truth passing against pride, and lust, and all the works of the flesh, and to destroy them out of the world; this is his voice from his temples in which his throne is, his holy kingdom and power, and that's the voice of Antichrist who would let this, and says, thou must not judge when sin is judged, and so with the words of Christ would save the works of the devil from shame and destruction: and now there be many Antichrists in this work to withstand the word of God in his temples, and who set the letter against the spirit to keep up sin, and to silence the word of the holy ghost that comes out of his house against it: and here are the children of the holy God known, and the children of this world; the one seeks to cut down sin, the other to save it; and both profess Christ in words, but the end of their work makes them manifest.

And you that are talking of Christ's appearance, where will you allow him a place to rule in, if not in the heart and chief place in man, therein to judge and govern, and speak, and give out his laws? Will you allow the evil one to utter his voice openly in man, in swearing, lying, and cursed speaking, and every evil work, and must Christ be silent and dumb thereat in his vessels when he sees it? Is not this his privilege in his redeemed ones, as the other hath his power in his captives, that in them he may judge sin as openly, as in the other it is acted? And this is the reasonable service of his chosen vessels, to give up their bodies that he may speak and act, and shew forth his virtues and life, and power therein, against the spirit of the world, in his vessels; and were it not for this, none of the holy men of God need to have suffered nor been hated, but for the words of God spoken by them, as Christ hath said, it is not you that

speak, but the spirit of your father that speaks in you; and this is the voice which the world knows not, and so would stop it, and says it is not the Lord, not knowing that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne in the hearts and mouths of his people. What! must not the spirit of truth in whom he lives, judge deceit and falsehood where it lives? Must not that which is holy judge the unclean? Must not the lowly one judge the proud, the chaste one judge the lust? Must not he that is spiritual judge all things? Must not saints judge the world? What a nation would you have this to be who would root out judgment, and yet profess Christ in you? Is Christ in that people where there is no judgment against sin? What, none to judge pride and excess, lying, swearing, and cursed speaking, false ways and false worships? Would you have all sin to pass openly without reproof? Is the land wholly become as Sodom? Mind what was their words to Lot in this case; this one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge; whose righteous soul was vexed daily with their unclean conversation. So would you have sin to go openly in the streets without reproof and shame? Where is the holy one? In whom doth he dwell, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? Is Christ a king? Is he a judge? Is he pure and clean in heart? Doth he live? Can he see sin and be silent, where he hath a mouth to speak by? Did he ever take up his abode in people where none would allow him a habitation and a mouth to speak by? Mind his walking aforetime in his servants, and what he did and spoke in them, and against what: and is he not still a God of judgment at hand against his adversary, though such as know not his voice put him afar off?

So you who say you are for Christ and his kingdom, mind whose kingdom sin is in, and whose work it is to defend it from judgment, and mistake scripture to plead for it; that is he which condemns the just, who would clear the guilty; and that is abomination to God, and withstands his appearance; and you that

yield your members thereto, are not for Christ, but against him in his members, who have yielded themselves servants of truth; and such as you, were they who slew the just one, his prophets and apostles (in whom the word of God spoke against sin) yet they had the scriptures, and served sin.

Wherefore if you love the appearance of Christ Jeus, you must not love sin, but in that principle which would not sin, feel him that suffers because of sin, and yet is without sin, and against sin; and if to him you come, whose appearance is in that which is holy, just, and true, and therein join to him, you will love that which condemns sin, by which he is grieved and oppressed; and then are you for Christ, when you can feel and suffer with him, by that which he suffers; and you will then see that nought is it that is offended at sin being judged, but he that is guilty thereof.

GRACE RECEIVED, AND GRACE REJECTED.

THE grace of God is that which brings salvation to man, and all men being in darkness, as they are in the world without God; so the grace of God is tendered to all without respect of persons; and that's it in every man which gives him a sight of truth in himself, which God accepts in every man, who would have all men come to the knowledge thereof, that they might be saved. Now this grace of God is one in every man, and doth not spare the evil, nor deny the good in any, out of respects either to persons, wisdom, strength or riches which are of this world, but hath respect to the truth of spirit in all, and their obedience thereto; therein to teach and lead to salvation, and the true worship of God in spirit, which leads to life eternal, and to the strengthening that which is of God's beget-

ting in man, and quickening the soul which by sin hath suffered; and this it doth by condemning sin in every motion, that it may never arise against the holy seed, and also by ministering comforts and promises, and power in spirit to the soul in the way of its arising above the power of the son of wickedness, still ministering light and understanding in the hidden part to the soul that hates sin, opening that eye daily through the obedience of truth, which the God of this world hath blinded, and purifying the soul by putting off the body of corruption, and blinding him that saith he sees, but knows not the way out of sin, ministering the law upon him.

And this is the ministration of free grace to every soul that receives it; and this it worketh powerfully in all that abide in it, through the spirit of Christ Jesus; and this grace (as saith the scripture) hath appeared to all men: yea, and doth daily appear in all who truly wait in spirit for its appearance, and gives to all such a sight of truth in themselves, testifying with or against every motion in their hearts, according as it stands in the sight of God, whether it be good or evil, whereby the conscience doth accuse or excuse, even as God shall judge them by Christ Jesus: So that there is no cause in this grace, why any are not saved thereby from sin and condemnation, but being rejected of some, it becomes their condemnation; and the same grace which saves him that receives it in faith and obedience, condemns him that rejects it in his disobedience: and this is the grace of God that changeth not, which appears to all men, but only reigns to salvation through righteousness, wherein it is believed to be sufficient and obeyed, in the truth therewith made manifest.

So that is the grace of God, which is of God in man, ministering in spirit light to the soul in the midst of darkness, ministering life to that which is dead in sin; leading man through the vail of death up to God, from whom the grace hath appeared, and of whom it is; and the light thereof is judgment, and discerning in

every one that receives it to be led with it in judgment, and condemnation to such as turn it into lasciviousness, denying the life thereof, and the truth that leads thereto, and so cannot be saved through it; but he that receives it, and joins to it in spirit, becomes one with it, and by his daily sinking into it in counsel, grows in him, and he in it, until it becomes a habitation and cover for him against all evil, and so he becomes gracious in words and works, daily receiving of Christ's fulness grace for grace.

And he that hath received of this grace, and is faithful therein, cannot minister of it to strengthen the transgressor, who loves his sin, (and so is under the law) nor cast the pearls before swine; but to such as are heavy laden and weary of sin, to encourage them against sin and temptations, which all that turn from the devil must expect to meet with; and judgment it ministers to the wicked, that therewith he may know his condemnation with the light of truth, which is their condemnation in whom grace is denied to reign, he being come into the world who is full of grace and truth; but the kingdom of grace is salvation to them in whom it reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ the Lord.

So he that receives the teaching of grace, comes therein to the leading of the spirit, and so becomes free from sin, is no more under the law, but under grace, but the law hath power over him that walks after the flesh, and every appearance of grace is witness against him, by declaring him to be under the law of sin and death, and not in covenant with him that appears against sin in the power of grace and truth, which is Christ Jesus the Lord.

A FEW WORDS
IN ANSWER TO THE RESOLVES
OF SOME WHO ARE CALLED
INDEPENDENT TEACHERS,

Whose gospel and ministry appears to depend upon tithes; or as full a maintenance secured to them by a carnal law, as appears from their own mouths, in their judgments, and desires to the present rulers, delivered as followeth.
By JAMES NAYLER.

FIRST (say you) we judge a parliament the best expedient for the preservation of these nations.

Answer. The best expedient for the preserving of the nation, is for all people in the nation to turn to God, that by his light you may be led to repentance and newness of life, that that may be done away in every heart, for which the wrath of God comes upon nations and people; and whilst people are out from the light of Christ in their own hearts, such are looking to the hills and mountains for safety and peace, whilst wrath and lust increases in your own hearts, and it is to be feared that will destroy you, while your eyes are abroad for safety.

2. And withal we desire all due care be taken, that the parliament be such as may preserve the interest of Christ and his people in these nations.

Answer. The chief interest of Christ in these nations, and elsewhere upon earth, is his spiritual dominion in the consciences of people. And that there he be confessed to be absolute king and lawgiver, to whom alone every heart is to bow, and every tongue confess, and that the wills and laws of men usurp not authority therein, but that he by his spirit exercise the conscience in all things to God and men. And this is his interest which he is now demanding, as his birth-right in his people, both from kings, parliaments, and such as were called protectors, and whoever rules amongst men; which being denied him, his wrath hath been

kindled in their kingdom. And it greatly concerns all that come into authority, as they look to stand before him, that this his interest be preserved, and this interest of his people also; which is to have free liberty to obey him in their conscience in all his spiritual motions, though never so much contrary to the flesh and blood: and if the parliament be such, it must not be made up of old persecutors nor new, but by men of feeling, fearing God and tender in conscience; and above all they must take heed of lending an ear to the wicked counsel of such teachers as serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, which have been the cause of all the blood and persecution that hath been shed in this our generation, who never cease to provoke the magistrates to establish mischief by a law, chiefly against this interest of Christ and his people, of which number you appear to be in your following desires.

3. As to magistrates power in matters of faith and worship, we have declared our judgments in our late confession, and we heartily prize our christian liberty; yet we profess our utter dislike and abhorrence of an universal toleration, as being contrary to the mind of God in his word.

Answer. What your judgment in your late confession was, I know not, but you might do well to show your judgment in plainness, what this universal toleration is which you dislike and abhor; whether it be that you abhor, that any should be tolerated but your own sect, or such as are too near you to testify against your errors? If this be it (as like it is) then it is too selfish to be sound judgment, or safe counsel to be followed, being against the rule of Christ, "do unto all men as you would be done unto:" Or would you have toleration to none but such as are in the true power of spirit, and true form of sound words written in scripture? This were to wipe out yourselves, and bring in those against whom you profess your enmity [in your last particular] to wit, the Quakers, who at this day have both power of spirit and letter against you both as to your call, your whole form of worship, and the

manner of your hire, being such as no true ministers of Christ ever practised, wherein the Quakers and you differ? Or do you only intend against toleration of open profaneness, which none that love Christ or his interest will plead for? In this I am one with you, but if by universal toleration you intend that the magistrate should limit the spirit of Christ in any of his creatures, because his way is not your way, but against false ways and worships, as he moves them to bear his testimony, as in former times he hath done in the true prophets and ministers against the false, then is your spirit seen to be the same that theirs was, who ever sought to stop the mouth of truth, least their deceit should be laid open; and that is that which ever was against the interest of Christ, and the mind of God in his word; and it will not be an easy thing for men to limit the holy spirit in its movings, or to measure a way to him, whose way you know not, flesh and blood must be silent, which would fill a cup to another, which you would not drink yourselves, and the spirit must speak, e'er you can know either mind or word that is in God.

4. We judge that the taking away tithes for the maintenance of ministers, until as full a maintenance equally secured, and as legally settled, tend much to the destruction of the ministry and preaching of the gospel in these nations.

Answer. This is your judgment, and you may be believed herein, being now upon the mark you aim at, and the price of your calling and preaching in these nations; and you do but here declare in words, what all the seeing people in these nations did foreknow was in your hearts; but the word gospel you cannot bring in with this carnal stuff, that's taken from you, and must no longer cover you. What, will the gospel be destroyed for lack of tithes, or a maintenance secured from a forcible law? Blush for shame! It was never known, that forced hire, or agreement beforehand, had ever the least place in the free gospel ministry; this cannot stand with a spiritual call nor free

gift; nay, it exceeds the legal priesthood and false prophets, and goes beyond Balaam in error. What, either tithes, or as full as tithes so secured, and by the same law? Must papists laws up still, or else the gospel falls? This is none of Christ's gospel that thus depends, nor is this the hire of his servants, whose reward it is to make the gospel without charge: was it ever known, that any of his seed came to the earthly powers, to beg their bread, or to take it by force? Doth he thus maintain his family? Doth not such a servant shame the master's house? Yea, friends, all who know the power of his free grace, and the riches of the everlasting gospel, deny your gospel that will not fill your bellies, but must be kept from destruction with perishing food, by a forcing carnal law; that is not the gospel which is the power of God, nor was the ministers of the everlasting gospel so maintained. Search the scriptures and be ashamed, and stop your mouth from ever pretending yourselves to be ministers of the spirit, or of the letter, who are gone out from both, and neither will own your words and practice herein, nor indeed no part of your worship, as it now stands, as will be easily made apparent by plain scripture upon a fair occasion, but are gone after times and rewards, as your fathers have done for many ages, who to the letter are not yet come, and yet would be maintained by a law contrary to scripture or saints practice.

And therefore the Parliament, if they be such as would preserve Christ's interest (as you say) they must not force the lambs of Christ to maintain wolves in sheep's clothing, who are now known by their fruits, which is Christ's rule and command to know them by. And this is against his interest, and the interest of his people, to be thus forced against Scripture and a pure conscience; for the Scripture tells of a Ministry which minded earthly things, whose God was their belly, who were murmurers and complainers, running greedily after the way of Cain and error of Balaam, [mark] Cain and Balaam are put together, and these are

against Christ's interest and his people; and if they who had the form of godliness without the power were to be turned away from, then by what law must those who are out of both be maintained as Christ's ministers, under pretence of the gospel destruction? I know that without forced maintenance and fulness of it, and good security, the national ministry would fall, which hangs thereon, it being their function as they call it. And so if any see the work worth it, let such hire them; and setting them on work upon that account, it's fit they should pay them whom they labour for. But that such as have received the ministration of the free spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, should be forced against his law in their consciences, to maintain such as are out of the doctrine of Christ, and can do no work for them, but against them; or that at all this is to secure Christ's interest; or that the destruction of the gospel of truth depends thereon; that is utterly denied, as a false judgment; and absolutely against the kingdom of Jesus in his temples, his law in their hearts, and his divine power and spirit, by which he upholds all things pertaining to life and godliness. And this were the only way for the next parliament, or power, to run themselves against that rock against which so many before their eyes have been broken, and few there be in this nation, except such as have hardened their own hearts, and blinded the eye of a pure mind, but they have seen it. Wherefore take heed you rulers, [if it be not too late] how you meddle with Christ's kingdom but kiss the Son and yield him his kingdom in tender consciences; touch not the apple of the eye, which sees that to be sin and evil, which yet you do not, of which you have often been warned. But if you will make laws, let the scriptures be your rule, without, and the spirit of Christ within, enlightening the pure conscience, that so you may become tender-hearted in the fear of God, that the edge of your sword may be turned against open wickedness, being touched with a true sense of what grieves the spirit of Christ in yourselves, being joined

to the Lord in one spirit and life. And this will be your wisdom the interest of Christ and his people, and from thence you will receive better counsel and truer judgment than that which would stir you up to persecute and force tender consciences against their faith and knowledge received of the Lord Jesus, in matters of his worship, to serve men of corrupt minds, having hearts exercised with covetous practices, who cannot cease from sin, and stirring up nations to devour one another to accomplish their own ends. And had not the powers of this nation said a confederacy to such teachers, and taken off their counsel again, which once God had discovered to be against them, and set them free from, then had they established in peace in their right authority, and Christ in his; and far from oppression had they been, had they abode in God's teachings, their hearts had been kept tender, and that eye open which would have given them a sight towards the helpless, who have been wasted through the oppressor, from whom they should have been set free, whose blood now lies upon the nations, for which is now enquiry making.

5. It is our desire, that countenance be not given unto, nor trust reposed in the hands of Quakers, being persons of such principles that are destructive to the gospel, and inconsistent with peace and civil society.

Answer. As for your desire that we should not have the countenance of men, we say, the light of God's countenance is much better, and we cannot look for both while men take your counsel; and our trust is in God, in whose hand we are, and not in our own, and from men we may not seek repose; better it is for the present, to suffer with Christ than to reign in your kingdom, or be honoured with your glory. So in patience stands our peace with God, even whilst our names are cast out as evil with men. But for your accusation of our persons and principles, to be destructive to the gospel and civil society, take that back again to yourselves; our persons we boast not in, but our principles are truth, grounded upon the light of

Jesus, and leadings of his holy spirit, and whatever is contrary we condemn; and this we certainly know will never be destructive to Christ's gospel, only your gospel it will destroy, whose foundation stands not upon the power of the spirit of Jesus, but upon tithes, or some settled maintenance carnal, as full, as secure, by a carnal law, else it is liable to destruction, as yourselves confess. And this know, that your gospel that must needs be destroyed if tithes fall, is not that gospel which the apostles preached; for that gospel begun most of all to flourish when tithes went down, the priesthood that received them, and the law that gave them; which you may read of in the apostles epistle to the Hebrews, which law never took tithes by force, as the papists law did. And now you have often said, "that whosoever preaches another gospel, let him be accursed;" so take heed that your own words condemn you not, and your own weapon pierce not your own bowels; for the Lord hath heard your words. And this we know, that the gospel of Christ, which the apostles preached, was upheld by the power of an endless life, by which they were also made able ministers, and did not fall when tithes fell, but then so much the more flourished into such bounty, that the publishers thereof, who had nothing, did in it enjoy all things: which gospel both your words and your actions declare daily you live not on; but like men who have lost the counsel of God, you act both contrary to law and gospel.

Was not this the counsel of God in the time of the law, when the priests had only tithes to live on, that then they should have no magistrate to force them, but freely they were to bring their offerings, that so he might engage the priest to himself, who was his portion, and then they never wanted, while they kept the word, and their lips preserved knowledge to the people. But when the priests forgot God, then like people, and then they justly wanted, as God had said. And would you now have the magistrate to make a law to take people's goods, and give to such as do not first beget

people to God? Is this to live on the gospel, or to eat of your own fruits, as Christ's ministers do and ever did? Thus may the magistrate do for a while against the Lord, and oppress the innocent, to feed the fat and idle, but the account is at hand, in which it will be said, did I require it at your hands? Am not I of power to maintain my own servants, who have the hearts of all in my hands? Or, what laws will you make for me, who never made use of any in this case, but the law of love, to be fulfilled in a free spirit, for in the household of Christ is no strife about carnal things? And that principle is destructive to the gospel of peace which admits of strife about their bellies, or framing mischief against another by a law to fill themselves.

And whereas you say our principles are inconsistent with peace and civil society, to you it is said, whom have we made war with [after the manner of men?] Though after Christ and his servants we war against spiritual wickedness daily, both in teachers and people, not to destroy their bodies and goods, as ours have been destroyed daily, and are appointed to death upon all hands; yet we have peace with God in this, that our hearts are with him for mercy and salvation, to such as yet seek our destruction and hate us without cause, except testifying against sin and false worships be the cause; and our society is in that which is truly civil, and civil we are when we are amongst our own, and towards the creation of God; and if at any time we be amongst wild beasts, and such as are in the wanton and uncivil nature, we have little society with them, further than to reclaim them, or to testify against them as we are moved of the Lord: and if this you call uncivil, or because we cannot observe your customs of pride and fashions of vanity; then we account it better for us to endure your reviling and reproach, than the eternal judgment of the Lord, who hath called us out of these things.

And now you pretended teachers, you are found out of Christ's doctrine, and you have not received his

teaching, who saith, take no thought for to-morrow what you shall eat, or for cloathing what to put on; nor are you taught of him who saith, seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added unto you: Now out of this faith you are found, and so out of the faith of Christ, and untaught you are of this teacher, and how should you teach others; and your foundation is not the foundation of God, who say first tithes, or something as full made sure; and then you will build, and your gospel will stand, or else it will be destroyed; so your foundation is sandy and dirty, and not the foundation of God which stands sure, on which the prophets and apostles were built, who never took tithes, or set maintenance to live on; but the apostle said, the priesthood was changed, and of necessity there must be also a change of the law. So these called not for a law from man, nor made flesh their arm, nor carnal things their support, as you do; so of this error you must repent, and come to the spirit they were taught by, and depend upon God alone, and not on the world; else cease calling yourselves independent, or saying, you are sent out by Christ Jesus, who hang upon the earthly power for food and safety.

TO THE GATHERED CHURCHES.

Give ear you gathered churches, so called, in England and Ireland, and hear what truth saith of you concerning your dealing towards God; for the day hath discovered you: and God is coming to enquire for his own amongst you.

WAS not there a plant planted amongst you once, a tender plant, which had a little rooting in a tender ground, which began to appear out of the earth, more in beauty than all the wild trees of the forest; it also did begin to blossom, and some tender grapes did appear; and the roots and branches began to spread,

and bend towards him that planted it, and made its appearance towards heaven; and there was great hopes of a blessing in it, and that it would have covered the earth with its comeliness that was beginning to be put upon it; insomuch as the oaks and cedars, and all the rest of the trees, the briars and brambles, began to envy its appearance, and gathered in counsel against it in great strength: but the maker thereof, seeing it bending to him, in that straight undertook to make room for it, cutting down some, and plucking up others by the roots, even to the tallest and strongest that withstood its spreading, until he left scarce a briar to hinder the fruitfulness thereof. Then he looked that it should arise, and spread, and bring forth fruits, according to its own nature, tender and good; and this was that which bare the name of tender consciences, and indeed did so prevail in many, as nothing was to be compared with it, nor valued like it, whose fame was spread in the world.

But now stand still, and behold what is become of this plant; and what the fruits are you bring forth, and how you are turned into a degenerate plant of yourselves, since the Lord took away kings, bishops, and all the whole body of opposition; compare your spring and your harvest together, and see what was sown, and what is now to reap amongst you for God.

Come to your faith, and come to your fruits, and try if they be of that nature which was sown and planted, which is from above; or have they that life or power; or have they that heavenly image? Are you not conformed to this present world? And have you not that beastly mark of pride, of covetousness, of self love, and other works of the flesh? What testimony hold you forth this day from Heaven against the wickedness that abounds in your streets openly; that you may be known to be from above, and not of this world, to all that pass by; that they may believe who cannot receive a feigned profession that is without works of life, nor faith in words without fruits. By what will you be known not to be of the world, but to be on the

lamb's part this day of battle? And what marks of his do you bear in your flesh, by which his enemies may be judged in themselves, of all their ungodly ways, and hard speeches, which a profession without life hath cast upon him these many years? But what are you manifest to every ones conscience? And by what shall the unbeliever say, God is in you of a truth, and fall down before his righteous power? Have you his lively image upon you in truth and righteousness in the streets? Or, can you say indeed, the Lord your redeemer liveth, and reigneth in you, in the face of your actions? Hath he redeemed you from all iniquity? Or are you presented without spot? Or doth your faith say, that ever you shall while you live? Is not all hope decayed, and many of you gone back from what you once were, many degrees. Alas for you! Is this the faith of God, which by the flesh is thus overcome: Or, are these the fruits of the heavenly plant? What is become of your Lord's money, and how is your gold become dross? Is there not a more precious witness trodden down under all this: And doth not the pearl lie covered under all this earth? Is there not a holy one of another nature; and feel you nothing moving to bring forth better fruits: I know there is a measure of the grace of Christ in you: why is it you are so gone astray from his counsel, and erred in your hearts from his precious life? Why will you not hearken to that which once was drawing you out of the world, for which you did bear the cross and reproach thereof: Were not you once they that were called the spiritual men and women, and became a scorn because you professed the obedience to its movings? And what way did it then lead you, and into what was it turning you: Were you not then hated for his name's sake; and did it not lead you down into meekness and patient suffering: and could you not then rejoice, in that you were counted worthy to bear his reproach openly, in hope of his appearance to plead your innocency. How did you then begin to preach and practice lowliness of mind; and pride began to

become a shame, and covetousness abominable; and a spiritual man, who had a tender conscience, who could rather die than defile himself with vain customs, was not such an one a jewel in your eyes? And in his sufferings you could feelingly share. Did not that spirit lead you out of your old dark forms of worship which you received by tradition: And did not your light and life arise as you removed by following thereafter; and did you not leave them in darkness that came not out with you? And none was able to withstand that spirit by which you then spoke and walked whilst you were going that way; but your adversary was forced to betake himself to carnal weapons. And did not your God then save you by his spirit, and by weak means scatter the mighty, that he might make way for this plant to grow: But what way did you then take? Let that of God in you be witness. Did you not soon grow into ease and carelessness, and so let the spirit of your old enemies overtake you, and many of those things by which your consciences were then oppressed, are you yielded to, and the worldly spirit you have suffered to beset you, and enter you again; which hath turned your faces into the world's riches and glory, with which you are covered at this day, and soon left off to follow that spirit that led out of this, which the Lord seeing, was grieved: But for his name's sake, not willing his work should fall, did call another people to his light, and many from far whom you then counted not a people, are come to the brightness of his rising, to follow his spirit; and what is now become of the children of the kingdom: and what is the fruit of that vineyard? Are not you now the great opposers of that spirit, and of the light within: undervaluing it as though it were not worthy to be a leader, nor able to keep in the paths of safety. Ah foolish people! Have you well requited your redeemer: Or, did his leadings deserve this from you: While you followed him in spirit, the husband of your youth: what evil found you in his light while you hearkened to it. Compare your way then and your way now, and be witnesses against yourselves forever.

What is this you have done? How is that spirit become your enemy, that then was your leader? Was he your enemy till you changed your way, and returned back into the love of the world, in which his spirit could not join with you, nor own you, nor change with you? So him that doth not change you have left; and testify against his light since you have received the spirit of the world. So darkness cannot comprehend the light, nor such receive him, who have changed their God like you? The guide of your youth is now as an adversary in your way, testifying against you in your own hearts; so you would stop his way in the hearts of others. If this be not so, let him be witness, whose spirit condemns sin in the flesh, with all its motions, in every one where his light is minded; which will truly let you see (as many as with faith and diligence hearken thereto) what way you are going, and what hath befallen you since you became resisters of that holy spirit in its temple, and have set up idols; and how the spirit of the world hath prevailed to cover you with its own vanities, and fading glory, till you have nothing left to separate you from the world but a form, without the life of the saints.

And now you having suffered the plant of life to be covered with the earthly spirit, and having sold yourselves under the fleshly power for want of a steadfast and faithful watch in the spirit of life, which did once redeem you in measure; now is the same spirit coming over you in the powers of the world, ready to rise up against your form also [which is all you have left] under which you must either join or suffer. And when this comes upon you, to whom will you cry for help? Or where will you leave your glory? Or how will you do to save your sanctuary in which you trust? If you look to the God of this world, you may easily have his favour, but then you must take upon you his form; and then what must become of your own you have trusted in, and so cried up for a sanctuary?

And if you cry to the Lord, will not his light in your consciences tell you, that he was once your redeemer, while you would own his spirit in you for a leader, and that it was not he that sold you, but your iniquities, and choosing other Gods, and letting in the worlds idols into his temple, and denying him therein, that hath now overtaken you again; and will not the second evil be worse than the first? When every sacrifice comes to be salted with fire, then will you know what it is for the salt to lose its savour: then will such be seen to be blessed, who have salt in themselves, and who have not turned their light into darkness, nor denied the Lord that bought them: then woe to the vessel which is filled with that which will not abide the fire. And this day is near at hand to come upon him that believes, and him that believes not.

And at that day, that which you have been filling the vessel with will be a heavy burthen, though pleasant in the heaping up, with which you have oppressed the just, and darkened that holy light that would have shined in your hearts, which once was arising to have given you the knowledge of God in purity; which gives to see the odiousness of all iniquity, and a way out of it; which spirit, had you retained, you would not have slain the just, nor taken pleasure in unrighteousness, nor been filled with ungodliness, like the world, as at this day your works are found to be, nor opposers of the spiritual light that leads out of the world. For in the light, which now you oppose, dwells no wickedness, nor unrighteousness; no covetousness, fornication, malice, envy, deceit, hatred, pride, despite, lust, nor oppression, nor fleshly pleasures inhabit in the light; but by it are judged and condemned, and cast out: for it is the house of God, who dwells in the light, which sees all these to be vile affections, to which they are given up, who are children that disobey the light and deny it, and take pleasure in these deeds of darkness, on whom the wrath of God abides; on which works the fire will take hold,

and whose end is to be burnt: which works you have seen to be evil by the light, while you were led by the spirit, and did condemn them in others, and preach against them; and do the same things, and plead for them now in yourselves, and now having no excuse to cover you, you rage when you are told thereof in sound words: but your teachers you will hear, which are of your own, and one with you herein, who feed the ear, but starve the soul.

And now when you hear of these things from such as love your souls, take heed to your spirits, that nothing arise as in the days of Cain: for the strong man hath had a time to fortify himself within you, and he will rage if his kingdom be entered. Wherefore hearken not to that which is above in the high mind, but return to that spirit which is lowly, and sink down into meekness, and take counsel of that spirit which receives truth in love, and abides the search with patience (and in whom there is no guilt there will be no wrath) for we do not this to stir up the evil, but to overcome it with truth. And as many of you as upon true search are justified in the light of life, with such we rejoice, and are one, and seek unity herein, in one testimony of life; and for such as have put on a fair covering, and a large garment above, but these evils are seen in the skirts of it; this is not to discover any thing which true love can hide, but that such might see with that by which they are seen, and mourn in secret with those that mourn for them in secret, seeking the way to return. But for most part it is too plain a truth to need a secret search to be seen, for its come into the streets, and in the places of your worships, and in your daily employment; it is found in all these. So wickedness being come into the streets, truth may not creep into a corner to reprove it: nay; its high time to cry aloud, not to spare the whore; for with an impudent face hath she backslided from her youth, and hath decked herself with the attire of an harlot. Is not pride become a glory openly amongst you? And to deceive souls hath got the name of

decency, and covered under the finest forms of religion; and the scriptures of truth which forbid it, wrested through your subtilty to plead for it, against the light in your own consciences; and how can humility hold her peace thereat? How are our honorable men and women, who were once covered with grace, and lovely in the beauty of holiness and modesty, bedaubed with ribbons, lace, baubles, and foolish vanities not worth the naming, and too many to mention? And how can wisdom but utter her voice against such whoredoms, and call her children from the paths of the destroyer? And to that of God in you all we appear, what spirit that is which is offended therein; or can he that glories in such folly hear wisdom's voice? See what spirits you are of.

And if you be the churches of Christ, or if any of you be sensible of his suffering, who hath long suffered under all this filth, then strip yourselves thereof, and come forth to his help against this height of wickedness that is now growing to the full, and hath fenced its way against all reproof and teaching, so that nothing is now left but the life to finish its testimony against it unto blood-suffering, which now is at the door.—Wherefore, if any of you be on the Lamb's part, who now hath a controversy with the whore, then come take up his cross and follow him, and shew forth his life a witness in your bodies against all this wickedness. If you be baptised into him, put him on; and if you have received him, walk in him openly: for his coming is not in the secret chambers, to witness against wickedness that's come forth in the open streets, nor in the desert to testify against his enemy that rules in the places of greatest concourse; but in streets, and markets, temples and synagogues, where these whoredoms are acted, there he utters his voice, and by his precious life witnesses against them, as in the days of old in his saints, so now is it, glory to God for evermore, whose day is world without end, which whoever comes to, must give up their bodies as a sacrifice, holy, and they only are acceptable at his coming, and fit for his use, glory for ever.

Wherefore be not so deceived, to think that long preaching and praying against these evils in your words, with the power thereof ruling in your hearts, captivated within, and covered therewith without, hath power to overcome this spiritual wickedness, or make it ashamed in the streets, or drive it into a corner, which you practice yourselves openly; for it's the life of Christ that's cross to all this, and the Lamb must take the victory. Therefore in the fear of God, turn to the spirit from whence you are gone, that his light may give you the knowledge of God in your hearts, and what you have of his power to save you from this evil generation, by redeeming your minds out of these vanities, your hearts out of the world, and your bodies and estates to himself, as a sacrifice freely given up to bear his testimony in your bodies, and in your estates, against the evil that now abounds, to the convincing of such as are out of the ways of God, by his walking in you, by the steps of his spirit which will shine forth as a light in your lives, if you become obedient thereto, forsaking your own ways to be led thereby. And let not your high thoughts deceive you, nor trust in lying words; for you are no further redeemed than you have this power given from above, and this treasure in the earthen vessel, which gives life from the dead; This is the riches of his grace, which saves by faith, and the gift of God, glory and life eternal. And he that saith, he is redeemed, or set free, and yet is led captive in his mind into these evils, and walks in them, is a liar before the Son, and blasphemes the holy name of Christ, and causes it to be blasphemed through the world. But he that is baptised into Christ, and all this filth buried, and that life that delights in it mortified, and covered with his lowly spirit, having received the gift of God, and put him on, and walks in him, honours him, and him that sent him, and hath fellowship with the father and the son, led by the spirit out of the world, through his sufferings, his death and resurrection; and such know the life of Christ, and the gift of God, to whom it is given not only to be-

lieve, but to suffer for to spread his name and power, and to preach his truth and righteousness, and to hold forth his virtue, as it is in him, according to the measure of him received in spirit, not adding nor diminishing: and this is the true ministration of life, and gospel-light, which calls to the simple with power, and which is manifest to that of God in every conscience, and that lively faith which is known by its works, which contains the glory of God for its witness. But a faith there is, which to this life is reprobate, which stands not upon the foundation of righteousness, but stands in lying words without fruits of the spirit to glorify God, or evidence the substance in life, and whose conversation is not in Christ, yesterday, to day, and for ever; but glories in swelling words, and conceiving of what Christ was and will be; putting him afar off, but to day hear not his voice, nor bear his image; and these are they that glory in words, but not in power, whose faith doth not overcome the world, but gives way to the devil, always promising great things to come, but themselves servants to these corrupt things, and this is faith without works.

And with this net are many easily caught, who being convinced in their understanding of a form nearer the letter, and having got words suitable thereto, then are received church members, and presently having changed their opinion, become new believers, and teachers of others, as though they had attained some great thing, not minding to prove their new faith by the light of life, and truly to try it, what life is in the new, more than in the old, by its powerful working in the vessel; whether it be that faith which purifies the heart and hands, which mystery stands not in feigned words, but in a pure conscience, purging the vessel, and fitting the temple of God for his coming, by the spirit of his son, which faith opens as it cleanses, drinking in the new through the death of the old; by which the just lives, which gives the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus, not in vain words, and who are gathered into it are gathered by the living faith, which worketh.

and conforms to Christ, within and without, to live his life, and manifest his life to the world, in their mortal bodies, and to bear his name and nature, his marks and sufferings in their conversation before his enemies, shewing him to be the same to day, blessed for evermore; and such are baptised into his likeness in death and resurrection in a true measure.

But who are gathered by words without power, and a faith without his holy life, such may run on heaps, swell high, and make many heads and horns, yet all make but one beast, and their several names serve but to make up his number, to which they do arise, all against the Lamb: but his life and power they cannot reach, neither can they read his name, nor bear his mark, who are not redeemed from earth: but the whores heart, and beasts image is their mark, which now is come into the open view, and cannot be hid: that being the whorish heart which loves the things of this world; and thats the beast which bears her, whose life is in them, and lusts after them, striving and fighting for them, and whose glory stands therein, and to be covered therewith, so that you need not dive so deep with your dark wisdom, to find whose you are, for the light is come which gives the knowledge of God (and who are his temples, and in whom he walks) and in the face of Jesus this is known in every conversation, by which light God hath shined in the heart for that purpose: and the power of the beast is seen by the light in all consciences, his image and mark appearing out of his temple, wherein his seat and kingdom is; so that he that runs may read each head, and their mark; and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and 'asts, and have put on Christ, and walked in him, and his face is seen, and in such only are the fruits of the spirit manifest; and they that have denied the spirit, its light and leadings, are enemies to its life, and in such the fruits of the flesh are manifest, and can be no longer hid.

And all you who have followed your own spirits, and denied the light of Christ, by the light in every

conscience are you made manifest, not to be spiritual men and women; which light judges pride, covetousness, deceitful dealing, and all your wanton pleasures and vain customs, and shows them to be works of the flesh. So the light denies you, and you deny it before men; and such are found amongst your churches; and the light hath laid you so naked, that the world sees you, and hath power over your holy things, to trample them under feet, saying, "what is their profession worth? They are as proud and covetous, &c. as we are; and can lie and dissemble as others, and we will never more trust them for their professions." Thus is your profession covered with reprobach, because you have denied the spirit, and have covered yourselves with that which spiritual men count dross and dung, and you are not sound of tender consciences. And to that of God in your consciences are we manifest, that this is truth; and to God Almighty, that this is not to upbraid any one, or to glory in wickedness, but in obedience to the spirit of God, who hath quickened us out of these things, and in love to your souls, which are wounded and slain thereby, and to warn you of what we see coming on, having felt the terror of the Almighty against the way you have chosen; who could rejoice to meet you in your return, and desire to separate from none of you, but in your sin, and that which devours the creation to feed the lust, which is separated from God forever, and you as long as to it you join, whatever you profess.

And this is to call to you all to return to the Lord, who is that spirit, and that life wherein all must worship that would be received of the father; for God will confound Babel, and all that give glory to images, and all that confess a likeness instead of life; and that you might all see that his is coming upon you, who cry the ordinances of God in words, with your lips, but deny his light in your hearts, and his spirit and word there, which is the great ordinance of God, and endures to all generations, and that by which all outward shadows were given forth, which endeth

shadows, and is the substance and body, which is Christ within the hope of glory, and worship in spirit, and the truth in heart, which changes not, which God looks at, and seeks such this day to worship him, and gives them power over the world, who confess to the spirit and life within, and worship God in his temple made without hands, wherein he is lifted up in truth and righteousness, light and true judgment this day in your streets, against the horn of wickedness, where he is confessed in life and power, and glory is given to the spirit alone, and he owns it, and receives it, and bears witness to it, with his presence, with his sufferings and with his blood, and is daily clothing such vessels with the Son, whom he brings forth in the everlasting arm and life. And this is the birth he loves, and the child of his own bosom begotten again, which bears his image lively against all the world, though it be but never so little that dare not disobey what he leads to in spirit, to conform to the will of man, though to save their lives or liberties; but daily cast off all as dung, that they may win Christ, this spirit and life, to lead and redeem them out of the dark world, which nothing else can do but this spirit; and this is the Immanuel, and the man-child that was, and is, and is to come, world without end. And since the father saw him appear upon earth in this image, he hath loved him, and owned him, though his appearance be as a lilly among the thorns, and many tall trees which have great names would stop his appearance, that he might not be seen, nor confession made to his light and rising in this lowly stature; yet is the father daily making his way before him, cutting down many high grown plants, which are not of this lowly nature, and many fall on each hand, some into the earth are sunk and buried, some into the Red Sea raging, into blood and persecution, and all to make way for the Lamb, to be seen and known by his life, to be him that was to come, for whose sake God is selling Egypt, and spoiling them of their jewels, and confounding of Babel, whose lives and language are now seen to be contrary.

And thus is he drying up the sea, that kings may come and worship in spirit, and they that overcome the world may confess thereto, and that he may recover his glory to himself in spirit, which men have given to visible things and shadows, that can neither see nor save, and where the pearl is lost, God loves not for your sacrifice.

And this is written to you all, that you may see what hath covered you since you have erred in spirit, denied the light, and have walked in the wind, and have exalted great forms and outward things above the spirit: so with outward earthly things are you covered, and not with the spirit; and as you have delighted to spend your strength and study to set up the letter above the light, and your carnal ordinances to be the salvation, and so have not given glory to the spirit, but have given glory to that which is not God, to oppose the light and spirit of God, and his living word in the heart, which only hath power to save, and enlighten the heart against the powers of the prince of this world. So by the light you may see what power now rules in your hearts, and with what glory you are covered, and that which you have been contending for with others, against the spirit, hath not given you power to contend against the world, and overcome; but you may feel yourselves captivated to that which some of you [who are not yet hardened] would not: others are come so as to glory in their shame, in open pride and vanity and fleshly pleasures, and with the same mouth they plead for the idol, with the same they plead for his fruits.

And so you may all read your judgment with the light of the world, which condemns the works of the world, yours and theirs, and that you are all come short of the glory of God, and are turning back to the glory of this world, and joined to it in pleadings and practice; and so manifest to all men, that you are not found worthy to declare him to this generation, he not being the end of your conversation, Christ Jesus the saviour of the world; but the hope that

was awakened in you, when you at first received the earnest of his spirit, is withered and dead, and now you have your conversation in the earth, and your names being written there, you have put the day of his coming afar off, and are joined with the world to withstand his appearance in the poor, that now God hath called to confess his light, and preach his resurrection and life in spirit, and this you and the world would quench where-ever it begins but to sparkle, telling them it's not sufficient, &c. to draw their minds out from it, and keep them in some outward observations, lo, here, lo there, lest the light should arise and condemn your fruitless observations; which light saith, the kingdom of God is within you.

And thus you quench the spirit in many, and having lost the key yourselves, you suffer not others to enter that would; and all you do for these when they deny the light, and come to you, is, you learn them to paint the sepulchre, but the soul in the grave; and so the spirit being denied, the flesh prevails within and without. And seeing you have refused to judge yourselves with the light, therefore are you laid open, and your lives with the world to be condemned; and the light, which you say to the world is not sufficient, arises in the hearts of the world to condemn your practices.

Friends, you that have set a feeling of that which pants after God, and waits for the kingdom of heaven, and where that principle is not yet buried, which first turned your minds out of the world, with the same now mind what way you are going, and what is the end you aim at, and in what will you take up your rest, that you may be eternally happy; will a settled form of truth, without the power of righteousness and presence of God in you, satisfy your longing souls? Was not this the thing that was awakened in many of you at first, and strongly breathed towards his appearance, so that nothing would satisfy, but a feeling of that spirit working obedience and tenderness, and speaking peace in you; for all your former failings and

comings short of obedience? And how many honest and just ways did this spirit lead you into, which you had not from man, and in your obedience thereto, opened to you of the father's bosom-love, melting your hearts, and opened the scriptures, and of the secrets of God, which you had never known of man, nor by man? And thus while you were tender in following the Lord in spirit, he led you therein, and fed you therewith; and whatever you did in singleness of obedience thereto, he answered with peace and joy therein: and this the witness of God, which in some of you remains yet not wholly slain, will witness too with us in secret, and yet till this day, if you have any obedience that God owns or answers, it is in that principle. And now will it satisfy you to sit down in a form at ease, and this oppressed in you, and grieved by setting carnal things above it, to lead you, and rule in your hearts, till it be weary with striving, and now is departing out of all your forms, and you have lost its leading; and do not you feel this in your souls? Is there never a secret lamentation in you, to seek after him who was the husband of your youth and led you at the first? This is all our souls long to see at present, that you would but diligently mind how you are parted from him, and what is the cause, and where he now appears that you might follow him, that he might lead you into life. We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, that spirit whose appearance in spirit changes shadows, forms, likenesses, and carnal ordinances, and makes all things new at his coming, which with the flesh is defiled. And though we would not have you to leave any thing in which you have formerly found any thing of God, till he lead you out of it, yet we would not have you to forsake him who led you therein, and therein was found of you; but him to follow wherever he goes: will your carnal things be any more to you than the temple, and circumcision, and the Jewish priesthood, when God had left it for the wickedness that was covered therewith? What then became of them that stayed therein, cry-

ing, the temple of the Lord? Did they not then trust in lying words? And was it aught but a den of murderers, strengthening themselves with the notion of God's ordinances against the life of Christ, who came in another appearance, though they knew it not then, no more than you do now?

Therefore take heed what you do at this day, when all are looking for the kingdom of heaven, some one way, some another; but most see that righteousness is departed from amongst men of all forms and professions, and the earth is got into men's hearts, and hath filled them with violence, pride and oppression. Now your work should be, and all that love his appearance, to watch diligently (not, lo here, lo there, but) where righteousness arises as the lightning; in what form soever he comes, righteousness is the life and power. And now take heed how you set up your form to oppose this, wherever it begins in the least to arise, lest you oppose God; for God's kingdom consists in righteousness, and through righteousness doth grace reign.

And this we further say to you in tenderness and true love, that if you once see that power of righteousness arise in any sort of people whatsoever above you, which by the light of the world in your own conscience condemns your conversation, take heed how you then oppose it, or stay in your forms which have it not in them, from joining to it, lest your temple become a habitation of murderers, as theirs was; for so will it befall such as will not follow the Lamb wherever he goeth, they war against him; for as he departs he will draw away that of his own from all that will not come with it, to him, wherever he sets up his ensign: and then your ordinances being left empty of that spirit, what must enter instead is easily to be discerned. And as you feel a spirit of strife and envy, lust and earthly-mindedness, and of all the works of the flesh, begin more and more to prevail in you and over you, then remember what we in love to your souls have warned you of, which we dearly

desire may never come upon you to the full, but that that eye may be minded in you, which would lead you out of the world, to see the rising of the son of righteousness, where the honest in heart shall meet in spirit, and find healing.

J. N.

TO THOSE WHO WERE IN AUTHORITY, WHOM THE LORD IS
NOW JUDGING, THAT THEY MAY REPENT AND
FIND MERCY FROM GOD.

O men of England, whose day is over, and whose time is passed away from you, and you are now left as men in desolation and darkness! You had a large day and time to have done good, and to have answered God's requirings of you, and your engagements to him, and so to have laid up treasure with God against the evil day, which is come from far upon you; and you had a large time and a great power in your day, to have made you friends of the unrighteous mammon, by doing justly and shewing mercy therein; that so you might have had a habitation in the day of adversity: and in your day the heavens were fair, and the son gave you his light, shining upon you through many clouds that seemed to arise, over which he sent you light, that in his light you might have walked and seen light; and his visitations and risings towards you was often, and his appearance was lovely towards you; even a calm sun-shine after a stormy tempest, and as warm clearness after rain, to the softening of the earth, and to make it fruitful, that he might have received of his tillage, a good savour from the fruit of his labours and have blessed you.—But, O people! you would not hear nor regard in that day, when his works was good to you every morning, and his mercies upon you all the day long; but you

grew high and lofty in yourselves, and proud in your minds, and self-conceited and self-ended, and hardened your hearts against his tender witness in your conscience, and walked rebelliously against his good spirit in your own hearts, and he could not cause you to hear; but you grew past feeling of any thing that is called God in you.

Then you daily waxed fat, and fulness increased, and pride gendered into your hearts, and you grew wanton, and kicked against him that bore you, and made light of his pricks in your conscience. Thus was your ear stopped towards God, and you wholly lost from all that he might speak unto you in spirit, or counsel, or fear, and from the way of his teaching and reproof you were utterly gone, and had removed your hearts far away from hearing his voice; for you had filled them with pride and vain glory, and your unjust gain had made many of them even as the nether mill stone; so you become unmoveable in your way.

Then did the Lord raise him up servants that would hear, and gave them his light, to see what you were doing against the Lord your God, who had redeemed you out of all adversity, and had raised you up out of a low estate; and had done for you exceedingly; even to win you as a people to himself: and also what God was a-doing against you, because of this your contrary walking towards him; and that he would certainly bring you down before your enemies, if you did not return and humble yourselves before him. And these he sent amongst you with his word, rising early, and sending them to speak his mind expressly what he minded to do; and it could no longer slumber: but you would not hear, neither would you believe; but the same which had stopped your ear, and hardened your hearts in your own selves from feeling, that had wrought to such hardness, dulness and unbelief, till God's word could have no entrance into you; nor his servants liberty to walk amongst you to publish it; but you begun to question in your unbelief, whether it was the word. and in your pride to scorn it, and in the

hardness of your hearts then you began to persecute the messengers of the Lord, which he sent with it to you for your good, and many hundreds suffered in all parts of the nation upon this account, till there was no hope of your hearing or obeying the voice of your return.

Then did the Lord raise up signs and wonders among you. if by any means he might appear as one to be feared or observed by you: and he stripped some of his children and sent them among you; and some he clothed in sackcloth, as mourning over you; and some with ashes upon their heads he sent into your assemblers of worships, and your assemblies in your feasts and of your fasts, which were all abominable to him, while you walked in your own ways, and would not hear his voice; but these you used worse than formerly, and your rage increased in stocking, beating, whipping and imprisoning, until the cry of oppression was so great that there was no remedy; and then the Lord arose and shook you in pieces, as a mighty one in his anger, and broke you with such a breach so as you could not be healed, nor be a power any longer; and so hath brought the wheel over you, and from far, without help, hath he caused the rod to blossom.

And the just Lord is now seen in the midst of you, and which of you is able to stand before him in judgment, or to condemn him in the thing he hath done; and captivity is taken captive before him; and you that did imprison are imprisoned; and you that sought to make yourselves dreadful by oppression, now know not where to hide yourselves from the mighty day that's coming upon you from the God of the whole earth.

And now this is the word of the Lord to you, all you sturdy oaks, and tall fruitless trees, whom the wind of the fierce wrath of the Almighty hath thus shaken: hear the rod, and who hath appointed it, and bow before the terrible judge of all flesh, and seek not to save yourselves with your former consultations, with

that spirit in which you have always rebelled against God till this day, and in whose counsel you have wrought this great evil to provoke the Lord, and in which you have ever rejected his word in yourselves and others; neither trust to your friends, to make flesh your arm, yet farther to provoke the Lord to your utter confusion; neither trust in your prayers or performances, or aught you can do, while you are in that rebellious spirit of disobedience to God's witness in your own consciences: for verily, God will not hear you, while you are unwilling to hear him. And now for this he is come near you at last to judgment, and he hath brought near his righteousness, that you might see it and lay hold on it, and make peace therewith now at last for your souls, that you may be saved; and your return must be first to that spirit against whom you have sinned, there to make peace.

And now spend not your time in vain talks, and vain practices, and so still serve that evil spirit that hath all along betrayed you of your obedience to God; but wait to feel that spirit, which calls you to mourn apart, every one for the evils of his own heart against his God, and let that be minded which leads to repentance towards God first, that if by any means you may find a place for repentance, which will be hard for many of you to do, you have so long dissembled with God, and betrayed his witness in you through deceit; for this is the truth to you all, if you find that from the Lord in spirit, that will let you see the evils of provocation, and give you power to put it off, whatever it be, you will find favour with God therein for your souls: but if you find not that spirit, you will find small peace with God; and then that which men can do for you will be little available; for it is for want of hearing and obedience towards God, that all this evil is come upon you; which must be turned to ere it can be taken everlastingly off: for if you had hearkened to his light in your consciences, and his word had had a place in your hearts to obedience when you were yet tender, then would it have kept you in his fear; so •

that you durst not have coveted that cursed thing, with which you hid and covered that just principle in you, and blinded your eyes with the riches and spoil of your enemies; nor durst you have set up what you had cast down, and got into their estates, and so into their pride by unrighteous gain, whom God had cast out; then had you not provoked God by these things to your utter ruining: or if after this was entered upon you, you had hearkened to his reproof, and put this off yourselves with his spirit, then had he not brought this terrible besom to sweep it away from off you, and from within you, who hath left you no place to hide your glory or your riches, where his hand shall not reach, and his eye find them out.

And there is now no hope for agreement with God in yourselves, nor that he will cease his anger against you, till you return to that from which you departed, that the same spirit may be confessed, and glory given thereto, by putting off, in his counsel and motion, that which was put on in your counsels against that spirit, and his light in your own consciences; and also in many others, whose souls were troubled and grieved for you in that day. And this the Lord God looks for, that glory be given to the just in his sight, and in the sight of all before whom his name hath been blasphemed.

And this is now the work of this your day, while you have a little time, and for this he waits and forbears, that he may be gracious to your souls for his name's sake. And it is not a time for you to sleep and sit at ease, nor spend your time in vanity, nor seek to hide that which God is resolved to declare openly, nor with fleshly counsel seek to save that which God will destroy. It's time now at least to see what that selfish spirit and its counsel hath done for you, and repent of it, by following whereof all this evil is come upon you, for your authority hath vomited you out, your glory hath left you naked, and your riches cannot profit you in this day of wrath from the Almighty. This was I moved of the Lord to write to you.

J. N.

A LETTER TO KING CHARLES II.

O KING! God hath in these nations a people gathered by himself into his light, who are known to himself better than to men, and therefore have we suffered by men under all the powers that have risen in this nation ever since God called us towards himself, by his eternal light and spirit. And though we receive not our laws from man, yet are we not without law as to our God, but have one law-giver, even Christ Jesus our Lord, our life and our head, blessed over all: and from his laws we may not depart. And by his law in our conscience, and the power of his spirit in our hearts, are we ordered and guided to walk holily towards our God, and harmlessly towards men, as the saints of old witnessed in scripture, however they be minded towards us; and by the virtue of the Lamb and not of flesh and blood, are we made to give our goods to the spoil, and our bodies to the tortures of cruel men, rather than defile our consciences, or sin against any one of the least of the commands of our Lord and law-giver Christ Jesus; who by the light of his eternal spirit doth daily lead us out of the evils and vanity of this present world, and having begotten us into his own guiding, he doth not suffer us to subject ourselves to any thing whatsoever is not set up by himself, nor to worship the God of this world, nor obey him in commands or customs; but the exercise of our consciences he hath redeemed wholly to himself, and by his precious blood hath sprinkled them, and made them tender and pure: so that we may not worship false gods, nor the true God in a false manner; nor may we worship men, nor follow the customs of nations, kindreds or people, or languages; but the spirit of truth itself we must follow: nor may we break Christ's commands in swearing, when men command us; but must obey him who saith, swear not at all: nor may we join to, or uphold any worship whatsoever, but

what the spirit of truth itself leads us into, though many have sought to force us thereto: nor may we leave the ministry of Christ, and that maintenance which the gospel allows of, to maintain a priesthood with tithes, and so go back from Christ to the law, that the apostle saith is disannulled, *Heb. 7.*

And for such things as these, concerning a tender conscience, and the law of our God, have we suffered grievous persecution, and not for any unrighteousness done by us against any man's person or estate, nor have we suffered by any just law of the nation, but by the wills of cruel men, and as a prey to every man's lust hath been our liberties, lives and estates, and the rulers that have been to this day have not sought our deliverance, but have dealt treacherously with us, and the Lord, whom we serve, hath seen it, and reprov'd it, and yet we are not set free; but at this day we live in the account of the rude and envious people, as a people appointed to death and desolation; and the whole body of ungodliness, and rage of wickedness is upon us daily, and with cruelty falls upon us in our persons and estates, and our peaceable meetings to worship the living God. And as to all these things, we are laid as the mire in the street, for every rude boy to run over, and we have not found help from man, as to all the powers that have been till this day since we were a people; nor do we speak this because we look for help from man; nor indeed can we expect that from men, until men own the same principle of God to rule in them to which we are subject, which is the Son of righteousness, and leads all into righteousness, truth and peace, that his light do follow, who is known to be the king of kings, and judge of the judges, though flesh and blood sees not his kingdom.

And now, O king, as we have been moved of the Lord, in bowels of love, and with much plainness of speech (after the spirit of truth, and not with vain compliments) to lay these things before all the several powers that have risen hitherto, with several other evils which our God hath sent us to testify against (both in rulers, teachers and people) so we

have done; and for that we have suffered also for a witness against them, as it is at this day: so the same God hath now after a while put into our hearts to lay these things before thee [O king] that thou mayst not be ignorant to what we are called, and for what we suffer: and in this we rejoyce, that we feel love to thy soul even while we are thus doing; and if many should be moved hereto of God, take heed of being wearied therewith, nor count it clamour, or trouble, as they that were before thee did, and so let up prejudice and evil thoughts in their own hearts against the innocent; for this we say unto thee, and affirm in the name of our God, that the more any are [truly] moved by the eternal spirit to warn thee of these things [or any other evils that may any way grieve his holy spirit] so much doth the Lord (of thy life, and true and everlasting peace) double his love unto thee, and shew his willingness to stay thee, from that which hath removed kings, and broken kingdoms: and this we know to be of God, and by him in us towards thy soul and eternal welfare. And though we cannot swear, and unswear, covenant & uncovenant with every change that comes, as men do that know not the everlasting covenant and decree of God; yet this hath God sealed in our hearts, to seek the good of all men, plot against none; but study to live quietly, and exercise our consciences faithfully towards whatever government our God shall set up; desiring that all men in their day may so use their power, as they may give account to God with joy, and not leave their names for a curse and reproach among men; for this we know, that God is now at hand, to give a speedy reward to every man, as shall be the work of his day.

Wherefore, O king, seek the fear of the Lord, and not pleasure; do justice and judgment in this thy day, relieve the helpless oppressed, and break the yoke of bondage that lies upon the poor, and bring judgment into the gates, and let not justice be sold, least the meek of the earth cry to God against thee: verily God is nearer this nation to avenge than many can believe,

though he hath done wonders in this generation that many generations have not seen, and is trying all sorts of people with the testimony of his appearance: blessed are they whose eye is open to discern the signs of the times, for a work is God working in the earth, and he will cut it short in righteousness for his elect sake, which daily have waited upon him who is blessed for ever.

O king, spend not thy time in fleshly pleasures, neither strive after that glory which will fade away; but apply thy heart to God, and wait to feel his spirit in thee, giving thee light and understanding to guide thy ways before him; for only blessed is he who rules by his power, and who is taught of God shall be established in righteousness, and be far from oppression; and only such shall be called the blessed of God to all generations: read, and remember the righteous and the wicked.

From one of those whom the world calls Quakers.

JAMES NAYLER.

AN ACCOUNT

FROM THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT,

(TO THEM THAT ASK)

In several particulars, why we have been kept from joining to or worshipping in, those forms at law, and forms of worship, that have been imposed upon us against our consciences, in these late years; for denying whereof we have (many of us) so deeply suffered with our lives, liberties and estates.

Also, what we own as to those things, and can be obedient to for conscience sake, according to truth, and the practice of the church of Christ, and the holy scriptures.

Forasmuch as many have desired to know the ground in particulars, of our differences in faith and worship towards God; and in some things as to the outward forms at law, which men have sought to impose upon us in these late years: and also what we would desire therein. Therefore is this written following, towards the satisfying of every honest desire who loves the kingdom of CHRIST.

ALL kingdoms and people ought to be the Lord's and his Christ's and come to be guided and governed by the law of the spirit in their consciences:^a which spirit, or anointing all must wait for, even from the king on the throne to the least place of government, that with it all may know judgment, and to do justice, which is of God;^b that he may be known to be the anointer of kings, and to judge among the judges, whose right it is of old; and God hath given it to his son by an everlasting covenant, that in him all nations and kingdoms of the earth shall be blessed, even through and under his righteous government:^c for God the father accepts neither laws nor governments if they are contrary to his own, and not of him, or from him; because, for him were made all creatures that move, not only in earth but in heaven also;^d and no flesh breathing, nor spirits, men or angels, have

a 1 John 3, 27. b Isa. 5, 6. 2 Chron. 19, 6. c Isa. 6, 9. d Heb. 2, 10.

any true power but as they receive it from him, and so use it to him and for him. But if they rule by injustice and oppression, for the time the Lord shall suffer them, and not for him, they shall not be established in peace; and when their measure shall be fulfilled, the Almighty shall remove them, and their names shall remain a curse to those that come after; for God will plead the cause of his own seed, and overturn and shake nations and kingdoms, until the inhabitants of the earth know that the heavens do rule,^a and the stout-hearted confess, that the head of every man is Christ:^b and that God hath made this same Jesus [which men have rejected] both Lord and Christ;^c which in his time he will shew to be the blessed and only potentate, king of kings, and lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, where he sits at the right hand of power, till God shall make all his foes his footstool.

Now this is that we wait for in every appearance and face of authority that comes up, to wit, the face of Jesus our righteous king and saviour, in whom is no violence nor oppression; who when he comes to rule, we know, will be tender of the tender in conscience, and meek towards the poor in spirit;^d and with righteousness will he judge and rule in the earth, to deliver the helpless from him that is too hard for them, who will drive wickedness from his throne, and the workers thereof into a corner; but will gently deal towards all that travels with righteousness, and put the lambs of truth in his bosom, for he loves righteousness and hates iniquity;^e therefore hath God called him his anointed, and will give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession,^f and a priest to God he is to all generations: in his days shall the upright rejoice,^g for he shall walk safely in his uprightness, no net shall then be spread on the mountains, neither shall he that turns from iniquity be made a prey, for under him shall every

^a Dan. 4, 26. ^b Acts 2, 36. ^c 1 Tim. 6, 15. ^d Isa. 11, 4. ^e Isa. 40, 11. ^f Psa. 45, 7, 2, 8. ^g Jer. 23, 5, 6.

one serve his God without fear in holiness of life and godliness of conversation.^a

Now this is he we wait for, even the beloved of our souls;^b and we know his birth is come to the nations, and his morning towards the people; yea, to the wise in heart, who are yet afar off, hath his star appeared, and we know his breaking forth to these islands, as the bright sun after the stormy rain; even so shall he be after the shakings, he shall be as a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; even so shall he be who shall reign in righteousness, and by whom princes shall rule in judgment.^c This is the royal seed, and he that is of him is the son of nobles, his princes eat in due season, for strength and not for wantonness. Thus shall the land be blessed, who is found worthy to receive the anointed of God to rule in their borders.

And this is he whom we have preached to all the several governments that have risen ever since God revealed him in us, and the glory and peace of his kingdom; and we have patiently waited, and in great sufferings have our souls travelled, to see if by any means we might see any willing to receive his anointing, and to be born of his spirit, to govern by his power, and with his counsel to order and be ordered, that through him they might be established of God: and we have looked through the veil of flesh in all sorts of people, and could not bow thereto; and by many contrary spirits have we been evilly entreated, because we could not own them for his sake, whose kingdom we seek to be set up in rulers, teachers and people.

And thus have we gone seeking the righteous one through parliaments and protectors [so called] priests and rulers of all sorts; but his government we have not found, nor with his righteous judgments have we been judged among them; but we have been shamefully entreated for his sake, and have borne his reproach because of his spirit in us, and his kingdom in our con-

^a Luke 1, 24. ^b Isa. 9, 6. ^c Isa. 32, 1, 2. Eccl. 10. 16, 17.

sciences;^a and many times have been tried, some to the loss of estates, and others of lives, to see if they could provoke, or drive us from his faith in our consciences, or tempt us any way to deny him, and own them in their corrupt wills: and though we have suffered under every several power and people, yet have we not ceased to warn them in love, with much fear and plainness, that if by any means they might have received his testimony, and not have perished in their gainsaying; for our God, in whom we trusted, shewed it to us, that they should not prosper, nor be established without him, his spirit and anointing, to whom he hath given the government of all people, that shall be blessed by him; yea, all the nations of them that are saved must walk in his light,^b and receive his counsel for their stability, and his anointing for the strength of their kingdoms.

And this is the cause why we have chosen rather to suffer under every power that hath risen against us,^c than to join in with them, because we have not heard the voice of the holy one in the midst of them, neither hath his spirit in them been the strength of their counsels, but they have sought to make flesh their arm,^d and to strengthen their kingdom with flattery and deceit, and not with truth, and they have sought to make themselves dreadful by violence, and to rule with cruelty, and not with the sword of God, which is judgment and justice; and have sought honour from men, and not from the Lord,^e and their concurring hath been vain glory, and not the spirit of God.^f So with the light of Christ we saw their foundation, and their building, and that they could not stand long in God's sight, and that all that joined to them must fall with them; and that the woes that are written of such must certainly overtake them.

And this is the cause, and no other thing, why we have hitherto borne our testimony against them all, even because they would not join to the Lord, nor

^a Isa. 69, 9. ^b Lam. 3, 14. ^c Rev. 21, 24. ^d Isa. 5, 21. ^e Jer. 17, 5. ^f John 5, 44.
^g Isaiah 30, 1.

hear his voice in their day, but the more he called after them by the mouths of his servants, the more they were hardened, and the more provoked him to their own confusion. So it hath not been prejudice to any man's person, that hath kept us at a distance from them, or their commands; for we can truly say we have waited without prejudice, if by any means we could have seen any of them seeking the kingdom of God, that therein they might have been established; yea, we have the witness of truth in us to this day, how glad our souls have been before the Lord, when we have but felt the least tenderness in any of them, arising from the spirit of Jesus, or the least confession from his light in them.

And sometimes we have felt some tenderness in some of them, when they have been low, little and in fear, in which we had some hope and gladness, to hear the voice of simplicity and truth (though but brokenly) so that we could then have said, they were not far from the kingdom of God: but turning away the ear from the spirit of truth in them, and consulting with fleshly wisdom, and carnal reason likely to make wise, and to accomplish their self-ends, how soon hath truth fallen in them, and blindness and hardness of heart come over them again worse than before, which being showed us of God, we could not but deny them also to be of God.

Thus in general an account is given to you that ask a reason, why we have not yet owned any power that yet hath risen, so as to join to them in all things.

Now to you who desire to know in what particulars we have differed from these governments that yet have risen since we were a people; we might say our lives, practices and sufferings have openly declared it, through the most parts of these nations, and in most and greatest of our differences; yet for the better satisfying of some that know not so much as others; and to take away all occasion of offence, from all that would not oppose the way of truth if they knew it, and to leave without excuse the wilfully ignorant, and persecutors of the way of Christ; I shall instance in

some things, and also shew our warrant for so doing, both by scripture, and the practice of the holy men of God in their generation; it being that so many are yet ignorant and unbelieving, concerning the present leadings of the spirit of truth in them, which is chief leader and corner stone in us, by which we walk towards God, and towards men in all these things.^a

And as to that first, though God hath laid it upon us, as matter of conscience, to be subject to what outward government, or governors soever he shall set up over us in outward things; and also that with all willingness of mind a ready subjection be rendered to every just command, not for fear only, but even for conscience sake; and that in all things we should seek the safety and honour, and well-being of such governors, to the utmost of our power, even as we look to account to God for it, of whom the powers that be are ordained; yet hath he begotten us unto himself alone, and to the leadings of his own spirit in all things concerning faith and worship, as to the matter, manner, time and place:^b this is to be done and performed singly as to him, in the leadings of Jesus, and in the power of his spirit alone, else will he have no regard thereto, and for this purpose hath he given the spirit of his son into our hearts, to be our light and leader in all these things;^c to which leadings and movings the father requires obedience in all things pertaining to our conscience; that must be the throne of Christ alone, and there will he sway the sceptre of eternal life, and answer his people in all things, and be their saviour, guide, and law giver in all things that are just and holy.

So that if at any time their teachers have left the way of life, and would lead people after them, yet hath he through faith and a tender conscience, preserved a seed out of error to himself in such a day, by which he hath proved and made manifest the folly of such teachers. And to this the scriptures do fully

^a Rom. 8. 14. Gal. 5. 18. ^b Mat. 17. 5. ^c 2 Cor. 10. 6

testify, as in the days of the prophets, when they erred in vision, and had not the word in them, and so caused the people to err, through their lies and through their lightness;^a then had he men of enlightened consciences, to send to reprove their brutishness, though otherwise they themselves were neither prophets nor sons of prophets, but may be a herdsman, or a gatherer of sycamore fruit, a ploughman or a shepherd, or some such which England's pride would call mechanic fellows;^b yet in these was a seed preserved, else the land might have become as Sodom, and not one have known the Lord nor his word. And as it was in the days of the false prophets, so hath it been since the days of the false ministry; by which many have suffered since the days of the apostles, for testifying against such as have erred in spirit, form and doctrine, from Christ Jesus and his apostles. And this hath been from the indwelling power of Christ in them, and his precious light shining in their hearts and consciences, that they have thus been preserved, and enabled to bear the testimony of Christ, against false worships and worshippers; and so it is at this day, in all who keep a pure conscience towards God in all his word and worship, that his true and spiritual worship might not be wholly lost out of the world.

Also if at any time their kings and rulers forgot God, or kings arose who knew not God, and then would lay upon them laws and commands, which were not just and lawful for them to do, then by the light of Christ in a pure conscience they were enabled to withstand them, even unto death; as that of Mordecai and the Jews, who would rather be destroyed, than bow to Haman's pride at the king's command:^c though England's people would have said this is but a civil thing, and duty and good manners, and the like; yet God's law in their conscience they preferred above all that the king commanded contrary thereto; yea, life and all would they lose rather than defile their con-

^a Isa. 23. 7. Jer. 23. Amos 2. 4. ^b Ch. 7. 14. Jer. 23. Isa. 1. 9. ^c Hester 3.

science towards God, or deny his law there, though no law without had forbidden such a thing: yet in other cases did they appear true and subject to the king, for Mordecai's truth saved the king's life not long before, though from man he had little reward for it.

Likewise might be instanced that of Daniel's praying contrary to the decrees of the king, his counsel of presidents and princes;^a and that of the three children against the fierce command of Nebuchadnezzar, in denying to worship at his will and pleasure. Likewise that of the apostles, when the rulers and priests also charged them straightly not to preach any more, their answer before authority was, we ought to obey God rather than man.^b Yea, it would be too long to tell how many godly men and women, upon the account of a pure conscience not only hazarded their lives, but lost life and all for the testimony of a tender conscience, as might be instanced. But this may be said for all, that if they would but have denied the law of God in their conscience, and conformed to the wills of men, and their laws, not one of all the prophets, apostles, or all the holy men of God need to have suffered death or spoil.

So now in that any of us by the same spirit of Christ, and from his light and law in our consciences, are moved to go testify against false prophets, false worships, and declare the way of truth to all people against them to their face. And if rulers have been so opposite to this, as to make laws against it, and to command us to bow and worship at their wills, which for conscience sake towards God we could not, for which we have suffered the spoiling of goods, long and heavy imprisonments, shameful usings and loss of lives also: I say, in this we have a cloud of witnesses, even the Lord Jesus our captain, and the whole body of martyrs, who have all gone before us in the self same obedience of faith and spirit, and have suffered the same or such like things, from rulers and teachers

^a Dan. 6. Dan. 3. ^b Acts 5. 28, 29.

that knew not God in their days, and all of them in their days were counted offenders, heretics, or despisers of authority, or some such reproach was cast upon them, by their accusers and persecutors, for obeying the law of their God in their consciences, whom the rulers of the darkness of this world have not known,^a nor can know, till they believe his light in their own consciences.

So it is not for new things, nor strange opinions which was never in the world before, for which we suffer, (though to the world they seem new and strange) but for the very same works of the same spirit of light and truth, which hath often appeared in a poor contemptible people, and hath as often received the same measure, from them who profess in words, but in works deny him; by such have we suffered, who read, and partly preach the same in words, which this eternal spirit in us now worketh; and by such who with words garnish the sepulchres of those whom their fathers shew, are we counted great offenders, for being found in the same way and practice, and in obedience to the same spirit, in that measure as we have received it. So we have this added to the testimony of a good conscience towards God and towards men, that we suffer not for evil doing, though as evil doers; (to wit) the practice of holy men and the scriptures of truth, which will own us herein, and stand on our parts against all our adversaries and accusers. And this will be proved so when we come to particulars wherein we differ from the ways and worships of these present times, and for which we are so much hated and persecuted.

And we know that it will not be found harmful to the bodies, estates, or well-being of any christian neighbourhood, nor of any other people in the nations, to practise those things wherein we differ in civil and temporal things, nor hurtful to the souls of any, in the things wherein we differ in religious or spiritual matters, from the several opinions and forms of worships that

^a John 16. 2, 3.

are or have been set up in these nations; as we shall make it plainly appear, if either spirit of truth, or scripture of truth, or things equal may be received on our part. Now we shall mention some particulars in which we differ for conscience sake from some of the forms, traditions, and commands of the men of this present age, and the powers that have ruled therein, under whom we have therefore suffered as evil doers.

AND FIRST, AS TO THOSE THINGS WHICH SOME CALL CIVIL.

AND indeed it may be wondered at by any moderate people, that in a nation called christian, any man should suffer so much, as to be called an offender for some of the things that I must mention upon this account [especially they being laid upon us by the spirit of Christ, as matter of conscience] and by a people so highly pretending for liberty of conscience.

As it hath been laid upon us by the spirit of Christ, to use the same single language to all sorts of people, which is used in the scriptures, and all the holy men of God therein have ever used, that is to say, *thou* to any one person, and *you* to more than one; a language sound and true to God and man, which the spirit of God first spoke and gave to man, and of man received it again without offence, and never since gave to man any form of speech, as we may read in the scriptures of truth. And in this we differ from some sorts of people, and for it have suffered as great offenders, and have undergone very grievous censures divers of us, though it hath been laid on our consciences from the Lord; yea, the scriptures also command the form of sound words to be holden fast.^a Now why those who profess the scriptures for their rule, should persecute us

^a 2 Tim. 1, 13.

for using the language of it, may be thought strange to the hearers thereof; yet for this we suffer for a testimony against them.

Also it hath been laid upon us by the Lord to call men and women by their own names, which their fathers have given to them, to be known by amongst men; and though in this we differ from some sorts of people, who can give flattering titles to some people instead of their names, and reproachfully miscall others instead of their names, yet herein we are owned by the scriptures of truth, and the practice of all holy men therein, who never refused their own names to take a proud title, but owned their names that God had given them. And saith the scripture, let me not give flattering titles to man, for in so doing my maker would soon take me away. And if you respect persons you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as evil doers;^a yet for this we have suffered also by this generation, as evil-doers and contemners of authority, though we know, that to call a man by his name contemns not his authority, nor do we it for that end, but in obedience to truth, and for conscience towards God.

Also that about our *Hats* putting of, which hath been so great an offence to many; this also hath been laid upon our consciences by the Lord, and we dare not disobey him therein to please men, though sometimes it hath been said, that if we would but put off our hats, we should not go to prison; others have said, when we come before them for judgment and justice, you shall have no justice, unless you put off your hats; yea, some have hazarded their lives herein, yet durst not disobey God herein, though they have suffered long therefore; and lost their rights for want of justice; yet we have not dared to disobey our God herein, but have valued our peace with him and a pure conscience above all sufferings and profits herein. Now, this is beyond all the persecutors of old, that men should suffer for their hats; yea, even Nebuchadnezzar in his greatest heat of persecution, made not that an offence.^b

^a Job 32. 21, 22. Jam. 2. ^b Dan. 3. 21.

to keep on their hats more than their other garments; but with their hats on, as well as hose and other garments, they were bound and cast into the fire; nor do we find in all the scriptures precept or practice of that thing, yet for this we have deeply suffered, in divers parts of this nation. Thus would people and powers drive us from the obedience of our God in a pure conscience, and instead thereof cause us to submit to a vain custom, for which we have no warrant, neither in scripture nor good example; but saith the Lord, ye shall keep mine ordinances, but the customs of the people are vain and abominable, you shall not defile yourselves therewith.^a So we obey God rather than men, and by men who profess God suffer for so doing.

This also hath been commanded us of the Lord, and laid upon our consciences, not to swear at all, upon any occasion whatsoever;^b and because of this we have forbore to swear, when men have called us thereto, whether to swear at any change of government, or whatever it hath been, we may not swear at all. And for this we have deeply suffered also, as contemnners of the law, though we have not despised government, but have consented to what just thing was required of us in truth of heart, without swearing. And for this we have the express command of Christ Jesus, who hath said, swear not at all; and his apostle said, above all things my brethren, swear not, lest you fall into condemnation.^c And we have also the practice of the followers of Christ, who refused to take an oath; for to such as receive Christ there is the end of swearing, and divers other things, which before Christ came to end them, were ordinances of God, but Christ the covenant everlasting hath ended all swearings of men whatsoever, and forbidden they are in his name upon pain of condemnation. Further, in the time of Moses, when swearing was in the Jewish Church, it was not to be forced upon them, but they might swear or not, as the case required, without any carnal punishment to force them to swear, nor was it

a Lev. 19. 30. b Jer. 23. 10. c Mat. 5. 34. Jam. 5. 12.

required of witnesses to swear betwixt a man and his neighbour, two witnesses were to establish the matter before the judge; but I never read of those two required to swear, that was as to a man's own particular; as when a man had taken a pledge, and it was stolen from him, then an oath was to be taken of that man in his own behalf, that he put not his hand to the stealing of it, and then he was not to repay it again; but if he would repay it he needed not swear: so he was not forced. And except in this case, and in the trial of jealousy, Numb. 5, 19. I find not an oath required by any judge in Moses's law. So these who make us offenders for denying to swear, exceed the law of Moses and contradict the law of Christ, by whom swearing at all is expressly forbidden; for saith Christ, it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thy oaths.^a So here was Moses's time, and swearing to the Lord commanded in truth; but (saith Christ) I say unto you, swear not at all; and he is greater than Moses, whose time is without end.

Further, as to the administration of the laws of these nations in these late years, there we have seen many things which in conscience we cannot join to, being shewed to us to be out of truth and equity, and not helps, but burthens to the nations. Now as to ourselves, so many as walk in Christ Jesus, we have one judge and law-giver appointed to us for that end by the father; and we may not go to law one with another, as men being come to Christ Jesus, the end of lust, pride, and strife, which we have found to be the cause of fightings, and suits at law; and if any thing of that nature would arise in any of us, by our Judge and law-giver it is judged, and we are saved.

And it is laid upon us by the spirit of truth not to seek to avenge ourselves of such as seek to wrong us, but to love our enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us:^b and so to suffer

^a Lev. 19, 12. Mat. 5, 34. ^b Mat. 5.

for peace sake; for to peace we are called towards all men, and under the prince of peace is our government, who are all in unity of spirit and life in Christ Jesus.

But when men haul us before judgment-seats, or cause us to appear at their courts of law, then we meet with many things among them there which for conscience sake we cannot bow to, nor uphold, finding them not only against the rule of christians, but out of the way of common honesty as men, yea, many things against truth itself, and this we cannot serve for law, which is against truth.

As when they send a writ to appear at their courts in a man's own proper person, and in obedience thereto we have come [may be] two hundred miles or above, and tendered our appearance accordingly at the very day appointed, then they have with violence and reproach thrust us out of their courts, because we did appear in our own persons, and not in another man's person, whom we have not known. And for this have we suffered much damage and long imprisonment, as contemnners of authority and law. Now this we cannot own as honesty and truth, and plain dealing as men, to let go all talk of christians, the heathen would not do this to us.

Also when our adversary puts up a bill of charge against us, drawn up in a form without truth, filled with false accusations, as though our offence amounted to hundreds or thousands of pounds wrong or damage, when with the truth of Christ in our conscience we know, that we have never wronged that man one penny in our lives, but that it is the enemy of truth and peace, even that old accuser of the brethren, which now works in that creature to spoil our goods, or take our lives or liberties from us; then we are not suffered to return an answer in the fear of our God and in plainness and truth of expressions, as the spirit of truth shall move in the simplicity of our hearts: and so with the spirit of truth to deny the lies and false accusations of the adversary: But we must be forced

to give unreasonable sums of money, to another man, to answer in our stead, who for aught we know may, instead of reproofing those abominable lies, excuse them, at least as a form at law. And thus our testimony against falsehood is obstructed, which the spirit of truth requires of us, and we must pay money to have that justified as a form of law, which we know to be a form of lies:^a and we cannot leave the truth to serve this deceit; and if the truth was no dearer to us than to give it up to be betrayed;^b yet it seems unreasonable to us, as men, to give our cause into the hands of him that knows it not, further than we inform him, and then have no assurance whether he will speak our words or his own; and so bring us under the guilt of that falsehood. This appears to us very unreasonable and dangerous, and below the privilege of a man, as a man, much more as a christian: so we rather choose to suffer innocently under it,^c keeping our consciences clear, than consent thereto, and so establish mischief under pretence of a law, *Psal.* 94, 20. and deny our testimony for the truth, to which we are called, and for which we suffer in all these things.

Also, if any of us be sued at the exchequer, or chancery, and appear and take a copy of the bill, and go to the Judges with a true answer thereto, they will refuse it because we cannot swear, though they will show us no written law for so doing, but tell us it's a custom, and this custom is preferred above his law who saith, swear not at all; and for this many have been imprisoned, it being put upon us, either to deny their custom or Christ's command: so we choose to suffer by men for a season, rather than defile our consciences.

If we be summoned to do service for the country, on a jury, and be willing to do the service faithfully, as to God and man, yet because we cannot swear, many are fined, imprisoned, and their goods spoiled,

^a Isa. 59, 4. Isa. 24, 15. Jer. 9, 3, 4, 5. ^b Prov. 12, 19, 22. Prov. 29, 12.
^c *Pra.* 40, 4.

and reputed unserviceable in the nation, when we would freely serve the country, so as we might not therein deny Christ our saviour.

If one of us be summoned to appear at a court for a witness, that would testify the truth before God from a good conscience, and in the fear of God, and according to his law, viz. in all things that if we should wrong any man whatsoever through our false testimony, that it's just the same should be done to us;^a yet because we cannot swear (be the action never so great) our true testimony is refused, and we thrust away without judgment, and threatened to cause us to pay what they say the party is damnified for our not swearing: and all this we must suffer for obeying Christ's commands.

If one of us should buy a piece of land, or have some fallen to him by inheritance, and come to the court baron to take it up, they will not let him take it except he swear, and so break Christ's sayings: or if a man purchase, or have an inheritance within a customary court, it's the same, and they will turn us off without it, if we will not swear contrary to Christ's commands. And thus is the evil custom of a court preferred before Christ's commands, a good conscience, and a families whole estate and livelihood.

If a man bind an apprentice in this city of London, and give a great sum of money with him, and the apprentice serves his time honestly and truly, and have his master's testimony thereto, yet is he denied his freedom, if he cannot swear for conscience sake, and so must lose money and service, if he be faithful to Christ.

If one of us should die intestate, they will not suffer our own wife or children to administer on our own goods, unless they will swear against their conscience, and the law of Christ; or if we make a will, and make wife or children executor, they are denied to prove the will, whereby they are to enjoy their estates, but by breaking that command of Christ in swearing.

^a Deut. 19, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

Likewise when some of us have been arrested to appear at such a court such a day, and have simply given bond to appear; and when the appearance hath been made at the day expressed by the party so bound, neither the appearance would be taken, nor the bond delivered, but a further snare, because another man appears not for us, whom we never knew, nor had aught to do withal.

Also about marriage, which we know to be an ordinance of God from the beginning, and being ordered in the counsel of God, and the bed not defiled, is honourable, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.^a So as any are moved of the Lord into that state, we say the counsel of the Lord is first and chiefly to be minded, and the thing weighed in his fear, that it be done only in the Lord, that it be not taken on lightly, rashly, nor chiefly for any earthly ends, but in the moving and ordering of the almighty creator of man and woman, who only knows their spirits, so to join them as they may be one in flesh and spirit, and may lead a godly and peaceable life. And this is God's ordinance, and those whom God joins together, saith Christ, let not man put such asunder; and this we say is the chief thing to be observed, viz. that God join them; and that notice be given to the parents, or such as have the oversight of each party, that (as much as may be) all may be done in love and unity in the will of God openly. And this we have found from God in spirit, and this we find in scripture, to be the ordinance of God to his saints of old, and their liberty in the Lord, which God never altered, which we keep for conscience sake, and may not break. And lest any licentious persons should abuse this liberty, to satisfy their lusts, and then not live as man and wife during their lives, and the magistrates not know of them, and so they escape the sword of justice, we have freedom in our spirits to acquaint some of the next magistrates with our intents, and thereby confess ourselves liable to the just censure of the magistrate,

^a 1 Cor, 7, 39.

with others, in case of misdemeanor, and all this we have done ere coming together as man and wife; which is as much as the ordinance of God, or any reason can justly require; yet have some of us suffered in this case by the changeable laws of men, who some of them have sought to impose one sort of priests on us as an ordinance, others justices as an ordinance, and others another sort of priests again. So for denying these uncertain rules of men, and keeping the ordinance of God that was in the beginning,^a we suffer by all of them as evil doers, yet have they not one charge against any of us, who have been joined together to this ordinance of God, as to breach of marriage, or misdemeanor therein; for we hate putting away, and come to that which was in the beginning.

These with many other things there be, as touching the outward laws, whereby both our lives, liberties and estates, become a daily prey to merciless men, from which hath been manifest such imprisoning till death, such persecution and spoil of goods, as many generations to come may admire to read of, though in this generation it's little regarded or minded, unless it be by some few, whose hearts God hath tendered, that have not been so cruel in their places as others.

Now let none say, that because we cannot bow to such unrighteous dealings of corrupt men, or their corrupt customs, or corrupt laws; that therefore we are a people that would have no law, nor magistracy at all, as some have falsely accused us: for of this we are clear before the Lord our God, whatever men may accuse us herein; for the law of God we own in our conscience, even the law of the spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord and lawgiver,^c by which we are taught, to keep our consciences void of offence towards God, and towards men, by which we are freed from under the power of the law of sin and death. And by this law of God in our consciences, we are also taught to be subject to every power God shall set up over us, by which teaching we know that the powers

^a Mat. 19. 8. ^b Mat. 19. 4, 5. ^c Rom. 8, 2.

that be, are ordained of God. And by the same law of God in our hearts and consciences, by which we are made to suffer, rather than to obey that which is unjust, by the same law, and upon the same penalty, are we made to be subject and obey every just and wholesome law of man, for conscience sake: therefore, as the ordinance of God, we obey, and own authority in the nation; and the ruler of the people as the minister of God, for good to such as do well, but a terror to every evil doer, without respect of persons;^a so we being guided by the pure law of God in our consciences, are subject not for wrath, but for conscience sake; for he is not a terror to them that do well, and obey God in their consciences: but if any do evil, let such fear, for he is the minister of God, and bears not the sword in vain. And for this cause we pay tribute to whom it belongs, and fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour; and from this we exempt not ourselves more than other people in the same nation; but desire rather to be examples to others with all diligence, not speaking evil of governments as many do, which will flatter to their faces; but seeking to our God for what authority he shall ordain, that under them we may be godly and quietly governed, without respect of persons.

Therefore we might say, as to all the several rulers that have arisen in these years, since we were a people in God's light, which of them have we reviled or sought to supplant, or what just law, old or new [which hath been according to scripture or a good conscience] have we denied or transgressed? Though from the evil and abuse of all, God hath by his eternal light, and the power of his spirit, preserved us to this day, glory to our God for evermore. So our consciences are clear towards them that are fallen as to that thing, by whom we so much suffered in their day.

And now in God's dread and fear we are, and in his pure counsel alone, we desire to be found towards you that are now come up into the seat of government, that if by any means, we might not be any occasion

^a Numbers 14:

of offence, or hardening of your hearts, by our disobedience or denying any of your laws, which are just, wholesome and good, and according to God's truth in scripture: nor, that on the contrary we might provoke our pure-ey'd and zealous God and father to displeasure against us, by yielding to any thing whatsoever, or obeying what is any way against his spirit in our hearts, or the light of Christ in our consciences. And this at present is our straight way, set before us to walk in towards God, and towards man; and therefore the desire and travail of our souls is great at this day, that you might be one with God in your laws and commands, that so, under you we might be godly and quietly governed, within and without. But if yet, it must be so, that your distance be so great, that with one heart we cannot obey you both; then whether is it better to obey God or men [with the light of God in your own consciences] judge you?^a Therefore, if we cannot keep peace with you, we choose to keep our everlasting peace with God, and that saving faith that's held in a pure conscience;^b and our prayers to the father of lights are, for the whole body of Christ's church, and every member thereof, that our hearts may be kept single to him alone, whatever we suffer from men for so doing.^c

NOW TO THOSE THINGS WHICH SOME CALL RELIGIOUS.

THOUGH in ourselves we make no such difference, it being that our consciences are to be exercised in the light and spirit of Christ in all we do towards God, and towards man; and every particular action towards men, God requires that it be done as to him, and to

^a Acts 4. 19. ^b 2 Cor. 1. 12. ^c 1 Tim. 3. 2.

his glory, and not in our own wills, nor in men's wills, nor after their wills, manners and customs, and commands, but in the will of God alone, revealed in Christ Jesus in spirit, and in his motion and leadings; which if we miss in, and serve either men or ourselves therein, and not God, we are accountable to him, as though we had erred in that which the world calls religion: therefore, whatever we do to God in Christ, to us is his service and pure religion, and undefiled before God, if we keep but our conscience unspotted from the world; though it be but in visiting a fatherless child, or a widow, in their affliction, or any other thing which the spirit of truth, justice and mercy leads us to, and requires of us.^a

But as the worship of God itself, hath relation to him alone, who is a spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit, and in truth,^b betwixt him and every particular creature only known, in matter, measure and manner, time and place. And knowing that the only wise God, who ruleth in the kingdom of men,^c and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and (many times) setteth up over it the basest of men, without controul, if he please to deal in judgment towards any nation; yet this hath he reserved as an eternal sceptre in the hand of Jesus our Lord, and by an everlasting covenant concerning him, thou art a king forever, over the holy people (or saints) and his throne is established in their consciences by a perpetual decree, to all generations; therefore was it never known, that ever he trusted or titled any earthly prince, with Lord over the faith and consciences of his own people: this was ever the son's prerogative above the kings of the earth, and he alone is to be judge and lawgiver, and corrector, and leader, in that invisible spiritual work of worship towards God, for he only knows the way, and none comes to the father but by him.^d

It's true, the pope hath taken upon himself such an authority, under pretence of the apostles, even over the faith and consciences of people, and with it hath

^a James 1. 27. ^b John 4. 23, 24. ^c Dan. 4. 17. ^d Isa. 11. 1, 2.

shed much innocent blood, which lies upon his seat and his line, till God comes to enquire for it, and for that end hath 'set up inquisitions, &c. And others after, and from that, have erected courts and synods, with their fines and prisons, and tortures, to force the faith and consciences of people, and they pretend the apostles also for this work. But this we know, that the apostles were no such men, nor used any such weapons, but deny them therein, both the pope, and they that are risen since, and expressly deny to be lords over God's heritage, or over their faith; neither did they preach themselves lords and masters, but Christ Jesus alone the Lord, and themselves servants for Jesus sake,^a as both their own words and practice doth testify; for saith Paul, not that we have dominion over your faiths:^b and saith Peter, not for filthy lucre neither as being lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock.^c

So we know that from Peter they had it not, nor from Paul, nor from any of the true ministers of Christ, for their weapons were not carnal, but spiritual,^d nor did they wrestle with flesh and blood, but with spirit:^e so all they can get from the apostles, either in word or practice, is this, that if they be troubled with errors, or profaneness in their churches, then if they have the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus, then to deliver such a one up to satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the soul may be saved in the day of the Lord;^f and this is not to jails or gallows, or inquisitions, or tortures, or fires; now, had they this spirit and power, they would know that which would convert in deed and truth, and not make hypocrites, or else kill them; but the false church having not these weapons, nor this spirit and power, is builded with oppression, and upholden with blood: and in her are found the blood of all the holy martyrs of Jesus, as saith the scriptures;^g yea, even now is she drunk with blood, *Revel.* 18. 24. and 17. 6.

^a 2 Cor. 4. 5. ^b 2 Cor. 1. 24. ^c 1 Pet. 5. 3. ^d 2 Cor. 10. 4. ^e Eph. 6. 12. ^f 1 Cor. 4. 5. ^g Mic. 3. 10

So now, this is the thing we say as to the worship of our God, and to the order of it; in all things it belongs to Christ Jesus our Lord, and to him as sole king and Lord thereof, we commit ourselves, even the whole man, soul and body, as to all things of that nature:^a and though there may arise power after power, and seek to stop us of this liberty and freedom, by acting force and violence upon our outward man, yet are we free by birth in Christ Jesus, and our inward man, they cannot bind; nor can we ever, while we abide in that seed, give up the right of Christ unto any of them; but this we testify in all we do, or suffer, that the right is Christ's, over our consciences, and over our worships,^b and to him alone we confess before men, and he hath the name in us: and though for a time, or times, we yet suffer, yet we know the end must come, and the Lamb must take the kingdom; and we know him that is true and faithful, whom the father hath sealed, and anointed to be head of the church which is his body, and to him must the nations account:^c and therefore we say to all the several powers that come upon us, we may not deny the Lord in our consciences, to bow to, or worship in what men shall set up or command; but he that saves us from our sins, he shall lead us in our worship,^d and to him we must give the obedience of faith, who gives us faith and power by his spirit to obey, and who hath wrought all our works in us and for us,^e and by whose virtue it is we live, and bring forth to the praise of God; and we are not our own, nor servants of men, but we are bought with a price,^f that we may serve him forever, by whom we are redeemed, and by whom all men, without respect of persons, must eternally be judged, or justified.

Therefore we say, this is a privilege that no man should be hindered of [to wit] the liberty of his conscience towards his God; but that an universal liberty for all sorts of people to worship God, according as Christ shall open men's eyes to see the truth, and as

^a Col. 1. 18. ^b Phil. 2. 10. ^c Rev. 17. 14. ^d John 6. 27. ^e Col. 1. 18. ^f Mat. 1. 21.
^g Phil. 2. 13. ^h 1 Cor. 9. 10.

he shall persuade their hearts by his spirit; seeing no man without Christ can do any thing in this case, acceptable to God; neither can one man worship in the measure of another, but in his own measure, as he receives of God in Christ Jesus, faith and strength, and spirit, for it must be in spirit, and of faith, else it is sin in God's sight, whatever men think thereof.^a

And this is just and equal in the sight of God, and all reasonable men, and that which I know no understanding man or woman would be limited in, seeing all have immortal souls from God, and to him alone must account for them, and not to men; that so every soul may stand and fall to his own master in this case, seeing none can save his brother, when he hath misled him, nor account to God for him;^b therefore he is no wise man who will leave the light of Christ that once knows it, to follow another man's opinion: and seeing every man would have this liberty for himself, why should he go about to deny it to his brother? How is that just or equal amongst men? And how doth it answer the law of Christ, as christians, who hath commanded, that all things, whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.^c Now if you be not come so far in equity, as to answer the law and the prophets, how will you answer Christ, you that profess him in words.

And were it not that nations and men were drunk and bewitched with the fornication of that scarlet colored whore, they would foresee the danger of taking that upon them which belongs to Christ alone, it being so many have been broken on the same rock; and reason itself might shew them how safe it is, not to be too forward in things of that nature, which God hath not called them to: and also it being so much contradictory to that just principle in man, which would lead every man to do to another as he would be done unto; and would teach every man that he ought to give up himself to his God, in all spiritual matters, and that

^a Rom. 14. 23. ^b Rom. 14. 4. ^c Mat. 7. 12.

so he should suffer every other creature also: and seeing that there is no infallibility amongst men, without the immediate manifestation of Christ Jesus, his light and spirit in them;^a but that since men took that upon them, even to sit as lords and judges over faith and conscience, the Lord hath scattered them in this thing, and confounded them into so many minds and judgments, that he that is subject to follow every change, in these latter days, shall scarcely abide in one opinion a year to an end: which things duly weighed, might stay the haste of every reasonable man, from forcing that upon the conscience of another, which himself is not infallible in, and for which he must account to God for all souls that err through him, and so perish, in gain-saying God's witness.

And this would be true wisdom, first to search in themselves, whether they have that call from God himself, to force any, or they do it to answer the desires of others, or to hold up a tradition; and so might they come to see what they serve, and whether it will bear persecution or blood-shedding at the day of judgment; and prove whether you have that which is infallible to force them to, or it be but thought, and opinion of yourselves, or others, seeing its so common a thing for rulers and teachers to join in forcing people that are under them to err, and for which so many have been confounded and cast out; and so that all might come to prove their work, and bring it to the light, to see whether it be wrought in God, and if he will own it with his light, which is pure in their conscience, which is an equal rule;^b and try what power and spirit it is that God hath made Lord and king, and law-giver and leader in all his worship; and if they have not this, then it is the old persecutor, and murderer, which uses to set people on fire that know not God in spirit: and if you have that spirit which God hath given the power to in his church, then it's gentle, drawing, and powerful, without for-

^a 1 Cor. 2, 10, 11. ^b John 3, 20, 21.

cible imposing, or killing, nor doth he ever compel against faith and conscience.

Now as to the worship of God, there be many particular things which the men of this age would impose upon us; yea, and force them upon great penalties, which the spirit of Christ doth not lay upon us as matters of faith or practice, nor ever did ordain them in any age, nor command them to be observed in his church, as men now impose them; but the contrary we find from the spirit of Christ, both in the letter and in spirit.^a So these things we cannot bow to, nor worship in, for conscience sake; conscience towards God, conscience towards the holy men of God in the holy life, and conscience towards the scriptures of truth; for of all these we make conscience, in their time and place, in which God the father of all hath brought them forth to serve him.

As men would impose upon our consciences, to come once a week, to such a great house in their parish, which they call a parish church, and there we must observe what one man shall read, preach or pray, for two or three hours that day, by an usual form; and this man will have a clerk, and he shall say Amen at the end of such a sentence, or part of his prayer or speech; and to this church, and to this worship so called, must we be bound while we dwell in that parish; and either the tithes of all we have, or so much a year set maintenance, must be paid to the man calling himself a minister of Christ; and so much a year to his clerk, for saying Amen after him, in money and other things; and if this we do constantly, we may live peaceably by them, and go under the name of good christians, and a religious man; but if we fail in any of these, but especially in that of tithes, or wages, then they call us hereticks, and complain of us to the magistrate, or sue us at law, till they have cast our bodies into prison, and taken the spoil of our goods. Now God having revealed his true worship to us in the light of Christ, which is in spirit and truth,

^a Rom. 7, 6.

and called us out of such carnal things, for which there is no scripture, we cannot for conscience sake worship any more therein.

Now, neither by the spirit of Christ in us, nor by the holy scriptures without us, nor by the example of all the holy men of God that have walked before us, can we for conscience sake own, nor uphold that for the true and spiritual worship of God in spirit and truth, neither to repair their worship house, maintain their priest, nor clerk, as they would impose upon us.

Now some have said, what would you have no church, minister, preaching, praying, nor none of this worship, nor maintenance, &c. What would you have.

We say, yes, we own a church, ministering, preaching, praying, and the maintenance that thereto belongs; but we would have them to be of God, and after his will in Christ Jesus, and not after the will and traditions of men, contrary both to God, good men, and the scriptures of truth: for we read of a church of Christ in scripture, but it was in God the father, and our Lord Jesus Christ:^a and we read of a ministry of Christ in scripture, made not of man, neither by man, but by the revelation of the Son of God in them: and the gospel, or ministry that they preached, was not after man, nor received of man, neither was they taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.^b And we read of a maintenance they had, which was to live of the gospel; and the spirituals which they sowed freely, without money or money-worth, brought them forth fruits freely, both in spiritual things, and worship towards God, and in carnal things towards their outward wants, and as they planted, so they eat; and where the plant grew, and the soul prospered, till it could bring forth fruit freely, there they need not to sue them and take it by spoil:^c but of the world they looked for nought but persecution, nor ever coveted or compelled any such thing from any creature, no, not where they had sown and planted, unless it grew in spirit and life to God, they looked not to reap any thing but loss, if

^a 1 Thes. 1, 1. ^b Gal. 1, 16. Gal. 1, 11, 12. ^c 1 Cor. 9, 11.

that which they had sown withered in the way: therefore did they watch for the soul, and not for tithes, pigs, and eggs, and geese, and sheaves, &c. But that the soul prospered towards God, that was their prize; and to make the gospel without charge, that was their reward, if they did it freely and willingly, for a necessity was laid upon them, and woe was unto them if they preached not the gospel.*

And these went on and prospered, gathering churches out of the world into God from place to place, where they went freely as they were moved of the holy spirit; and if any where they came were found worthy to receive them, with them they might eat freely what was set before them, where the spirit was free: but they did not seat themselves in a town, or say, this is my parish, and this is my hire, so much a year; but wandered to and fro, having no certain dwelling place, nor was their bellies any part of the bargain, as to coming, preaching, staying or going, as to any place.

And when they had gathered a church into the spirit and life of Christ Jesus, which brought them to meet together, then they did not lord it over them in faith or conscience, neither were they called their masters, but still servants for Christ's sake;^b nor did they get a glass and set up, and if any spoke in their time, while they were speaking (or after) say they broke their peace, and send them to prison; but said, all might prophecy, that all might be edified. And it was joy to them to hear any to speak by the spirit, either son or daughter; and some might speak, and some might judge of what was spoken: and if any thing was revealed to him that stood by, the first was to hold his peace; and the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets.^c

Now this church and its order we own, wherever we find it to be after God, and in him; but when we meet with a company of people that deny all this, and if any be moved in the spirit, either to speak while they are

a 1 Cor. 9. 17, 18. b 2 Cor. 4. 5. c 1 Cor. 14. 29, 30, 31.

speaking, or judge what they have spoken, then the teacher cries, away to prison with him; and the people run upon us all on heaps, ready to pull us to pieces. This we own not, nor doth Christ nor the scriptures own it to be his church. This is not the spirit of the prophets, nor subject to the prophets, but the rude spirit which tumulted upon the apostles and prophets of old.

So here is somewhat declared of the ministry we own, and his maintenance [and also of the false;] but of such a thing as a clerk to say Amen, we read not in the scripture neither name nor office. And now let none think it strange, or an error in us, to compare and weigh, and try and prove things; for we are christians, and have received the spirit that is of God, that we may know the things that are given to us of God, from things that are of the world: and we may not receive every one for a minister of Christ, who tells us he is, nor that for a church, which every one calls a church, nor that for worship, which every one would impose upon us:^a for things had need of trying, and spirits also; and we hold fast that which is good. It's true, in the world there be many churches, and many heads; Gods many, and Lords many, many faiths, and many opinions; but in Christ Jesus we are called to unity in all these things: so that we say with the churches of Christ in scripture, to us there is one body, one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.^b And this one God in us is a spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and in truth; so of us he requires truth, and that we worship no other things, nor bow to them; though all men have not this faith, but can follow any thing in their worship, which is the fashion of the nation where they live; but this we are called out of; and into that one worship we are come which is in spirit and truth, for in that is the father worshipped, and God hath sought us out of the many worships that are in the world, in spirit to worship him; and Christ saith,

a 1 Cor. 2. 12. b 1 John 4. 1 1 Thess. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 8. 5, 6. Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6.

these are the true worshippers that so worship, and into this hath Christ led us; and in it he owns us in his spirit, and the father owns us, and testifies to us in every enlightened conscience, and in this we are come to the spirits of just men, and they own us; and the scriptures own us also; and in this we have peace, though persecuted.

But in all these, we read not in all the gospel worship, of any temple made with hands, to bind men to, nor parish churches, nor preaching by the hour, nor for so much a year, nor that ever ministers of Christ took tithes, nor their hearers gave them; but confessed Christ come, and a free gospel, and said both the priesthood that took tithes was changed, and the commandment by which they received them was disannulled by the sufferings of Christ: *Heb. 7.* Nor do we read of sprinkling infants, and calling that baptising them into the church; nor do we read of their singing David's words in metre, nor praying by form, nor a clerk to lead the psalm and say amen. And much more we might mention, which was never used so in the true church, but is come to a form since Popery came up, and the scripture bears no testimony thereto, as now these things are used; and all that can be truly said for them is long custom, but from plain scriptures they cannot prove them.

Indeed we read in the scriptures of truth of the gospel preaching, but it was not limited to one house, nor by a glass, but from house to house, city to city, and that by the spirit, and their worship was in spirit; they prayed with the spirit, and they sung with the spirit, and he that had a psalm sung it with the spirit, and with understanding also; and they worshipped and preached in fields and mountains, and streets, and schools, and markets, and they prayed by sea-shores, or in any place where God moved and led them by the spirit of Jesus; and all this we own, which the scriptures testify to. And this is that we would have all brought to trial, and that worship owned which Christ and the scriptures own, and none forced against it, by

any means whatsoever, which are come up since the scriptures were written, and the apostles times.

And this motion is not unreasonable, hurtful or dangerous to any, especially [we may say] in this nation, how can it be denied, wherein all other forms in words profess the scriptures to be a rule for all to walk by? And to you all this is our motion, that the scripture may be heard what it saith without wresting, and what sort of worship it testifies of; let that have the name to be of God, and then let none be forced from it. And if you deny to be tried in your faith and profession, by that which you have so long called your rule and touchstone, and then reproach and persecute them that walk in it, will not your own words judge you before men, and shall not you walk under condemnation from God in your own consciences? And thus in short have we shewed our desires, and what we would have in this thing, which might free every tender conscience from oppression, and the magistrates of the nations from the guilt thereof before God.

Will you call yourselves christian magistrates and christian ministers, and set yourselves against what Christ hath wrought by the power of his spirit, and is now working, and think you are doing him service, when you are grieving his spirit, and persecuting him in his members, for doing that to which he immediately leads them now, as in the days of old? Is not this in effect to say, depart from our nations, we will have none of thy ways, nor shall any under our government, or that will follow our teachings, obey thy spirit, if we can stop them by our power? Is not this to withstand his appearance, and resist the power that you profess to rule for?

Do you not read in the acts of the apostles and Paul's epistles, what labour and sufferings they underwent, to bring people out of carnal rudiments and ordinances of men, and to bring them to the worship in spirit and truth alone, both as to time, place and order? How did they run in hazard of their lives into temples, synagogues, and set places of worship,

to bring them out of temples made with hands, to worship where the spirit should lead them, without respect of places; that so the words of the Lord Jesus might be fulfilled, who said, not in the temple, nor in the mountain, but in spirit and truth should the father be worshipped; and did not Stephen lose his life for telling them, that God that made the world dwelt not in temples made with hands; and Paul suffered for the same testimony:^a and they told them, the most high God could not be worshipped with mens hands, nor carnal things, but in spirit and in truth. And how often were they tumulted and beaten, and their blood shed for this testimony against the beggarly rudiments and carnal ordinances of men, both of Jews, who had their ordinances from the letter, and also the Gentiles, who followed their customs; that out of all carnal things they might bring them, to follow God in spirit, and therein alone to serve him.

And while you profess all this in words, will you be the men that will deny the very same in works? And shall you be guiltless? Shall not both Jews and Gentiles rise in judgment against you, and condemn you who act against knowledge, scriptures and your own profession? And is it not so with your rulers and teachers of this generation? What force and cruelty hath been used to bring people back to your Idol temples made with hands, there to worship, and no where else, and to repair them, and to bow to the customs of men there set up, for which there is neither scriptures nor example; even too many to mention, what imprisoning and tormenting of the spiritual worshippers of the living God hath there been in these last days for these things? What sufferings have some gone through but for testifying against these traditions carnal, and saying the church must be in God, and that every one must come to be led by the spirit alone in all their whole worships, and so give the kingdom and leading of his people to the leading

^a John 4, 21, 24. Acts 7, 48. Acts 17, 24.

of Christ his spirit again, in all things pertaining to worship, life and godliness? Hath not this been a dangerous thing in this age to bear this record of God in Christ, or so to become his witness? How many have lost their liberties, their estates, and some their lives for this testimony in word and practice, which reconciles to God in all his whole worship? And yet the same is read and preached every first day among them that do thus against such as live the life thereof for Jesus sake. These are not the works of Christians indeed, in the apostles sense, but of such as know not God, nor the word of reconciliation.

How many have suffered in this age but for reproving sin in the gate, as cursing, pride, lying and swearing, &c. How have some been beaten, pulled and hauled, and dragged through streets and kennels, and before judgment-seats, and to prisons for no other things? How many have wofully suffered but for preaching repentance through streets, towns and markets, in the name of the Lord, and by the call of his holy spirit? How many hundreds have been imprisoned for preaching the everlasting gospel of Jesus freely, in towns, temples, streets and markets, and from house to house, which was the manner of God's messengers in the name of his Son ever to do, and for which they suffered? How many have had their clothes rent off their backs, and been shamefully beaten till they have been left for dead, and afterward carried to prison, for but asking a question, or speaking a word in a steeple-house, while (or after) a man hath been speaking things doubtful, or not true; though this was the way of old, in which the servants of Christ walked, and by which he gathered the churches into God in spirit, and out of false worships: and it was the manner of the apostles to enter into synagogues and places of worships, both of Jews and Gentiles on their sabbath days, and openly dispute there with them before their hearers, and then those whose hearts God touched, left their carnal worships

and clave to Christ in spirit, which is now become a greater offence to this generation, than ever it was either to Jews or Gentiles; for I never read that simply for so disputing, they either beat them or hauled them to prison, though they went sometimes three sabbath days together into one synagogue; yea, the fiery Jews, who were set on mischief against that way, yet this they could suffer in their synagogue, as is testified *Acts* 17, 2. and saith the scriptures, this was his manner. And in *Acts* 18, 4. it is said, he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath day at Corinth, where he continued a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them, ver. 11.

Now hath not this been the great offence of these days; yea, I may say the chiefest crime which the servants of Jesus Christ have suffered for in this age, and scarce none, either ruler or teacher is able to bear it once, which they could bear a year and above, among Jews and heathens. So that this way of Christ, by which the churches were gathered and called in the apostles time, is become more abominable in the sight of those that call themselves christians, than it was either to Jews or heathens. And when neither laws of Jews, gentiles nor heathens, nor such as were made in times of popery, would answer their wills against this, then they made new laws of their own against this practice, which themselves read, believe and preach. And this we cannot own, that men should withstand that in works which they profess in words, and seek to impose it upon others, who serve God therein by the spirit of Jesus, and then call themselves christians, and say the scripture is their rule who cannot bear it in them who practice it in obedience to Christ Jesus.

And this is that we contend for in all our sufferings, and actings in the simplicity of our hearts, that our Lord and master Jesus Christ may have his prerogative royal restored to him, over his body the church, and every particular member thereof, his lordship and mastership given to him alone of all his children, from

the least to the greatest, and that none else force it, or require it from him, but that his headship alone over his church, his leadings, and the seat of his judgments in every redeemed soul and conscience, may be restored to him; and that he may have both name and authority therein, and that none may presume to take his authority to themselves, while they give him fair words, and call him *Lord, Lord*, but neither do his will in their own consciences, nor suffer them that would. This I say, is that we seek now at the hands of men that are called christians, which by his own precious blood and sufferings he once purchased out of the hands of the old persecutors, and gave it as an inheritance to his seed after him to all generations, to call him head and Lord in them and over them, in all things pertaining to worship and conscience, as the scripture of truth is evident.

And this we say in his behalf, and in the power of his name, wherever he sends us, that though his adversary of old hath striven to take this his purchased possession from him, and now sits where he ought not, commanding conscience over his subjects, compelling and forcing to obey his traditions and laws, from carnal precepts and traditions of men;^a yet we say the right is Christ's alone, and the whole kingdom of God in every conscience he hath purchased with his blood and great sufferings of old. Therefore we say to all sorts of people, look to him, and walk in his light, all that look to be saved; for we say, he is a great and mighty one, who though he hath been as one gone a far journey for a time, yet he is returned, and hath seen how his dear servants have been entreated, and his little children spoiled of their birth-right, being deprived of their liberties; and now strangers would rule over their tender consciences, and seek to defile them with idolatry, which is against their spiritual birth and breathing; and so would rob him of his authority, and sceptre of his everlasting dominion, for which he will tread nations in his wrath, and people

^a Jer. 10. 2, 3,

in his hot displeasure, even for Zion's sake the city of his glory, and he will spoil the spoiler, and lead captivity captive, and so will he make way for his inheritance, to come into their habitation of rest.

And this we say to all people, give up, fear God, and give glory to his name, for the hour of his judgments is come; and he will have dominion as of old, and his purchased possession as in ancient days; but especially to you who are called christians, and mention his name, and call him Lord, and profess the scriptures in words, which testify of him, his sufferings, and his purchase through his precious blood, and the eternal anointing of the father, sworn unto him by an everlasting covenant, that he alone shall sit on the spiritual throne over the house of David forever, that he may with his spiritual leadings gather the outcasts of Israel, and present to God all the precious among the people. Have you not read, you professing priests and rulers, that it is he alone that is the light of the world,^a and that God hath given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander; that it's he that is appointed for a light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet in the way of peace.^b Did God ever set any at the right hand of power but he alone, that he might make his foes his footstool; of whom he saith, when he brings him into the world, let all the angels of God worship him?^c Have you not read, that it's he alone that purgeth the conscience from dead works? And will you not suffer him to reign or govern therein? Hath not he quickened every living soul, and created anew every free spirit? And would you take and keep the kingdom therein out of his hand, and rule there for another or yourselves, with force and cruelty? Is not this he for whom the sabbath was made and all the ordinances under Heaven speak his dominion? And will you now read this, and profess, and withstand him in the consciences of his tender people, and deny him to rule in his church alone? Have you not read what

^a Isa. 55. 4. ^b Luke 1. 79. ^c Heb. 1. 6.

God hath said of him and his enemies in the second psalm; nay, are not all the scriptures his, and testify to him alone, as head over all, and ruler in all his saints? And as you have heard, read, and professed his dominion more than heathens, and yet go on to keep it from him, so to you is his appearance, to seek his own of you; and if you persist to deny him, it's you must drink the cup first, that the heathens may hear and fear his name from far, and his rising appear to all the ends of the world, that it's he alone who is from everlasting, at whose name every knee must bow, and tongue confess to the right of his inheritance.

And this further I lay before you people of this nation, who have long been crying for peace and settlement in the nations, and in your religion, and you cry out of so many divisions, and so many religions: I say to you all, how should you be otherwise, when you will not come to the one religion that is of God, as it was in the beginning, and is clearly manifested by Jesus Christ, for the bringing all into God again, and reconciling all sorts of scattered people, who are scattered in the imaginations and customs of carnal spirited men, from God and the one good thing, into many things, rudiments and traditions, wherein you can neither be reconciled to God nor one to another, for how is it like that ever that religion can reconcile to God, which sets you a killing one another to uphold it? Are you like to obtain peace in that spirit which in your hearts is the cause of enmity and war? Or obtain unity from that root which hath thus scattered you in its fruits and offspring? This is like the false prophets of old, who would bite with their teeth, and cry peace.^a

Nay, this is not the way of settlement or lasting peace, that you must have in returning, and making peace with the spirit of Jesus: you must kiss the son, and so make peace; for this hath been concerning you of these nations, that if you own not the light of Christ in spirit and truth, that he may lead you out of these many things which are not of God, and recon-

^a Mich. 3.

cile you to God in spirit and truth, there to worship him alone who is a spirit, you will e're long be in blood, either amongst yourselves, one against another, or else in the blood of the innocent lambs of Christ, which will not be for your peace with God; for he that hath letted your peace and settlement is not yet taken away, nor his power, who is that old murderer and divider of the nations, people and tongues, about faiths and religions; and with which a fire hath often been kindled; nor can his power be stopped but by the spirit of the Lamb of God, which takes away sin, and breaks down the wall of separation, which is made about ordinances, literal, ceremonial and traditional, which can never cease but as men turn to the spirit of the Lord Jesus, that with the light of peace and truth, you may be led into peace, truth and unity, that wrath may be done away, and the ground thereof, and you and your religion may be settled on the foundation of truth, Christ Jesus the chief corner stone; ^a and not upon days, times, meats, drinks and apparel, and other things which will perish with the using; and so will they that worship, and not in the leadings of Christ alone, and God will shake the idols of peoples minds, and all the glory of flesh, that he alone may be exalted in the earth, as he is in Heaven.

So if you will have peace you must come to the son of peace; and if you will have establishment, you must come to the foundation of the prophets and apostles of God; for I say, many have been about to build a house for God to dwell in with carnal things and rudiments, and this they would limit him to (and his people) who is a spirit, and his house must be built of spiritual men and women, who like living stones must grow up in his own light and virtue into a holy temple in the Lord; in which you must be builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit, *Eph.* 2. 20, 21, 22. And this is God's house built by Christ alone, which is elect and precious, not with gold and garments, or observations of perishing things, but of re-

^a Col. 2. 14. 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22. Heb. 10. 11.

deemed souls by the blood of Jesus out of their vain conversation, and gathered into the spirit of truth and life, and power to worship God, who is a spirit, in spirit and truth; and this is God's house at this day, and such was his house in the apostles days, who dwells not in temples made with hands, as saith the apostles, nor with mens hands is worshipped, but by him that's poor in spirit, and of a broken and contrite heart, to him will I look, saith the Lord, and there will I dwell:^a and the bodies of his people are the temples of the living God, as he hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people, 2 Cor. 6. 16. And until you come to this building of God in yourselves, God will not dwell with you in peace, but all your buildings will he confound, and not accept your sacrifice, and then the devil will enrage you against God's house and spiritual building, even his poor despised people, them to destroy; like Cain when his sacrifice was not accepted in his own will.

But if you turn to the Lord, who is that spirit, then will he cause his light to shine in your hearts, to give you an heavenly understanding, and he will put his spirit in your inward parts, and fill you with heavenly power, and will let you see the lively image of truth and peace; and he will take away the veil of the covering that is spread over all nations, from which arises all their carnal comprehensions and carnal worships of the invisible God, and he will also swallow up death in victory,^b which now worketh in the nations, to kill one another about religion and worship without spirit and life: so will you come to be taught his true worship, who is a spirit, and become true worshippers in spirit; and so grow up in his knowledge, and he will own your worship, whom as yet you have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.^c And Christ saith of such worshippers, you worship you know not what; but the true worshippers worship in faith, and know what they worship, and such the

^a Isa. 66. 2. ^b Isa. 25. 7, 8. ^c 2 Cor. 3. 16, 17, 18. ^c John 5. 37.

father is now seeking to worship him, saith Christ Jesus, *John* 4. 22, 23, 24.

And this is the thing, O England! that concerns thy peace with thy God in this thy day, who art cumbered with many things about worship, but neglects the one thing needful for thy everlasting peace and establishment, and to bring thee into that worship and spirit,* without which God cannot accept thee, and that religion which is pure and undefiled in the sight of God, which will keep thee unspotted of the world;^b which till thou turnest to, thou wilt be working against the spirit of God, through the darkness of enmity, that is in thee, and he will certainly work against thee, except thou repent.

J. N.

R. H.

^a Luke 19. 42. & 10. 41, 42. ^b Jam. 1. 27.

PART OF HIS ANSWER TO THE
BOOK CALLED
THE FANATIC HISTORY,
(SO FAR AS CONCERNS HIMSELF)

Which was said to be published with the approbation of diverse Orthodox divines, (so called) and dedicated to the king by Richard Blome.

IN ANSWER TO THE EPISTLE DIRECTED TO KING CHARLES.

FRIEND, thou seemest to dedicate thy book of false accusations to king Charles, and wouldst put it upon him, (as matter of duty) to be patron thereof; but it is wisdom in all men, but especially in rulers, to know what they father, or take upon them to defend, in this day, when the old liar and murderer is at work in the earth, seeking, and creeping into every several government, to stir them up that are in present power, by false accusations to persecute God's innocent people; yea, what power hath risen in this age, which hath not been by flattering titles tempted hereunto, and also overcome, by a sort of teachers and people which are not the children of peace, nor have wrought peace in these nations, or the rulers thereof;^a but blood and cruelty: and if king Charles looks to be established in peace, and truth, and righteousness, which is the anointing of God, then he must not patronize lies, nor countenance wickedness and envy, which is the substance of thy book which thou wouldst have defended, and against a harmless people,^b whom thou wouldst have him suddenly to restrain, and that under pretence of defending the faith of Christ. But,

^a Pro. 4. 16. ^b 20. 8. 12. 26, 30, 14.

friend, to restrain people from following the light of Christ in their consciences, and his truth in the inward parts, is not to defend his faith;^a which faith is a mystery, and held in a pure conscience. And they that follow the Lamb, are led by his spirit and truth in the inward parts: and this the eternal God of heaven and earth requires, and seeks such to worship him. And thus to restrain is not for the king's safety, nor the work of his sword, nor are you the friends of his establishment in God's peace, who would put him upon it to please your bloody spirits.^b But to restrain open profaneness, and to be a terror to evil doers, and to preserve people from the fist of wickedness, and to deliver the poor and helpless from him that is too strong for him, and to bring judgment into the gates,^c and make it free for all sorts of people, without respect of persons or opinions, that the evil-doer may be punished, and the well-doer encouraged in every corner of the nations, that when God comes to enquire for innocent blood or oppression, it may not be found, nor violence in the land.

This is that which God looks for at the hands of kings and rulers, that they bear not the sword in vain.^d And this you cry not for, by which his authority may be owned of God, and subjected to for conscience sake; but you would have that of God in the conscience stifled, and restrained, and then what is all obedience worth towards God, or men, or rulers; but to follow any thing that is set up, and be true in heart to nothing? And many such spirits will be found in this nation, if ever king Charles stand in need to prove them further than by flattery or self-ends, as those have found that were before him. And whether it will be his wisdom to fall upon the tender lambs of Christ, and seek to restrain them from following their leader, and so procure his wrath for pleasing these spirits, let the wise in heart judge, who have duly observed God's appearance, towards such a work all along in this age.

^a Eccl. 5, 8. ^b 1 Tim. 3, 9. ^c Jam, 16, 13. ^d John 4, 24. Psal. 2. ^e Rom. 13, 8. Amos 5, 15. ^f Isa. 5, 7, 32, 7.

And whereas thy complaint is, that if his majesty put not forth his royal hand of power, suddenly to restrain us, we are so numerous and seducing, that we will [in a little time] diffuse our poison over the better part of his kingdom, which none but a regal authority can stifle.

I say then, what is become of your spiritual weapons? Have not your teachers told people of the strength of truth, and the power of Godliness? Have you lost both [may wisdom say] and run you now to the arm of flesh, to get errors stifled [as you call them] or else your hope is lost, and your faith fails you? Did ever any of Christ's ministers leave their spiritual weapons, to run to the arm of flesh, or a carnal weapon, to stop seducers? I say, no; this they never did, but with spiritual weapons they wrestled and overcame spiritual wickedness, and with them cut down heresies, blasphemies and false worships, and cleared the churches of Christ of them, and drove them down before them in the world; for none could resist the spirit by which they spoke, of all the false priests and false worshippers:^b but being put to the worst, they cried [as you do] to rulers and people, help us, or all will be overrun: for they that turn the world upside down are come hither; [mind your cry.] And then the rude multitude run on heaps upon them, and made tumults often, and fell upon them with staves and fists and assaulted the houses that entertained them, as you do, and so hauled them before rulers, who took their part herein, and put them in prison, and often whipped them, unless it were some that were so noble, as not to heed the cry of the multitude;^c but would hear their cause, and give them leave to speak, before they would sentence them that were accused. And this was the nobility of heathen kings and rulers; and do not you seek to make Englands rulers worse than them? Beware lest heathens rise up in the day of judgment against them who are called christians, and condemn them.

a 2 Cor. 20, 4, 5. Eph. 6, 12, &c. b Acts 6, 10, 21, 28, 17, 5, 6. c 25, 15, 16.

And in this your cry for help, against so contemptible a people (as you count them) you (like silly women) do but discover your weakness and worthlessness: and if God open the eyes of king Charles he will see it. What! Have you preached and wrestled yourselves out of all hope and faith, that either you must have sudden help from him, or all is lost and over-run? Surely it may be said, you have been bad watchmen and idle shepherds, who have lost all if sudden help come not from another hand. Now if any had come against you with carnal weapons, then had you had some excuse in crying to the earthly powers; but in that nothing but spirit comes against spirit, and yet you have lost the day. This doth clearly manifest, that the power of God you have not in you, but have lost the kingdom of the most high, and so are become unreasonable men, who would have two weapons against one, and another to do your work for you, and yet are unwilling to forego your wages; 2 *Thess.* 3. 2. Yea, this advantage you have had divers years, but have not prevailed therewith.

And whereas thou sayest, thy book is of great consequence; and so thou presumest to make king Charles the patron of it: and then askest pardon for thy presumption when thou hast done.

I say thou hast need, the substance of thy book being made up of false accusations, gathered up out of books formerly written against us, which have been disproved by answers several times over: and to these thou hast added some new accusations, as false as the old, and spied out the failings of some few, who have mourned before God, that ever they should sin, and give occasion to the enemy of God so to blaspheme.—And many things which were done and spoken by others, who are not of us, nor ever were: and of this is thy book made up, as any may see who read it, & our several answers to the charges therein, many of them of several years standing, against these false accusations, which have most of them been printed over and over, and presented to the former powers that have

risen, and as often answered: so there needed no more to be said, than hath been, were it not for the sake of some, who may yet be strangers to your way of dealing towards us, under every power that hath been. Now discretion will say, that to make another man the father of such a work, to which he is a stranger [but especially a king] is presumption indeed, rashness and folly, and needs a pardon.

And whereas you now say, that none but a regal authority can stifle; It's true, you have tried parliaments and protectors [as you call them] and parliaments again; and to make them then work for you, your priests used these arguments to them, [to wit,] that in the late wars they had exposed lives, liberties, estates and relations, with all other personal advantages, in maintaining the just proceedings of parliaments, and for them you then claimed our stifling, as the price of your prayers, purses, hazards, losses, banishment and blood, as may be read in the Westmoreland petition against us, which thou hast printed in page 197, and 198. And was not this power that which you then called the common enemy, in the same petition, page 200, which you now cry to, and would put him upon that work against us now, as defender of your faith, &c. Ah! faithless generation have you been to God and man, may you not be ashamed of this work, to print it and send it to king Charles; and call him to defend it, and patronize it: How hath envy bereaved you of your reasonableness? Shall he who defends this, defend either faith or truth? But this is that you may cover yourselves with your shame and envy, that both king and people, and parliaments, may see what a generation you are, that will run under any power to get your bloody ends; but indeed true to none; for if it was true, that you was so faithful to that parliament, with your prayers, purses and blood, and there you plead, then is your faith but new, which now you would have defended; but if not true, then how great deceivers, and how little to be trusted, or defended, in your cruel designs.

The king that faithfully judges the poor, his throne shall be established for ever. But if a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked, *Prov.* 29. 12, 14. And to thee, who hast set forth this book of mischief, I say with the scriptures, lay not wait [O wicked man] against the dwelling of the righteous, spoil not his resting place. For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again; but the wicked shall fall into mischief, *Prov.* 24. 15, 16., see also *Mich.* 7. 8.

J. N.

IN ANSWER TO THE BOOK.

THE day is come that the scripture is fulfilled, which the Lord spoke by his prophet, *Isaiah* 44. 25. That he will make the diviners mad; and that the prophets shall be ashamed, every one of his vision, *Zach.* 13. 4. The which doth now evidently appear, and their folly is made manifest unto all, that will see and behold it, according to 2 *Tim.* 3. 9. And is not this manifest madness and folly in them, called orthodox and divines, to present unto the king their packet of lies, which have been seven years told over, and so long since disproved and confuted, as may be seen in a book called *Saul's Errand to Damascus*, &c. printed in the year 1653, and in several other books since. It already hath been, and is now manifest unto all men of sober understandings, that these men, falsely called orthodox and divines, have had no defence, either to vindicate themselves, or disprove the people called Quakers: but this refuge of lies, which they first presented to the parliament sitting in 1652, and likewise to other parliaments which have been since that time, and to the two protectors, and now to this present king is directed; and you presumptuously charge him to be

the patron to it, requiring him to defend those lies which you falsely call the faith. But this we know, according as it is written, *Prov. 29. 12, 19.* That if a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked; but a wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.

These pretended divines, are such as have bowed and crouched under every appearance of a power, and by flatteries seem to cleave unto them, that they might uphold, maintain and satisfy their god, which is their bellies: these were of them which said, that Oliver Cromwell was the light of their eyes, and the breath of their nostrils: so that now with shame they might rather confess that they are blind, and dead (from the light and life of God) than to multiply lies in their accustomed manner, as formerly. These also were of them that said, Oliver Cromwell was Moses, who had led them into a sight of the good land; and that Richard his son was Joshua, which should lead them into the possession. But we, with many more, do see that their hope is false, and their faith also proved vain, and that they are not yet in the land of promise, for there no liars come. And those former rulers hearkening to their lies were deceived by them, which was the cause of God's judgments, and utter destruction coming upon them; which while they put into the priests mouths, they cried peace unto them, calling them Moses, Aaron, and Joshua; but when they ceased, and could not put into their mouths, then they cried out, that Moses and Joshua were tyrants and oppressors: and so will they do unto the king now, who are seeking to cleave unto him by flattery and deceit; which if he deny to be the patron and defender of their lies, will be apt to cry as much against him. So that he, or they, are blessed, whose ears are not open to their clamours, but whose hearts are joined to the truth, and who are led by the spirit of God as their instructor; for such shall discern hypocrites, and false hearted men under every pretence of flattery or dissimulation; for the folly of these begins to be manifest unto all men. *2 Tim. 3. 9.*

Now as in answer to the history, concerning John Toldervey, asserted by a company of priests, as Brooks, Cocking, Goodwin, Jenkins, Jacomb, Alderry, Tombs and Pool, whom themselves say, that they have but perused a part, as page 99, and yet pretend to witness the whole; whose witness is disproved and denied by the said John Toldervey, both by his own book given forth from him, and by his life and conversation, being now [since his return from his outgoing] a living witness, not against, but for the way, doctrine, principle and practice, which the people called Quakers do live in, against those lies published abroad concerning him.

And as for thy charge thou hast against J. Naylor, through everlasting mercy of my God, I have yet a being amongst the living, and breath to answer for myself, though against the intents of many cruel bloody spirits, who pursued my soul unto death [as much as in them lay] in that day of my calamity, when my adversary was above, and wherein I was made a sign to a backsliding generation, who then would not see nor hear what now is coming upon them, but rejoiced against this piece of dust, and had little pity towards him that was fallen into their hands; wherein God was just in giving me up for my disobedience, for a little moment, as a father to correct; yet should not they have sought to aggravate things against me, as thou dost, for it was a day of deep distress, and lay sore upon my soul, and the merciful God saw it, who though he was displeased for a time, yet his thoughts were not to cast off for ever [but extend mercy] as it is at this day, glory be to his name, from my delivered soul eternally.

And in that day there were many spirits flocked about me, and some whom while the candle of the Lord shone upon my head, I ever judged and kept out from me, who then got up and acted, and spoke several things not in the light and truth of God, by which they who sought occasion against me then was strengthened to afflict this body, and he that watches

for evil, in thee and some others, makes use on still against God's truth and innocent people; whose mouths the God of my mercy stop, and so finish the trouble of my heart as to that thing, for my soul hath long dwelt among lions, even among them that are set on fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongues a sharp sword, speaking mischievous things to shed blood.

But O man, or men, whoever you be, whose work it is to gather the failings of God's people in the time of temptation, or night of their trial, and aggravate them, and add thereto the wickedness and mischievous lies of your own hearts, as thou hast done in thy book, and then come out with those against God's everlasting holy truth it to reproach; I say, you are set on work by an evil spirit, and you do but shew yourselves to be enemies to God and his children; and it is our sorrow, that any of us should give such spirits occasion to blaspheme; and it hath been trouble of soul to all the people of God, that have ever loved righteousness, when they have thus occasioned the joy of the wicked, or to feed the man that watches for iniquity, and feeds on mischief: yet know this, you that are of that brood, God will not cast off his people; though he be sometimes provoked to correct them, even before their adversaries [which is a sign to them] yet is his anger but for a moment, and his favor shall return as streams of life; then shall the food be taken out of the mouth of the viper, and the prey from between the teeth of the devourers; and God will feed them with their own vomit, and the poison that hath long lain under their tongues shall be bitter in their own bowels. Thus will God certainly plead with Zion's enemies, as he bends her sons for himself, and God will make up her breaches: and this hath my my soul seen, Jacob's captivity restored, and the diggers of the pit are fallen therein; neither hath he smitten him as he smote them that smote him, nor is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him; but this is all, his fruit to purge away sin.

So he that had long watched for my faltering then got advantage against me; yet had I then power to bear his utmost envy, through Christ Jesus, whom I then confessed before men, who then was my support in all, and under all, and who is over all, blessed forever of all who have proved him in the depth.

But that which was, and is the sorrow of my heart, is the advantage the enemy then took against the name of Christ, his truth, and his despised people, in that time of temptation, which is that which thou art now pursuing with hatred and lies, as that I was suspected to have a woman in bed with me, the night before I suffered at Bristol, when there were six or seven persons in the room that night, and a man (to wit) Robert Rich in bed with me. But this, and several other false things thou hast written in thy book, of which I am clear before the Lord, so they touch me not at all; nor shall I here mention them against thee in particular; but to God alone I look, in his time to be cleared from all offences in his sight, who only knows my heart in this thing, in whose presence I can say, that nothing is more odious and burthensome to my soul, than that any of the glory or worship which belongs to God, or to Christ, should be given to flesh and blood, in myself or others: and how it was with me at that day many talk of, but few know; so the judgment of such I bear, desiring that none in judging me, might have condemned themselves in God's sight, whose counsels are a great deep, and the end of his work past finding out, till he himself reveal them; but in the end he will be justified of all, and in all he doth, that all flesh may be silent before him.

And however myself, or any others may be left to themselves, to be tried in the night, yea should any utterly fall, or whatever may be acted by any man or woman, that is not justifiable in God's sight, yet in vain dost thou, or you gather up sin, or watch for iniquity, to cast upon the light which condemns it in every enlightened conscience, and there will clear himself to be no author nor actor therein; and I know

by the spirit of Jesus, which I have received, and which worketh in me, that this is not his work, nor his seed, nor in him that loves his enemies, thou art not; but the old accuser of the brethren it is that worketh strongly in thee; and in the light which thou reproachest, art thou seen to be the man that makes lies, and carries tales to shed blood, *Ezek. 22, 9, 12.*

[The rest of this book, in answer to the priests old lying stories against truth and friends, not being so material to be inserted, is here omitted.]

A word of reproof to the ministers of the nation, whose kingdom is already shaken and divided against itself [preceding the distinction of the true ministers—from the false. Writ by G. W. and J. N. in reply to J. Bewick.]

Being a word to the said John Bewick, and the rest of his brethren the hireling priests, who are in his way.

WHETHER are you now run for a refuge and defence for your tithes, and set maintenance? Doth all your old grounds fail you that formerly you have pleaded? Are you driven out of scripture, of Christ and his apostles; out of all the law of God there, and out of law of nations and countries; and would you now fly to Melchisedeck for help? What! Is there no scripture command that will own you in your yearly stipends; and are you afraid of men's laws failing you; and are you now fled from all your former pleas, and think you to find help from Melchisedeck? Did you not formerly plead divine right, and told us, by the scriptures you would prove it; and then being driven out of all commands, or examples in scripture, then you pleaded the custom of the country, and national law: and by that in Oliver's time you took men's goods, and cast them into prison, and made havoc and spoil abundantly? And then many of you would not plead scripture

at all; but by custom and human law you would have it. And dare you no longer depend upon that? And dare you now think Melchisedeck will stand you in stead, or own you in your work and trading, any more than the prophets and apostles? What! Are ye of the order of Melchisedeck now, who but a while ago must needs plead the order of Levi? And then, when that order and your manners would not stand together, then you pleaded the order of nations. And now thou J. B. in thy book, wouldst make people believe, that you are after the order of Melchisedeck, and that tithes were yours before they were given to Levi, and that he had them but for a time, by a special command, till you came, and then you were to come up after the order of Melchisedeck, and so you must now enjoy them forever, &c.

But now you must be tried in the light, whether you be of that order or no, as well as you have been tried with the order of Levi; and if you be found of his order, then we will grant you to have right to his maintenance (if you will be but content with it) for we must needs think it meet, that children should inherit the right of their fathers. So if you be Melchisedeck's children, you will do his works, which were to relieve the weary soldier with his own bread and wine; so you may expect his reward, if they be free to give it you, as Abram was of his spoils: for we never read that it was the order of Melchisedeck, to ravine about after outward things, nor sued people for hire, nor spoiled their estates, nor cast them into prison, nor any way sought after gifts or rewards: nor do we read that he ever required or received any yearly tithes of any people or parish, either sheaves, beasts, swine, fowls, or the like, which was to relieve their families, from any creature, but as he was the priest of the most high God, not called nor made of men.— So he was maintained by him, and not by men, and he was like to him that called him, a bountiful man ready to give, ready to bless and to relieve others in their way; as appears in what he did to Abram and

his army in the way, he met them with bread and wine, and gave them freely, and asked them nothing again, and so he received freely tithes of Abram's spoils; but never can any of you prove, that he had the tithes of Abram's estate, stock or tillage, nor ever demanded, or sued, or took by force any part of any man's goods upon any pretence whatsoever.

So here is Melchisedeck's order; if you be of it, and his children, then you will own it, and it will own you, and we shall own it also in you. And in this order we find him who was of that priesthood, Christ Jesus, a priest forever after his order, who to us is an example forever; and all that walk contrary we deny, who said, it's more blessed to give than to receive, who was bountiful in feeding others, but for himself he had not whereon to lay his head. This was after the order of Melchisedeck, and all his are after him forever; and therefore none of his ministers did ever require any thing for themselves but what was free, nor coveting any man's gold, money or apparel, nor ever in the least did mention tithes to themselves, or make any yearly bargain about carnal things whatsoever, but preached freely and received freely, or nothing. And this in scripture we find to be the order of Melchisedeck, and the order of Christ and of his apostles, if you can receive it.

But on the contrary, when we see a sort of men who never heard God's voice, running and enquiring who can get the greatest yearly stipends, tithes, or augmentations, and tearing peoples bodies and estates, if they get it not, according to the havoc that hath been made by the priests of this nation in these late years, this was never the order of Melchisedeck, Christ or his apostles, nor the order of Aaron neither, who had a law for tithes, but the order of Eli's sons, who were sons of Belial, who know not the Lord, and therefore sent their servants to take it by force, as now hath been done, to the spoiling of many families.

So you are found further from the order of Melchisedeck, Christ and his apostles, than from the order of

Levi, as far as the priesthood and ministration of Christ, exceeds in bounty and freeness the ministration of Moses; so far are you come short in your orders and manners, in this covetous practice after earthly things. And you are seen to be after the order of those who mind earthly things, which the apostles foretold of, who were coming up in their time, who served not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and made merchandize of people in their times through covetous practices. And this hath been the order and manners of you, as your practices have proved in these late years, to the ruining of many families; and so your manners have declared your order and descent, none that ever were from above doing such things.

So it's in vain to seek to cover that with words, which is so monstrously broken out into contrary actions: the sheeps clothing can no longer cover your various natures. And for this end hath God left you to yourselves, that your practices may exceed, and so make you manifest to the full. And thus hath he left you, that the more you seek to cover yourselves with deceitful words, the more you give occasion for people to mind your unanswerable lives, which are become so boundless in covetousness, pride and oppression, that neither Christ, Melchisedeck nor Moses can own you therein, nor will answer what you do. So that when you have done what you can, you must be driven back to her that brought you forth, who rides upon the beast; for no other power will own you, nor bear you in your practices. O unreasonable men, what unreasonable work have you made in these late years in this nation? What begging and petitioning have you made to every several power, to enlarge your benefits? what thrusting out one another out of great livings to get in yourselves: and when you have got in, what havoc have you made of the peoples estates, and still cried to the earthly powers for more maintenance? What suing and casting into prisons of poor people? How have you cursed the great ones that

were over you when they would not serve your turn, and stirred up wars against them, till all have been as heaps by your means? How have you flattered such as would feed you, while they had power, and when they fell, then you have reviled them, and crept under the next, and flattered them also; and all for tithes and augmentations, and the like; which thou callest the *golden oil*. And yet you would have us believe you are not covetous, nor preach for lucre. And you do deceive with your feigned words such as are not able to judge between your words and your practices; and so the blind lead the blind, and you hate the light that discovers you; and we can truly say, that it is not because we have wronged, or falsely rendered you, that you thus hate us above all men; but for the light that is in us, and the truth that makes you manifest. And we have God's witness with us and in us, that we hate not your persons, but your ungodly practices; and so much the more are we made to testify against you, as you seek to cover yourselves with wresting the scriptures, and taking the name of Christ's ministers upon you, but walk in such ways as none of his ever walked in: and in faithfulness to God and godly men, we cannot allow you neither Melchisedeck, Christ nor his apostles, nor any of their words to cover you, until you come into their lives, and leave your devouring and covetous practices.

And couldest thou blush, thou hadst never had a face to have quoted such scriptures in this thy book, and laid them upon the false prophets and false teachers of old, whilst thyself art found in the very same steps; so that modesty cannot but admire how thou couldest pass through them, and not be wounded in thy conscience, and made ashamed; what a forehead have you got? Or that ever thou shouldest so much as mention one scripture of the apostles, or any ministers of Christ under the law, to prove tithes due to a minister of Christ under the gospel? A thing which none of them ever owned, or so much as mentioned, otherwise than as to deny them: what a reprobate sense

are some men now given up to? Or was ever truth so perverted contrary to the life and practice thereof?

And as for Melchisedeck, whom thou wouldest make thy refuge, he will not own you, nor serve your turn, who only received tithes of the spoil of what was taken by the sword, and that but once, and that not by command nor demand, but by a free gift, upon his feeding the soldiers first with bread and wine freely. How this will afford you an everlasting law, to demand the tenth of peoples labours and estates, by which they should relieve their families, and not finding them free therein, to take it by violence; they are blind indeed, who see you not therein, your false ground and false covers.

And whereas you teachers use your tongues for your great tithes and set maintenance; and the more to prevail upon doubtful-minded people, you take the apostles words, and by putting your meanings on them, make some people believe, that when they spoke of living on the gospel, they meant tithes and augmentations, &c. We say, alas! deceived men, you cannot deceive us therewith, for we in plainness tell you, that the practice of the true prophets and apostles, gives the true and open meanings of their teachings and writings, and to that must you come before their words can own you, or we allow you their words, as to have part or possession in them; for we know the true ministers of Christ preached not for their bellies, nor their masterships, nor sought themselves, nor ever named tithes, as belonging to them, in any case, nor was ever augmentation in the bargain to any people, as to their preaching and gospel, nor did they claim a great house to dwell in, but in all things laboured to follow their Lord and master, who had no possession in the earth, for which they left what they had of their own, to be as he was, and preached freely as he did. And this testimony is given of them in the scriptures of truth, that they wandered to and fro, in hunger, cold and nakedness, having no certain dwelling place. And this was their reward, namely, to

make the gospel without charge, that it might be as free to others, as they had received it of God: and they never handled the word for gain, nor taught for filthy lucre, nor made merchandize with it, as, what will you give me? Judas-like; nor had they great houses to live in, and great tithe-barns to lay up earthly treasure, nor any way exercised covetous practices, but had whole churches, to which they had not been chargeable at all.

Now for men to take such mens words, to cover their covetous, cruel and ravenous spoil and imprisonments, would be as the taking a sheep's skin to put on a wolf's back, and then say he is a sheep, which might deceive the sheep, but could not change the wolf's nature. Wherefore we cannot see the holy men of God so abused and be silent, as to have their words so wrested, quite contrary to the life thereof, and their godly innocent lives so wronged, as to be represented as men of such manners and behaviour. So let them alone, and their holy words and godly innocent lives; abuse them not by taking them into your mouths, so as to represent them to be men of your order and behaviour.

And Melchisedeck and Christ, cause not their names to be evil thought on, by making people believe them to be fathers or authors of such spoil or bondage to poor people, or of the true gospel being so chargeable. This is charged upon you all, as you will answer him in his day, when he comes in all his holy ones, whom wicked men have belied; and in the mean time be ashamed of your comparing yourselves with them, and confounded in your abuse of the holy scriptures, and of the holy mens lives; for the light is come from on high, and guile is found in your mouths, and earthliness in your minds.

And you that call your carnal maintenance of tithes and augmentations the golden oil (as thou dost in thy book) are seen, in the light of God, to be wholly ignorant of the true anointing, which should give you sight in yourselves, and so cannot lead others out of

the world. And it's no wonder that you so oppose the true light, your lamp must needs be darkness, when earthly things is your oil; your gold must needs be dross, and your prize below the mark of election, and corruption carries the draught in your balance, whose golden oil is earthly things. You are seen to be the men who have in you the false measure, and bag of deceitful weights. How is the holy one prized in you? How is the invisible disallowed? And how have you put the price upon carnal things, whose gold is become dross and corruption, counted gold? Are you the lights of these days? Or can your eye lead to immortal treasure? Or, shall you be the men who must reveal that which hath been hid from ages, at whose appearance they that find him count your gain loss, your gold dross, and your oil darkness, death and a stink.

And know, you earthly-minded men, that the true light is risen on his children, who is the father of lights, though your eye be yet in the earth, and your minds carnal, calling good evil, and evil good, putting light for darkness, and darkness for light, as earthly minds have ever done. And it's in vain for you to deceive such with chaff, and dross, and corruption, by your calling it gold, or by wresting scriptures to feed such with a lie; for in us the truth is become judge and law-giver, and hath redeemed us from lying tongues: glory and praises to the truth everlasting!

And we know that tithes were the maintenance of the Jews, Levites and Priests, but never of the christians, by any command or example of Christ our head, who gave his life to abolish them, and that priesthood, and many other yokes of bondage, which the Jew's religion lay under; and having triumphed over them all, sent out his servants in his own spirit, to proclaim freedom freely; and they gathered subjects into his kingdom, whom he redeemed without money, to serve him freely: and of him we are, and his glory we may not give to another spirit, nor receive another gospel, that genders to the earth and to bondage.

And for this it is we suffer spoil to this day, and not for covetousness, nor in despite to men, nor in opposition to any law of men, but for his sake alone, whose precious blood hath redeemed us into a better covenant and kingdom; and wo to us, if we give up to please men, or save ourselves. And so being faithful we please God, and therein we have peace, and he pleads our cause, and lifts up our heads through all, and is with us through good report and evil report, and we have glory and joy in his reproach, and triumph over the enmity that for his sake comes upon us from all sorts of earthly minds; and we are made to contend against many beastly spirits, that seek our destruction; yet may not we give up his right and our freedom, which with his precious life he once purchased for all his, of which inheritance we have a part, through the light of his grace, by which he hath called us to freedom in him, as our purchased possession, which the spirit of the world would drive us from, to serve the spirit of bondage. And so here is a reason of the hope of life that is in us before all men.

And we know assuredly, that as long as our God shall suffer men to hate us, and reproach and spoil us for this, we being faithful shall not want the lamb's power, to withstand all your deceitful words and works of cruelty, and not be tainted with your enmity, nor give up the right of his kingdom, but in perfect peace be kept therein, till righteousness arise to reign, and judge for the meek of the earth, who are found faithful to his coming.

J. N.

MILK FOR BABES,

AND

MEAT FOR STRONG MEN TREATED OF.

That a feast of fat things, and wine well refined on the lees, they
may come to be made partakers of.

Written by James Nayler, in the time of his confinement in prison,
but not published till 1661.

O come young men and maidens, old men and babes,
and drink abundantly of the streams that run from the
fountain, that you may feel a well-spring of living wa-
ter in yourselves, springing up to eternal life; that as he
lives [even Christ Jesus] from whence all the springs do
come, so you may live also, and partake of his glory
that is ascended at the right hand of the father, far
above principalities and powers.

To you tender hearted ones, who have felt the call
of the father's love, who now see more desirableness
and beauty in innocency and meekness, than in all the
mountains of prey, or self-conceited exaltations ari-
sing from the airy knowledge: my soul is with you here-
in; and in that which hath given you the sight of this
excellency, wait low, and diligently hearken thereto,
until the thing itself spring up, which naturally hath
this riches in it, which cometh from above, and yet it
is felt far below all fleshly affections, high thoughts,
and hasty desires, and by these is veiled and hid from
you; so that you cannot come to the life and spring of
it, but as you deny these, and put them off, by sinking
down through them, all these earthly foundations and
ends, to rise up: for under all these your beloved suf-
ferers, while these are above in your minds, and thro'
the fall of all these must he arise, and over all these
take the kingdom, ere you come to have a quiet dwel-
ling place in him, and he in you. So under all these
must you pass, and into the likeness of his death you

must come, and be planted therein, that the fellowship of his sufferings you may feel, and partake of his meekness and patience therein, who beareth all things; and your faithfulness with him therein must be thoroughly proved: in which faith and patience you shall learn him whom you love, his reproach without, his temptations within, even such trials as cannot be declared to another, shall you learn in him, with his love, obedience, patience, meekness and long-suffering under all; and how through all these he ariseth, in which resurrection he chaineth his enemies, and takes them captive wose captives you were; and thus shall you have fellowship in his resurrection, wherein you shall attain to the resurrection of the dead, and the inheritance of eternal life.

But dear children, who seek this to attain, think it not strange, when for the attaining hereof you come to be rejected of all, denied, condemned, contradicted, and tempted with all manner of spirits and evils; assaults within and without, with fears and dread, in weakness, watchings and fastings, with tears of sorrow night and day; to be led into the wilderness, and there tempted, tried in the night with great temptations and see no way out; led on a way you know not, a way of wrath and terror, and passing by the gates of hell, and none to pity you, nor take your part; chastened alone, that you may be proved to the uttermost; and when this you come into, then faint not, nor look back, but lift up your head through all, and know, that now he deals with you as with sons and daughters of his love: take heed you murmur not, nor measure him with yourselves, nor repine at the rod; cast not your evil eye upon the instruments, who, or what they may be; for that will beget wrath in your minds, and then you will lose the life you aim at, and suffer in vain; but in the greatest floods keep your eye to your beloved, retain patience and meekness in long-suffering, with faith: let these be ever in your heart as the end of all; and still believe, that all that befalls you is but to waste that which would hinder you from being join-

ed unto him you so highly prize. So in all things keep with him, let his joy be strength unto you in all, and the appearance of his beauty will refresh you in the new, as the old doth waste; and with him make war against the enmity, and let his love quench all wrath that would arise; let him be your shield of faith; and whatever you are led into while you retain him single in your minds, it shall be profitable to the end expected, but without him you can do nothing: so if you pray to the father, let it be by him: in all your wrestlings, his meekness, patience and long-suffering, with faith, prevails much with God. If you resist the tempter, let it be in him; its his good that only hath power to overcome the evil; and here is your strength in all, if you hold him stedfast in your minds; in the fire and in the floods he will be with you, and be your power and peace, and make your way through all.

Though at some times the clouds may be so thick, and the powers of darkness so strong in your eye that you see him not, yet love him, and believe, and you have him present; you shall feel his patience calling you down out of the storm, and his meekness moving you to follow him who hath gone the same way before in all his saints. This is your beloved, who now goeth before you, hear him alone; then are you faithful, when you look for no other to be with you in all, nor to redeem you out of all but him whom you love: so that though the tempter should tender you relief some other way (for herewith he will prove you, if he see he cannot drive you from the meek and patient one by sufferings and threatening, then will he flatter and promise, to draw you from him) yet this is your faithfulness, that you abide till meekness and patience bring you out.

For whatever you own for your redeemer out of trouble, that must be your Lord and master, and you its servant: wherefore take heed you own none for a helper, but him whom you look to inherit; so he that makes flesh his arm, inherits the curse; and the earth cometh over him, and he must serve it: but stay you in

the meekness of Christ, his peace and patience, and receive the earnest of your inheritance in the day of your trouble; and when you come out, none shall be able to take it from you, nor any contrary nature shall be Lord in you, nor over you; but he in whom you have trusted shall rest upon you, and his glory shall cover you, and he shall become your life and leader for ever.

And being faithful in this trial, you shall learn Christ and find out the wiles of Satan, and perfectly feel what he hath of his own in you, to work upon, even by their present working in your minds; for that which thinks sufferings hard, and time long, that is not to be trusted; for it will work in the reasonings a distrust, and tempt to look out for freedom and ease by some visible help; or if it cannot prevail to hunt about for freedom, yet if any carnal way be opened, it will form a fair pretence as though it were of God, which is not of God; and this seeks to betray you from the just and faithful one, and would part you from your chaste waiting upon him whom you love, taking his advantage by your haste, weariness and weakness in the journey. But that which only minds to be obedient to God in suffering and acting with faith and diligence, hearkening with all long-suffering, meekness and patience, what he saith, thinking it a greater thing to obtain counsel from him, than ease from another; believing that no other can give an expected end but him, to wit, an inheritance in that you wait for; and therefore count nothing dear that you may win him, thinking no time long, nor any thing hard to endure, for the joy and beauty that is set before you: this will never deceive you of the redemption of truth; your beloved and redeemer, and Lord, is one, and you shall not be put to your slight shifts as they that go out from that spirit are; for you shall feel and see your redeemer in the midst of you, and with his body shall you rise and live, and you shall not be ransomed with silver or gold from the hand of the oppressor, but by the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without spot; not

with any corruptible thing, but his long-suffering, faith and patience, his love and meek spirit shall set you out of all darkness, and above all fears; and your freedom will be perfect, and inheritance large, when all that would not stay upon him alone, are consumed in the fiery trials, which haste, ease and distrust, will never bring to an end; till which you are not fit to be joined to him you love, in ever-living obedience and everlasting praises, the portion of all who have waited on him, and have found him faithful in the end.

And having learned this mystery of godliness, and found the worth of it, you having found his way perfect and pure, and him faithful to such as walk therein, you may be able to direct the simple and unlearned in the desirable way to rest, and your words have in them a manifestation of life, and quickening power is with you, and this shall be your everlasting strength, that you are redeemed with that you so dearly loved.

And this you shall feel in the way, that the more diligently you wait upon him in all conditions you pass through, even so the more do you receive him, by drinking in of that heavenly virtue that is in him, who is the meek and patient one; and by supping continually with him, and he with you, will you come to be filled with him, that all haste, and impatience and distrust will be overcome by him, till he become your whole life; and all your thoughts, words and actions have their rise and being therein; so that self be seen no more, nor that appear in which death or condemnation have any entrance or power. And this shall you find to be the house from above and Heavenly city, in which the holy spirits live and walk, and have communion as they come to be perfected; of which the Lamb is the light and salvation, into which none enter, but who through his meekness and long suffering are ransomed, and by faith therein redeemed.

Who being thus builded, see no more sorrow nor fear of falling, the foundation being everlasting, elect and precious, and every stone therein tried in the fire, and in faithfulness chosen for that end.

So with all diligence sink down to feel the election, not minding that which boasts in high words before it be tried, but when it comes into the fire, will not stand patience in the trial, but through that being given up to death, seek for that which lies under in the suffering, which calls you down from every high thought: to him come down into the low valley, who bears all things without complaining, that with him you may suffer, and with him you may obey, and in all things he may be with you, and you with him. This is the election, make him sure to yourselves in life and death; so shall you be changed by him: and though you go down into a low estate with him, he shall raise you spiritual; though you are sown weak, yet shall you be raised in power; if you rise not but with him, as he raises you; if you cast not off the yoke, nor fly the cross, nor heal your own wound; though your wound be mortal, yet the cure is immortal; though you go down in shame and reproach, yet raised in glory, and covered with immortal honour and eternal life, with power and strength to fulfil the will of God, and the answer of a good conscience; through this baptism and resurrection you shall attain, and so become one in spirit with him that dwells in the light, in death, in sufferings, in patience, in faith and in obedience, which otherwise no mortal man can approach to, there being that to be fulfilled which the light requires, which the first man hath not in power, so by that law (his life he must lose) which hath power over the transgressor as long as he lives, and cannot be joined to Christ till to that law he be dead; so the first which is earthly the law kills because of sin and want of obedience; but he that is born again of the spirit, lives because of righteousness and obedience. So the boaster is excluded, being concluded under sin, that the mercy may arise in the meek principle over all, to fulfil all.

The light saith, love thy neighbour as thyself: this the first birth cannot do, so the boaster is excluded, and the law lays hold on that life, which wants this

love, and the creature must give up that to death, that he may come to the meek spirit, for the power of that life and obedience that hath righteousness in it; and the creature drawing his mind and affections, and faith from the first, who hath words without power, and giving these to the second, the first falls, withers, and dies in that vessel, and as the mind is diligent in the second, he rises in the faith, and Christ raiseth the power of obedience in that vessel, and so as he rises through the law, he brings forth fruits above the law, against which there is no law. So he in whom the covenant is, and hath the power of obedience to righteousness, puts an end to the law: so he being denied, dead and buried, whose life arose through disobedience, who is the transgressor, and because of whom the law was added, the law becomes dead also. He that fulfils the law is he that gave it forth, and is the end thereof, in whom by faith you live, and inherit this righteousness, as you put him on through death who is this life. So being faithful in the light, shall you learn him that kills and makes alive, that casts down and raises up, that condemns and justifies, and so shall know the way of death and the way of life; and who that is hardened by the law, and who fulfils it, and the life and end of both; and you will see the cause and end of all the tribulations, earthquakes and thunders, and several voices, clouds, smoke and darkness, and great temptations, and the trial of your faith herein will be as that of gold, and will bring to inherit the kingdom of God and eternal life, and power to judge the prince of the air, and over the mystery of iniquity, and to deny the God of this world, with all his snares and traps, wherein the unlearned professors are caught, and held captive at his will, though some of them have a knowledge and form of the truth, taught from what others have thus learned, all which you shall judge and have power over, and all ministration under the son shall with this be comprehended, whether angels or spirits; even he that is faithful and diligent unto the end of this great tribulation, shall

be made white, and have judgment committed to him, and the key of David's house, to bind and lose, and shall sit in the Lamb's throne of judgment and righteousness in Heaven, and the grave nor Hell shall have no more power, nor shall his old iniquities have any more power over him, the strength of sin being dead.

Wherefore, brethren, in the light be faithful, when you come into this condition; take heed of unbelief, and haste not out of it, lest you tempt the Lord of your life, and grieve his meek spirit, and provoke him to leave chastening, and so your spot remain, and you prove but bastards, and not free-born children of his kingdom, power and glory; and so in time your old iniquities overtake you again.

For whatever of the old man comes out of the fire unconsumed, dead and buried in this baptism, will be a continual canker, seeking to eat, and an enemy, daily waiting his opportunity upon all occasions to get up, and overspread the pure plant of innocency, and so spoil you of your beloved, and so make void all your sufferings past, and bring in the old evils like a flood upon you, as it hath befallen many at this day; but be faithful to the end of all iniquity, the root as well as the branch: so shall your righteousness arise clear and unspotted, and your old sins shall therewith be buried, and never rise again, neither to accuse nor reign. And this is your victory over death.

And this know (whatever others imagine, let none deceive you) that though the evil seed be sown when men sleep, and take root with pleasure, and spring up with ease and delight, yet the end thereof is bitterness and great tribulation; but the precious seed is sown with tears, conceived in sorrow, and brought to light with sighing, nights of watching, days of mourning, and with much labour of spirit, and travail of soul, must you come to see your desire; for though the world have conceived a faith in the air, and so bringeth forth naught but several sorts of winds striving upon the earth, without foundation, and so builds nothing to perfection; yet with you it must not be so, for to you

the light is sprung up, which leads to the foundation of God; and you have received a faith that gives you a sight of the stone which the builders see not; and to you it is given, not only to believe in him, but to suffer for his sake in the behalf of him; and so to run as to win him; so to strive as to obtain him, his name, his power, his nature; for this is that your souls groan for, to possess and inherit his power, his love, his meekness, his patience in all tribulations, his faith in all fears, and to have the power of his grace and virtue living in you, whereby you may be men of able spirits, rightly furnished to every good work, and against all evil, that in him you may overcome when you are tried, and be more than conquerors. And your work is to war against whatever would keep you from coming to this foundation and corner-stone. And it is not beating the air that will fight your battle; for it's against all deceits you are to fight, and airy notions, and all spirits that would possess you with words and forms, without the power of righteousness, and whatever lies under the power of sin; the true light gives you to see the cursed deceit that lies in all this, and that these are the subtle paths of the destroyer; and nothing less than victory over sin and subtilty will satisfy your souls. So that it's only life and power that can give you peace; and therefore yours is work, and not vain words; and that which strikes at the root of sin is your best weapon. So it is not flesh that profits you, it's the spirit that must quicken through hardship, that which ease hath slain, e're you come to perfect peace.

For though the scriptures speak of a child that is heir of all things, and gives this inheritance to all in whom he is formed, whose name is wonderful in counsel and strength; yet is not this brought forth without hard labor and travail, and the pangs of death gone thorough; for when you come to the Lord for counsel, and feel that there is two manner of seeds in the womb, then will you see that great work is to be done e're you come to rest; there is the strong man to

be bound, before the babe can reign; and strongly is he armed with all manner of wiles to save himself; and it's not words and thoughts that will cast out the mother and her son, which must not inherit: and this must be done, or all is in vain. He that is born of flesh is in bondage to things here below; this cannot inherit immortality, for sin hath power in him; and die he must, that the son of righteousness may arise to life in you, and bring your life to light with him, as he appears; and though the light be above the transgressor, yet the son is lowly that gives it.

So being faithful in the light, which from the son cometh, which condemneth all the lofty ways of the first-born, you will thereby be led into ways lowly, to cross your life in the first birth, through watchings and fastings, and great tribulations [into which the spirit will lead you] whereby the false birth must be famished; for there is nothing for the lust to live on, nor for that wisdom to walk in that loves itself, or seeks its ease and pleasure. Then be faithful to your guide, however he storms that is to be destroyed.

And with all diligence press into that which calls in the wandering mind, and give heed with watching and wrestling to get abiding therein, which as you are faithful therein, it will be enlarged, till it become a habitation for your pure minds to dwell in, and take up its rest, which hath been tossed to and fro as in a wilderness; and by killing in the watch all that would draw you out, and sinking down into this meekness and steadfast lowliness, you will come to feel the plant of God that brings forth this meekness and holiness, and springs of living virtue; and there will you meet the Lord in his kingdom on earth, where he delights to walk, as in a garden; for in these things he delights, and in such as delight therein; and there wait to feel his fellowship, and receive his counsel in purity and coolness, in which he will let you see whatever it be that would break his covenant with you, and whatever leadeth out from the eternal life; and

will, with his spirit, lead you out to war against it; in which spiritual war being faithful, you shall not fail of victory, till every cumbrance in your minds be cast out, and so heavenliness become a quiet habitation, that in the meek spirit you may feed upon the heavenly food, and not to have that ravenous earthly spirit to steal and devour it from the soul.

And as you get an entrance into this heavenly mansion, so diligently watch, and in the light stand armed against the thief, and keep out whatever of his would enter into your affections or desires, under what pretence soever; for if it enter into your affections, it will steal away your minds from this pure innocent plant, and this is adultery, treachery and whoredom, which you must wrestle against in the power of his love.

And with willingness of mind to put off all the old idols out of your affections, whatever hath any place there; for by the entrance of that through lust, hath the son of righteousness suffered, and the innocent been slain; and until that be condemned and cast out, which hath come over the just in your affections, the son of righteousness arises not into his kingdom, who must give you the entrance into this holy habitation, and must fulfil all righteousness before the full enjoyment be: which work you stop, whilst you retain the unrighteous, having a seat in your heart uncondemned and cast out. And hence it is that many seek to enter, but are not able, the cursed thing not being cast out, which can have no place in God's kingdom, with which the just hath not communion, nor the temple of God with idols.

And this I say to you, which is a learned truth in this journey, that if you either retain your old lovers, or suffer any thing now to enter your affections, or draw out your minds from this pure plant of righteousness and truth, you shall in no wise in that state enter into the kingdom of heaven; for this is the way, and must make your entrance: therefore fight against whatever would draw you from it, and with violence break through it, and take the kingdom; for only he that hath been faithful in the baptism of John, in order to

fulfil all righteousness, shall receive power to press into the kingdom. And when you come here, you will find violent powers to keep you out, which with the Lamb in war must be overcome violently; for the strong man having got a possession within, is not easily bound and cast out, for it is a spiritual wickedness, and in high places, with which you are to wrestle: therefore a heavenly virtue contrary thereto, and of a greater power must give you your victory.

So press into the heavenly spirit with its power, to overcome the earthly spirit with its powers; strive earnestly in the meek spirit, to obtain a measure of faith and patience, larger than the temptation, and that will endure to the end of it, a meekness and love to cover all strife and wrath, a long-suffering to famish all haste, and that which seeks its own ease; and so in all things with desire, drinking in of the heavenly virtue from above, whereby you may become strengthened with all might to stand all assaults of the enemy, within or without; and so in the cross come to put on Christ Jesus, the great power of God unto salvation, and well-spring of eternal life and glory; which is done by sinking down into the heavenly feeling, contrary to the will of the exalted life, whereby you will be overshadowed from above, from whence the saviour is looked for, to overcome things below.

And as you come into the feeling of these virtues, hold them fast, till he come who is the fulness, and with that you have, wrestle against whatever would draw out your minds from it; for with that of him must you make war against whatever is contrary thereto. And as you are faithful to abide therein, you will feel every high thing fall before you; for that which cleanseth the vessel of all corrupt things, is your weapon, and that which springs up in a contrary nature to the corrupt, is your life; the beholding whereof, as it ariseth, and keeping your eye constant in the faith and hope of attaining to his fulness, will make your work the work of love, your obedience delightful, and all your sufferings easy, and your loss

of your former glory will, in that eye, appear great gain. And this is your acceptable service, and that faith which works by love, which avails much with God, and being followed, overcomes the world, and sets free from it in all things.

So with the light mind to be led down into that life that is not of this world; come to him that seeks not himself, who hath not his rest in things on earth, who is rejected of men, denied of his own kindred, and forsaken of all; and as you come to him, you will come to be proved, whether you can forego all these for him alone, and that he may make his appearance in you, and cover you with himself, his contempt and reproach, and his patient power to bear all; for it's he that can bear all things, that shall never be moved; and he that thus overcomes, shall know the white stone, and that rock which breaks the nations, but builds the house of God.

But in all your journey take heed of the adulterous mind, for it seeretly devoureth the precious life: wherefore take heed of that which looketh out, give not way to that eye not for a moment; for if you consent to it upon any pretence whatsoever, you enter into a covenant therewith against the holy seed, to destroy the chaste mind; but whether it be rough or smooth, yet hold it as an enemy; and that which if it get in by consent, must be got out by suffering double to the delight it brings with it: but if as an enemy you withstand it, by constant and patient resistings, it will fly, and grow weaker upon every assault, and he that giveth you virtory will grow more in your esteem and delight.

Wherefore think it not strange (so long as any of the old leaven is within, unpurged out) that the nearer you draw to God in the lowly suffering meekness, the deeper you sink into tribulation, and your sufferings increase upon the fleshly part, for that is the sons way to perfection; and the wondrous works of the father are learned in the deep; for by the hand of God upon you (being faithful in suffering to the end) shall you

see the old foundation of the world, the root and offspring of all wickedness, how it came to be laid, and how the lamb was slain, and what he is; and the foundation of God shall you see and feel, upon which the saints were raised up, and built in the spirit; and how all the chaff, hay and stubble comes to be cleansed off, for his fan is in his hand, and the words of his mouth are a consuming fire to that nature, which refineth the gold and quickeneth the soul, and divideth the clean from the unclean. And the nearer you draw to God, the nearer will he draw to you in righteousness, and judgment, and truth, to make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness, and to establish you in his inheritance, who appear in his temple through the refiners fire and fullers soap, the end of all sufferings, and entrance into everlasting joy, purity and peace, and weight of eternal glory, to which there is no other way but through affliction.

But as you come down to the foundation of God, watch with all fear and diligence, that nothing exalt you, or lift you up in mind, conceit or comprehension, above that foundation you are builded upon; for many temptations of haste, will present themselves with fears and distrust, to get you from off the foundation of life: but if you keep lowly, stedfast and faithful thereto, by it you shall be raised out of the pit, and set above the earth. And for that end it is laid within you, that in spirit you may be built thereon in order like the corner-stone, a new man, not the same that goes down; and none knoweth the way of his rising, but as he keepeth to the foundation, and mindeth the head of the corner, which as you diligently mind, you shall know the sure foundations of the holy city, even from the word of the beginning of Christ, as you grow to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance, and of faith towards God, the doctrines of baptisms, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

And as with the foundation of life and power you come to be edified, you will be led out of the domin-

ions of death, where you shall learn wherein it hath its power, and by what it reigns, and how it captivates the seed, and how its bonds are broken, and with what he is taken and chained, who hath the power of death; and so come to see what binds and what looses, kills and makes alive; the life of the law, the life of the prophets, and the life of the apostles, as they passed before you, will you come to know, their inheritance therein to possess, and with them in spirit have fellowship, as they passed the time of their pilgrimage here, that to the life of Christ they come, for the fulfilling of the word of God, which endureth from generation to generation; this being the end of all the travails of the souls of righteous men and women here below, that they might attain the fulfilling thereof, and so return in peace to him that made them, cloathed on with their heavenly house, for which prize they counted all things loss here below, casting off the earthly pleasures, and killing every affection thereto, estranged therefrom in all their walking whilst they are here, knowing that the love to the earthly things is the enemy to their spiritual ascending, and that the earthly adulterous spirit daily hunts to devour the precious life, and to keep the soul in things below, presenting daily its carnal delights, and opening the paths of the destroyer, with pleasures to the carnal eye, which whosoever joins to, cannot ascend into the Heavenly inheritance, but with the dark world daily go downward, who are degenerated from the life of God, and estranged from it even from the womb: so that they in that state are never able to attain the knowledge of God, nor in truth and righteousness to call him father, nor to say they came out from him, nor ever to him can return; this they being willingly ignorant of, that as no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, so no more shall any man so ascend, but he who is born, not of the corruptible seed, nor begotten but by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

But with you it is not so, who feel the havenly motion, drawing your minds out of all earthly delights, the taste of the heavenly life overcoming the earthly in your affections; so that to the world you die daily; you feel something quickened in you, that cannot feed on earthly pleasures, but hungers after righteousness, and sees a beauty in holiness, and thirsts daily after the heavenly virtue. So to that sinks down into its likeness, which is yet in suffering, and hunger and suffer with it, and join to it in all its counsel; so that in it you may be raised; for that is it which is on the foundation of God, and coming to him as a living stone, you will be built on the same foundation, the same spirit being your head, by whose arising all the vails will be done away, the vail of death, the vail of the law and prophets, and the whole mystery of godliness will be unsealed, and the way to Heaven opened by him, even the slain Lamb, who hath his power from the midst of the throne of God, even for you, if you join to him in his sufferings and ascendings, who maketh the way betwixt Heaven and earth, and keepeth it open in all them who mind him, therewith to possess the vessel in holiness and fear towards God; so that nothing shall hinder your prayers from coming to the throne of God, nor the dew and blessing of Heaven from falling upon the seed. And here is Heaven opened, and the way of grace and salvation, for the wayfaring man here on earth to walk in; in which if you wholly exercise your minds, you shall not err, nor shall any thing be able to hinder you from receiving gifts from the father, so long as nothing of a contrary nature stops his own from arising to him in praises, and you with it.

So let nothing cut off your communion with God in that measure you already have received, but let the breathings of your souls and your hearts be continually open towards him, and therein you shall not only receive, but become faithful improvers of what you have, by the blessing that is in the covenant, that is with all that love him that dwell in the light: for where

the conversation is in Heaven, there the earth becomes fruitful.

Wherefore give all diligence, that nothing entangle your affections here below, or stop your heavenly mind from its constant ascending; for that which would is the spirit of bondage which hath got power, by letting some carnal thing in upon you, to press you down: which spirit waits upon you continually, to oppose the heavenly life, and get above it in your minds, and so as a weight beset you in your way, lest that which comes from Heaven should have free passage through a clear vessel to heavenly seed, free from cares, cumbrances and earthly pleasures, and from earth to the Heavens; for it's he that comes from above, which declareth to man his way and his wants, presents his prayers, and receives the answer; and by him alone doth God work all his works in you, and for you, in Heaven and in earth. Now if you join to another, and give your strength of heart and mind to his enemy, then the work of God ceases, the way being stopped; for the adulterer, the covetous, the idolater, the wanton, the slothful, or whatever of that nature you join to, your consent giveth him strength to stop the way of life: and this is your condemnation, witnessed with the light; and herein had death its power at the first, which can be no head, but where he is hearkened to, let in or obeyed (but being resisted, flies) but being let in, he seateth himself in the heavenly place, with much policy and power, and is not easily got out, nor seen to be what he is. So when you feel your way darkened, or affections grow cold towards Heaven, then take heed with all diligence in the pure light to search, for your enemy hath got some entrance, which by faithful and patient waiting in the light you will come to see, and through the power of the cross to kill that life, and cast out that in which it was conceived, for that must not abide in the house with him, that is heir of the heavenly inheritance, but is an enemy to his coming; for it is he that letteth, till he be taken out of the way, which while he is in the

way, dulls the affections, and clogs the heavenly mind, that it cannot ascend. Wherefore that which you have received of the holy one, his unction, hold fast till he come, and with it stand armed against whatever would enter, to lead out to any outward observations; but with all diligence observe that which you have of his in spirit, which the adversary seeks so much to draw you forth from, lest you should increase your Lord's money, and herein you maintain your daily watch, and war with that you have of life and power, and not with that you have not: so are you faithful stewards, and are accepted in what you have, and not in what you have not; for the world is in darkness, and so wait for they know not what, and have no ground for their faith, nor power to prepare his way to his coming, further than words of others, or their own conceivings, but are not in him that is true; but you are in him that is true, who have his light received, and are in it to observe his appearance in all things; and the messenger of his covenant you know, who goeth before his face to prepare his way, turning your hearts from every evil way, and out of the paths of the destroyer, that you may be faithful upon earth, that so he may receive you into himself, when he cometh to smite the earth with a curse, which that which brings forth briars and thorns is nigh unto, whose seed is not of himself, his root and offspring, but is begot in the adulterous mind.

For the mind feeding from without upon any knowledge, form, or observation [but what the life leads to in spirit and power] is the ground of the mystery of iniquity, and the woman of witchcraft, which hunteth for the precious life of the holy child, seeking to draw your strength of affections from him after the harlot, that so he may fall and die daily in your hearts and affections, while the lust goes out to another, covered with some fair pretence, whereby the worldly spirit gathers strength daily, as you shall feel who are watchful and diligent in the spiritual war, so shall that truth appear to you; that as your love waxeth cold.

so will iniquity abound, with an irresistible power whatever you think to the contrary, which is not in the life; or whatever you believe without that faith which works by love to the life of truth: so let your wrestling be into the power and life of God, and thereon feed, and your life shall endure forever, and your strength and virtue shall be daily renewed. But you read of some who had the form of knowledge, and of the truth, but being out of the life of truth, held the truth in unrighteousness; and such when they knew God did not glorify him as God in life: so he gave them up, who became vain in their imaginations, who retained not the life in the knowledge, turned the truth of God into a lie: so that knowledge could not keep them from being filled with unrighteousness, which stood not in the life and power of righteousness, and who received not that truth in that faith which loves to live the life of it.

Wherefore let your food be in the life of what you know, and in the power of obedience rejoice, and not in what you know, but cannot live, for the life is the bread of your souls, which crucifies the flesh, and confounds that which runs before the cross. So let your labour and diligence be in that which presseth into the heavenly being, and seeketh a conformity to Christ in obedience of what you believe, and hearken in love to that, not in that mind which would save your own lives, nor feed you where you are; but in love to that which separateth you from self-life, and changeth you into his life whom you wait for from above; so in receiving his commands in that which loves to be like him in life, your faith works by love, and his commands are joyous through love: that faith worketh obedience, quickness and willingness, it worketh out the old, and worketh into the new; and so through the hope of that which you love, and obedience of faith, the entrance is made with the life, into the holy kingdom, and the immortal glory is put on, which in the light is seen, and in the life is obtained, as with the word of faith the separation is made, and

the first birth put off, whose life is without the veil, and is for death, with that life who makes the entrance through his blood, and through his flesh, a living way, a way of life, a new way to all who are seeking the door in old ordinances and traditions, and outward observations, feeding their minds with thinking or talking of what others did long since, or what may be done in times to come. and so are in times, but out of that life which endures forever, and only hath the promise of the father, and power to make the entrance to him, from whom all the world are driven, who are in the lust, and in that nature which loves itself, and worketh iniquity; yet wearying themselves to find the door, without the light of that life which is not of this world.

And as you mind only to feed on the plant of life, you will come to know the work of the father in his vineyard, and who the faithful labourer is, and what must be his work; and the slothful servant, and what his work bringeth forth; and the cause why the field of the sluggard is overgrown with evil fruits, and why his vine bringeth not fruit to perfection. For you will find many plants besides the tree of life, all which seek to be fed and strengthened in the mind and affections, and many grown trees tall and strong, which have got fast rooting, spread and bring forth abundantly after their several kinds; and all these present themselves to the eye of the mind, to be fed from thence, which is as the feet fetching food from far, without which they cannot live long, but must pine away and fall, as they die in the affections, and as the mind is withdrawn from such objects as they are fed withal. So the work of him that is faithful is to number these to the axe, and to the fire, and not to suffer these any place in the mind, how strongly soever they tempt, and try every way to spread root to keep life; that so through the death of these, the vine may grow alone in the clean affections, and holy mind, and honest chaste heart, which is the good ground, and where the pure plant will bring forth of itself in all, where it

is not cumbered with that which is contrary to it; which contrary fruits all that mind the light may see: but the sluggard not being diligent to dig up the root, as well as to condemn the fruit, therefore they are daily growing, and the good ground is cumbered with them; and such know what they should do, but are not able to abide therein, their life being lost in the midst of this wilderness, and overgrown with wild plants.

But you being diligent in your watch, you will see that the cause of all your troubles and confusion (when you come to the true labour indeed) is not for nothing; for you will find many plants of several kinds [for the world is in the heart of man, and the heart in the earth, as he is driven out from God.] And every kind hath its several life, which lives have their several feedings, all which you may feel in the light, by their temptings to lead out your minds; and though they are of several motions, and live upon several objects, yet the least of them being fed by consent in your mind, will overrun the vine, and in time bury it, by growing up in you affections: wherefore all must come down, that truth alone may rise in your affections, and the word of life have place in your hearts, who is purer than to dwell in the adulterous mind, and whose eye cannot behold iniquity, who hath no communion with darkness, nor fellowship where any idol stands in the temple.

So this is your faith in your labour, even that which overcomes the world, and suffereth nothing thereof to take place in your minds, but with the spirit of life to watch, and wrestle against every lust, and kill every affection that would go out for food; for whatever goes out, betrays the innocent; and every pleasure of the flesh, as a canker, doth eat out the life of the holy and just one; but by faith the just lives; and in faithfulness doth he judge, and make war against all his enemies, in every one who are exercised therewith.

And in this work mind what you follow; follow nothing rashly, but prove all things with the fire; and that

which will not endure the temptation, and bear the corss, is the adulteress who will look out every way for ease; and the serpent will present many likely ways to her under fair pretences, which she that would live at ease, will hastily hearken to; and if you hearken to her, you will betray the work of life, which is bringing forth in hard travail and labour, which is slain in the birth, where ease and sloth is consented to; and with living at ease and pleasure, hath the life been slain from the beginning of the world, and hath been kept under by her sorceries, who fares deliciously upon earth; and by consenting to her pleasures hath the election been lost, and covered with the seed of wickedness, which God hates, which wars after the flesh, and lusts after the flesh, to strengthen in self above the holy spiritual seed; but minding to make that sure to you which calls in your mind, and being obedient thereto, it will lead down by the power of the cross, through that which is above, to the feeling of the election; and a separation being made betwixt that which God choseth in his working power, and what he condemneth, you will come therbey to know to what to join, and from what to withdraw, that you may be workers together with him, and not against him, which the subtle one will lead you to do, till with the light the separation be made; and so joining to it faith and obedience, the election will arise, and by diligence thereto it will be made sure.

And once feeling the innocent to move under the oppressor, give yourselves no rest until the strong man bow; for with great plagues upon that nature, and with a strong hand against that will, must the seed of promise be redeemed from under his power, which like Pharaoh, if he get but rest, will not let Israel go from under his power; and if you keep with the spirit, and hearken low, it will let you see what must be the plagues you must pour upon him, till he be brought down, that a little child may lead him, and reign over him; and he that was oppressed by the beast, may ride upon him: and as that nature got head and

strength by having its lusts fulfilled, so it must be subdued by having its lusts famished; which if you be not faithful to the seed of God herein, you sell your birth-right, and betray your own redemption, and are found deceitful workers against God and your own souls.

Wherefore run not with that which is in haste, but lie down in that which is meek, lowly and patient, that which is willing to wait the father's time, and seeks to obtain by the obedience of faith, and not in the will that would have in its own hand: for a nature there is which runs out for help, and raveneth abroad to be satisfied, which God will famish; and this will seek to lead the mind, if it be followed, and will hunt about and murmur if it be not satisfied: this goeth about the city, but entereth not; and this must suffer hunger, and feel the lamb's wrath, and plagues upon the head thereof, what way soever it turns, till it bow and come under, which it will not till it be pined with famine, and wearied upon the mountains of prey; then shall the Lion lie down with the Lamb, and the little child lead to rest, and no ravenous beast shall take his feeding from him. But in this work take heed you be not betrayed with that spirit, for it is very subtle, to run to the one hand or the other, either into the eagerness and haste, which is its first way after convincement; or else, when it gets not its ends there, then into sloth and idle carelessness, and both these keep it alive in strength above the seed; but a straight way there is betwixt these, in which the seed ariseth, which is a diligent, watchful, patient meekness, feeling the godly principle moving and following it in faith and obedience in all things, without haste or ends, further than what is opened in the life of obedience, constantly diligent least any thing slip out of the mind, which is freely given either for practice or teaching; for only the diligent mind holdeth the true living treasure; but the slothful and disobedient are leaking vessels.

So as wise in the light, prove your freedom, from that nature which is high, and fierce, and hasty, or

any way above the meekness, for therein stands your perfect redemption, to know that you are not servants to that nature; for it's the same that hasteth into the greediness after worldly things, and fears, and distrusts, if it hath not in its sight and possession what it lusts after; which being convinced of an inheritance in heaven, would have that also in all haste by sight; but not through faith, patience and obedience; which if it may not obtain into its own sight, and in its own way and time, it will be ready to faint and distrust, and this will never strip himself of all, in hopes of an inheritance it hath not seen; so this is in bondage, and not to be heir: but the just live by faith, whose birth is free from this world, and your redemption for the other into the leadings of this, which will bring to the inheritance of the purchased possession.

Wherefore prove your freedom in all things, that you may not glory in vain, but in the liberty of sons: do not say, all things are lawful, all things are pure, &c. And so sit down and say, you are redeemed, and have right to all; but first pass through all things, one after another, as the light leadeth you; and with a true measure see, if you be from under the power of any; when you have proved this throughout all things, and found your freedom, then may you say, all things are lawful, and know what is expedient, and what edifies yourselves and others, and the rest to reign over, without bondage thereto: and this is the liberty of the sons of the new creation, born again, not in bondage; whose liberty is glorious above all visible things; and these are the pure, to whom all things are pure, who have proved all things with that which is pure, and hold fast only that which is good, and the rest are free from.

And this ever mind, that whatever freedom you obtain through the sufferings and patience of Christ in spirit, you part not with it to please the flesh, but hold it as your everlasting possession purchased for you, not with corruptible things; so that which is dearly

purchased, let not lightly go; but remember Israel, who was redeemed out of Egypt with much hardships, and many signs and sufferings, but soon in haste got up, that which said, let us return back again; and this grieved God above all: and this you will find ready to rise upon every further hardship and want, as it was with them. Wherefore stand fast in that which you have proved to be liberty indeed, and by no means look back nor hanker to that which is behind, to let it overtake you again: remember Lot's wife; and the wrath of God will ever be upon that mind which looks back into old things, which are judged in the light, and led out of with the life: wherefore stand single in your minds to follow nothing new nor old, but what the holy spirit leads into; for the work is a work you know not, nor the way do you know, but as it is learned in the obedience by which the soul is purified and cleared by purging out the old earthly leaven, which hath darkened the temple of God, and God's work is not seen in that nature.

Wherefore give all diligence to the spirit's motion and leadings, what it moves against, and what it leads to; for now will God make all things new; a new creation, new heavens, and new earth, and new heart and mind, and a new law, a new man to walk therein with his Maker with cheerfulness, as the old bonds are broken by the spirits leading, and to serve in newness of spirit. And as you mind the pure leadings of the spirit, and willingly follow and obey, you will come to know your creator in the days of your youth, and how he made the worlds by the word of his holiness; and how he is your father, and in what; and how he begets you again into the heavenly delights, who was gone out from him, and drove into the earth with your hearts and affections, and so those will lead out still further from God, if you look into them, but can never come into God again, but must die, and be changed by the spirit; and the new creature is accepted of God, the new heart and mind, and spirit, which is renewed after God, by following of his spirit who created him.

And this work will be darkened to your understanding, if your minds come not clear out of the old, into the new: for wrath will arise, and confusion will be to that mind which is double, and where the eye is not single, kept forward in the belief of the spirit only, but looks back into the loss, and to that which is dying and condemned; there is the smoke and darkness and torment, and temptations, being enticed back into the old: but if the eye be single, the whole body is full of light, and the faith ariseth to endure to the end of the world, and to look to the beginning and finishing of the new work of regeneration. And standing single to God herein, though the world pass away with thundering, earthquakes, and a mighty noise, yet shall ye not fear nor faint, abiding in the meek, patient, and suffering spirit, and the leadings of that which endureth all things to win Christ: and coming out of Babel, you shall not fall with her, nor be darkened with the smoke of her torments, as all that abide in her must, and of her plagues must partake; but the pure mind rejoiceth over her in the midst of all.

AN EPISTLE 'TO FRIENDS.

DEAR friends, dwell in the pure power of God, and in the undefiled life walk towards one another, and feel one another in harmless hearts, and in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ judge all straightness in yourselves, rather than one another; how good a thing is unity of spirit and mind? And how precious is that soul that seeks peace with self denial? God is near you who seeth all your works: but evil thoughts break your peace, and grieve God's holy spirit: but that is the child of his love, and son of his bosom, that seeks not himself, but can lay down his life for another; O feel that spirit and life, my dear friends, and wait for his appearance, who is that life in whom he comes with power; thy peace shall be as a river that is clear and broad, which shall not be dried up; but thou shalt drink into eternal rest, and quietness shall fill thy dwelling, and the God of peace and holiness will delight in thee, and in the end thy fruit shall break out, and thou shalt not long be hid, but thy God in whom thou delightest, shall cover thee with his glory, and make thee to shine in his light; and the Lamb shall speak out of his temple, and shall be confessed to; but the self-ended spirit will wither, and that which lifts up itself will fall to nothing; and back-biters, and whisperers, and they which carry tales to make debate, will God thrust away far from him, and the meek shall enjoy his inheritance alone, who hath sought his praise from God, and not from men: therefore take heed to your spirits in God's fear, and keep the unity and covenant of God, and grieve not God's spirit, nor provoke any to wrath. And again I warn you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ, speak not evil, nor think evil of brother or sister; for if you do, you cannot be guiltless before God, nor stand before the enemy in the time of trial; for evil thoughts will eat out your peace and precious life, and devour your

strength, and make way for many evils to enter and prevail upon you. Even the Lord God of eternal power preserve you all, who hath called you, and given you a name amongst the living; for in him is my hope and confidence concerning you all, for the adversary is near you; but to him that is true and faithful I commit you all, whom many of you have known from the beginning; and as you dwell and walk in his power and life of holiness, love and peace, God will keep you from all evil, bear you, and lead you into growth and improvement of what he hath committed to you, and in faith and peace you will be kept from running to the hills to save you, or for making a refuge of lies; but with the everlasting truth will you all be girded and armed with the word of life, against all wickedness of flesh and spirit, within and without. And God eternal crucify the world to you all, and thoroughly crucify you to it in every affection, and out-going of the mind, so that you may all witness him come who is the end of the world, and eternal life, and in him walk in the singleness your minds as free-born children, redeemed into perfect liberty with him. And dear friends, meet often together, and so build up yourselves above visibles, that you may enter into peace and life everlasting: the day of God hastes on apace, which will try every man's spirit, and every man's work, of what nature it is, and none will be saved, but who are of God; and such he receives unto himself, who are builded up to him in that which is from above: but the wandering and unstable spirit he will shut out, and punish with perdition from his presence evermore.

Wherefore dearly beloved in my soul, above what I can write this I lay upon every one of you in particular, and warn you, that you prove and examine yourselves herein, what spirit you are of, and what is your freedom herein; and note that spirit which steals your minds into earthly things, and wandering thoughts, for that is not of God, but is of this world, and works after the power of the prince of the air;

and in this spirit all have fellowship with the world, and are in the power which works against God and the Lamb; nor can any in that spirit serve God, nor have fellowship with him in the light; for it is carnal and devilish, and shut out from God the father of light, and so becomes a vagabond, wandering chaffy spirit, not capable of God's counsel nor service; nor can you have fellowship with the brethren in the light and power of truth, so long as this reigneth and is followed by you; and so this must be judged in every motion of it, that it may be subdued and put under foot, lest you being once enlightened, become wandering stars from God's presence forever. So be you faithful to God who judgeth you, and gird up the loins of your minds, and wait for stable heavenly spirits, that you may be born thereof, and rule therein over yourselves, and so overcome the world, that you may walk at liberty in God, and in Christ Jesus whom he hath sent, and herein is life eternal, and rest to your souls, what ever befalls you, and only blessed is he that enters thereinto; and it is the faithful that enters, and in faith and obedience is the covenant kept, which keeps quiet the mind, and in perfect peace in all conditions, the purchased possession of every redeemed soul, through the blood of Jesus. So God cover you all with his spirit, being baptized into death; and the Almighty arise among you, and judge every evil root in its first motion, and give you the knowledge of himself in love, and build you up above all strife and enmity, and fill you with his grace, and season your hearts therewith, and make himself your delight, and bless you all, and increase you; my dearly beloved ones, to whom bowels of dear love runneth, even unto the least of you all, in your innocent simple desires I am once with you all, beseeching my God for you all, that not one of you that ever have tasted of the call or power of God, may be lost, or offended, or driven away; God eternal build you up into his life, and give you an inheritance in him that seeks the lost, and brings back that which is gone astray. Dear friends, read me,

hear, and feel my bowels towards all that are tempted, or fallen; and treasure up mercy against the day to come; even as ye look to be forgiven, so forgive one another unfeignedly, and keep yourselves separate from the world, and every pollution: O fear not the world, neither covenant with man, nor say, a confederacy; but fear the living, powerful God of Heaven and earth, who is a sanctuary to every clean and faithful heart; and to him I commit you all, who is over the world, and worketh in you, to make you eternally happy, that you may be his sons and daughters forever, to whom give thanks and praise for evermore, *Amen.*

You are often in my remembrance.

J. N.

This epistle was given forth since the foregoing book, about the 5th day of the 5th month, 1660.

HIS LAST TESTIMONY, SAID TO BE DELIVERED BY HIM ABOUT TWO-
HOURS BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE OUT OF THIS LIFE; SEVERAL
FRIENDS BEING PRESENT.

There is a spirit which I feel, that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end: Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty, or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself. It sees to the end of all temptations: as it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thoughts to any other: If it be betrayed it bears it; for its ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God. Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned, and takes its kingdom with intreaty, and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of

mind. In God alone it can rejoice, though none else regard it, or can own its life. It's conceived in sorrow, and brought forth without any to pity it; nor doth it murmur at grief and oppression. It never rejoiceth, but through sufferings; for with the world's joy it is murdered. I found it alone, being forsaken; I have fellowship therein, with them who lived in dens, and desolate places in the earth, who through death obtained this resurrection and eternal holy life.

J. N.

He died in peace with the Lord, at Soam (or Home) in Huntingtoshire, and was buried at Kings-Rippon in the said county, the latter end of the year 1660, about the 44th year of his age.

SEVERAL EPISTLES AND PAPERS
TO RULERS, PRIESTS AND PEOPLE,
NEVER BEFORE PRINTED.

TO THEM OF THE INDEPENDENT SOCIETY,

Some grounds why I deny you to be a Church in Christ, though in
the times of ignorance I walked with you in these things,
worshipping I knew not what.

Having received the light of Christ by which the man of sin is revealed, with all his deceitful workings, in teachers and people professing to be like the saints and holy men of God in words and form, but deny the life and power thereof; and being by the light commanded from such to turn away, in obedience thereto I am moved to declare the cause why I have withdrawn from you for some years; and now am moved to declare against you, and your ground, power and spirit to deny, by which you are acted in ways contrary to Christ, the apostles and holy men of God, as in scripture is witnessed, and that in these several particulars.

1. Your being gathered into an outward covenant; in a form of words, whereas the believers were gathered into the unity of faith by one spirit, into the invisible covenant Christ Jesus, and there they knew one another in spirit, and them received, and not only in a form of words, nor did they shut out any that believed for such things; and here you are gathered in your inventions, and not by me, saith the Lord.

2. Your worshipping in the idols temple, builded for idolatry, and stands consecrated to that end to this day; out of such the apostles called all that believed, to worship in temples made without hands, and they

met in other places, after they were called out, and said God did not dwell in temples made with hands.

3. Your choosing a man to divine to you, always from a text of another man's words, or which he hath not received from the mouth of the Lord, taking hire for it, being called master, and you calling him master, which both are forbidden by Christ. And here you are out of the doctrine and faith of Christ, which respects no man's person, and amongst the heathens and customs of the world.

4. Your sprinkling infants upon the faith of others; but the saints baptism was upon their own faith; for with the heart they believed, and with the tongue confessed to salvation, and the baptism by which they were saved was not the washing away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

5. Your leading people to sing David's conditions in rhymes and metre, in the invention, and not in spirit: and so you join with the world to make songs of his words, but his condition you know not, but are enemies to it, where it is witnessed; and singing in words what you are not in life, you are found liars, and lead others to lie also; but the saints sung by their gifts, and not other mens words, as you do.

6. Your holding fast the form of sound words, the language of the spirit, always used by the holy men of God, as the scriptures do witness. And here you err from the practice of Christ, and all the holy men of God, and are with the world in the confused language of Babel, yeing and youing one, and thouing another, after your own wills and passionate humours, observing times, places and persons herein; and here is unsound words, and not after the spirit.

7. Your persecuting, stocking and shamefully entreating the innocent, for coming into your idols temples; yea, though they never speak a word therein: which none of the church of Christ ever did, but suffered the same from the world. And here are you in the wicked world, and out of the saints practice.

8. And many other things I cannot own you in, as your hunting, coursing, keeping dogs for your pleasure, bowls, shuffle-board, or such sports used by the heathen; but never by any of the saints, for they were redeemed from these vanities, and prayed that their eyes might not behold vanities, and waited to redeem the time they had spent in lusts of the flesh. Also your vain laughers, wanton jestings: but they who know Christ, know him a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; but the wicked are as chaff, who shall not stand in judgment. Besides I may instance your backbiting and false accusing your brethren, slandering before others, for that you never spoke to the face. And this is not charity nor order. And the whole thing you call worship, which you perform every first day in your idols temple, not one thing performed by you, as was by Christ, and those he sent.

9. Your limiting the holy one, no more to speak to his people but by the letter, which limiting we deny, having heard the voice of the same living God that ever was, who spoke to Abraham and his seed, and not only I, but hundreds in the nation, in whom that seed is raised up, shall witness against you.

And while you are in these things, I cannot own you to be a church in Christ; nay, you are proved to be no christians, for they who were called of men masters, or upheld such as were so called for their teachers, were no christians; who stood praying in the synagogues, had the chief place in the assemblies, whom our Lord Jesus Christ cried wo against, were no christians, and who hauled out of the synagogues, stocked, beat and imprisoned, were no Christians; who lived in sports and gaming, backbiting and slandering, were no christians; who had the faith of Christ in respect of persons, were not christians; for Christ taught the way of God truly, neither did he respect any man's person. And here you are found out of Christ and his way, and according to your works you are judged, and not after your words; and by the light are you proved, who say you are christians, and are

not, but are such an assembly as the envious Jews were, who acted these things against christians. And tho' you may say, that God is your father, as they did, yet your works prove you to be of another generation; for whom you obey, his children you are (he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.) It is the life I own, and not the words only, for only that differs from hypocrites. And here your spirit is proved and tried, who have a name, but are dead: for that is not the spirit of Christ, that is found out of the doctrine of Christ. And your power I deny, with the light you are seen and comprehended, and with the light condemned, who are found out of the doctrine of Christ: therefore I do deny you in the light, which is one in all your consciences, which will me witness eternally at the dreadful day, when the book of conscience is opened [tho' now seared;] and then you shall see this to be truth, though now you harden yourselves against it: but it is that the scriptures may be fulfilled upon you, that you may stumble, fall and be broken, as they did who acted such things before you; and their plagues you shall witness, whether you will hear or forbear, unless you repent.

A lover of your souls,

JAMES NAYLER.

SOME QUERIES ANNEXED.

1. Whether the power of delivering up to satan stands in the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, or in the greater number of voices?

2. Whether it be he that walks in the spirit and power of Christ, withdrawing from him, that hath the form, but denies the power, or they that have the form, but deny the power, casting out of their synagogues or meeting places; whether of these deliverings up, are after the counsel of God, and example of the saints in scriptures?

3. Whether it be he that is found in satan's work, and pleads for it, that be to be delivered up to satan, or he that is found in the work of God, and denies the work of satan?

4. Whether any who have not the same infallible spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to judge withal, can give any up to satan, or doth the scripture warrant any such thing?

5. Whether that judgment by which any is justly delivered up to satan, be eternal; yea, or nay?

6. Whether assemblies [tho' never so great, or whatever they pretend] who have not this spirit and power, have not cast out such as Christ hath received; and here the blind cast out the children of light, whose eyes Christ hath opened?

7. And are not these scriptures, Isaiah 66. 5. John 16. 2, 3, now fulfilled upon this generation, that acts such things now, which Christ and the prophets foretold?

TO A CONVINCED BACKSLIDER.

FRIEND thou sayest, that which at first called thee out of the world's vain customs and worships, was a net; and thou bids me, leave my nets and follow thee.

I say, truth it is, that the net of the kingdom hath been cast into the sea, and many have been caught by it, and upon trial some are found fit for the masters use, and some are cast back into the sea again. But should I leave that which called me out of the world, and separates me daily from its vain customs, and crucifies me thereto, to follow thee therein, I should be unfaithful to the spirit of Christ, deny my calling, and

make his cross [to me] of none effect; and in joining to that again which he hath freed me from, I should deny my redemption and purchased possession, and fall to that again which I had vomited up: which latter evil, the Lord hath showed me to be more loathsome than the first, in his sight.

And whereas thou sayest, the new creature cannot be defiled: then are all the saints exhortations to perseverance, of none effect and needless, and he that stands need not take heed lest he fall.

Was not David, of whose seed Christ came, a new creature, and anointed after God's own heart; and was not David defiled with sinning against God? O friend, take heed of such conceits, for it is the voice of presumption, above the fear of God which should keep the heart clean; and there the vessel is defiled already: but the true child is preserved by daily fear and obedience, keeping on the armour of light; and by the power of the cross, is the spirit of the world daily kept out, never more to be received nor bowed to, however it be transformed; and here is faith to him that hath understanding.

And though it be true, that he that abides in Christ sins not; so it is as true, that he that goes forth again into the world is sure to be defiled: and saith Christ, if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth.—Read and understand with that which is meek and tender, what spirit thou pleasest, him thou servest.

And friend, thou should not have condemned that which at first called thee, toward a kingdom which is not of this world.

HIS EPISTLES TO FRIENDS.

EPISTLE I.

TO FRIENDS AT LINCOLN.

ALL friends about Lincoln, in your several measures wait, that by the everlasting unmoveable truth of God you may be taught and guided, as it is in Christ Jesus; that by the spirit of the Lamb you may walk, and have your conversation ordered unproveable before all men, that the truth of God be not blamed amongst the wicked through your means, and so the displeasure of God rest upon you: wherefore all take heed to that pure innocent spirit by which you are called; that with it you may be kept clear out of all forwardness in the will and eagerness of spirit, by which the enemy takes occasion to present his false doctrine, to pervert your minds from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus, and so to exalt the selfish mind into the imaginations, thereby to set up the admiring of persons and things outward in the visible eye, whereby the mind is drawn away from the invisible power; and so the seed suffers by your minds being captivated from the simplicity, and being got into the thoughts, and exalted against the knowledge of Christ; so is the creature misled and betrayed, which would not otherwise be overcome of the enemy: so all keep low to him who is not of this world, whose kingdom and glory stands not in visibles, nor changeable things, but in righteousness, peace and joy in that holy spirit which you have received, that in due time you may all come therein to be sealed, even with the same spirit of promise.

And all take heed that you be not shaken in your minds at the appearance of satan's wiles and temptations, who must be revealed (at the brightness of the Lamb's appearance) whose coming is with many signs and lying wonders, thereby to take away all who are

not stayed in that spirit that cannot be shaken, nor taken with his baits and wonders, but are only taken and affected with righteousness, meekness and innocency; such as are there stayed, and love those things, shall not be moved: but the adulterous generation, whose minds are out of the covenant, cannot stand. So to the measure of the spirit of God all take heed, that you may have the feeling of the just principle to stay your minds in this hour of temptation, and having done all, to stand; gird up your loins and have your lamps burning: and the mighty God of power preserve you all to himself out of all deceit.

JAMES NAYLER.

London, 8th day, 3d month, 1655.

EPISTLE II.

TO ALL FRIENDS AT LONDON.

Dearly beloved in the father and in the son, in whom my soul is knit in everlasting bonds of love, the streams whereof run forth towards you in fervent prayer to my father, and your father; that you may be all kept in that light and life by which you are called, and which you have received from above; that with it your minds may be all stayed in your measures, from closing with that out of which your minds hath been called, and that you may not be shaken in your faith and stedfastness by any temptation that is, or shall be suffered to appear unto you for your trial; but that you may all endure the trial in the patience, faith and long-suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ, who for that end have received a measure of him, that you may thereto give

up to be guided in all assaults, and led through the greatest darkness, and that none of you make any likeness in your thoughts, to follow them, seeming like to make wise, or good for food, which is all done in that nature which is impatient, and stands not in the counsel of God; but that you all stand in that which is not of flesh, armed against self, and its seeking, which leads out from the suffering, and betrays the just in the battle by taking flight to save its life, and so loses the life whom the vengeance of God will pursue to eternal destruction, that he may avenge his seed upon the head of the deceitful worker, and treacherous dealer gone out from the life of God. Wherefore all friends take heed to your spirits, and keep your dominion in the life of Christ; and therein feel your authority over all that would shake off the yoke, and cannot joy in the cross: hearken not to unprofitable things, neither lend an ear to the wicked; stand you still armed in the covenant of promise, till the mystery of iniquity be revealed against the workers thereof; for this must be perfected for your entrance, that you may be proved in all things, that your possession may be of faith alone; and being found stedfast in your trials, you shall not only save yourselves, but as eyes to the blind shall you be before your enemies, and your good savour shall go forth to the nations, and many people shall call you the blessed of the Lord, and from far shall the desire of the nations come, and you shall be as when the sun riseth upon the earth, as fruitfulness in the wilderness, and as the breaking forth of the barren womb, so shall you be to them that are yet afar off, and to them that are near, rejoicing.—Surely I see the eyes of the beloved ones in the nation turned towards you, and your fame is spreading as a child of beauty, and hopeful is your appearance to such as have seen and heard of you, even so, *Amen*. Let their expectation be double fruit on your behalf, and your reward in your bosom. J. N.

EPISTLE III.

TO THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE NORTH.

Dear friends and brethren, whose hearts are touched with the love of God and have been awakened out of the carelessness of the flesh: in that which hath called you abide, with your minds single thereto, that the plant of God you may see springing above the earth, wherein you may receive, as from a lively oracle, counsel, wisdom and strength, every particular; and the springs of life open, whereat to drink as you pass out of the world; and the clear water of washing you may know, that so an entrance may be ministered abundantly to your souls, that to the dominion you may come, and know what it is to rule well, every one in his own house; that none of you seek to know as the world doth, that to your knowledge may be added what ariseth from the life; so you shall never wither, but shall flourish through obedience: take heed to your spirits, that the earth get not above, and the mind be defiled, for then you lose your authority, and darkness and death will prevail in you above the pure; and so having left the life, that mind hath not whereon to feed but what is behind; as a pasture over eaten, so doth leanness overtake the soul, and poverty as an armed man: and this from the Lord shall be the portion of such as mind earthly things. So in the name and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, I warn you all to take heed to yourselves, and that you stir up that which is pure, which you have received of God, that you may keep out of the cursed thing that is contemptible, that no ill savour be sent out to trouble the minds of God's flock, whom he hath called to purity and peace; that as the Lord hath been pleased to call you, as a first fruit, and hath set up his standard amongst you, and your sound is gone out throughout the nations, and from thence hath he sent out his messengers to them that are afar off; so that your growth may appear, and the glory of the Lord

may be your reward, and none may step in before you and take your crown. So keep your garments unspotted in the presence of God, and before all his saints; live in peace, and love to bear one another's burthen, and let none please himself; and the mighty God of power preserve you spotless in your measures, to his everlasting praise, *Amen*.

Written from London, to the churches of Christ in the north, by him whose heart is enlarged towards you in the Lord. J. N.

EPISTLE IV.

FOR FRIENDS IN THE CITY OF YORK.

Friends and brethren, in the fear of the Lord, stand armed against all deceit and division, and come down and feel after the spirit of the Lamb, to be united in that which changeth not after the visibles, where the knowledge is outward, for there is the ground of sects, and seat of exaltation, which respecteth the person who is known in the outward sound, and the same puffs up for one, and against another, and there is the simple despised, and the Lamb trodden upon, and innocency suffers, and that which should cover you being despised and slighted, the schism enters, the judgment of the Lamb being lost, and the still waters refused: wherefore every one mind to keep low in the innocent principle, that in the humble spirit you may all worship, and bow before him who is despised and forgotten, when you are above in the extremes: so with meekness receive the voice of the spirit, as being ingrafted thereby; and that which doth not, is seen in the Lamb's light to be above, and not in the rest where righteousness and peace kisseth each other. So dear friends, feel that spirit which is quick in hearing, peaceable in receiving, and willing in obeying, for that is the spirit beloved of God, and all being joined

thereto, the chords of God's love so unite as not to be broken; and there shall no disobedient spirit hide its head in a formed power: so all mind that which suffers, and doth not resist nor seek itself, for that shall forever reign; when the sanctuary is cleansed obedience shall be your life, meekness and innocency your rest; the dew shall fall for your growth, butter and honey shall you all eat at the table of the Lamb, that you may grow wise in knowledge, and your savour may be sweet among the flock of the valleys, amongst whom you are beloved for the father's sake. So every one look to that which is low, and exalt that which is easily trodden on; so shall you make up the breaches, and find even paths to walk in, the spirit of peace shall rest upon you, your walls shall be salvation, and your gates praise. J. N.

EPISTLE V.

FOR FRIENDS TO WAIT TO KNOW BREAD IN THEIR OWN HOUSES,
THAT THEY MAY LIVE THEREBY.

Friends and brethren, to whom the eternal covenant of the father's love hath been tendered, and his light you have received, in it wait to have your minds stayed, and your hearts opened towards God, who hath given you the light, that therewith you may all see the work of your redemption begun, and the spirit working, and its power, and you joined to it in the faith and obedience, whereby your souls may be purified, and your bodies washed from the dead works, that the water of life, and the blood of the covenant you may come to be sensible of, and the effect of it, and that which is born thereof (contrary to your car-

nal wills) in the hidden understanding; for out of the sight of the world, and in the faith of this, life is seen and felt, its joy and power that carries the creatures above the visibles: that with the invisible being you may have fellowship in the church of saints, which is in God the ground of all truth and true worship and acceptance, that to the fountain you may all come, to that bread which is one, that none of you have his food to seek abroad; but to the rest of the Lord you may all come, unto the everlasting sabbath, every one to see your mansion; and this know every particular, thou art not called to seek thy food abroad, and from others, as the heathen and the prodigals do, who are out from my father's house, who are always wanting and murmuring, and complaining, but to partake of his fulness, from his mouth who is the feeder and fulness of all things, whose honor is, that he be only waited on, and who delights in filling the hungry souls with good things; and for this end hath he sent out his servants to cry and call to all, to come to him who hath made ready in abundance, even everlasting riches; so all mind, that to him alone you seek, and upon him you all wait, that you all may have power over your wills, and that contrary spirit which leads out from God, upon which the curse and want is; for this I say, you shall receive in this his day according to the works done in the body, and as the working of the spirit that worketh in you, whether of obedience or disobedience, as that spirit is whom you obey so is your reward: so shall all flesh be made to justify God, who worketh of his own will, and in the obedience to his own spirit, in all who believe and wait upon him, in light and peace: but hardness of heart, and blindness of mind happens to all whose eyes are abroad, out from the covenant of his promise, and so shall every one receive at his hand, who is no respecter of persons. So all wait, with your loins girt, and your lights burning, that at his coming you may all be found in his work, every one according as he hath called you, that with the light you may all know what

it is that commends you to God, and justifies you in his sight, from that which justifies self in your thoughts, but with the light is condemned in God's sight; that so you may not run in vain, but obtain that which will stand at that day; that you may every one in particular, know that which cannot be deceived nor overcome, that in the hour of temptation you may rejoice, and through the tribulation you may enter into the kingdom, and so nothing be able to move you in the way, or lead you aside; but as you go along you may learn Christ in his sufferings, and watchings, and fastings, and temptations, and steadfastness and patience, in faithfulness and obedience; that as you have received Christ, you may be able to walk in him, and his power, above all that is behind you, and so come to know your strength, and where it is: and so all come to make proof of Christ, and his power and wisdom in the light, to see him working in you the will and the power, in the male and in the female, who exerciseth your hearts in innocency towards God, and one towards another, and all men: and this you shall all find, that as you abide in your measures so you grow herein, and so come to feed on the life, when others, whose minds are abroad, feed upon the wind; which if hereto you take heed, no leanness of soul there shall be, nor darkness of mind; but the least shall be as David, when Jesse's root you come to feed on.

Dear friends, my desires and prayers, to God for you are, that you may abound in his knowledge, which is life indeed, and that you may not always be learning, complaining and wanting; but that with the rest of the saints, you may be able to declare his power in its life and working, to the redemption, freedom and fulness thereof, above all created things. So be diligent now the day is come, that none of you be found idle, nor a sluggard, nor vain and light, nor busybodies in things without, nor wandering from your habitations, nor prodigal proud boasters; but in the work of God you may all be found diligent, least the bonds

of iniquity prevail against you, and draw you back again into the world, out of which your hearts have been turned, and so the candle be put out, and the spirit quenched, and so you be left in his power whose work it is to blind the eye, stop the ear, sear the conscience, and your latter end be worse than your beginning: wherefore, in tenderness unto you all I warn you, before you be overtaken; and the mighty God of power preserve you all watchful and diligent in your measures, to his praise who hath called you.

JAMES NAYLER.

~~EPHESIAN~~

EPISTLE VI.

TO THE CALLED OF GOD WHO BELIEVE IN THE LIGHT TO
WALK THEREIN.

DEARLY beloved, and children of the living God of life, and servants of the Most High, and all who love the light and appearance of the Lord Jesus, that which is rejected of men, and the world cannot receive, but to you is become precious and beloved; in which appearance you see the way of death and of life, the will of God and the will of man, and the effects thereof, by which you are led to count it great riches to deny yourselves, and suffer the will of him that hath shewed this mercy, whereby you are turned from the world's ways, and have owned this light of Christ to be your guide out of darkness, and many of you have obtained mercy, to be faithful thereto, and have obtained a good report through reproach with your brethren of the same household, that have gone before in the like faith, and are found worthy to suffer

with joy, what you are called to in your several measures and places: so in that which you have received all abide, even as he hath called you with the holy calling, that you may feel his arm, and know his power, and in what principle it worketh, and how far his covenant reacheth which he hath willed for salvation, that therein you may be kept safe and clean, and that you may be found a willing people, hearkening and diligent to answer his call, and obey in the light wherein you have believed, that the righteousness of faith you may all come to inherit, wherewith all your nakedness shall be covered, with his skirts who hath loved you, and therein will love you more, and rejoice to make you glorious therein, even the praise of the whole earth, for his righteous names sake, wherewith he will cover you, and in which he will keep you out of the expectation of ungodly men, who lie in wait for your slipping. So all be faithful herein, which is your beauty and comeliness, and wherein indeed God hath made you lovely to behold in your several measures of himself: and truly in this my heart exceedingly rejoiceth in you, to see that God is preparing you for himself, as with you to provoke the nations to life; yea verily, my soul is bound up with you, and my love I leave with you, in the bowels of the Lord Jesus, that therein you may all live in one.

And my prayer to the throne of glory is. for you, that you may all be kept without blemish, every one having salt in yourselves, that your savour may be sweet through the world, and that you be not blemished through carelessness and coldness, and so death get in amongst you, and sow divisions and rents through want of improving the life of love. Wherefore be steadfast in the faith, every particular, and arm yourselves in the light against the whole world, and the power thereof; yea, even that of it which lies in any of your bosoms, and against that which would enter again, make no covenant therewith, no, not for an hour; but the covenant of light and life dwell in,

and you shall never be driven to the earthly gods for help, nor beg your bread from any other than he who hath called you, and given you an eye to wait upon him, that he might fill you with his riches.

So all take heed you close with nothing hastily ; but first ask counsel in the light, and there stay and wait for an answer ; but measure not him a time or way in your own thoughts, for then you tempt him, and you cannot hear his voice, and the enemy thereby will seek to harden your hearts.

Meet often together in the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therein mind to be gathered into the fountain of love and knowledge, that therein you may love one another, and from thence send forth love to all the creation, which now in love he is visiting. And herein shall you be blessed, and become like your father, heavenly in mind, and soul, and spirit. And having found him thus in spirit and power, dwell together with him therein, that I may read you in one, who is blessed forever.

JAMES NAYLER.

EPISTLE VII.

TO FRIENDS, TO BE DILIGENT IN MEETINGS.

DEAR friends and brethren, in the uprightness of your hearts walk before the Lord every one in his measure of life, with the eye single to him who hath called you out of darkness into his presence who dwells in the light. So before his face see you all walk, with the heart fixed perfectly for him and his truth you have received, witnesses therein, against all

the world's deceits of man's heart within and without, that innocency and meekness may preserve you in all your ways in the world, and in the eternal unity amongst yourselves meet often together, and suffer a word of exhortation one from another in the spirit of meekness. Love one another unfeignedly, and know one another in that which is pure, that therewith you may be gathered out of the world, up to God, from whom the gift comes, that every day you may grow nearer to him who is your head, that, with the living, as you behold him, you may keep death out from passing over you: so shall you be kept sweet and cool, and your pastures fresh and green, feeding in one, that you all may grow strong in one, and there receive power for the obedience of the faith you have received: and the mighty God of power preserve you all lambs in love, and unspotted in the world, till his appearing for whom you wait, your salvation, but the world's condemnation; for whose sake you now suffer, and are not ashamed, the Lord, blessed for evermore.

J. N.

EPISTLE VIII.

CONCERNING LOVE AND JUDGMENT.

FRIENDS, he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is love made perfect, who are as he is in this world; here is boldness in judgment; there is no fear in this love, no torment in judgment. But if any man love the world, or the things that are in the world, the love of the father is not in

him, but the love of the world: which judgment torments; for all that is in the world, the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the father. These are in the world, and lie in wickedness, which cannot stand in judgment, who have fear in judgment, who are tormented in judgment, whose life is in the world, in the lust, in the pleasure, in the pride, in the excess, in the ease and in the world's nature: these are not of God, whose love to these things is greater in them than the spirit which calls them out of the world; such cannot endure judgment, cannot stand in it without torment, fear arises, torment arises within, which makes them fly judgment, and cry out against it; which God loves, which the sons of God love, who are redeemed therewith, who have denied the spirit of the world, which is to be tormented, and have received the spirit of adoption, through the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of burning, and are purified, and sanctified, and baptized into Christ Jesus, and have put off the world in great tribulation: such love judgment, and are able to stand therein, and to dwell with everlasting burning, that which condemns the wicked, the world and the spirit thereof; such love, who love God, who love his appearance in Jesus Christ, who is a consuming fire, which is love everlasting to his own seed, not of the world, nor the lust thereof; but that which strikes at the world's life, vanity and glory, which cannot stand his appearance, whose day burns as an oven, before whom the world's glory and the fashion of it passeth away, that he may bring forth his sons and daughters in another image and life which the world loves not, but hath torment in judgment, but the redeemed rejoice therein.

And who is it now that cries, away with judgment, and who hath turned it into wormwood? Such as have their life in the world, whose delight is in that which will be burned, who are for condemnation, who are disobedient to him that calleth them out of the world, who deny the light of the world, sent to convince the world of all sin, and lead into all truth; such cannot

stand in judgment; what boldness can such have therein, who are condemned already, for unbelief in the light and disobedience thereto, fear and torment must needs arise and drive them away, and as chaff must they be, that the scripture may be fulfilled.

And these cry out for love, who cannot stand in judgment, who stand in the enmity; who love the things of the world, are in the enmity against God, and whose life is therein, what have you to do with love? You must first deny the enmity, and give up that life that stands therein, through obedience to the light, which is God's love to the world, that through the cross of Christ, and by the spirit of judgment and baptism of fire, all the bonds of iniquity, which keep you in the world, in the enmity and out of God, may be broken, and you brought out free, born of that spirit which the world hates and condemns, which condemns the world. And so through death of that life which holds you in the world, in the enmity, under the law, under the wrath, you may come to enjoy God, who is love, whom without holiness none can see to their comfort.

God's love stands not in man's will, nor can any who stand in the will of man either give or receive it, only to those who have no other lovers in the world, he gives himself: who so loves Christ's life, as to hate their own, whose hearts can join to nothing but what is of God. And this is that true chastity and true charity, which all must learn with the loss of the world's gain, e're God be enjoyed as a husband. And who hath obtained this treasure in his vessel, must possess it in holiness, or lose it; he cannot let the harlot in and be undefiled, nor give it out to the nature which he hath denied to obtain it, and not betray it and lose it, which is only retained in holiness alone. So he that dwells in the light calls to all in love: come unto me, saith Christ, and drink and eat freely: this is love, but do all hear? Do all obey? Do all come? Do all inherit? Do all own correction? Are all of God? Do not many cast off judgments, and despise

reproof? will not bear the rod, and yet would have the love? Whom I love, I rebuke, saith the spirit, and chasten every son that I receive. This is God's way; so you who reject it, reject love, and not it you.

Ah! silly people, how are you deceived! Doth he that sees you fast in the world and in the curse, where you have not power to do well, as yourselves confess, but to do evil, and comes and cries peace to you there, and sits down with you in that form or fellowship, doth he bring you love, or hath he the love that is of God in him, who flatters you here? And doth he who hath the sword of judgment, and faithfully uses it to part you and the world in which the enmity stands against God, to bring you out into sons freedom, doth he hate you, or is he your enemy? Is not this to put enmity for love, and love for enmity, as it is at this day with all that love the things of the world, and are kept captive therein, when truth comes to pass upon them where you are?

And you say you are come to the son and to freedom, &c. and you are all in love, as you say: but when judgment from God is sent amongst you, and falls upon that which is of the world where it finds you; then a fire kindles amongst you, and you have torment, and your love leaves you; which shows your love is not of God, which loves judgment, where mercy rejoiceth, whose love hath not torment nor fear.

Now the day tries your sonship, your freedom and your love; for judgment I am come into the world, saith the son: and are you come to him and cannot stand therein? Are you free-born who are in that nature whereon the fires kindle? Is your love that which bears all things, who are tormented in judgment, and driven into heaps of confusion and fear, speaking you know not what? Is this the voice of sons, which cries, away with judgment? Is this to receive correction? Is this the son's freedom, or of his nature? Nay, this is to kick against that which pricks you, wherein you plainly show you have not learned your sonship of the father, after Christ Jesus; nor known him formed in

you, who bears the chastisement of peace, but have got your knowledge another way, than in learning of Christ, and your love is not obtained through the fire, with the loss of all that is to be consumed, which God hates, nor are you born of that spirit of Christ, to whom all judgment is committed in Heaven and earth, nor do you know the key of David.

Now honestly search your house with the candle which God hath lighted, and when you find the truth in your inward parts, then shall you say, there is no love but in it; and that the world's love stands in that which God hates, and is a lie, and pierceth the soul of all that serve it, or let it into their bosom. And for this we may not join in your love, though we love you, in that which is beloved of the father, wherein alone we can have boldness in the day of judgment, and in that life alone, in which love is made perfect, which none can inherit further than they become as he is in this world, walking as he walked, dwelling in God who is love without end.

EPISTLE IX.

TO SOME THAT WERE BACKSLIDDEN.

THE child is born who is not of this world, and many are called to bear his testimony against the world, who are no more of this world, nor the spirit thereof will they receive, nor be in bondage thereto, who have received the spirit of freedom, even of the father and the son, in which they are begotten out of the world, and the love thereof.

Now what are you about to do, who have been called, and once enlightened to see the vanities of the

world, and the evils of its customs and fashions, ways and worships, and have been touched with judgment for your conforming thereto, and now are turning back to settle and build therein, and there to take up your rest, seeking to get a peace to yourselves in that which judgment hath once entered upon you, shall this your building stand? Shall not your peace be broken? Ask your own hearts, if they condemn you not herein, and of unfaithfulness to his faithful witness in you; I know God hath not left himself without a witness in you for judgment, which sometimes doth arise, and cause fear in you, and lets you plainly see you take not counsel of his spirit, but of your pleasures and profits in the world, and by them are you led, and not by that spirit which calls you to bear his testimony against them.

And do you see this deceitful dealing in your own spirits towards Christ, and that your hearts are not upright in his testimony against the evil of this world. And will you cover all this deceit with conceits, words and notions, and seek to build you a place of peace above all this? Will you thus heal your hurt deceitfully and know it? And shall this stand before God? Shall not judgment arise in due time, and your hurt appear again? Is not this worse than all your former sins of ignorance, which you now add knowingly?—Ask your own hearts, if they fear not the end of this dealing towards God and your own souls.

You are seeking rest, but not in the sabbath of God, but in the world, you deny the first days work, (to wit) that which separates light from darkness. So you are far from the sabbath of pure rest; so your rest shall spew you out: it's unclean, and your building shall fall upon your own heads. The foundation is polluted and mixed with the world, your garment shall rot; it's defiled with the flesh, and all your notions and conceits as hay and stubble and chaff, shall burn in the day when he shall arise to judgment, whom you now betray for the world, and to get yourselves ease and pleasure, your ease shall slay you, and your pleasure pass away with bitterness of soul, when

your own work shall set you on fire, and all your airy notions and high words, and all your knowledge you have got in that disobedient nature, shall become fuel, and all your fears shall fall upon you to the utmost, because you have wilfully made a path for yourselves to err, and sought to hide your way from the light, thereby to stop judgment in your hearts, and that equity should not enter, who have denied him that called you, and have with-holden your body from him that made it, lest he should have purged you, and have drawn away your shoulder from his burthen, lest you should have borne his testimony against the world's lusts and your own, who have cast off his yoke, and proclaimed liberty to yourselves in that which grieves the holy spirit.

Therefore, as you are joined with the world against the judgment of the just, who comes to restore all things, so with the world will be your portion, when the just comes to judge the world, and when all comes to be restored in the covenant, you who have not kept covenant will be cast out: then shall you know, that whoever denies the light is a child of darkness, notwithstanding now your conceits cover you.

Against whom do you strengthen yourselves, when you say, we shall have peace, notwithstanding the witness in our conscience speak not peace? And when you call that the spirit of bondage, that would have you free from the evil of the world and service of sin, do not you speak this against the Lord and your life? Do not you herein rise up against the just and innocent, and to stop the mouth of him that is faithful, that the wicked may escape unreprieved and live? Have you any thing else that will show you your hearts deceits? And is he become your enemy, because he will not flatter you therein? Doth not he speak peace freely to the obedient, though he never prophecies good of the world, in its corrupted ways? Shall you prosper who seek deep to hide your sin from his reproof? and will you be found children of the day, who seek to hide your ways from the light?

Whose image do you bear, who are like the world, except in opinion or notion? And who can so far conform unto it, as to procure its love, and escape the cross which should crucify it to you? Are you like Christ, because you profess him, when you crucify every appearance of him to yourselves afresh? Will you boast in the saints lines to make you a cover, whilst that lies crucified in you which should lead to their lives? Will not you be found the sepulchres that appear well without, but death and dry bones within? The babe slain, that is not of this world, and his life buried in the earthly minds, and the grave garnished with his words? Shall he who steals his neighbour's ass be condemned fourfold; and shall he that slays the innocent, and steals his garment go free?

The holy men of God travailed in sorrow, to bring forth what God begot in them, and not their own conceiving; and when they brought it forth it was contrary to the world, and could not bow to it, nor join with its ways, but held forth another image. So their covering was with the spirit of God, and with the reproach of the world. And in obedience to that spirit they spoke as it moved; in which words you take liberty, and resist the holy spirit, and call their lives bondage. Now ask your own consciences, if you be not they who glory in words without the life, in appearance but not in heart; but this is seen amongst you, that the blood of the slain cries so loud, that few dare look within his own house: so you make ado without, to stop it for a time; but by what is done within must you be judged in the end.

Are you the restorers of the pure paths for the simple to walk in, as in the beginning, ere the God of this world caused error by his inventions? Or, are you the makers up of the breach, wherewith he hath broken in upon our forefathers, in the days of darkness, error and superstition? When will your practice preach redemption from all those vanities, and your lives declare a liberty from his bondage of corruption, and to

things that perish with using? Doth not the creation groan because of pride, and the oppression that is used to uphold it, in its becking and bowing, and false worships and customs? And are not men and women wholly in bondage to things that God never set up, nor commanded; because they please the spirit of this world, with whom you are turning back to worship, and call it your liberty. So your liberty is in that which lies in corruption, and your glory in that which is unrestored, the end whereof is death; but the sons of God are they that are led by the spirit of God, whose glory is his likeness, and their substance is eternal life.

EPISTLE X.

FOR FRIENDS TO BE TENDER AND COMPASSIONATE ONE
TO ANOTHER.

Dear friends, be tenderly affected towards one another, as brethren in the Lord, and often remember whose spirit it is you profess to have upon you, and whose image you are to bear before all men; but especially towards all that love Christ Jesus, and bear his testimony this day, and his reproach; and that you seek to support the weak, and recover such as are tempted, shaken or fallen: seeking all occasions to restore and forgive one another, and to blot the remembrances of offences out of your hearts, and remember the bonds, with which the Lord Jesus hath bound us all to this, who laid down his precious life for his enemies, whom we were, and are if we receive not this spirit in the life of it, therein to walk towards one another; he cannot live in us else, but suffers in

us as in the world. And remember how the father accepted his son's atonement for us, and forgave us much at the beginning, which we had done against him when his life we knew not, but oppressed it in us. And this should bind us to do the like for all souls; for they are his, as we were his when we knew him not; but especially to every brother or sister, for this is pleasant in his sight, and in his house it is his honour and anointing, wherewith his children are anointed into tenderness, from the highest to the lowest. And that spirit where he lives seeks not self, but seeks the lost, and to bring again to God.

So prove your own selves, if Christ be in you, and the anointing makes soft and gentle, and melting the hardness makes peace and oneness. And this is his glory and work above every spirit, and his name above every name; that as he is just and pure, and separate from sinners, yet is he tender to seek, and to save, and ready to forgive above all other, thereby turning away wrath. And for this he is loved of God and men who are reconciled thereby; and pleasing it is to God that he walk in you, and you in him, in whom wrath is quenched, and forgiveness received.

And dear friends, this is our peace, and his glory is upon us if with this spirit we be covered, and armed against the adversary who waits for evil, and to divide and keep in division, and to keep the evil in mind, that it should not be blotted out; and there wrath abides as a spark in secret, and the fire is ready to kindle, more than to forgive. And where this is so, it cannot be long till it will break out, where peace is denied, and there satan gets his daily advantage: and, saith Christ, it is impossible but that offences will come; wherefore he saith, take heed to yourselves; and if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent forgive him; and if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him. And if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly father forgive you your

trespasses. So look at God in what you do to men herein, for to him you owe it, and much more: if you know God and yourselves you know this, and for want of this satan hath got advantage at this day, and the enmity eats as a canker, and pride gets up, and wrath is heavy and devours, though many see it not; yet it is seen and felt by some, and lamented and feared, who see it spread over the tenderness in many, where love did abound at first; and how little a thing will now give occasion of wrath to work high; yea, many times when no just occasion is given.

And this is the advantage that satan hath got in this time of trial, which hath tried many, and shaken many. Oh! that it might once be truly said, that we had all taken warning, and gotten strength by it in the best things and most pleasing to God, and which might most honor him before all men, and double the bonds of pure truth, and live in all his called people, who hear his name openly; and that we might all be found in his nature, and no appearance else seen, that so the adversary might be holy without his hope within and without. And some breath after this more than any outward glory, and many lament the want of it; which if we all seek it, our rest will then be truly glorious, yet again, in one heart and mind, as at the beginning. And this is longed and believed for, with desire of heart, that none may come short of seeking and obtaining the same.

And you that have the word of God, which is the sword of the spirit, take heed how you use it, and be not rash in your words, nor unadvised; but take counsel at that which leads to do to another, as you would be done to, that you may use your power for edification, rather than for destruction; you may bind or loose here on earth who have the word. This power is given from above, abuse it not, to bite or devour withal, lest you be devoured thereof, and wrath kindle against you, who reject mercy, and choose it not rather than judging one another, in things where mercy might take place amongst brethren. And you may

bind a brother or sister under a trespass, who hath trespassed against you, and cause them to suffer much, and give satan advantage against them above their strength; but this I am sure God delights not in, on your behalf, though you may say it is just, and an eye for an eye; yet surely if God had so dealt with you, your debt had remained upon you; and the time will come, that he that hath shewed no mercy must have judgment without mercy. And for that end hath God shewed us mercy and forgiveness, that we should walk in it towards the brethren, and be like him. And some are tried that all may fear, and know by what you stand; and if God doth but leave you to your own spirits, you will appear but as other men, and high-mindedness, and hard-heartedness against your brethren, is the way to provoke him to do it, that as you have done, so you receive.

And this will certainly come upon all, who in the forgiveness of God abide not, though some men's sins go before to judgment, and some follow after; and happy is that man whose iniquity is covered, and puts on that spirit towards the brethren and fellow-servants, which hath power to keep it so.

I speak not this to hide the transgressor, or keep the evil one from judgment, wherever he is seen; for that will defile you: but to preserve the brotherhood from him that now seeks occasion, that no place be given to him, but that all may be done in that spirit that hath the power and effectual working together, and heal and save through judgment, making an end of sin, and the remembrance of it, and in peace sowing the fruit of righteousness in him alone that makes peace, not kindling the fire; but with fear to be defiled pulling out of the fire, putting a difference in this case, which none can do but who have received the power of forgiveness from above, and walk in it. And such indeed have put on the Lord, who would have none defiled, nor any lost for want of compassion; and in whom sin is covered, wrath is put away, and mercy hath taken its place, and such love mercy and sal-

vation; but they in whom wrath and strife is above, take heed and glory not over another, which will bring yourselves under greater condemnation.

EPISTLE IX.

NOT TO STRIVE, BUT OVERCOME BY SUFFERING.

CHILDREN of God, seek a kingdom in you, that flesh and blood strive not for, nor cannot enter therein, a kingdom undefiled, and that fadeth not away, hid from that which feeds on earthly things, a heavenly kingdom, bearing heavenly fruits, and where heavenly things abound; wherein the heavenly spirit rules, guides, and brings forth fruits of itself, heavenly fruits, the fruits of grace and meekness, and of a lowly mind, the fruits of peace and gentleness, and forbearance amongst yourselves. These are heavenly fruits, and the virtues of the tree of life, and that which the loftiness of flesh and blood looks not for, nor doth esteem, which loves the praise of men, and to be known in that which this world can see into with the outward understanding: but wait with patience to feel that quickened, which is sown in tears, and springs up with joy, out of the sight of the natural understanding, that that alone may bear you, and therein all your fruit may be found, and so come to the knowledge of the tree by its fruits; and let the life open the understanding (and not the notion, or a sight) that is the heavenly learning of Christ Jesus the righteous, full of grace and truth; but striving to get up to the knowledge of heavenly things in notion and form, before the thing itself be born and brought forth, this is the wrong way to learn Christ, and the way of the world, that veils the life; for this knowledge stands in the sensual part, to exalt and puff up the mind above the

meekness and lowliness that is in the spirit of Christ Jesus, and beguiles the soul of the simplicity in which it should feed; and so a tree may grow high, and hard, and strong, yet fruitless and out of the power, got above the poor, above the innocent, out of the feeling of the sufferer and man of sorrows where he is; and the end of this growth is not in the pure rest, for the higher any one grows here, the more doth that wither and die in them, which is soft, and tender and melting, which makes one, and is the true fold for lambs, where the lions must lie down in the end, if they come to rest, and that eye put out which looks to be great among men, that comes not into the rest, but hath strife in the mind, strife in words and secret smittings, which defile the rest, and lead into the division and separation; but the little child leads into the rest, and that which is lowly gives the entrance.

So feel that which is lowly and meek to arise above self, that which stills all strife at home in your minds, and gives peace in temptation and tribulation; that's a soft and tender thing in you, that is the peace-maker, that's blest of God. And this is first felt under the world, under the strife, suffering by the strife in patience, to bring to the end of the strife and the world, and in the end of it, and all exaltation, he comes to arise over the world and the enmity, who is not of a striving nature, but lives by hope, and believes to see to the end of all things under which he suffers, and to out-live every temptation by suffering. And so by an everlasting life comes over the world, and to reign over all things that are not of that eternal nature; but not to join with the evil.

And he that in the particular is born of this, hath overcome the world in himself, and knows how to walk towards his brother in that which hath power over the world and outlives all, whereby he can suffer therein, and brings forth its own undefiled into one to rest, ever aiming in all ministrations at the kingdom of truth, peace and holiness, which is the end of all gifts and callings amongst the brethren, and is only

obtained as that arises in all which suffers by the world, but is not of the world, which he that is Christ's minister comes to turn men unto.

And this seed all should know, which is beloved of the father and heir of the everlasting kingdom, who strives not by violence, but entreats; who seeks not revenge, but endures all contradictions from all against himself, to the end he may obtain mercy for all from the father. And this is the seed of eternal peace, and the eternal peace maker, which was foreordained of the father, and hath power to endure all things, and subdue all things by overcoming.

So this seek in yourselves and all men, and in it seek one another as brethren. This is that which is perfect, and is never to be done away, neither can it be overcome of the world; wrath cannot enter it, pride cannot enter it; it strives for nothing but to live its own life, which the world strives not for; nor can any that are of it strive with it; the worldly spirit seeks not that crown, whose life is to suffer all things, to be meek, and low, and poor, and rejected; reviled, contemned of all the world, bearing the reproach of all that's above that of God in all. And little striving in the will of man is there for this kingdom, or the cross that belongs thereto, which no exalted mind can bear nor glory in.

And this is the righteousness that exceeds the Scribes and Pharisees, and professors, and that wherein they cannot enter; nor can any reign in this kingdom, but who can bear the cross which leads to the crown, and hath a habitation in that which cannot be moved with change nor kindled with wrath.

This is the heritage of the meek, and the kingdom which only belongs to the poor in spirit and pure in heart, where the hardness of heart is broken, and melted, and self dead, many spirits desire to look into it; but few to live the life of it; it's only for the heirs who are born through sorrow, and slain with ease; to whom flesh and blood is an enemy, and with the eye that looks out lightly esteemed amongst men.

JAMES NAYLER.

EPISTLE XII.

EXHORTING TO MERCY AND FORGIVENESS.

DEAR friends, mind whereon you feed, and in what you grow, and keep all low in your minds, that the virtue of meekness you may feel, and know the strength of it with God; take heed of the knowledge above the life, and of getting words of wisdom, and therewith set yourselves above the meek, and despise the weak, and so become strong trees without fruit, which God will overturn by the roots: but every one feed in a clean spirit, and therein know the power of the word of life in yourselves, which as it passeth breaks the rocks, and melts the hardness in every heart, and melts you all into one heart, as one man, all into one mind in Christ Jesus, that you may be knit in one body, and one spirit, and one head, the lamb over all, glorified over all; having come through the world, and through the law, now know the power of love in yourselves, as it is in Christ, and the mercy seat and forgiveness of God; even as you have received of the Lord freely, so do one to another freely, that you may be sealed therein; that there be no evil in any heart unblotted out before God, that he may walk in you all in pure peace and mercy, and that all may know into whom you are begotten; and with the saving health of God you may be all covered, and the weak strengthened and comforted, that none be driven away for want of compassion, but that such be visited with the same you have received, or would receive from God for yourselves: and this is brotherly kindness, as God is kind: and all know the virtue of a healing tongue, and how to use it; and often remember, ye were enemies to God, and ignorantly did that which you should not; and in that state God sought you with much patience and long suffering towards you, and with great forgiveness were you gathered in-

to his love and mercy, that he might lead you an example towards your brethren, for all souls are his: how much more should you be tender to such as are already called, and serve them as brethren who have but received the truth in belief thereof, and are turned towards God, bearing their testimony in that faith against the world, though in much weakness? Yet of such be tender, and feed them with milk, as the Lord hath fed you; so do with much fear and gentleness, least the same be driven out of the way, and give no advantage to the enemy; and set not yourselves above them with that which you have received from God: but seek the life of God in all, to set up over all; and let that be the chief thing you aim at in all, for the Lord's sake, leading them the way of meekness and fear which is in God, and in the pure wisdom, putting a difference betwixt weakness and wilfulness, and betwixt the brethren and the world; and as your hearts are found perfect to the seed (the word of God) herein, God will make you wise to salvation, nurses and fathers shall you be called, and a blessing will be in your hand on whom ever you lay it; and you will grow in grace and mercy as you come to feel this rise in you, and in the knowledge of salvation, and the power of God's arm you will feel you have to gather withal unto God, and he will write his name of peace upon your assemblies, and build you as a city without breaches.

EPISTLE XIII.

TO SOME FRIENDS IN THE NORTHERN PARTS.

DEAR friends, my soul salutes you all, in the breathings of eternal love, which we have in the bowels of Jesus Christ, who is the holy one, and full of the father's love, truth and mercy, and in him we drink into the same eternal spirit, and of his fulness we all receive enlargedness of bowels towards every living soul, whom God hath quickened in the life towards himself. And truly friends, it's in that life that the remembrance of you arises in my heart, amongst the rest of the living of my father, whose faces I have not seen for many days, though often I have felt desires thereunto; yet your remembrance is sweet to me for the truth's sake, whose testimony you bear before all men, and are not ashamed; and some of you have stood in it from the beginning, in which I see you present, and feel you in spirit and life, which I have in God.

Dear hearts, it's by the arising of the Almighty we have unity and strength; the morning of our light he is in us, and his rising is our glory and crown, and he is the father of all our righteousness, in the harmlessness of our hearts: how often doth he revive us with new life, and refresh us with the streams of his pure virtue, and is more in our hearts many times than tongue can utter: and then he brings to a sight one of another; and then in what glory stands his beloved lambs in the eye one of another; and how doth his tender spirit make our bowels yearn towards one another? Thus doth the Lord often for us, and lays us in his bosom together, and removes all evil far from us, and then shows us the spiritual relation that we are in, in him.

Friends, in this you are near to me in God, I can speak it, to whom be glory forever; and here I had a

sense of divers of you when I was under the mountains, and when my adversary had dominion: verily I cannot forget you in those parts, and your tender hearts which I felt in that day, yea, well could my soul feel the hard and the tender; and he that delivered my soul, hath written you in my heart, never to be forgotten: and God will bring his people all into a clean and peaceable land, and feed them with life everlasting; and thereto I commit you all, dear children of God, that therewith you may be armed against whatever evils may assault you in this evil time, and generation, that knows not God.

And when I was in the north, it was in my heart to have seen you, that I might have rejoiced with you in God's holy fear; but on a sudden was I brought back to this city, and here I wait the will of our father, to do or suffer, to whom be all fear and obedience for evermore.

Your dear brother,

J. N.

EPISTLE XIV.

EXHORTING TO WATCHFULNESS.

BLESSED forever be the father of light, who hath called you out of the world, and hath given to you a testimony to finish in behalf of Christ Jesus; that through you he may manifestly declare him to the world, in the true savour of God, wherein you are the first fruits to his glory, as you die and arise in him: and so the son is the light of the world. So I beseech you, let your shining be in the right nature, and your rising be as you are born of God, and covered with

the same spirit and life by which you have been begotten towards him: that none of you may be found false witnesses of his coming, when you are proved with fire, when nothing will abide with you but what you are in his nature; that's all you have of the treasure of God, even what you are in him, who worketh in you against the flesh and the world; as many as abide in the feeling of his measure, and therein receive him as head over all. But if you receive any thing above him, in your minds, which is not of this nature, then you oppress him who is meek and tender, which hinders his arising to walk and dwell in you.

Wherefore dear friends, watch against all fleshly, selfish, hasty motions; take heed what you receive into his temple, least you defile it, and he leave you desolate and in darkness.

Because of evil thoughts, covetousness, and pride of heart, is his spirit grieved; every self end, in whatever you do or suffer, is an enemy to his life, he suffers by whatever is done deceitfully towards God or man; and if you give way to wrath you deny his kingdom; yea, you that have tasted of him, you know in measure how pure his way is in all things; and I pray God you may all grow therein, being so much the more diligent, as you see your adversary seeking by all means to darken that glory of your holiness in Christ Jesus, that spirit; to whom I commit you all, that in the holy bowels of his tender love you may know one another, in whatsoever any of you shall meet with from the world, in this way of your pilgrimage; that your unity in him nothing may be able to break.

EPISTLE XV.

TO WATCH AGAINST THE ENEMY'S WILES, AND
BE FAITHFUL TO THE END.

DEAR friends, in tenderness of heart which I receive of God daily, I am with you; and I pray God our father, in the Lord Jesus Christ, that your minds may be kept pure and single to himself, so as at the fountain of eternal life you may ever feed and receive counsel, and grow in strength against that spirit which hath many subtil wiles to draw your minds from the bread of life; even the Lord God of truth discover them all to every one of you, and preserve you daily against them; that to the root which bears you, you may all be kept, thence to receive renewed strength, that to God you may be fruitful forever; and not as trees whose root withers, and must needs fall in the end, though never so high in knowledge or conceit; even the Lord keep you all from this, which is that which is much in me to write to you of at this present, who to me are dearer than I can express; that to the foundation of God you may all be kept, and all the people of God on the rock to drink, who are his portion in this his day, with him to stand against the powers of darkness that are arising against the Lamb, to whom be glory.

And blessed are they who with him are found faithful, even such as continually feed with him, where eternal life is manifested; and none can feed there, but as they come to have their minds redeemed out of worldly things. So dear friends, all take heed of many thoughts, and many works, and walk humbly with God, with single minds always; and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, *Amen.*

Something in answer to two letters sent from New-England, to some of England, to persuade to persecution; one letter in the name of Richard Billingham; and the other in the name of John Endicott, Governor of Boston. The 7th month, 1653.

FRIENDS of New-England, called Independents, you have taken the name to depend upon the spirit of Christ Jesus alone for your defence, as though your way did not depend on the arm of flesh; and thus like sheep you had clothed yourselves, and got a name of life above the beast and his mark, more than many other sects in the world. But now the Lamb (who will not give his glory to another) hath weighed and proved you, and your work hath made it apparent you know him not, nor his spirit and power that bears all things, and overcomes all things, you not having on the armour of light, nor the sword of the spirit, that is able to judge and divide aright, to cut down heresies [as you call them] confound errors, in the way of salvation: but are found a people filled with rage, wrath and bitterness, cruelly entreating his servants, whom he hath sent amongst you in his name and nature; whereby you have shamed your profession, and stained your colour; you have blotted your name out of the Lamb's life, and writ it in blood, that all the world may read it: the Lamb you have denied in works, his spirit, his power and his mark; and you have made it fully appear whence you are, and that you are not from above, nor your power spiritual; but from below, and your arm flesh, your weapons carnal and devilish, as those which formerly you have condemned, even the worst of them you exceed; and out of the power you are gone which is able to bear all things, try all things, and hold fast that which is good; who have no way to stop the power of heresies, but with killing those whom Christ came to save: so your birth is brought forth; here is wisdom, let him that understands read, how little a thing God hath chosen to confound so great a name, and to write it amongst the number of the man of blood.

And to strengthen your arm, and cover that shameful thing you have in hand, you have sent your letters into England, filled with bitter words and untruths, the foulness that abounds in your own hearts have you cast abroad for a covering; which is so much too narrow to cover innocent blood, that it further lays open your rage and rashness, and folly, to every moderate spirit that reads you.

You undertake to inform (with many grievous and false accusations) against a people who are better known here in England than you know them, and which have a witness of truth in most hearts in this nation (if suffered to speak) which may return your accusations back upon you as false; and the ground to be but malice arising in yourselves: and this is your folly with sober men of sound judgment and wisdom.

What have these people acted (saith truth) against the present government, these years wherein they have been proved sundry ways? What is the rebellion, written or spoken against authority; seeing you say its all their religion? Who is that magistrate which they have sought the destruction of? And what is that all manner of disobedience and malignity which they encourage against lawful authority, seeing you accuse them with these things? What discontents have they had a hand in, as to strengthen; and what are the words they have spoken against the present government; and what are those combinations and insurrections they encourage, seeing you charge all these things upon them? And what plots have any one of them been found in since this present government, against which many have been, and opportunity hath not been wanting, seeing you say they have all plots. O men, be ashamed of your words: are not they known in England, to have been men who generally did adventure lives and estates, with those who are in present government, purchasing their freedom as men, with great loss; and now seeing they cannot seek it that way, do not they sit down and suffer, in

the way of Christ, all that man hath power to inflict upon them, holding forth the name of Christ in a pure conscience for a witness against them, for repentance to salvation, and not for destruction; and a witness there is in every conscience of the truth hereof, though all men should be silent, or set themselves against it. And for the blasphemies you tell on, heresies and sedition, what are they? Bring them forth into open view, and let the scriptures of truth judge thereof: and if therewith [without wresting] you can convince us thereof, then you shew a spirit suitable to scripture, and one with scripture, and yourselves as men of God; and deny that spirit of murder that calls Christ a devil, and his servants blasphemers and hereticks; but was never able to convince them thereof before the face of truth: yet with swelling words of accusation stir up men to take away their lives, saying, if they were not so, we would not have delivered them to death, or persecution: and if like sober-minded men of spirit, you had done this, to have proved before you had pronounced, the heat of this fiery matter had been quenched in your own bosoms ere it had been kindled, or come thus far witness against you to your hurt; and when it comes to return again into the vessel from whence it came, you will know it had been good it had rotted ere it had risen; though now the innocent bear it till its time be fulfilled.

You accuse them for killing the witnesses; what with crying against sin, which hath slain the witnesses, and with preaching to you amendment of life, calling you to the witness of God in you; and this is known to be our chief work in old England, and new, and through the world; and this is that end they aim at, which would call their mischievous end. But friends, it's your pride and fulness, and the lusts of your fleshly wills that slays the witness of God in yourselves, and your exalted wisdom above and against the spirit of truth and meekness; where Sodom and Egypt is, there lies the witnesses slain, which they who are come out of come not to kill.

And you say, if the Lord have given them commission to kill the witnesses. Doubtless the Lord hath given them commission [but not to kill his witnesses] for had not they commission from him, and power also, little hope could be to go about this work against that bloody spirit which is now in the world, which hath slain the Lord of life, murdered the prophets and apostles, and martyred his messengers, under the name of hereticks, in all ages; and from which no other can be expected now, had they not commission from him, who hath also put on them the same suffering spirit, who loves not their lives unto death, to which you are made to confess, saying, they regard not their lives; though you call this the spirit of the devil, as persecutors ever have done, who are too mad in zeal without knowledge to mind what they do, or against whom, as at present you are seen to be, though the witness of God sometimes forces you to confess to the truth; and this is borne witness to by them, and not slain. And now see what a work you are found in against the Lord, who are slaying his witnesses, for which you are accusing others, and as if the Lord had given them commission to kill his witnesses; is not this horrid blasphemy? Then see what you are doing, who are about to kill the bodies of such whose commission is from the Lord: surely had you the spirit of children [were the messages as bad in truth as you would make it, by false accusations] should your work be to contrive their death who come with his commission to preach amongst you: hath such a thing as this been known, that a child should arise against the rod in the hand of his father, and say, if I can but destroy it I shall have peace? This is your work, and this you send in counsel into old England, saying, persecute them with the severest censures, so the wrath of God would be appeased towards England. May not all that ever heard what you once fled from, out of England, stand amazed at this return? Alas, for your loss and darkness; did ever any of your foregoers in this way appease the wrath of God, by following this counsel?

What became of that persecuting power which your eyes once saw, and from which you fled, their rulers and their teachers, who taught them this very same way, and they took it as you do? They that stayed behind, bearing the cross from which you fled, can tell you:—though when you left that authority, they esteemed themselves as safe in that way as you can, and was as confident to settle their peace with persecuting the Puritans [then so called] as you with killing the Quakers [now so called.]

O men, fear the Lord God of power, and take heed what you do in the height of your pride, and heat of your cruelty; the hearts of such as love your souls are wounded with your counsels and actings; and read the scriptures, and see if that way did ever lead but to desolation and ruin; and you are grown to a great height in a little time, and your encouraging others to go on with confidence in that way, and your gladness at it where you hear of it practised, shews your hearts are hardened; and the heart never hardens in cruelty but where its filled with a corrupt treasure: it were better that you should condemn it in yourselves, than wrath should rip it up and reward it.

And in your papers you pretend great danger to be overcome, and say, there is more danger of these than the king of Scots, or all the popish princes in Germany, &c. What! overcome with a people that bears no weapon against you but the sword of a suffering spirit: what fear is this that besets you, and what do you fear will be overcome without hands? Do you see where this fear arises, and is not that within you that causes it? Is it not the spirit of this world within you exalted where it ought not, which is now afraid the witness of God should arise in you and your people, which hath long suffered under false pretences, and feigned worships, pride and covetousness, and the whole body of wickedness: and ye being awakened to the light of Christ Jesus, it would arise and testify against you, to the overturning of the throne of iniquity, which is framing mischief by a

law, and lay your honor in the dust, that he alone may be exalted in you, who hath no fellowship therewith. This is seen to be the cause of your fears, and the danger you are in to be overcome, and the cause of confederacy, and calling to such as fear your fears, for more help to strengthen you against the burthensome stone; and a bad cause you have undertaken against the Lord God of power, to withstand the day of your visitation; and as badly do you manage it, to set briers and thorns against him in battle, which he will make his way through with fire: it was better counsel to kiss the Son, ere his wrath wax hot against you, lest the smoke thereof wholly blind you; for he is near you who will overcome you, or condemn you, who hath begun to work a strange work among you, and in a strange way to your wisdom, is he turning your inside outward to be seen of all men, so that a wolf must no longer be called a lamb, nor the bramble the vine, with any who are not wilfully blind, but can judge of the tree by its fruits, and with base and foolish things in your eyes, this is coming to pass; and that which you count the work of the devil must discover the devil in whom he is, and the lamb in whom he is, and each must have his name after his kind and nature, that truth may pass an even judgment.

Your words are, that the spirit of God should rule in his people; and, say you, he that is in them is stronger than the spirit that is in the world, and here you pretend to set spirit against spirit in trial for victory; but in works you deny this, betaking yourselves to the arm of flesh, making whips, prisons, banishment, cutting off ears and framing laws to shed blood, your chiefest strength; these are not spirit, nor spiritual, but carnal and devilish, never used by the spirit of Christ to overcome evil, or heresies: will you say you are God's people, and his spirit rules in you, and is the stronger; and will you murder and shed blood under this pretence? Is the spirit of God, and his strength, to martyr and mangle his own workmanship? Hath he no other way to overcome the devil?

What a God would you make of him in your dark minds? Doth he give some of his servants commission to come amongst you, and doth his spirit rule in you to kill them for obeying his commission? Shall the judge of all the earth do this thing to his creatures? Is not this the highest kind of blasphemy, and shall his holy spirit be guilty of innocent blood? Nay, God is not divided against his creation, no more than satan against his own kingdom. He that kills the body because of the spirit of error that he says is in it, shews his power can go no farther: but he that hath power to confound the error and save the life, he is the saviour to whom the creature belongs, who comes to save his own and slay his enemy that is therein; and here is read the mark of the lamb and the mark of the beast: but the lamb must have the victory, and those that war with him, over the bloody colored beast, and that spirit that rides thereon; and had you followed the lamb, and stood with him in suffering when you fled before this spirit, then had you overcome it, and not taken it with you, which now hath overcome you above measure, with more eagerness devouring in you, than ever in those from whom you then fled, as both your works and words manifest; such outraging, false and bitter words in your letters, as the gates of hell cannot exceed: and you tell of the actings of Munster being remembered by you; but sure it is for imitation, for your cruelty to those few who have come amongst you have not come short thereof, and yet you are not satisfied with blood, and when in rage you do this, are not ashamed to say that they who bear all your wrath are they that make the magistrate a man of blood, and contemptible: and thus every way you load the oppressed with your evil deeds, and evil words, who must bear all from you to hasten a testimony against you. But O men consider, you are fallen upon a poor helpless despised people, who have few among men to plead their cause, but every where hated of men: yet in time you will find, that you are stumbled on the rejected stone; take

heed least he fall upon you who must first finish his testimony, and you fill up your measure, that he may be clear of your blood; wherefore deal not proudly, for verily, yet a little while and judgment must arise to the meek, and power to the weak, and wisdom to fools, (as to the wisdom of the world) to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, &c. and to search out the hidden things of Esau; and the days are coming upon all flesh which you will not believe, who are settled in your own wills and self-confidence.

Wherefore, men, be sober, and in the fear of the Lord God of power take heed what you act in his name; for he is zealous for it; and pretend not his spirit to shed innocent blood with, for it is holy and pure, and the virtue and power of it stands not in carnal weapons, nor is it known in hard and cruel hearts; there his honor comes not, but where the heart is broken into tenderness, and the will of man sifted out, and seen to be vanity, there he dwells and makes his power known, and the weapons of such are mighty through him, but not to shed blood, but to judge and discern of spirits and powers of the darkness of this world, and to cut down that which is exalted in the dark hearts of proud men, and to open the eyes of the blind therewith. And now how weak is your shield become already in his sight? And how narrow is your covers you have sent over to England, to hide your shameful thing you have in hand.

You say, the juncture is great betwixt those you call hereticks and the Jesuits; when it's open to the view of men, that their head at Rome, and your head is all in one counsel, and in one spirit against them; however, like Herod and Pilate, your horns may seem to divide amongst yourselves; do not they there toss them, and torment them without cause [as you do] from prisons to inquisitions, and so to Bedlam? And though they know not what to judge of them, yet they will have their blood: and will not sober-minded men soon judge betwixt whom the juncture is in this case, and your cover will shame you.

You say, one of them pressed much for a conference with one of your teachers, but say you, the Quaker was quickly weary. And presently you say, that unless your court do make a law, to banish them, and not to return upon pain of death, you cannot be rid of them. What a pit of darkness is this you are fallen into [may wise men judge?] Can one of your teachers so quickly weary out one, and might not then all your teachers rid you of six [for that is all the number you tell on from England] in a more noble way, and more suitable to the authority of the spirit, and power of Christ Jesus, than to cut their ears, and banish and kill them? How shameful is your glorying here? Or how doth this covering hang together, to be believed for a truth with men of understanding?

In your letters you would have people to believe, that the spirit in those you thus torture is but the spirit of the devil, and much weaker than that spirit in you; for you are the people of God, and that is the spirit of God which rules in you, &c. And yet a fenceless fear possess you, that unless a carnal law be made to kill the body, you cannot overcome the spirit.

And this way you mistake for victory, notwithstanding their commission be from him whose spirit you pretend rules in you. What stuff is all this, when judgment comes to pass upon windy words? What a boast of the people of God, having the spirit of God in you, and the strength and greatness of that spirit in you, and the ruling of that spirit in you; and yet no power to overcome and vanquish your adversary, but what you have from the murderer? May not the least child of true light see your shame through all this glorying, and that you are men yet under the power of the spirit of this world, and never yet came to know a victory over that spirit in yourselves? and how are you like to judge the spirit of the devil in another, but like all the bloody spirited persecuting men, call evil good, and good evil, darkness light, and light darkness? And it can be no other while the murderer is exalted,

for there the devil is his God and father, who doth his works by lying and murdering, &c. And you that are there, are seen to be out of the power of Christ Jesus, which binds the strong man, and are in that nature which is fierce, and cruel and devouring; which nature issues out of the evil treasure, corrupt and perverse words, calling rogues, and emissaries of satan, and diabolical, and such like reproachful language, ill becoming the mouth of any christian, and with all that know the fruits of the spirit, this is favoured to come from a root of pride and disdain; and as it's from a bad father, so it begets the like in such as are under you, and have not power to judge it in you.— And, friends, you have a great fight to go through in yourselves, to overcome all this, and the father of it; which you must do e're you glory in a spiritual victory in yourselves or others.

Also your unlimited boundless slanders, that all may judge that hear them, that they cannot be true, show that you have not power to bridle your tongues to moderation, which is set on fire of Hell; as to say, they cause all discontents, all bold speech against the present government, encourage all combinations, all insurrections, all their religion to speak and write rebellion, and they have all plots, &c. As though they had all of these things, when in truth you can prove none of all these things.

O men, without shame or measure, what words are these you utter! How deep is truth buried in you, that you should not hear its voice, to stop your mouths, and stifle this shameful thing e're it came out! You say, was there ever state so void of reason to suffer such things? Which things they suffer not, as that of God in them can witness; and they are void of reason indeed, if they go from that which in themselves they know to be true, to believe what envy speaks to the contrary; and so leaving their own light to be led blind to kill the innocent to appease God's wrath, as you seem to teach them.

Friends, this is bad counsel, and it's not unlike but you will find some ready to take it, who as yourselves are too rash to mind either way or leader. And all your wrath must be born, as it comes upon the helpless, simple and despised for its time, who often lament for your souls, more than for what you have power to inflict upon their bodies, and in heart could wish that you were so wise as to take into your bosom again this shameful thing: and if you can come to a little coolness in yourselves alone, and sink down therein, and more seriously inquire at the spirit, which in secret calls you to do as you would receive, if peradventure God may give you a feeling within yourselves from what root this hath risen, that there you might condemn it, e're it go any further, and own the day of your visitation and salvation.

And this is the worst they wish you, whom you so fear, and their lives seek, who are seeking your souls in the sight of God.

J. N.



TO THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF ENGLAND.

As I was passing down the borough of Southwark not many days ago, I saw the greatest abominations acted that ever mine eyes beheld, in several places in the open streets men upon scaffolds, by two, three, four or five on a scaffold, transformed into several shapes, lifted wickedness up on high, and acting such abominable folly in words and actions, in the sight of the sun, as might make any tender heart, fearing God, to tremble at the sight of. And this was in many places of the streets openly, besides what was within the

houses, where several trumpets were sounding to gather vain minded people thereto: which wounded my heart to see, that ever such things should be tolerated under your government, for whom God hath so wrought, that you might reform these evils; and though I was moved to declare against them in the name and power of the Lord openly, yet am I not clear thereof, till I have laid it before you. And this I am to say unto you, that as you look to stand before God, so do you speedily and effectually remove these abominations out of God's sight, throughout your government and dominions, that his righteous soul be no more grieved therewith; for he will not give you rest, unless you quiet his spirit herein, by rooting out both secret and open appearance of all such ungodly sights of vanity and folly out of the land, with all other ungodly sports and pageants, which if you set yourselves to do, with a perfect heart, God will answer you therein, and be for you, if you will be for his spirit, that it be not grieved nor oppressed through your neglect; and also thereby you will give a sure testimony to all the good people of these nations, by publishing your effectual law against it, that your hearts are set against all open wickedness, and are resolved to drive it out of the land, root, and branch and remembrance; which if you do, all that love the spirit of God will love you, and join to you, and the wicked shall hear and fear the Lord and you: so shall you be a means to cleanse the peoples minds from vanity, that they may receive better things. And this is to bear the sword for God, and work reformation in truth and righteousness, and scatter wickedness; the neglect whereof causes the nation to stagger, and wrath to increase. And without this reforming the God of peace will not dwell with you, nor establish you, for his pure eye cannot behold iniquity, nor dwell with folly.

From one who seeks your peace with God, and one with another,

JAMES NAYLER.

Some considerations needful to be taken into mind by such as are in place, to ease the oppressed, reform abuses, and set the people in their right freedom, so as it may be for the advantage of the truth, as it is in the kingdom and power of Christ Jesus.

1. IF any be moved of God to come into your places of worships, to speak the word of the Lord to the people, or to show your teachers their error from the truth of Christ's worship, and prove it so before the people, by scripture and plain words of truth, do you serve Christ Jesus in counting these offenders, and making or executing laws against them as disturbers?—And would not this way you take have withstood that way by which the ministers of Christ were sent out to gather his own out of all false worships, and by which the churches were gathered by the apostles, whose manner was, to dispute daily in their synagogues, schools and market places, as you may read in the scriptures. And now you that call this misbehaviour, and peace-breaking, and seek to stop it, do not you withstand the good old way of Christ, by which the churches were gathered? And though you profess the apostles words, yet deny their lives and practice, and the way of their ministry; and is not this to fight against the liberty of Christ, and testimony of scripture, and christian freedom?

2. Is he worthy the name of a minister of Christ, who when any come to him in this way of Christ, hath neither power nor patience in spirit, to abide the trial of truth before his hearers; but forthwith stirs up his hearers into a tumult against that one person, calling to carnal strength against him [who only comes with spiritual weapons] shewing plainly that he hath not the spirit and power of Christ Jesus, to resist gainsayers, and defend himself and his doctrine in the way of Christ and his ministry, whose weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God, to bring into subjection whatever exalts against Christ Jesus? And have not such magistrates as have made and executed laws upon

this account, withstood the breaking forth of light and truth in former ages, which manifests itself most clearly in open place, that all may hear and judge thereof? search the scriptures and other histories, and see if this hath not been the way that the light hath broken forth from under all sorts of false worships, though it was ever condemned with false worshipers under evil names and reproach, as it is at this day.

3. Did ever Christ Jesus require it at the hand of any magistrate to interpose with his carnal weapon betwixt his ministers, in any thing about his spiritual kingdom? Or, did ever any of his ministers seek such a thing from them? Is not this to deny the judgment and power of Christ in themselves, who is the only judge and lawgiver to all his own servants, in whom he is known; who need not go out for judgment or for defence; and to betake themselves to such a way as he hath not appointed. And is not this a shame to their calling, that they who should be your teachers, and have power with God for you, should come to you to be regulated in spiritual matters, or defended one from another? Have not these lost the government of Christ Jesus in themselves; and his salvation? Let truth judge thereof, after the practice of Christ's ministers recorded in scripture.

4. Would you not count that an idle and bad husbandman, who hath ground enough to till freely, and doth so manage it as it will not find him bread? would you think it your duty, to make him a law to take by force his neighbours increase, who hath no more advantage of the earth than himself? If this seems unequal in carnals, take heed how you force it in spirituals, as touching your ministry; but as they sow let them reap, and as his hope is that thresheth, so let him partake of his hope; and if his gospel will not keep him, it's time to give over, his dead work doth more harm than good. What fruits is the Lord of the harvest like to receive, where the whole increase will not maintain him that tills the ground? Read, and deal by Christ the Lord as you would be dealt with, and deny

him not the liberty of ordering and keeping his own servants, if you look for freedom in him.

5. In truth and plainness, as you will answer before the Lord for what you do, have you any order from Christ Jesus in spirit, or from the scripture [were you the chiefest of his disciples] to go any further in appointing Christ a ministry, than to pray to the Lord of the vineyard, to send forth faithful and painful labourers into his harvest? And is it any less than taking upon you the royal prerogative of Christ Jesus, for man to say, this shall have liberty to preach, and the other shall not; the latter being more conformable to Christ than the former? Take heed what you do herein; and seeing you say Jesus is Lord, let it be so, and seek not to stop him of his right, lest he be angry, he is able to send out, and maintain his own servants, and he that comes to man for want, shames his master.

6. Seeing that which is called the gospel is become so chargeable in this nation, in respect of great sums of money, &c., that yearly are paid to uphold it, lest it should fall; which charge is to the undoing of whole families, and loss of the lives of some who are imprisoned till death for want of payment thereof. May not the oppressed people therein look upon it as a special mercy from Christ Jesus, who is taking off this heavy burthen, by calling and sending out his message of good tidings, by the mouths of such as will go freely without hire or reward, as in the beginning, whom he fits with power to turn people from their sins, which those that teach for hire have not. And now let truth judge in all in whom it is, if such as withstand his free gift and tender, do not deny the gospel as it was in its freedom in the beginning, and stand up for that which doth so much burthen the nation, and hath brought forth such bad fruits. And do not such withstand the manifestation of the power of Christ, in his managing his own work freely, and taking clear away the ground of that cruelty, and heavy burthen from his oppressed people, without which power the nation cannot be eased of that yoke, nor set free.

7. Can ever the people of this nation be made free as christians [as you have promised] so long as they are forced to maintain a sort of teachers with their estates and labours, which they are persuaded upon good ground, both by demonstration of the spirit and testimony of scripture, that they are out of the doctrine of Christ, and way of his pure worship, and in the steps of the false prophets and false apostles, whose ways both Christ and the scriptures witness against, and are ready to make proof of it before you, if they can be admitted upon equal terms face to face with them; which if they be denied, are they not denied christian freedom, and sought to be kept in bondage to that which is against their faith and conscience, which ought not to be bound, but set free?

8. Have the tender consciences of this nation that liberty promised to them upon engagement? Or, is the reformation intended by the honest hearted brought forth, whilst people are forced against their faith to repair the idols temples, with their crosses, and images and false worships, paintings and picturings, and other vanities of bells, fonts and glasses, to pay clerk-wages and easter reckonings, and tithes of eggs, pigs and geese, and all other things never used in the true church of Christ Jesus, but brought in through popery, and cannot be bowed to by any who truly make conscience to follow either the power of Christ or true form of scripture in his way of worship. And what freedom hath the people of God obtained by your removing kings and bishops, who are sought to be kept in bondage to these same things under great suffering?

9. Seeing there is no confidence to be put in flesh and blood, but as it comes to be ruled and ordered in all things, national and religious, by the spirit of truth in the inward parts, wherein the kingdom of God is in men on earth; and seeing no other spirit can beget brotherly affection and everlasting peace, and lead and give power rightly to reform what is amiss; then ought not all, who desire the peace and freedom of the nation, to seek it first from thence, by giving the

spirit liberty to be Lord in every conscience? Or can you lay any foundation of freedom that will stand, till the spirit of Christ be set free, and owned as head and law-giver in yourselves first, and then lay no bonds upon it in others? And thus all confessing and bowing to the king in his kingdom, he will not have occasion to dash you into pieces; as he hath done so often, for going about to set bounds to his authority in tender consciences, who will not be bound.

And if the nation be found worthy thus to receive him into your house, who is king of truth and peace, then will he for you cast out the evil one, who is the author of all strife and envy, wars and divisions, which are up in the hearts and minds of such wherein Christ rules not, who are daily waiting for evil one towards another, and want but opportunity to put it into action; which you cannot but be sensible of: which hath been and will be, until the powers of the earth are willing that the heavens should rule; and those who pretend to rule for Christ be willing to be ruled by him in themselves, and suffer him to reign in others.

And further, consider your present work, who are professing the coming of Christ, and his kingdom, but where will you have him to reign? And who must be his subjects, while the earthly powers would not suffer him to have the ordering of such in whom he lives, neither in matters religious nor civil, not so much as to the hat on their heads, or words of their mouths, or manner of their worship? So that the name of a king he is allowed, but his place and authority is withstood by the spirit of the world, which would suffer none to conform to Christ Jesus, but to the world's customs, laying the penalty of carnal commands upon such as follow on to obey his spiritual movings; as in not swearing, and many other things which might be instanced.

10. Consider your promises to God and the honest people of this nation, in the day of your fears and

weakness; was it not then in your hearts, that if ever the Lord gave you power, you would set free the oppressed people, especially such as made conscience of their ways towards God, and that cruel, proud and covetous men should not be in any place of power, to Lord it over any tender conscience, so that many sober people believed you herein, that you would not have suffered a corrupt self-ended man to have borne an office through the nation; but such as would have acted freely for God and his people for conscience thereto, and not for gifts and rewards; and that all popish unrighteous laws and false worships should have been utterly rooted out; and to the spirit of the Lord Jesus alone, and after the scriptures of truth, you would have come to have laid the foundation of all, as in the beginning before the apostacy, both as to law and gospel, which you not doing when you had power, the simple-hearted, who were drawn in by these fair pretences, and had no other ends in all their actings and suffering with you, but righteous freedom towards God and man; such begun to leave you, and return home, as men disappointed of their expectation; and were brought to see what was in men, and their error in looking at flesh and blood. Others cried out to the army, who then seemed much to condemn you for your neglect: and one of them took upon him the title of protector; and you were cast by; and he had power to have done good, to whom many cries of oppression came; which awhile he answered with good words, and sometimes with tears: but instead of taking away the ground thereof, he sought to make his own house strong; and for that end were such thrust out from their places, as would not betray their conscience and trust. And such were put in places as would become any thing he would have them. And as he grew high, so the cries of the oppressed were shut out at his doors; and then many were sent from the Lord to warn him against oppression, and to speak to him the word that now God hath fulfilled; who waited many days at his gates, but were shut

out, and often abused by his evil servants; and where they could come to speak to him, as he went to take his pleasure abroad, they were thrust from him in his sight, and he suffered it many times. And when he did hear them, he would not believe; but said how shall I know it is the word of the Lord; though the light in his own conscience did witness thereto. And thus he rejected the counsel of God against himself, till his day was over. In which time the innocent deeply suffered, and some of yourselves tasted a little thereof; and some of you seemed sensible of your neglect, and promised, that if you ever came in power again, what you would then do; but many could not believe that ever you should, so strong had he made himself; but an arm hath wrought which none can let, and you are in place again, who have been ready to renew your promises, to set the people free, both as men and as christians; which the Lord hath heard, and stirred up many of his oppressed people, to lay their oppressions before you, to try you: for a short work will the Lord make, for his name's sake and his oppressed seed.

And now take heed to your spirits, and consider you are called and set before the living God, and his eye runs through you, who is most pure and just, and will own nought in you but that which is truth in your inward parts. And as you intend to approve yourselves in his sight, or receive power to quit yourselves of your engagements to him and his people; so to that be faithful, for there only will he give you of his counsel in secret, and in the hidden parts will he teach you his wisdom; if you will hearken thereto; and in spirit must you receive his strength, and not in flesh and blood: and he that searcheth your hearts, and declares to man his thoughts, his name is the Lord of hosts. And take heed of making any other thing your arm or counsellor; so shall truth teach you. And take heed of corrupt men, and their subtle counsel; you have seen the end of that which is established therewith: and take heed of shutting out the word of

the Lord, or despising the counsel of his people; or oppressing, or suffering to be oppressed by others; such as are tender in conscience, for such are nearer the Lord than you are aware of. And as their hearts are open to his movings, so is his ear open to their cries; and in all their afflictions he is afflicted; for the living God is in them, and it is he that bears them up under oppression, though oppressors cannot believe it, and if they be oppressed he is grieved, and will plead with you.

And now seeing you pretend to do the work now indeed, and to bring forth perfect freedom for all men, as for yourselves; and to that end seem to draw the people of God near you again, and have called some of them, that they would present their burthens and oppressions, which grieve the spirit of Christ in them; and you appear as though you would accept of sound counsel from such in whom truth speaks, and have been preserved in the nation, by suffering with it, this time wherein so many have betrayed it; so that God hath not wholly left the nation. And these you now seem to give ear to, who indeed know best what oppression is, and the way of God in removing it, with whom God hath been in it, and is with them, glory for evermore!

And now if you will hear what truth saith to you in these considerations, concerning you and your laws, you are out of course, and gone out of the right way of God's law and his gospel; and those who should ease the people of all heavy burthens, are become themselves a burthen too heavy to be borne, and are become devourers, and not relievers of the helpless, as you will hear, if you will indeed hearken to the oppressed; for in the place of judgment is wickedness, and in the place of righteousness there is iniquity, and the horrible thing is committed in the land, which God hates; the judges thereof judge for rewards, the priests thereof preach for hire, and the people who know not God love to have it so; and through this doth the just suffer oppression, and the spirit of the Lord is grieved.

But if you will undo the heavy burthen, this is the way, if you can receive it.

As to your laws, come to the law of God, and what is written by him; that observe for a rule without; and let the same spirit of truth in you, and such as fear God, and hate rewards and gifts, have the executing of it freely, for a gift blinds the eyes of the wise; and that which is freely of God alone, hath his blessing and power to cut down the man of sin, and make the wicked afraid. So may the land be cleansed of open wickedness, and sin made ashamed to appear in your streets and markets, which is now become bold, and the proud are counted happy. And this God requires, to punish all known sin by his law, which respects no man's person, neither oppressing the poor, nor sparing the proud.

And for the gospel, such as have it are not made ministers by the will of man, nor by the law of a carnal commandment, but by Christ and his power, being sent out by him who is the Lord of the harvest, who is with and in them, whom the world cannot receive, neither knoweth. And as many as have this treasure in their earthen vessels, have the word of the Lord, and are freeborn thereof, and will never trouble you, nor burthen the nation with hire, glebe-lands, tithes and augmentations, nor great houses to dwell in, nor burthen themselves with such things; but he that is in them will lead them, and feed them as pilgrims and strangers upon earth, as his ministers ever were. If you can believe the scriptures then receive such, and deny them who dare not trust him as to a maintenance: so shall his servants be known, the true worshippers of Christ restored as in the beginning, and the land eased of its burthen; and that will fall of itself, which hath been set up, and holden up without Christ and against him. And this freedom the children of light wait patiently for; which if you deny them, it will come another way. Reject not truth; least you be rejected thereof.

J. N.

A WARNING TO THE RULERS, IN THE YEAR, 1659. WHEREIN A
JUST LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE IS PLEADED.

It is not the spirit of the world, nor the wisdom of flesh and blood, that God will honour with setting the nations free; but the spirit of Christ Jesus God hath chosen and appointed to make free, and whom the son makes free are free indeed. So if you intend to make good your promise to the nations, then must you work with that spirit which God will own, else God will not work with you, nor own your work, but will overturn it, till he come to be owned, whose right it is. So if you look to do the work of God, wait for his spirit in yourselves first, to work you into obedience to his will and fear; and have respect to that spirit alone, which respects not persons, but truth in all persons. And if you know the truth to be Lord in you, the truth shall set you free, in yourselves first, free from the spirit of bondage, free from the spirit of this world, which would be lord above the spirit of Christ, and worshipped above Christ, and against his commands. This must you die to, that you may live unto Christ, and become his disciples, all taught of him, and he alone worshipped, and your hearts circumcised, so as to hear his voice, who calls to all that will own him, to do to all men as you would be done unto, this is the law and the prophets; and this must you receive from the lawgiver in spirit, if you will act for him, and act out all your old popish laws, which have been made out of the truth, to uphold corrupt interests; for upon that foundation must you build no house for Christ Jesus that he will own as his. And come to the scriptures of truth, which you have been long saying, should be your rule, and lay them amongst you, instead of old popish statutes, and corrupt counsels, and err not from it, nor suffer not any to wrest it by subtilty, but wait for the spirit of truth to lead you into the truth thereof; and there is no bondage in that law, nor in that spirit which gave it forth; and so the perfect law of liberty (if into it you look and do it) you will be blessed in your deeds, and

He that will not own mens laws, made by the spirit of the world, will own his own, and his own spirit he knows and owns, who rejects the world's spirit, and its self ends hates, and will blast and confound.

And if here you would begin faithfully, your way to peace would open to you in the spirit of truth and judgment, and an easy thing would you find it with God, to establish freedom, and stop the mouths of all unreasonable men, which no other spirit shall ever have power to do, but that which leads you to do as you would be done to.

So if you will act laws for Christ, you must begin with the law and the prophets, and with them prove yourselves, which is Christ's rule to walk by. Would you have others to compel your consciences in your worship, or lord over your faith to God? If not, then do it not to others; for that's out of Christ's doctrine and scripture rule, which saith, whatsoever you would that others should do unto you, do ye so unto them; this is the law and the prophets. Examine yourselves, and let truth judge you; are you all of one opinion touching your worship? And would you have your faith bound to another's opinion, wherein you differ, contrary to your conscience? If not (as none that serve God more than man would) then seek not to bind another, here is the law and the prophets, saith Christ Jesus, if you will hear his voice. And if you say, but the greater number of you are of one opinion; is this a safe rule for you to walk by? Did not the greater number crucify Christ, and cry, away with him? And doth that prove him infallible in judgment, or give you cause to think so, seeing Christ saith, they be few that find the way of life? And if you go by the greater number, and not by the spirit of Christ alone? Is not that to leave Christ Jesus, and his work, and betake yourselves to the arm of flesh: let truth in you all judge? The scripture saith not, follow the greater number, but follow the commands of Christ; who saith, all things whatsoever you would that others should do unto you, do you even so to them; this is the law and the prophets. Now you are like to be tried, whether

you will own Christ's commands, or your own interests and opinions; and if you own Christ Jesus, then with his commands shall you stop the mouths of unreasonable men, who would have others bound and themselves at liberty. When such come to you to get a yoke for the consciences of others, ask them if they will first take it up themselves, and be bound to their way whom they seek to bind, which they denying, shew themselves in the unreasonable nature, which would not do as they would be done unto, these deny the law and the prophets. And if they say, theirs is the true way, and therefore they would bind all to it; I say, that is yet to prove, and the more to be suspected, by their seeking a carnal law to uphold it contrary to Christ's doctrine, which the way of the gospel needs not, nor ever used. And it is not safe to judge of things that differ by the hearing of one party; but let both have equal liberty before you, and the scripture and words of Christ judge; and he that is denied of this, hath not his freedom as a christian. And he that would compel others to maintain his teacher, or his meeting place, and other outward things, which he calls worship, see if he will first be compelled to do the same to them in their way of worship. And this is the law and the prophets, and equal and reasonable freedom; and this will quench the fire of unreasonable spirits, and stop their mouths who seek to bind heavy burthens and lay on others, which themselves will not bear; as the opposers of Christ's kingdom have ever done, which comes to set free from all their bondage.

And when you have herewith stopped the mouths of these unreasonable men, and shewed them their nature, and how far they are erred from Christ's doctrine, and how far they are short of the law and the prophets, then you may be at rest for them, and so have an open way to christian liberty for all; and let him that will have an hireling teacher, hire him; and he that can receive a free teacher, receive him freely; and he that will have a clerk, hire him; and he that will worship in the steeple-house, repair it; and this is

reasonable in the sight of all men, and freedom of conscience, and none forced, nor have cause to complain of another.

And if any say, this will cast down all worship and ordinances, &c. I say, not so, for it casts down nothing that is conscientious, only it leaves every form free from persecution, to stand of itself, and nothing will fall thereby, but what is out of the power of Christ Jesus, and is upholden by carnal laws and arm of flesh, and not by his spirit, which is the false worship which hath crushed so many before you by seeking to uphold it, and will break all who take it upon them to uphold, under the name of Christ's worship; for his own worship he will have the honour to uphold, and to the powers of the earth he hath not given it; nor hath he at any time committed that charge to men, to send out labourers into his harvest, or to provide for his servants, his own house hath bread enough in it, who is Lord of all; all that he lays upon the powers of the earth is, not to touch them, nor do them harm: and he that saith he is a servant of Christ, and comes to the worldly powers for relief shames his master, and his house, and Christ will not own such servants; and he that saith he is sent out by Christ, and wants a place to preach in, and comes to the world for a place, is a liar, and is not sent out by Christ, but runs unsent for your gifts and rewards, whose work is not with God; and who saith he is sent out by Christ, and then seeks to men to be approved, or else be silent, shews he is not approved of God, nor his mouth opened by him, which those that have, none can shut, who have the living word. So mind these things, and burthen not yourselves with that which is too heavy for you to bear. Will you tell of making the nation free, and will not suffer Christ to have the freedom to send out his own messengers, with his free message, freely; and shall they not be suffered to declare his will, unless they come to you for hire or approbation, after the will of man? What freedom is it you talk on, who would bind the word of God, and limit the holy one? So take heed what you do against the heir, and free-born, who is

arisen to work a new work in the earth, and to undo what the will of man hath been doing without him, and to exalt the spirit of truth over the head of deceit and false worships.

Wherefore men be still, and fear the Lord God of power, and wait to see his spirit in you moving, and what he is about to do, that you may serve the son in fear; and think not that you can do any thing in his work, but as he worketh in you of his own will, and not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men; and it is vain for you to think to build upon the old foundations, which are not of God's laying; for with the life of truth are they seen to be out of course, and not that on which the prophets and apostles were built, and therefore rejects the corner stone, the light, and so the light hath rejected them, and discovered their foundation, and made them naked and bare to all that are spiritual men; and in vain do you labour, as those before you have done, who have thoughts to mend and repair the old, your thoughts are not God's thoughts, who is about to make all new, by the spirit of him by whom the world was made; in vain do you labour to piece the old garment, or mend the old bottle, your rent is still the worse, your priesthood and national worships is too far gone out of God's good old way ever to be mended; they must be let alone, and to the beginning must you come, and to the foundation which was laid, which is Christ Jesus, as in the apostles times, before the apostacy and popery, and if to that you look with a single eye, you will see your national worships wholly out of the good old way in every particular; and where nought is right how can that be repaired but by making new, as it was in the beginning.

And for your laws, if you will say you will be christians therein, then must you not look back to what laws were made by popish kings and queens, and self-interested men, which have in them respect to any other thing but the kingdom and righteousness of Christ Jesus, in all consciences; and all these you must cast by, and to the pure law of God must you

look, which respects no man's person, but is spiritually just and holy, which answers to that of God in every conscience, and that must you set over all, yourselves and others, that every one may be subject thereto for conscience sake: then is your power of God, and he that resists receives damnation in his own conscience: but by resisting and unjust law men have not damnation, for this were to conclude under damnation the whole army of martyrs, who in all ages have fought the lamb's battle against the beast and his mark; and this were to condemn yourselves in your present work.

And this consider, it is not merely the name of a king, nor of a bishop, by which the innocent people of God have suffered; but by that lordly oppressing, cruel spirit, and corrupt ordinances, laid upon pure consciences; and this is evidently seen of late, that in six or seven years last past hath been more innocent sufferings, and open oppressions, than in many years before: this is known to be true, though you being now got up above the feeling, have not an ear to hear the cry thereof; yet if one had told some of you of it, a very little while ago, when you were either in sufferings yourselves, or fear of it, then it would have been better received by you; so soon doth man's heart deceive him, whose only guide is not the exercise of a tender conscience in the light of Christ Jesus, towards God and man: wherefore, if you will do aught against oppression, then in truth and faithfulness condemn the spirit and power of oppression, and nature of it, and not the name under which it works, least it be worse in you than in those before you; for hitherto it hath exceeded and got strength in every one who have overturned others, pretending reformation and freedom, whose work hath been to set safe themselves and their interests [as they thought] but let the yoke lie heavy on the neck of the poor helpless; and your hearts are viewed already in this thing, and are not found upright in the sight of God, as the light of Christ in you shall witness, when he visits for unfaithfulness and breach of promise; and God is drawing away the expectations of his people from you, who feels you cooling rather than quickening to that one thing most needful and acceptable in the sight of God, to wit, breaking the power of the oppressor, and easing the spirit of Jesus Christ, who hath so long suffered in his despised members, who for his sake have given up their bodies and estates, and have been laid as the streets for the oppressors to go over, and have been a prey to the proud and covetous teachers and rulers of these times last past: and this should have touched your hearts with compas-

sion towards them, and a true zeal for God; and you should not have delayed their deliverance, nor spared that cursed thing by which the innocent have thus suffered, that so you might have cleared yourselves of the blood that hath been shed, and lives lost in prisons, and the havoc that hath been made of estates, and ruin of whole families; and this will lie on you till you purge the nation thereof, for God is just, and the blood of his saints is precious to him, though little esteemed with men: and this cruelty you should have put a stop with your whole heart, and not in the least seemed to uphold that spirit by which it is and hath been done, neither in teachers nor people; so would you have manifested to all men, in the sight of God, your innocency as to what hath been done against the just in this evil time, and so the spirit of Christ Jesus in his prisoners would have been eased, and would have lifted up their souls to God in praises, and in prayer for you; whose prayers God hath respect to, who have been faithful to his interest and kingdom this day, which all self-ended men and teachers have betrayed, by turning with times and powers after the commandments of men, and not after the Lord Jesus; and these are seen by the children of light, to be flocking and creeping to you now, as they have done at every change, to cover them, and strengthen their hands, and remove their fears which guilt hath brought upon them, and to justify them in their evil and deceitful dealing against the life of truth and faith; which you doing, you condemn the just and clear the guilty, and this will quench the spirit of justice in you, and bring a load and darkness over it, and the Lord will not be with you, nor give you power to do what you have promised in his sight, which was in the hearts of some of you to do, when you came in place; for if you keep not out the accursed thing from you, God will not be with you, but against you. And this those know, who know the living God.

Therefore in the dread of the Lord God, take heed to your spirits, and act not after the wisdom and will of man; for you are not to act for man, but for God. And this you cannot do, but as you receive the spirit of truth from above, judgment and mercy to teach and establish on the earth, without respect to any changeable thing.

And take heed how you respect persons, or feigned words and false pretences; but keep true judgment, as God is just; and mercy, as he is merciful. And this is after God's own heart, and for God, and answers that of God in all consciences, and gives the kingdom and glory to the just and merciful; then Christ reigns, and the righteous rejoice, and the mouth of iniquity is stopped, and fear will fall on the hypocrite, and good men fearing God will draw towards you, not to beg of you for

their self-interests, nor load you with their wickedness, but to add to you of the strength and power of the Lord God, who dwells with such as fear him.

And this is the kingdom of God with men, which if you will not seek to set up first in yourselves, and then in every one that comes before you for judgment, then are you not for God, but for yourselves; and God will divide you, and overturn you, till he find such to choose as are willing that he alone should reign, by the power of truth, in their inward parts.

And take heed of putting away the weak with fair words, when they cry for relief against such as are too strong for them, and bearing with great ones like yourselves; and so the grieved in spirit depart from you without help, and so cry to the Lord against you, who will hear them, and mark your doings against the day. This was his way who had once power to have done good to the oppressed, before you, and might have set the people free, as he often had promised, as you have done; and now its your time to perform, slip it not, least deceit harden you, as it must needs do if truth alone take not place: and seek not your honour from men, nor strength from flesh; but hold fast truth, judgment and mercy, that the Lord may strengthen and honour you: but if you forsake these sin lies at the door, which when it's finished brings death and shame, as your eyes have seen. O that you had hearts to understand.

Remember how it was with Oliver Cromwell, after he had taken upon him the work of setting the nations free, but did it not; but instead thereof, sought all ways to establish himself, and his house, out of all fear of being removed, or shaken; and to this end gathered to him the arm of flesh, and the strong, and cast out the weak and poor. And how often hath God sent his servants to warn him, and call him to repentance, who at first he put off with good words, but little else; but the Lord, not willing to give him up, sent them still; which after, when the message came near, and wounded his conscience with guilt, then he shut them out with guards, and they were pushed away from his doors and gates, and evil intreated, and imprisoned, and worse intended, till there was no remedy; and you have seen what God hath done in the end.

And now take you heed of dealing so towards God and his people: but take heed to your spirits, for the heart of man is deceitful when he is exalted. So mind the spirit of meekness and truth, to guide you, and do the work you have engaged to do without delay, with your whole heart. And if any be moved to come to you from the Lord, take heed of shutting it out, or slighting it, as hath been done, least you reject the living counsel of God, and he cease from you: and you will soon be tried herein, for a short work is God making in the earth, that he may exalt the son of truth and righteousness. He leaves men without excuse.

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